# Cosmovisions AC (6 min)

#### The role of the ballot is to determine who did the better debating by evaluating the truth or falsity of the resolution using a normatively justified ethical framework. Anything else is arbitrary and silences 6 min of the 1AC. My ROB is the most inclusive since any normative framework can generate offense under it. Prefer additionally.

#### [1] Resolvability: PICs, Agent CPs, Consultations, and Floating PIKs don’t disprove the thesis of the affirmative since they still prove the resolution is true. There are no temporal modifiers in the resolution and any actor who has moral authority is within the text of the resolution.

#### [2] Constitutivism: The NSDA announces a topic and creates the governing rules for the activity. Following speech times concedes the authority of my ROB.

#### And: Theory is violent and should be rejected.

#### [1] Notions of fairness in agonistic games are hopelessly vague and ideologically reinforce conquest

Lee 17 - Jonathan Rey Lee, Analog Game Studies, March 20th, 2017 “CAPITALISM AND UNFAIRNESS IN CATAN: OIL SPRINGS” [http://analoggamestudies.org/2017/03/capitalism-and-unfairness-in-catan-oil-springs/] Accessed 9/14/20 SAO

Before the first turn was over, I knew I had won—a circumstance typically only achievable through overwhelming skill, prognostication, or cheating. In this case, however, the game itself gave me an insurmountable advantage via my starting position. It’s tempting to label this as poor game design1 since it certainly violates the principle of fairness almost universally assumed in competitive gaming. Yet in a world where the myth of a ‘level playing field’ obscures and authorizes ongoing social inequalities, problematizing the notion of ‘fairness’ in gameplay may provide unique insight into the ‘fairness’ of capitalist culture. This insight is possible because contemporary games are cultural phenomena that have also become media phenomena. Games, that is, need not merely reflect culture, but have critical potential for reflecting on culture. The following reflections work toward developing such a critical paradigm by showing how the Oil Springs scenario for The Settlers of Catan plays out ethical dilemmas raised by the emergent and systemic inequalities generated by capitalist systems. In order to analyze these inequalities, this paper first explores game balance as the interplay between emergent inequality (how games determine winners and losers through the inputs of skill and chance) and systemic inequality (how an asymmetrical game state may privilege certain players).2 This paper then analyzes how the Oil Springs scenario for Catan links resource generation to land ownership, the runaway leader problem to the tendency of capital to accrue capital, and industrialization to market destabilization and ecological catastrophe. Finally, I reflect on the experience of enacting inequality within an unbalanced game system. Throughout, I suggest that while competitive games are typically designed to produce emergent inequality from within a level playing field (systemic equality), the rules that govern such emergent inequality are systemic in ways that allow for critically engaging systemic inequality. Fair and Balanced While not all games are competitive,3 the history of games is thoroughly intertwined with agon (or ‘**contestation’) as an organizing principle of Western culture**. According to French sociologist Roger Caillois, agonistic games play out agonistic culture “like a combat in which equality of chances is artificially created, in order that adversaries should confront each other under ideal conditions, susceptible of giving precise and incontestable value to the winner’s triumph.”4 With mathematical precision, agonistic games create balanced contests that reflect the ideal of agonistic culture: a perfectly level playing field that produces a genuine meritocracy. Yet, even while reflecting this agonistic ideal, the complicated balancing act performed by actual games demonstrates the limits of this ideal. Recognizing that fairness is problematic even within the carefully-controlled medium of games should also call into question the very possibility of a level playing field in arenas as complex as global capitalism. Fairness, like beauty, is left to the eye of the beholder. What standards determine which is most fair: that everyone gets the same amount of pie (equality), that everyone gets pie according to their need for pie (equity),5 or that everyone gets pie in proportion to how much money or labor they invested in the pie (meritocracy)? There are similarly divergent ways of considering fairness in games. Caillois is adamant about the fundamentality of fairness, arguing that games of both skill and chance (agon and alea) “require absolute equity, an equality of mathematical chances of most absolute precision. Admirably precise rules, meticulous measures, and scientific calculations are evident.”6 Taken together, however, skill and chance presuppose contradictory paradigms of equality, making it difficult to determine what counts as fair for games that incorporate both (as most contemporary tabletop games do). Similarly, although Caillois argues that “The search for equality is so obviously essential to the rivalry that it is re-established by a handicap for players of different classes,”7 notion of fairness behind the handicap does not reinforce but rather undermines the agonistic ideal. Such contradictory messages suggest that fairness is a highly subjective notion. That is: standards of fairness vary not only according to individual preferences, but also by context (casual gaming vs. tournaments), game genre (wargames vs. party games), and even circumstance (games are generally only ‘unfair’ when one is losing). Unsurprisingly, this variability amongst subjective standards yields a spectrum of paradigms for promoting balance, a somewhat vague negative term that presents fairness as ‘not unbalanced.’ Most commonly, games that tend towards symmetry tolerate emergent inequality but very little systemic inequality: symmetrical games allow skill and chance to separate players as the game progresses, but provide roughly parallel pathways to victory. In such games, the inevitable asymmetries are typically either minimized (playing first often confers an advantage, but usually a minimal one) or counterbalanced by other asymmetries of relatively equal value (the komi in Go compensates black’s advantage in going first with a point bonus given to the white player). Asymmetrical games extend this latter technique by counterbalancing different ways of playing (via differing pieces, abilities, rules, goals, etc.) to create a more or less equal game balance. Thus, asymmetrical game design provides two possibilities for exploring systemic inequalities. Balanced asymmetrical games can explore themes of inequity while maintaining an environment of fair play that adopts a perspective of critical distance—the player observes the interplay of differences that contribute to inequity without being immersed in the experience of inequity itself. By contrast, deliberately unbalanced asymmetrical games can explore inequity both thematically and procedurally, immersing players in a fundamentally inequitable world. To advocate critical play with and against capitalist systems, there are good reasons to challenge any standard of competitive balance that supports the myth of capitalism as a level playing field. **Insisting on perfectly balanced games is not just an impossible ideal; it** is a problematic one. Balanced games imagine idealized worlds that **may reinforce the deep cultural assumption that contestation is a** practical and **ethical way of organizing society**. Yet, there is a substantial disconnect between the fair and balanced worlds of gameplay and the many systemic inequalities that emerge in everyday societies. In practice, major genres of competitive game design—such as wargames, race games, betting games, and economic strategy games—often uncritically invoke and thereby reinforce broader forms of cultural contestation. Strategic wargames, for example, may intellectualize war tactics while glossing over the cost of violence. Similarly, economic strategy games may glamorize profiteering while failing to represent exploitation. For instance, Monopoly depicts rents as an arena for capitalist competition but ignores the consequences for tenants, worker placement games often reinforce the dehumanizing representation of laborers as human resources,8 and Catan fails to represent the violence of settler colonialism.9 And even as these games ignore disenfranchised populations, they ask players to become complicit in the systems that produce such disenfranchisement: the participatory medium of games often entangles player agency with the logic of capitalism by promoting a particularly capitalist model of agency—a self-interested agonistic impulse that plays out within a quantifiable, rule-governed system of exchange. Monopoly board There is perhaps no clearer example of the intersection of games and capitalism than Monopoly, of which Caillois writes, “The game of Monopoly does not follow but rather reproduces the function of Capitalism.”[ref]Caillois, p. 61.[/ref] Ironically, the game industry appropriated Monopoly from a game explicitly designed to demonstrate social inequality—The Landlord’s Game (patented 1904; this image from 1906) by Elizabeth Magie. Originally designed to demonstrate Henry George’s notion that the infrastructure of renting properties consolidated wealth in the hands of landowners at the expense of their tenants, The Landlord’s Game has resonances with the issue of land ownership discussed in the next section. (CC Wikimedia Commons) Although the way that games are more generally implicated in capitalism10 (and vice versa)11 deserves more critique, this parallelism may also provide games like Catan with a special critical potential to expose systemic inequality. For instance, in The First Nations of Catan, game designer and scholar Greg Loring-Albright describes how he developed “a balanced, asymmetrical strategy game” that “creates a narrative for Catan wherein indigenous peoples exist, interact with settlers, and have a fair chance of surviving the encounter by winning the game.”12 As discussed above, this type of game represents a critical intervention into historical inequalities while minimizing systemic gameplay inequalities, such as ones that might give the indigenous peoples a less than “fair chance.” By contrast, Catan and its Oil Springs scenario are mostly symmetrical and, if not actually unbalanced, certainly balanced unstably. With respect to Catan, Oil Springs makes more explicit the thematic connection to capitalism and, in a related move, makes the game balance even less stable “to draw attention to important challenges humanity faces, in relation to the resources that modern society depends on.”13 It accomplishes this by adding to the five original pastoral resources in Catan the modern resource of Oil, which is simultaneously more powerful (it counts as two standard resources), more flexible (it can be used as two of any resource), and more dangerous (its use triggers ecological catastrophes). By raising the stakes in these ways, Oil Springs further unbalances Catan to make a point about emergent social inequality tied to the unequal distribution of resources. Playing Capitalism Capitalism is far too multifaceted for any game—even one with as many variants and expansions as Catan—to model fully. Yet, games can indeed critically play with capitalism by condensing capitalist principles into their game systems through the systemic constraints and affordances that structure game interactions. Rather than describing capitalism, many agonistic games are themselves simple capitalist systems in which self-interested players engage in more or less free market competition with each other. Certain game designs, therefore, are not only tied to the agonistic logic behind capitalism, but are unique microcosmic economies that can represent specific facets of capitalism. The abstraction of Catan, for instance, obscures the history of settler colonialism and the exploitation of labor to focus instead on portraying land ownership as a lynchpin of modern capitalism, both in relation to resource generation and the tendency of capital to accrue capital. Similarly, the mechanics in Oil Springs focus on the role of the natural resource of oil as fuel for industrial capitalism by showing how industrialization accelerates resource production and exploits the environment. For Karl Marx, ownership of private property14 precludes fair compensation of workers by granting the capitalist (the holder of capital[refMarx defines capital thusly: “Capital consists of raw materials, instruments of labor and means of subsistence of all kinds, which are utilized in order to produce new raw materials, new instruments of labor and new means of subsistence. All these component parts of capital are creation of labor, products of labor, accumulated labor. Accumulated labor which serves as a means of new production is capital.” See Robert C. Tucker, ed. The Marx-Engels Reader. 2nd ed. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1978, p. 207.[/ref]]) legal ‘rights’ the value generated by production without requiring that they contribute any labor towards generating that value. Land in Catan reflects this model by automatically generating resources which are given directly to the player/landowner, completely bypassing the question of labor. Instead, the emergent inequality is between rival capitalists played by the game participants. Although class differences are not represented, these emergent inequalities are structurally linked with class differentiation. Indeed, private property is problematic for Marx primarily because it forms the conditions for emergent inequalities to become systemic inequalities through wealth consolidation. Thus, private property parallels an emergent asymmetry known in game design as the runaway leader problem, in which it becomes increasingly difficult to catch the lead player as the game progresses. This occurs in any game design—such as Catan—that links point accumulation and resource generation, creating a feedback loop such that the further one is towards achieving victory the more resources one gains to reinvest in that progress. In contrast to a game like Dominion, in which accumulating victory points can actually reduce the effectiveness of one’s resource-generating engine, in Catan the closer one is to victory the faster one should move toward victory.15 The idiom it takes money to make money captures this fact about capitalism, which Marx describes as “the necessary result of competition” being “the accumulation of capital in a few hands, and thus the restoration of monopoly in a more terrible form” (70). In fact, emergent and systemic inequalities often do synergize in this way as the material consequences of emergent inequalities become concretized as systemic as they are passed down from generation to generation, maintaining fairly resilient wealth disparities between different social and ethnic groups. Catan For Marx, these problems with land ownership are only intensified in industrial capitalism, in which ownership over the machinery of production further disenfranchises the industrial worker. This is precisely the shift in emphasis behind Oil Springs, which introduces Oil not just as one more roughly equivalent commodity, but one which radically unbalances Catan’s market economy. Representing the increasing pace of production from pre-industrial to industrial societies, one unit of Oil is worth two resources. In fact, it is worth two of any resource, which means that the strategic value of a single Oil resource ranges from two to eight resources (since it can take up to 4 resources to trade for a resource of one’s choice), making Oil so much more valuable than other resources that it seriously unbalances the game. In addition, Oil is required for building a Metropolis, the most powerful building in the game. Depicting how new industrial processes destabilize existing economic relationships, Oil Springs shows how the problems of capitalist land ownership are compounded when such land contains scarce resource reserves that are essential to industry. Such resources encourage relationships of dependence not only over renters and laborers (who are nowhere represented in Catan), but also over other industrialists who require these resources. Thus, the game makes the inequality between different starting positions more dramatic to depict a shift in modern geopolitics away from territory being valued primarily for it land, population, and location to being valued primarily for its strategic resources. While Oil Springs does have mechanisms that restore some balance, such as keeping Oil off the highest-probability hexes and capping the amount of Oil a player may hold at one time,16 its primary mechanisms for balancing Oil ironically further unbalance the game. By making Oil use precipitate ecological disasters, Oil Springs highlights the costs of industrial capitalism and makes an implicit ecocritical statement about how environmental consequences affect us all. They affect us, that is, randomly but not equally. Demonstrating that even negative consequences can be exploited by the industrial capitalist, the game’s two forms of environmental disaster turned out to be less damaging to me than to other players. The first environmental disaster, in which rising water levels destroy coastal settlements, played in my favor because I planned to exploit Oil and therefore avoided building coastal settlements.17 The second disaster, representing ‘industrial pollution,’ randomly strikes individual hexes, causing them to permanently cease to produce resources. More precisely, it does this to the ‘natural’ resources—affecting all hexes except for Oil Springs, which continue to produce after a reduction in the shared Oil reserves. Thus, because I was disproportionally less accountable for the consequences of my actions, I was able to safely initiate risky behavior that the risk-averse players suffered from. As risk and accountability can become unhinged in a free-market society that pushes for deregulation, Oil Springs speaks to the fact that those most responsible for climate change—be they individuals, corporations, or nations—do not generally bear the brunt of the consequences.18 Oil Springs The Disaster Track from the Oil Springs Scenario. Every time an Oil resources is used, it moves a marker along this track, triggering an ecological disaster if it reaches the final space (this takes 5 Oil in the 3-4 player game and 8 Oil in the 5-6 player game). If this occurs 5 times in total, the game immediately ends and no one wins. Image used for purposes of critique. In all the aforementioned ways, the game systems of Catan and Oil Springs use emergent inequalities to reflect on various systemic inequalities. This conflation, however, raises another question of fairness, namely how systemic inequalities emerge. In the case of Catan, this question becomes how to distribute land that has such intrinsically unequal value that it is sometimes possible to accurately predict the winner based on the starting positions (as in my case). The game attempts to solve this by using a snake draft to organize how players select their starting positions. Fairness is achieved not by creating equal spaces, but by assigning fundamentally unequal spaces using the mechanisms of emergent inequality: skill and chance (agon and alea). There is a fundamental difference, however, in the role these two forms of emergent inequality play in the deep interpenetration of games and culture. For Caillois, whereas agonistic games reflect the meritocratic ideal of cultural contestation, aleatory games play with the fundamental uncertainty of life—they are ludic, even carnivalesque experiments in fatalism. Unlike the triumphalism of agon, therefore, the aleatory elements of games explore consequentiality beyond the limits of human agency. This explains, for Caillois, how aleatory social institutions such as gambling and lotteries counterbalance the fundamentally agonistic structure of society by providing a faint hope that any individual may leap out of a condition of systemic inequality through an emergent (but rare) inequality. This demonstrates how capitalism balances itself by using the possibility of upward mobility to obscure its systemic conditions for economic immobility. This also reveals a way in which game design struggles to represent systemic social inequality: games often achieve balance by using aleatory elements to subsume systemic inequality within emergent inequality, sacrificing the critical experience of systemic inequality in order to maintain the ideal of balance. Thus, the emergent inequalities in Catan fail to represent how historical inequalities are invariably systemic as race, gender, class, and nationality play prominent roles—how in America, for example, the original occupants were dispossessed by force of arms and land was redistributed according to explicitly discriminatory laws.19 It also fails to represent how even after more recent legislation has eroded many of these practices, their legacy20 necessarily lingers within a capitalist system where ownership is passed down from generation to generation. There are limitations, therefore, to representing social inequality exclusively through emergent mechanisms—when games create a genuinely level playing field, they become incompatible with capitalism, which perpetuates the myth of a level playing field while in fact perpetuating systemic inequalities. Playing with Privilege It was only upon further reflection that I began to tie my play experiences to the preceding forms of social inequality. In the moment, however, my focus was more narrowly focused on executing my strategy—or, to put it bluntly, on winning. At the same time, this was tinged with a growing sense of discomfort that can only be described by an even more uncomfortable word: privilege. Certainly, my ability to win the way I did was due to a privileged starting position, which tilted the balance of power in my favor. Yet, privilege is an attitude as well as a condition: **being able to focus exclusively on strategy and winning is itself** a form of **privilege**. Games (even so-called serious games) are not theories of social inequality—as embodied, performative spaces, games express a procedural rhetoric21 in which players develop perspectives by exploring the consequences of their decisions and actions as they play out within the game system. To play certain games in certain ways, therefore, is to play as capitalists and play out capitalism. Games like Acquire encourage us to play as capitalists. As mentioned above, the procedural rhetoric of Oil Springs is paradoxically predicated on privileging the very strategies of industrial capitalism that this ecocritical game otherwise censures. This presents players with a dilemma, in which **playing to win may require performing actions that are** thematically represented as **ethically problematic**. Thus, the primary reason I received such advantageous placement in my case study is that I ruthlessly pursued Oil from the start, whereas several of my opponents hesitated to do so (possibly due to their ecological consciousness). Sometimes gamers attempt to justify a win-at-all-costs mentality by claiming they are merely following the dictates of the game (indirectly valorizing the cultural ideology of agon), or that they are merely solving an abstract puzzle without regard to thematic considerations. While these are valid ways to play a game, **they** nonetheless **represent an active choice** on the part of the player **rather than some** ‘objective’ or **‘default’ position.** Indeed, the phrase “win at all costs” itself admits that such play necessitates a cost. While I can understand why some players would choose to play in this way, **this position is not viable for game scholarship**. To properly study a game, one must account for the interplay of its many facets. Theme, which can evoke representational content and complex psychological and affective22 responses, is an essential facet of a game as text. When players respond to a game’s theme, they are performing a genuine textual engagement worthy of analysis. Thus, this section draws on my own play experience to reflect on possible consequences of systemically privileging certain positions. If I had to sum up my experience, I would say that playing and subsequently winning this particular game was no fun at all. And, although I cannot speak for the other players, I imagine it was not much fun them either. Working from an advantaged position altered the game experience in ways that counteracted much of the enjoyment I typically derive from gameplay. I say ‘working from’ rather than ‘playing from’ because rather than playfully exploring new strategies, I found myself merely implementing the most obviously advantageous strategy. My narrow focus on winning imposed an inappropriately results-driven framework on play, something I typically value more for the experience than the results. This focus was driven, moreover, less by the rewards of victory than by the fear of failure23—even while my privileged position robbed winning of much of its merit, losing would have been still worse. Although the game was unbalanced in my favor, an increased probability of winning did not, in my case, lead to an enriched game experience. This is because **the value of a game experience cannot be reduced to winning,** which is why games—even agonistic ones—are distinct from non-playful tests or contests. This is surprisingly analogous to Marx’s argument that capitalism not only inequitably distributes resources, but also reduces human experience to something instrumental and transactional. Indeed, Marx suggests that even while the capitalist is materially advantaged over the laborer, both are equally alienated by being reduced to their respective roles within the capitalist system. Systemic inequality, that is, is dehumanizing for all its participants—whether privileged or marginalized. Systemic inequality in games is, of course, less consequential and more voluntary than social inequalities,24 but it can alienate players in similar ways. In fact, most games eschew systemic inequality because it tends to be unpleasant for everyone involved. Players in privileged positions may find their roles overdetermined by the game structure, resulting in a narrowing of strategic, exploratory, or playful possibilities (for example, I had no reason to trade with other players when I could acquire all the resources I needed on my own). Similarly, players in less privileged positions may find their choices narrowed by their limited resources as the runaway leader problem renders their choices increasingly inconsequential. Systemically unequal game design, that is, looks like a lose-lose situation. Yet, it is not that inequality deprives play of choice, but rather that it overdetermines the consequences or relative viability of various choices. In the right conditions, therefore, such unbalanced play may add a unique dimension to the play experience. Rather than playing as an industrial capitalist, for instance, I could have chosen to play as an environmentalist. Instead of using Oil, I could have chosen to ‘Sequester’ Oil by permanently removing one of my Oil resources from the game each turn, gaining 1 Victory Point (VP) for every three Sequestered Oil, and an additional VP for sequestering the most Oil. Simple mathematics suggests that this is a terrible strategy: 1 VP is a paltry reward for the relative value of three Oil.25 This discrepancy underlies a model in which industrial capitalism is systematically more viable than environmentalism. Yet, what counts ‘viable’ can be called into question. Precisely because sequestering is ‘bad’ strategy, it offers an interesting thematic possibility: role-playing as an environmentalist knowing that one is not likely to win. From a thematic perspective, this strategy could be quite rewarding. Whereas my privileged play would lead either to failure or a victory deprived of merit, pursuing sequestering could offer either an impressive victory or a loss offset by the satisfaction of maintaining a moral position. These benefits, however, are psychological rather than ethical. While environmentalism is certainly much needed, playing environmentalism in a game is no more intrinsically beneficial than playing industrial capitalism. Critical gameplay requires more than importing real-world values into games; it requires interrogating the assumptions players bring to the game and the positions they adopt within the game. To sequester Oil solely for the sake of feeling morally superior is not a critical position (although it could certainly be an attractive one). Precisely because environmentalism matters, it deserves critical attention and critical gameplay. After all, activism can be problematic in, for example, replicating colonial attitudes towards the developing world or performing a kind of ‘conscience laundering.’26 Critical play,27 that is, is not an outcome but a method. Or, as Marx puts it, “I am therefore not in favor of setting up any dogmatic flag. On the contrary, we must try to help the dogmatics to clarify themselves the meaning of their own positions” (13). The potential consequences of such reflection are not just two, but many. Beyond simply stating that one way of playing (environmentalism) is superior to another (industrial capitalism), critical play provides an opportunity for players to self-reflectively engage the decisions and feelings of occupying different subject positions within inequitable systems. Critical play encourages reflection. Coda Games have not historically been on the forefront of discussions on social inequality.28 This is partially because the fundamentality of agon in games reinforces certain cultural logics, partially because the carnivalesque nature of play tends not to revolutionize prevailing systems,29 and partially because social inequality presents a special challenge for game design. To reverse this trend will require a critical perspective that pushes the limits of the game medium, such as the imperative toward balance at the heart of competitive game design—especially in a world where ‘fairness’ alternatively means ‘light-skinned,’ and the myth of a level playing field is used to justify a clearly uneven one. As Oil Springs demonstrates, experimenting with the interplay between emergent and systemic inequality is one way games can explore capitalism as similarly rule-governed, self-interested systems. In deconstructing the myth of the level playing field, it becomes clear that emergent inequalities in capitalism are develop systemic qualities. As a rule-governed agonistic system, capitalism legally positions the capitalist to leverage the rights of ownership to exploit the worker’s labor. Similarly, capitalism promotes the runaway leader problem by passing down capital via inheritance rather than need or merit. Furthermore, despite all claims to neutrality, economic hierarchies in capitalism are historically intertwined with other social hierarchies, such as race and gender. The problems of social inequality, therefore, are necessarily multiple and intersectional. Games have historically also lacked nuance with respect to intersectional analysis.30 If they represent categories like race and gender at all, most games do so either via problematic stereotypes or via visual and narrative means that bypass the procedural rhetoric that makes games so distinctive. I suspect that most game design avoids systemic unfairness at the level of identity politics to avoid alienating players who identify in diverse ways. At least on the surface, class—an extrinsic marker of social identity—seems easier to dissociate from sensitive identity politics and, thereby, more implementable in games like Catan.31 However, critical play must resist the ways that games by their nature simplify and abstract what they represent. Instead, critical play draws upon but moves beyond such simplification and abstraction to respond to complex social realities. And the reality of capitalism, as discussed above, is that class is intertwined with race and gender. Indeed, an intersectional perspective on critical play may provide a way of exploring the paradoxical unity and disunity of player and role that complicates the gameplay experience. After all, despite the common association between criticism and distance, critical play is still an experience—an embodied calling into question of certain social systems. –

#### [2] We can cross apply the aff to theory since layers are arbitrary and fairness is an intrinsically ethical concept. Solves ideological dogmatism and content exploration

Koh 13 - Ben Koh, NSD Update, October 1st, 2013 “Breaking Down Borders: Rethinking the Interaction Between Theory and Ethics” [http://nsdupdate.com/2013/breaking-down-borders-rethinking-the-interaction-between-theory-and-ethics/] Accessed 8/14/20 SAO

First: **Fairness is** at its basis is **an ethical concept**. For instance at its basis, fairness as Rawls explains is, “a number of persons engage in a mutually advantageous cooperative venture according to certain rules and thus voluntarily restrict their liberty, those who have submitted to these restrictions have a right to a similar acquiescence on the part of those who have benefited from their submission.” That is to say, the basis of fairness rises from benefiting from cooperation. In the debate context, the “benefit” as Rawls refers to could be the actual ability to debate, or speaking without interference etc. In the same way that it’s considered immoral under most ethical systems to take without recompense, fairness is relevant due to it being the “recompense.” Additionally, equality’s importance is as a moral concept. The utterance that we ought to both start with the same amount of speaking time is morally relevant for it guides or at least constrains our actions, or the rightness and wrongness thereof (i.e. if I go a minute longer in the NR, I would usually be dropped or at least penalized due to its wrongness). Second, Fairness is normative: A) The idea that there is a consequence to a certain unfair act implies its relevance to our action. Debaters generally don’t read theory just because they wanted to point out something interesting or amusing, they do so to win or to rid the round of the problematic argument. B) The voluntary concession of the basic rules for the round renders fairness as being “obligatory.” Loland explains, “the obligation of fairness does not arise unconditionally. One basic premise is that the parties are voluntarily engaged. They have chosen participation in favor of nonparticipation and have thus more or less tacitly agreed to follow the commonly accepted rules and norms of the practice play the game. Loland further explains that “in sporting games, the predominant distributive norm is meritocratic. The norm on equal tratemnt, then, becomes a necessary condition for a game to take place. To be able to evaluate the relevant inequalities satisfactorily, participants have to compete on the same terms. All competitors ought to be given equal opportunity to perform.” The implication is that an argument that questions ethical assumptions (or even more basically assumptions at all) needs to be open to criticism. In the same way debaters now take into account the theoretical implications of their frameworks (i.e. the line of arguments centered around whether or not “ought is defined as maximizing well-being” is a fair interpretation), **debaters should take into account the ethical implications of their theory arguments**. Analyzing the way we debate theory further exposes these assumptions. Theory is debated typically in a very **utilitarian** **fashion**. Debaters tend to weigh between theory standards under assumed criterions of “what would a policy maker do,” how easy the calculation is, etc. They answer the question of drop the debater vs. drop the argument commonly in terms of solvency, whether or not there is a deterrent effect, etc. It’s no surprise in my mind that most “LARPers” are generally as proficient on the LARP as they are on the theory debate due to the reproduction of skill. To keep theory argumentation at a standstill in its variation is to deny the basic value in LD in the first place. There’s no reason why we should not question the assumption of how we debate or think about theory in the same way we question the assumptions of right and wrong in LD. A question that follows then is what occurs if we debate theory in a more Kantian sense? Or a more Nietzschean one? Etc. I’m not persuaded by the idea that ethical arguments cannot apply to the context of theory debate. Examples: 1) If the argument against consequentalism is true that there are infinite consequences, is norm setting ever possible? 2) If an intention based framework is true, and the violation was not made intentionally, should the one violating still be held culpable for the violation 3) A polls framework would outline why community consensus is most ethically relevant. If a certain practice is common, would that implicate its moral permission? Beyond the voter, concepts like competing interpretations, which in some variations claims that only one interpretation is objectively/ absolutely true, could easily be criticized with postmodern arguments. Massumi (a Deleuzian contemporary) would probably argue that the attempt to instill a certain worldview of the round is indicative of state philosophy, where “The end product would be ‘a fully legitimated subject of knowledge and society’ – each mind an analogously organized mini-State morally unified in the supermind of the State. Prussian mind-meld.” Security K type arguments that criticize the idea of deterrence claiming that mindset is the root cause of the threats it attempts to be prevented can easily apply to drop the debater justifications about norm setting. Apprehension to introduce this type of argumentation into the debate sphere can be tracked most likely to the tendency of judges to either a) paradigmatically assume fairness is important to avoid annoying and assumptive debates about whether or not fairness is a voter or b) judges not voting on these arguments frequently in the past. However, this line of thought I present does not attempt to claim that fairness is absolutely not a voter. This type of argument generally does not contest if theory itself is unfair or resolvable in a theoretical way, i.e. in the fashion most “fairness not a voter” arguments are made. The goal rather is to reframe the lens of which we analyze theory debates, or analyze “fairness not a voter arguments.” The application fosters discussion about what fairness ethically should imply, not in attempt to create more “frivolous theory debates” or figure out ways to make theory irresolvable. In fact, this mindset would produce **better philosophical discussion**. By examining the full implication of an ethical argument, debaters could more fully understand what it means to argue X or Y is the correct moral framework beyond just the resolution at hand. Whereas debate about animal rights or compulsory voting does allow for that form of philosophical analysis, this viewpoint allows for full education of ethics to even more frequent, real world concerns of fairness and education. Additionally, most of the historical unwillingness is probably rooted in tendency for debaters to use this avenue of argumentation in a **blippy fashion**. However in the same way that arguments that are more fleshed out or have definitive warrants are given priority over others, debaters ought to argue this similarly. Rather than treating ethical arguments against theory as a “back up strategy,” this should become a more full, centralized approach. The purpose of this article is that fairness as an ethical idea, with the same ethical discussion, etc., should not be absent from questioning. The implementation, function, correctness of a conception of fairness, etc., should all be open for debate in the same way that we try to figure out if death is really morally bad after all. The even broader implication is that LD debate should continue to foster questioning**. To take a firm stance on basic assumptions is to deny the role of philosophical questioning in the first place**. To quote Rebar Niemi, “the notion that any one of us could set some determinate standard for what debate should be is preposterous, uneducational, sanctimonious, and arrogant. I think that the notion that we should teach the already privileged population of debate to be inflexible, dogmatic, and exclusive in their belief sets **creates** worse citizens, **worse people,** and ultimately a worse world.”

#### Framework

#### The meta ethic is refusing all epistemic hegemony. This a is a prerequisite to cognitive deliberation and precedes normative framing.

Poppe 16 - R.C Poppe, Utrecht University Repository, 2016 “APPLYING DECOLONIAL PERSPECTIVES TO CLIMATE ETHICS” [https://dspace.library.uu.nl/handle/1874/334548] Accessed 10/9/19 SAO

Relation and contribution to climate ethics As stated in the beginning of the previous chapter, moral epistemology is a branch of metaethics that concerns itself with the justification for moral statements. Moral epistemology, however, must also be a branch of epistemology, because if justification **for moral statements** is **to be evaluated, there needs to be a justification for** the (type of) **knowledge employed to execute such evaluation.** Therefore, moral epistemology needs to account for both ethical and epistemic considerations. As Timmons argued, there is no neat separation between normative ethics and metaethics: they are intertwined. So, if one were to engage in an inquiry to normative (applied) ethics, at least some attention has be given to moral epistemology. It matters greatly, however, what epistemologies one employs as basis for that inquiry. The way decolonial thinking thus relates to climate ethics is that it can be used to address epistemological issues in the current climate ethical debate. The argument that will be explained below is going to say that there can be no global social justice without global cognitive justice (Santos 2008, p. 258). In a nutshell, this means that an **ethical** form of mitigation **policy cannot be achieved if the epistemology**(-ies) **employed to justify the evaluation of justification of moral statements** (moral epistemology) **is in conflict with epistemologies** and relations to nature **of the people affected** by that policy. Management approaches interfere with global cognitive justice Different relations to nature The argument regarding global cognitive justice draws upon indigenous relations to nature. According to Enrique Salmon, indigenous ways of relating to nature should be understood as a kincentric ecology (Salmon, p. 1328). This means that indigenous people regard themselves and nature as part of the same family. Salmon argues that the best way to understand such a relation to nature is through the Rarámuri (an indigenous community in eastern Mexico; the Sieraa Madres) concept of iwígara, which he explains as the following: Poppe 35 “Iwígara is the total interconnectedness and integration of all life in the Sierra Madres, physical and spiritual”…”Iwí also makes reference to the Rarámuri concept of soul. It is understood that the soul, or iwí, sustains the body with the breath of life. Everything that breaths has a soul. Plants, animals, humans, stones, the land, all share the same breath. When humans and animals die, their souls become butterflies that visit the living. The butterflies also travel to the Milky Way, where past souls of the ancestors reside. Iwí is also the word used to identify a caterpillar that weaves its cocoons on the madrone tree (Arbutus sp.). The implication is that there is a whole morphophysiological process of change, death, birth, and rebirth associated with the concept of iwí. Iwí is the soul or essence of life everywhere. Iwígara then channels the idea that all life, spiritual and physical, is interconnected in a continual cycle. Iwí is the prefix to iwígara. Iwígara expresses the belief that all life shares the same breath. We are all related to, and play a role in, the complexity of life. Iwígara most closely resembles the concept of kincentric ecology.” (Salmon, p. 1328) The concept of kincentric ecology, iwígara, is at the heart of the Rarámuri land management philosophy (Salmon, p. 1329). It is a reciprocal relationship in which the Rarámuri are one of the relatives of the family of the land, of which they regard themselves as guardians (Salmon, p. 1329). The Rarámuri conception of nature and their relation to it is quite different from Western conceptions. Singer, for example, argues that the atmosphere (which is a part of nature) is to be perceived as a resource and that for the sake of justice in mitigation policy, the entitlements to this resource need to be allocated fairly. Similarly, Escobar argues that the conception of capital in political economy is undergoing a significant change with regards to nature. He calls this the ecological phase. Nature, he says, is no longer exploitable and external to capital, but rather it has become internal to capital (Escobar 1996, p. 326). “No longer does nature denote an entity with its own agency, a source of life and discourse, as was the case in many traditional societies, with European Romantic literature and art of the 19th century. For those committed to the world as resource, the ‘environment’ becomes an indispensable construct. As the term is used today, environment includes a view of nature according to the urban-industrial system.” Poppe 36 (Escobar 1996, p. 331) As mentioned in Singer’s section, the UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) recognizes a right to sustainable development, because of the assumption that economic progress is essential for combatting climate change. According to Escobar, however, this is counterintuitive, because economic growth and capital accumulation are largely the source of environmental degradation (Escobar 1996, p. 329). Therefore, the ability of sustainable development to preserve nature is questionable and the question should be asked whether this is even the main aim of the project. Referring back to the reflection on Singer, the preservation of nature seems to be subject to the preservation of political and economic systems. “The sustainable development strategy, after all, focuses not so much on the negative consequences of economic growth on the environment, as on the effects of environmental degradation on growth and potential for growth. It is growth (ie capitalist market expansion), and not the environment, that has to be sustained. Since poverty is believed to be a cause, as well as an effect, of environmental problems, growth is needed with the purpose of eliminating poverty and with the purpose, in turn, of protecting the environment.” (Escobar 1996, p. 330) Escobar says this is perhaps most visible in discussions regarding the biodiversity in rainforests. Their preservation through sustainable development is not to save the rainforest for the sake of saving the rainforest. Rather it is to save the rainforest as a resource; the resource being the genes of the species living in this environment that can be used for bioengineering (Escobar 1996, p. 334-335). “Nature and local people themselves are seen as the source and creators of value-not merely as labour or raw material. The discourse of biodiversity in particular achieves this effect. Species of microorganisms, flora and fauna are valuable not so much as ‘resources’, but as reservoirs of value-this value residing in their very genes-that scientific research, along with biotechnology, can release for capital and communities. This is one of the reasons why communities-particularly ethnic and peasant communities in the tropical rainforest areas of the world-are finally recognized as the owners of their territories (or what is left of them), but only to the extent that they Poppe 37 accept viewing and treating territory and themselves as reservoirs of capital. Communities in various parts of the world are then enticed by biodiversity projects to become ‘stewards of the social and natural “capitals” whose sustainable management is, henceforth, both their responsibility and the business of the world economy’.” (Escobar 1996, p. 334-335) These ethnic and peasant communities are the indigenous peoples that inhabit these territories (Escobar 1996, p. 334). Key to the argument of global cognitive and social justice here is that, as Escobar says above, these peoples are expected to view and treat these territories and themselves as reservoirs of capital. According to Lohmann, however, “a resource is something whose value lies in being a ‘source’ of something else”…”a commodity is something whose value lies in what it can be swapped for or what price it can fetch” (Lohmann et al, p. 55). Therefore, it seems that Escobar’s use of the term resource can perhaps better be swapped for commodity. Although this makes little difference for the argument to come, it means that what Escobar calls reservoirs of value can be interpreted as resources. What this means for indigenous peoples, on the one hand, is that they have to abide the ideology of efficiency that is central to modern economics (Lohmann et al, p. 54). For example, as Lohmann says, this means that indigenous peoples might be forced to divide their land into permanent forest areas and permanent agricultural areas, even though many indigenous communities use areas periodically (they use a piece of rainforest as agricultural land for some time, then move on to another area to let nature run its course on the previously used area) (Lohmann et al, p. 54). On the other, it means that they consequently have to redefine themselves, their relation to nature, and their everyday practices. No global social justice without global cognitive justice Before it is possible to construct a sound argument, it is important to define social justice and cognitive justice. Michael Novak claims social justice is social in two ways: 1) it is social in the sense that it requires cooperation to attain justice; and 2) it is social in the sense that it aims at all members of a community (whether it be local or global), not at a single individual only (Novak, p. 12). The second claim can be understood as an entitlement to an equal notion of justice: justice applies to everyone equally. Cognitive justice, as Santos argues, should be understood as a “just relationship among different kinds of knowledge” (Santos 2008, p. 258). This means that **no a priori supremacy should be granted to any** kind of **knowledge** (Santos 2008, p. 258). Poppe 38 Justice is in itself a challenging philosophical concept. Referring back to Timmons, normative questions about how to attain justice are inevitably subject to metaethical questions of what justice is and how a concept of justice can be justified. Even though decolonial thinking regards universalist tendencies as problematic, there is need for a common ground in the understanding of the concept in order to have a normative discussion about global justice. Therefore, perhaps the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is the best model to work with, since it expresses that the “…recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world” (UDHR, preamble). In the making of the social and cognitive justice argument, I will draw upon Article 18 of the Declaration: Article 18: “**Everyone has the right to freedom of thought,** conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.” (UDHR, 1948) Santos’ argument, as previously mentioned, is that there can be no global social justice without global cognitive justice. So what exactly in climate ethics interferes with global cognitive justice? As mentioned in the previous chapter, Singer’s principles of fairness are aimed at allocating the burden of mitigation fairly. This burden, however, is expressed in economic terms: the monetary cost of reducing emissions. For indigenous peoples such as the Rarámuri, however, it is not so much a material problem as it is an epistemic one. As illustrated above, their knowledge and beliefs do not fit in the epistemic framework of rationality and scientific thought; they employ a spiritual epistemology. Their philosophy of land management is directly related to their spirituality. Their use of land, such as a periodical use, is not arbitrary or random, but it is a manifestation of their spiritual beliefs. The Rarámuri, for example, only harvest plans in areas where their Iwígara (their life breath) is strong, so that the plants with a weak Iwígara may strengthen (Salmon, p. 1330). This way they believe to maintain a balance in the interconnectedness of life (Salmon, p. 1330). By demanding that indigenous peoples view and treat nature and themselves as resources (reservoirs of value) to preserve biodiversity, they need to adjust their practices in Poppe 39 order to secure such preservation (like setting permanent forest and permanent agricultural areas). The problem, therefore, is that mitigation policy through management approaches interferes with the manifestation of indigenous beliefs in practice, which is a violation of Article 18 of the UDHR. Assuming that the UDHR is indeed an adequate standard for what is just, this means that management approaches (and therefore climate ethics operating under a management framework) fail to bring about social justice. Having established this, why is there need to discuss cognitive justice as a prerequisite for social justice? Is it not possible to simple adjust policy in such a way that it does not interfere with social justice? As mentioned in the introduction, policy-decisions regarding climate change come predominantly from Western countries. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), created by the United Nations Environment Program and the World Meteorological Office in 1988 (Singer, p. 184), includes no representatives of indigenous peoples (Lohmann et al, p. 38). Yet, as discussed above, the policies constructed affect and disrupt these peoples way of living. It seems, then, that the construction of policy is paternalist in nature; indigenous peoples have no say in the construction of policy, even though they are affected by it. This implies that the policy-makers know better what is best for indigenous peoples than themselves. Consequently, this can be interpreted as a rearticulation of coloniality through the rhetoric of development: the Western policy-makers being the developed and the indigenous peoples the undeveloped. According to Giovanna Di Chiro, this is exactly the claim of the People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit. They claim that conventional environmental organizations and policy-makers employ a managerial top-down approach with a technocratic rationality that is “disempowering, paternalistic, and exclusive” (Di Chiro, p. 306). As Escobar argued, however, people living in what are now labeled as developing countries did not use to define themselves in terms of development, even though billions of these people now do. Indigenous peoples, however, even though they often live in these developing countries, still do not define themselves in terms of development. Mark Plotkin, an Amazonian ethnobotanist, argues that the reason why indigenous peoples often live isolated should be regarded as a form of resistance, precisely because they do not want to comply with Western thinking and way of life (Plotkin, 2014). This resistance can thus be understood as the previously mentioned epistemic disobedience; indigenous peoplesreject the epistemic hegemony of rational and scientific thought. Consequently, following decolonial Poppe 40 reasoning, qualitative statements regarding indigenous ways of life in terms of development or rationalism are inappropriate, because indigenous peoples do not employ a rationalist epistemology nor regard development as the meaning and direction of history (see Santos’ monoculture of time). As mentioned in the introduction, policy-decisions regarding mitigation policy come from the global actors empowered to make such decisions and conventional policy takes a management approach towards mitigation policy. These are the developed (Western) countries, because they have a stronger economic and political position than developing countries. Important to keep in mind is that mitigation policy is an international endeavor; the developed countries do not construct policy on their own and enforce them nationally, but this is managed globally by intergovernmental organizations such as the IPCC. Since the Western epistemic framework assumes an epistemic supremacy of rationality and scientific knowledge, according to decolonial thinking, policy-decisions reflect this assumption. Therefore, the construction of mitigation policy reflects the rhetoric of development, because policy-makers would consider Western knowledge to be more sophisticated and thus believe the employment of such knowledge to be capable of benefitting everyone, including indigenous peoples, more than other knowledges. Management approaches in policy show the same paternalistic tendency, because they globally impose the assumption that nature is a resource to be managed and preserved as to sustain capital (Escobar, p. 328). As has been illustrated above, however, such reasoning leads to the interference with indigenous ways of life and even their fundamental human rights. Therefore, from a decolonial perspective, there can be no global social justice without global cognitive justice in the construction of mitigation policy. Consequently, climate ethical theory or principles that operate in a management framework cannot achieve social justice, because the employment of a management framework in international policy-making implies the epistemic hegemony of one knowledge over others (a lack of cognitive justice). Therefore, cognitive justice is a prerequisite of social justice.

#### The standard is decoloniality. You have a categorical imperative to reject doctrines that uphold cultural otherization

Dunford 17 - Robin Dunford, University of Brighton, Journal of Global Ethics, September 21st 2017 “Toward a decolonial global ethics” [https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/17449626.2017.1373140] Accessed 10/1/20 SAO

Decolonial ethics is not without its tensions, some of which I explore in this section. In principle, the above two aspects of pluriversality cut in different directions. The pluriversal as that which is formed through inter-cultural dialogue points in the direction of a dialogue in which positions are not excluded in advance (even if this dialogue may take place, initially at least, only amongst the oppressed), and in which no particular standard or value is valid in advance of dialogue.7 Taken alone, this form of pluriversality raises questions. Does inter-cultural dialogue have any limits or constraints? Are values justified solely by virtue of having emerged through inter-cultural dialogue, or is it possible for a value to be wrong, normatively speaking, despite emerging from this process? Are any and all views allowed to the table, or ought certain views be rejected? What about those views that reproduce colonial narratives or values that have done so much to silence, undermine and oppress those on the underside of the colonial matrix of power? Taken alone, this aspect of pluriversality cannot provide an account of whether there are views, practices and modes of engagement that should not be allowed in discussion. Nor can it rule out, as illegitimate, views, values, practices or policies that, despite emerging from discussion, may nonetheless go on to oppress others. It is here that pluriversality as a value enters**. Pluriversality** as a value suggests that practices, worldviews, values or policies are legitimate only if they remain compatible with the existence of other worlds. In this sense, pluriversality sets a standard of legitimacy that **would judge as morally wrong any** worldview, value or **practice that** does not accept the existence of, or that **works to shut down, other worlds.** That is not necessarily to say, though, that those holding such views ought to be excluded from dialogue. There is a tension, then, between the two aspects of pluriversality. Giving ultimate priority to one aspect cannot solve this tension. Without any reflection on its emergence from pluriversal dialogue, the substantive value of pluriversality would become a new abstract, already-universal design and would undermine all commitment to taking seriously as producers of knowledge those that are marginalised. Without the substantive value, there is no way of identifying why a dialogue that takes seriously multiple cosmovisions is a morally good thing. Nor would there be any way of casting any judgment on or identifying as morally wrong certain visions – racist visions, sexist visions, visions that advocate a form of modernity that inevitably reproduces coloniality. Both aspects of pluriversality must remain, and decolonial global ethics must find ways of navigating (if not resolving) any tension between them. It will be for pluriversal dialogue to find ways of navigating this potentially irresolvable tension. To offer some ideas to any such discussion, it is worth noting that the substantive value of pluriversality has emerged, in practice, through pluriversal exchanges in indigenous, peasant (Martínez-Torres and Rosset 2014), feminist (Leinius 2014) and World Social Forum praxis (Conway and Singh 2011). Having emerged as an abstract value through concrete, inter-cultural dialogue, it can, in turn, retrospectively account for why it is that such dialogue is, normatively speaking, a good thing. One might also note that the abstract value of a world in which other worlds are possible does not give rise immediately to concrete values, practices, policies and attitudes. Understanding what kind of practices, policies and modes of behaving and living enable other worlds to exist, and fostering the kind of respect for other worlds that such practices and ways of living may require, requires pluriversal dialogue, for it is through such exchanges that it will become apparent that certain demands and ways of living can and do result in the oppression of others. Both aspects of pluriversality can thus be mutually enriching in practice, despite the potential for tension between them. Whilst there is not room to introduce them in depth here, any readers inclined to think that this tension makes decolonial ethics unworkable, hopelessly idealistic and of no use **in the ‘real world’** would be advised to explore the practices of the social movements that navigate these tensions. Related to this difference between the two aspects of pluriversality are tensions between decoloniality as an option and decoloniality as an imperative. For Mignolo, there will be no place for one option to pretend to be the option. The decolonial option is not aiming to be the one. It is just an option that, beyond asserting itself as such, makes clear that all the rest are also options. (2011, 21) Similarly, what we put on the table is an option to be embraced by all those who find in the option(s) a response to his or her concern and who will actively engage, politically and epistemically, to advance projects of epistemic and subjective decolonisation and in building communal futures. (2011, xxvii) This weaker version of decoloniality appears not to rule out, as incompatible with decolonial global ethics, other visions. ‘Western civilization’ would then, Mignolo (2011, 176) suggests, ‘merely be one among many options, and not the one guide to rule the many.’ The decolonial option serves to add another option to the table. It does not necessarily reject Western modernity, liberal cosmopolitanism or other positions, provided that they, too, present themselves only as an option. When understanding pluriversality in terms of its procedural aspect, this makes perfect sense. It would be wrong to set out, in advance, one option as an imperative, as one we ought to follow, albeit in different ways. The worry with this weaker version, however, is that it risks ‘losing the ability for critique’ (Alcoff 2012, 6) and becoming a relativism of anything goes. For Grosfoguel (2012, 101), **by contrast, pluriversality is not ‘a relativism of anything goes’.** Similarly, for Dussel (2012, 19), a decolonial perspective does ‘not presuppose the illusion of a non-existent symmetry between cultures’. Instead, it acknowledges that some cultures, cosmovisions and livelihoods are systematically threatened by others and cannot survive in the face of cosmovisions and lifestyles that are inextricably tied to the ceaseless extraction of resources, the dispossession of people and poor working conditions. These perspectives follow when the substantive value of pluriversality is invoked. If the practices, institutions and lifestyles that we associate with modernity continue to depend upon and be constituted by coloniality, then these are not compatible with a world in which other worlds fit. It is for this reason that Dussel suggests that decolonial liberation is ‘impossible for capitalism’ and must not accept the colonial matrix of power ‘as a whole’ (Dussel 2013, 138). Though Mignolo primarily presents decoloniality as an option, at other times he suggests that ‘pluriversal futures … are only possible if the reign of economic capitalism ends’, on the basis that economic capitalism provides space only for practices that can be turned into, or do not obstruct, profits, and hence does not allow different worlds to exist on equal terms (Mignolo 2011, 292). This article is not the place to analyse the validity of Mignolo and Dussel’s accounts of capitalism. The point is to suggest that decoloniality should be considered an **imperative**, and not just an option to be placed on the table. So understood, decolonial global ethics **goes beyond a relativism of anything goes. Any option that inevitably depends upon the systematic destruction of other words would violate the principle of a world in which many worlds fit.** Decoloniality, and its central value – pluriversality – invoke stringent demands that rule out a number of worlds, practices and lifestyles. It identifies as wrong a world of economic capitalism if and insofar as it inevitably depends on, and cannot be reformed to prevent, the destruction of other worlds. It identifies as wrong practices of resource extraction, if and insofar as they destroy the livelihoods of peasant and indigenous peoples. It identifies as wrong highly polluting lifestyles, if and insofar as they lead to the destruction of the lives and cosmovisions of those who are dispossessed and displaced as a result of environmental change. **It means, finally, that Western civilization as we know it cannot be one legitimate option among many if and insofar as it is constituted through, and cannot be separated from, coloniality**. If decolonial global ethics is to unpick the colonial matrix of power and liberate people (s) from domination, it must be an imperative. It must be understood, as it is by Mignolo (2011, 23) in one of his stronger statements, as a project ‘which all contending options would have to accept’. **This does not mean that decoloniality and pluriversality offer a singular and rigid global design**. A pluriversal world is one in which multiple options are possible – a world in which many worlds can co-exist. Whilst other options would be circumscribed insofar as they would have to accept the decolonial imperative of working towards a pluriversal world, this still leaves room for many options, many possible lives, livelihoods and cosmovisions. Only those worlds that **involve, inextricably**, the continued domination of others are judged as wrong (though it may well be the case that such views should not be excluded from dialogue, given that dialogue itself may help enrich the kind of mutual respect that would lead to the abandonment of such views). Far from invoking a relativism of anything goes, this principle is a demanding one, with radical implications for global social structures and ways of living. The building of a pluriverse is and must be an open-ended project, fed by dialogues amongst actors from across the world. Moreover, the demand of a pluriverse may be impossible to meet fully; in an interconnected world, it may be impossible to ensure that it is not the case that the actions of some constrain the worlds of others. This does not mean, however, that some worlds, practices, livelihoods, lifestyles and institutional designs are not more compatible with a pluriverse than others. Recognising interconnectedness – and the long history of interconnectedness – only increases the importance of striving for a pluriversal world in an attempt to build a world free from the domination and destruction of the colonial matrix of power. Decolonial theory makes a distinctive and valuable contribution to global ethics. It begins with an analysis of coloniality as the inextricable darker side of modernity. In reflecting on what it would mean to decolonise, decolonial theory offers a fundamentally global ethics that is distinct from individualistic and universalistic cosmopolitan theory. It begins with those perspectives threatened by a colonial matrix of power, and proposes inter-cultural dialogue across diverse cosmovisions. In so doing, it refuses to specify, in advance, what is of fundamental moral significance. Finally, it embraces pluriversality. Plurversality refers, on the one hand, to a way of constructing values. A value is pluriversal if, rather than being set up as an abstract and already-universal value, it is constructed through dialogue across multiple cosmovisions. Pluriversality also refers to a value of a world in which many words fit. Pluriversality thus offers an account of both a global process through which global values can legitimately be formed, and a value that can be used to judge particular practices, policies, processes or social structures. Pluriversality as a value is demanding and judges as morally wrong practices and social structures that inevitably dispossess others. But it is not equivalent to those universal, global designs central to the colonial matrix of power. It is not equivalent, in part, because it embraces radical difference and **seeks to multiply options,** rather than close them down. It also differs in that it has emerged from, and can only be fleshed out through, a process of pluriversal exchange. Decolonial theory has been constructed alongside and through social movement practice. The above presentation of the value of pluriversality, and of the distinctive features of decolonial theory more broadly, has only been possible in light of the work of peasant, indigenous, feminist and World Social Forum activists contesting various aspects of the colonial matrix of power. Taking decolonial global ethics seriously opens avenues for further work judging whether, how, and why given practices, policies, processes and structures are compatible with pluriversality in both senses of the term. If this article encourages global ethicists to explore further these questions, then it would have played its small part in contributing to the construction of an ethical framework that can take seriously and challenge the legacy of colonial rule.

#### Prefer

#### [1] Performativity: They presuppose that their epistemology will be valued which means contestation proves our standard is a prerequisite to all evaluation

#### [2] Survival: Centering decolonization strategies is an irreducible survival that shapes accessibility. To ensure that debate remains a space safe for all – the judge has a proximal obligation to ensure inaccessible practices don’t proliferate. Accessibility is a voting issue since all neg arguments presuppose that people feel safe in this space to respond to them.

Reddy 16 - Sujani K. Reddy, Abolition: A Journal of Insurgent Politics, October 11th, 2016 “We Don’t Need No Education: Deschooling as an Abolitionist Practice” [https://abolitionjournal.org/dont-need-no-education/] Accessed 8/17/19 SAO

My essay has, in some sense, now reached a point of no return. **Centering indigenous sovereignty undoes the project of capitalist imperialism** as it has taken shape through the white settler colonial nation-state. And yet it is at this very point that the project of undoing this unholy alliance begins to unravel in my mind. This unraveling has less to do with acquiescence to a system whose goal is to debt us to death, and more to do with being tired of focusing on already existing forms of dominant power in a way that reinforces them. This is again me butting my head up against a wall where critique can be a form of complicity. Lest this lead down a road of despair, I want to first recognize that for me, what we call Ethnic Studies did not actually start with the student led social movements at the dawn of what I have been calling the post–civil rights United States. To start there is to center educational institutions as the beginning and end of our horizon. Instead, I want to remember that inasmuch as Ethnic Studies bears a relationship to the long histories of our communities, our cultures, and our ways of knowing, it has its roots in practices that were and are antithetical to the institutions of capitalist imperialism. It is in the ongoing struggle to maintain indigenous epistemologies and cosmologies; it is with the enslaved who taught themselves to read against the master’s will; it is with the immigrants who were excluded and detained and who carved their voices into the walls of their holding cells; it is with the imprisoned whose quest for knowledge is self-led and oriented toward collective liberation; it is with the movements for migrant rights that work to link their struggle to ones for indigenous sovereignty. This list is obviously not exhaustive, but just a beginning**, a way to think about who we understand as having knowledge, and how we come to learn not simply skills that will lead to resources within a capitalist system but also ways of knowing that are inherently oppositional to that system.** The question of ways of knowing is critical. Following the insights of Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, while specifc to the context of Nishnaabeg intelligence, also allows me to see how the unraveling of my mind is perhaps also a way out of having been schooled in this system, and into new epistemologies.9 This, then, is an attempt to reframe what we can understand as resources, and re-vision ourselves as having access to an abundance. It is also to recognize that efforts to de-school, while not always going under this particular moniker, are and have been ongoing. But what about those of us who remain, in some way or other, working within the system as such? Here I want to turn to our capacity to practice small acts of marronage. In keeping with the proposition itself, I will proceed by being more suggestive than comprehensive or proscriptive as I refect on how the practice of Ethnic Studies evolved for me and a small group of students at my last job. These were young people whom I had worked with over multiple semesters and years, both inside the classroom and outside as an advisor and fellow activist in local struggles around migrant justice and against mass criminalization. We were in a setting where institutional resources were available for “service learning.” The college encouraged collaboration between faculty, students, and underserved communities who were not, until now, under its purview. It is important to recognize how this is a neoliberal manifestation of noblesse oblige for the ways in which it privatizes the distribution of resources and services that were once part of the purview of the state. Given this context, my student collaborators and I slowly but surely came to understand that the most meaningful forms of action for us came to be the ones that went under the radar—the ones that were sideways and slanted and drew upon the undercommons as so powerfully articulated by Harney and Moten. We found ways to be in the institution but not of it, to not subordinate ourselves to its forms of recognition but instead **to employ its resources in ways that were not legible or reducible to its designs** or demands. We were not poster children; we were poachers. Thus, I have already said too much and must leave the rest purposefully vague because publicity is precisely not the point. The question of whether or not we de-schooled Ethnic Studies is open. So too is the question of how the undercommons relates to visions of abolition. What I want to leave you with, at this juncture, is simply a practice of diversity that is not a demand for inclusion so much as it is a call to diversity our tactics—as a strategy for survival.

#### [3] Solidarity: Our standard minimizes battle fatigue

Brady 17 - Janelle Brady, University of Toronto, Canadian Journal for New Scholars in Education, May 29th, 2017 “Education for whom? Exploring systems of oppression and domination” [https://journalhosting.ucalgary.ca/index.php/cjnse/article/view/30801] Accessed 8/28/19 SAO brackets in original text

Knowledge systems and ways of knowing are rooted in people’s social locatedness and help them to understand certain phenomena. Alcoff (2007), again drawing on Code’s work, asserted that there are epistemic advantages and disadvantages to ways of knowing and knowledge systems. In relation to the epistemology of ignorance of objectivity, those whose knowledges are validated and legitimized are part of the dominant group, whereas those whose knowledges are disenfranchised are part of the oppressed group. According to Dei (2014), knowledge is based on its historical, as well as ancestral and spiritual underpinnings, and cannot be pinpointed to one contextual moment. Epistemological advantages or disadvantages may play out in education when educators or students become ascribed knowers in particular contexts. One might be the “South Asian Food expert” or the “Indigenous history expert,” and they may experience some level of epistemological advantage in knowing; however, **their knowledge is still Othered and compartmentalized** into particular moments in time and removed from history. In an educational context, Othering people’s knowledges, histories, and identities to become stagnant points in history or single stories takes the onus away from school administrators and curriculum developers whose responsibility is to delve into South Asian history beyond samosas and Indigenous history beyond Pow wows. This is because the epistemologically advantaged become responsible for sharing their knowledge in educational contexts. However, their knowledge is not solely contextualized to that particular moment in time, but deeply entrenched in history and implicated by the history of others. Questions in the educational context can be asked about why South Asians were denied entry into Canada through racist immigration policies (Ralston, 1999; Thobani, 2007) or why and how Indigenous residential schooling, forced assimilation, the building of pipelines and the like continue to affect Indigenous communities to this very day (Coulthard, 2014). The contextual experts carry the burden for the ignorant who dominate, thus reinforcing the idea of “sharing their subjective experiences.” As Lorde (1984) stated, People [of colour] are expected to educate white people as to our humanity. Women are expected to educate men. Lesbians and gay men are expected to educate the heterosexual world. The **oppressors** maintain their position and **evade responsibility** for their own actions. (p. 115) Thus, it becomes the work of the oppressed to become educators to share their stories and their subjective histories and realities for the dominant group, when the dominant group deems it appropriate to do so. The **oppressed become the bearers of the oppressor’s ignorance** while also living through their own oppression. It is important to be critical of such dynamics so that people of colour do not bear all of the responsibility for the privileged to learn and unlearn about their privilege.

#### [4] Using extinction as a motivation for action obfuscates colonialism and papers over structural violence (All Countries)

Mitchell 17 - Audra Mitchell, Worldly, September 27, 2017“Decolonizing against extinction part II: Extinction is not a metaphor – it is literally genocide” [https://worldlyir.wordpress.com/category/colonisation-and-settler-colonialism/] Accessed 10/19/18 SAO

Extinction is not a metaphor… Extinction has become an emblem of Western, and white-dominated, fears about ‘the end of the(ir) world’. This scientific term is saturated with emotional potency, stretched and contorted to embody almost any nightmare, from climate change to asteroid strikes. In academic and public contexts alike, it is regularly interchanged with other terms and concepts – for instance, ‘species death’, global warming or ecological collapse. Diffused into sublime scales – mass extinctions measured in millions of (Gregorian calendar) years, a planet totalized by the threat of nuclear destruction – ‘extinction’ has become an empty superlative, one that that gestures to an abstract form of unthinkability. It teases Western subjects with images of generalized demise that might, if it gets bad enough, even threaten us, or the figure of ‘humanity’ that we enshrine as a universal. This figure of ‘humanity’, derived from Western European enlightenment ideals, emphasizes individual, autonomous actors who are fully integrated into the global market system; who are responsible citizens of nation-states; who conform to Western ideas of health and well-being; who partake of ‘culture’; who participate in democratic state-based politics; who refrain from physical violence; and who manage their ‘resources’ responsibly (Mitchell 2014). Oddly, exposure to the fear of extinction contributes to the formation and bolstering of contemporary Western subjects. Contemplating the sublime destruction of ‘humanity’ offers the thrill of abjection: the perverse pleasure derived from exposure to something by which one is revolted. Claire Colebrook detects this thrill-seeking impulse in the profusion of Western blockbuster films and TV shows that imagine and envision the destruction of earth, or at least of ‘humanity’. It also throbs through a flurry of recent best-selling books – both fiction and speculative non-fiction (see Oreskes and Conway 2014; Newitz 2013; Weisman 2008). In a forthcoming intervention, Noah Theriault and I (2018) argue that these imaginaries are a form of porn that normalizes the profound violences driving extinction, while cocooning its viewers in the secure space of the voyeur. Certainly, there are many Western scientists, conservationists and policy-makers who are genuinely committed to stopping the extinction of others, perhaps out of fear for their own futures. Yet extinction is not quite real for Western, and especially white, subjects; it is a fantasy of negation that evokes thrill, melancholy, anger and existential purpose. It is a metaphor that expresses the destructive desires of these beings, and the negativity against which we define our subjectivity. But extinction is not a metaphor: it is a very real expression of violence that systematically destroys particular beings, worlds, life forms and the relations that enable them to flourish. These are real, unique beings, worlds and relations – as well as somebody’s family, Ancestors, siblings, future generations – who are violently destroyed. Extinction can only be used unironically as a metaphor by people who have never been threatened with it, told it is their inevitable fate, or lost their relatives and Ancestors to it – and who assume that they probably never will. This argument is directly inspired by the call to arms issued in 2012 by Eve Tuck and Wayne K. Yang and more recently by Cutcha Risling-Baldy. The first, seminal piece demonstrates how settler cultures use the violence of metaphorical abstraction to excuse themselves from the real work of decolonization: ensuring that land and power is in Indigenous hands. Risling-Baldy’s brilliant follow-up extends this logic to explain how First People like Coyote have been reduced to metaphors through settler appropriation. In both cases, engagement with Indigenous peoples and their relations masks moves to innocence: acts that make it appear as if settlers are engaging in decolonization, while in fact we are consolidating the power structures that privilege us. In this series, want to show how Western, and white-dominated, discourses on ‘extinction’ appear to address the systematic destruction of peoples and other beings while enacting moves to innocence that mask their culpability and perpetuate structures of violence. As I argued in Part I of this series, extinction is an expression of colonial violence. As such, it needs to be addressed through direct decolonization, including the dismantling of settler colonial structures of violence, and the resurgence of Indigenous worlds. Following Tuck, Yang and Risling-Baldy’s lead, I want to show how and why the violences that drive extinction have come to be invisible within mainstream discourses. Salient amongst these is the practice of genocide against Indigenous peoples other than humans. …it is literally genocide. What Western science calls ‘extinction’ is not an unfortunate, unintended consequence of desirable ‘human’ activities. It is an embodiment of particular patterns of structural violence that disproportionately affect specific racialized groups. In some cases, ‘extinction’ is directly, deliberately and systematically inflicted in order to create space for aggressors, including settler states. For this reason, it has rightly been framed as an aspect or tool of colonial genocides against Indigenous human peoples. Indeed, many theorists have shown that the ‘extirpation’ of life forms (their total removal from a particular place) is an instrument for enacting genocide upon Indigenous humans (see Mazis 2008; Laduke 1999; Stannard 1994). Specifically, the removal of key sources of food, clothing and other basic materials makes survival on the land impossible for the people targeted.

#### Advocacy text: I’ll defend that the appropriation of outer space by private entities is unjust. I am not role playing the state, just stating the current state of affairs is unjust.

#### [1] Privatizing land violently enforces western reductionist epistemologies over alternative relational views of nature

NoiseCat 17 - Julian Brave NoiseCat, The Guardian, March 27th, 2017 “The western idea of private property is flawed. Indigenous peoples have it right” [https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/mar/27/western-idea-private-property-flawed-indigenous-peoples-have-it-right] Accessed 3/14/22 SAO

We live in a world dominated by the principle of private property. Once indigenous people were dispossessed of their lands, the land was surveyed, subdivided and sold to the highest bidder. From high above, continents now appear as an endless property patchwork of green and yellow farms, beige suburban homes and metallic gray city blocks stretching from sea to shining sea. The central logic of this regime is productivity, and indeed it has been monstrously productive. In tandem with the industrial revolution, the fruits of billions of acres of dispossessed and parceled indigenous land across the Americas, Africa, Asia, Ireland and Australia enabled two English-speaking empires – first the British and then the American – to rise to . The latter remains the most productive economy in the world. **Property** also **embodies and upholds a set of values and relationships to land.** It propagates a utopian vision called the American Dream, wherein hard work, land and a home are platform for boundless opportunity – or at least escape – from capital domination. **It separates humanity from all other animals and cements** man’s **mastery over the natural world and all living things**. While property has transformed the world, its flaws have never been more apparent. Open land on the frontier, if it ever actually existed for the common man’s taking, is long gone. Homeownership no longer provides the economic security it once did, and appears out of reach for younger generations. The richest 1% holds more wealth than the rest of the world combined. At the same time, environmental degradation and climate change proceed at a terrifying pace. Our capitalist property regime and economic system have succeeded at producing remarkable surplus. But the benefits of this system too often flow to a small fraction of the population, while land, water, air and people pay the long-term price. Prior generations responded to similar crises by turning to communism. But today, Marx, Lenin and Mao no longer offer a scythe sharp enough to fell the stalks of capitalism. Another, more cutting-edge possibility is to heed the diverse indigenous voices displaced and drowned out by imperialism. From Standing Rock to Queensland, colonized and **indigenous people are demanding new relationships** to water that sustains the life and land which provides for the people. This approach entails returning lands and resources to indigenous control and rethinking our relationship to the environment by recognizing and protecting indigenous values and the rights of nature through the law. **While indigenous values, beliefs and practices are as diverse as indigenous people themselves, they find common roots in a relationship to land and water radically different from the notion of property**. For indigenous people, land and water are regarded as sacred, living relatives, ancestors, places of origin or any combination of the above. My own, Tsq’escenemc Secwepemc people, for example, express these views daily through our words and place names. Both the word Secwepemc, which is the name of our nation, and Tsq’escenemc, the name of our community, contain the suffix emc, which has multiple uses and translations, including person, the people, land, ground or soil, and even to milk or to nurse. Versions of this suffix, which are common to all Salish languages, derive from the proto-Salish word tmícw, which means world, dirt, nature, earth, land and spirit in many Salish languages. Linguistic models suggest that all Salish-speaking peoples, whose homelands span parts of Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana and British Columbia, shared a common ancestral language between 3,000 and 6,000 years ago. Ingrained in each Salish community then is the idea – even older than our indigenous languages – that the people are of the land and the land is of the people. These kindred spirits are alive and inseparable. **Indigenous epistemologies were all but eliminated by colonization. British and American empires dispossessed indigenous people of their lands in the name of property and productivity**. Many indigenous children were sent to church and government schools where their languages and cultures were literally beaten out of them. Despite this brutal and enduring history, indigenous people today stand on the frontlines of global movements fighting for a more just relationship between humanity and the land. One promising precedent on this path to a post-imperial future has emerged in Aotearoa/New Zealand, where the Whanganui Maori iwi just won a 140-year legal battle to recognize that their ancestral Whanganui river has legal rights equal to a human being. The Whanganui settlement, which was signed by the Whanganui iwi in 2014 and enacted into law by New Zealand parliament last week, established two guardians to act on behalf of the river, one from the crown and one from the iwi. In addition to legal recognition of the personhood of the Whanganui river, the settlement provided financial redress to the iwi of NZ$80m, and an additional NZ$1m contribution to establish the legal framework for the river. Less than a week after the legislation went into effect, India’s Uttarakhand high court cited the Whanganui decision when it ruled that the Ganges and Yamuna rivers have the legal status of a person. While the implications and effects of these legal experiments are yet to be seen, these are potentially revolutionary precedents that offer a path forward to redefine relationships between governments, indigenous peoples and the land in the 21st century. At their core, these decisions recognize what indigenous people have believed all along: that land and water are sacred, living relatives and ancestors whose well-being humanity depends upon for our continued health and existence upon this earth. Between the productivity of property and the recognition of indigenous rights and the rights of nature, there lies the potential for a more just future for the land, the water and their human relations.

#### [2] Space Appropriation by private entities will reinforce terrestrial inequalities

Weeks 12 - Edythe Weeks, lecturer for the Ethnic Studies Program at Northern Arizona University, 2012 “Outer Space Development, International Relations and Space Law: A Method for Elucidating Seeds” [https://www.academia.edu/33295335/Outer\_Space\_Development\_International\_Relations\_and\_Space\_Law\_A\_Method\_for\_Elucidating\_Seeds] Accessed 3/14/22 SAO

It is the eve of outer space development, but few people are aware of this. In the absence of awareness, people cannot prepare for the opportunities that will arise; and so the vast wealth likely to flow to Earth from outer space will cause **ever-greater inequality and instability** in our already unequal and unstable world. This book is a call to educators to factor equality and diversity into the process of outer space development by creating a widespread movement to teach outer space development studies to all students, especially those who study social and behavioral sciences. In calling for this, I am also putting out a call to visionary thinkers to increase public awareness that outer space is already in the process of being developed. My objective is to provide a pedagogical approach aimed at mending the knowledge gap. If we fail in this objective, we are more likely than ever before to witness ever-widening gaps of social and financial inequality. The first question that will arise as we embark on this process, of course, will be: Why Outer Space Development? People often ask where the money will come from to develop outer space. Platinum-group metals such as iridium and osmium, and various other valuable untapped natural resources, have been discovered in abundant quantities and **are likely to be mined by companies**. The discovery of natural resources has sparked development projects in the past. These historical patterns of human behavior are occurring again today, as companies speed up the process of private spaceship development. A myriad of **space laws and policies are already in place to support space commercialization**. Recently, the 2010 NASA Authorization Act and various other laws and policies initiated by the U.S. government have placed on the agenda plans to build advanced space transportation systems; to privatize spacecraft development; to create commercial space habitats, space stations, and space settlements; to initiate commercial space mining; to investigate spacecraft trajectory optimization for landing on near-Earth asteroids; to engage in commercial spaceport construction and interstellar-interplanetary-international telecommunications; and to launch space exploration missions to near-Earth asteroids, the Moon, Mars, and Mars’s moons. U.S. initiatives have in the past been mirrored by the international community, and we can expect to see similar patterns arising on a global scale—indeed, as this book will demonstrate, they already are. The global community is experiencing economic recession, natural disasters, lack of opportunity, employment anxiety, failing K-12 programs, widening inequality gaps, uprisings, revolutions, revolts, unmet educational goals, and a general failure to uplift, inspire, and provide meaningful opportunities for significant portions of our population. In the United States of America, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan failed to jumpstart the economy; the Dow Jones failed; Wall Street failed; millions of working people lost their houses to foreclosure; tent communities and homeless populations are on the increase; many people are experiencing depression, anxiety, career anxiety; we see alarming rates of people dropping out of high school and college; and there is a general lack of opportunities, along with high rates of job loss. People need something that will allow them to focus anew their talents, energies, abilities, and gifts, and use this bleak climate as an opportunity for positive change. Outer space development is emerging as an answer to this state of crisis. The question is: To whom will the benefits accrue? Many strategic decisions have already been taken regarding space development of which the global general public is unaware. Once legal rights to space resources are granted, **only those with the capital to take advantage of new laws and policies will be in a position to profit from the new space industries**. Only those who are in a position to “know” about outer space development will be in position to take advantage of the opportunities. It is important to remember that the global general public has for several decades being paying the start-up costs for space exploration research, science, and technology. It’s not too late to factor in equality before an infrastructure of **inequality is forever with us** as we venture to establish the ~~final frontier~~.