# 1NC

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#### The 1AC is a drive for the wholly recognizable sovereign native subject through trauma politics that justifies antiblackness and violence against those rendered non-recognizable by whiteness

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Depressingly, if we were to historicize “Native debate,” we would have to begin with a litany of non-Native debaters reading “Give Back the Land,” offering sovereignty as a solution to a tragic history of genocide that relegates Native people to phobic/phillic objects of the past whose futures are in the hands of those Settlers who bravely dare to talk about them. The terrain in which everyone can become Native—or at least become an advocate for Natives—is a cleared landscape produced by genocide but also, significantly, produced by antiblack slavery.[2] This history of non-Native debaters’ representations of sovereignty, land repatriation, and treaty rights as the only solution to genocide also reaches into the present. What is most disturbing to me about this ongoing history is that we have yet to tie virtually any debate round to actual, material land repatriation, sovereign gains, or the upholding of treaty rights. These material gains involve labor from Native people organizing at the grassroots level, not an academic labor from Settlers. Debate arguments do not facilitate sovereign benefits for Native peoples. Further, the struggle for sovereignty itself does not overcome or solve genocide. The removal of the Hunkpapa Lakota Oyate and their relatives at the Oceti Sakowin camp at Standing Rock should be proof enough of this—sovereignty as a politic is often met with, rather than resolving, genocidal violence. Non-Black Native people in debate have performed a similar land-based politic. Native debate has become so associated with words like “land,” “sovereignty,” “space,” “place,” “treaty rights,” and others, that it is almost impossible to theorize Native debate absent sovereignty as a grammar that marks our existence. So both non-Native debaters (who claim to advocate for Native peoples’ sovereignty) and Native debaters (who claim to advocate for something that usually falls into the grammar of sovereignty) are talking in essentially the same register, with incredibly limited slippage towards genocide as a vector of violence. And, for Native people, like non-Natives, debate arguments do not and cannot facilitate the material elements of decolonization that these land-based arguments frequently rely upon.[3] Sovereign gains don’t happen in debate rounds, but for some reason the (mis)recognition of Native enunciation as sovereignty persists, in that the word “land” harkens to Native debate in almost every instance, that almost every debate involving Native people reading perceptibly “Native” arguments includes a discussion of “treaties” or “sovereignty” or “land-based pedagogy” or “spatiality.” What other reason could this be than a structure of desire around recognition from the Settler/Master? If we really follow the history of how “Nativeness” has been misrepresented in debate by Settlers, it becomes clear that much of contemporary Native debate, strangely (or as I argue, not so strangely), mimics these misrepresentations. Of course, debate is an economy of (mis)recognition. That “Native” becomes coextensive with “land” in debate is no accident. It is an enunciation that has been evoked prior to the involvement of any Native debaters or coaches. And it is reiterated by non-Black Native debaters with increasing certainty about the truthiness of Native relationships to the land. Systematically absent from this conversation, of course, is a discussion of genocide. I have gestured above towards the ways that the desire for recognition from the Settler/Master motivates this conceptual move towards the register of sovereignty. As Wilderson writes, “The crowding out, or disavowal, of the genocide modality [by the sovereign modality] allows the Settler/’Savage’ struggle to appear as a conflict rather than as an antagonism. This has therapeutic value for both the ‘Savage’ and the Settler: the mind can grasp the fight, conceptually put it into words. To say, ‘You stole my land and pilfered and appropriated my culture’ and then produce books, articles, and films that travel back and forth along the vectors of those conceptually coherent accusations is less threatening to the integrity of the ego, than to say, ‘You culled me down from 19 million to 250,000.’”[4] This gesture towards conceptual coherence and therapeutic value is why there is a celebrated and ongoing association between “land” and “Native” in both non-Native argumentation and in arguments made by Native people. It is why we cannot theorize about Native debate absent the contingent register of sovereignty. I am hesitant to claim that sovereignty should be completely abandoned as an analytic for obvious reasons—I think Wilderson also gives credit to indigenous conceptions of sovereignty, what it unseats, and how it operates, while still articulating a critique of sovereignty unrivaled by much of Native studies. I am not interested in suggesting that all Native people ignore our peoples’ land relationships or histories of broken treaties as politic throughout the United States or the world. I agree with Qwo-Li Driskill’s suggestion, alongside similar ones from other Native theorists, that sovereignty must be re-theorized significantly rather than echoing the propertied enterprise that confers legibility to state formations. Regardless of my reluctance to disavow the potential for sovereignty as a politic outside debate rounds, I think it is obvious that sovereignty in its terms in debate—as a recognized and fundamentally “Native” utterance—is genocidal and anti-Black. Broadly, my argument is that genocide is an undertheorized arm of an antagonism that halfway positions Native people, and that the basis of such undertheorization is the desire to be (mis)recognized as nearly-Human by the Settler. This claim invites an investigation of the context of (mis)recognition in debate and what is particular about debate itself with regard to Wilderson’s theory of position. Debate is inevitably a space of recognition, coherence, and transparency. It seeks to uncover, make clear, and expand consciousness more than it promises to occlude, hide, or make incoherent. This condition of debate is significant not because that makes it different from the rest of the academy, or the rest of civil society, but because it offers a specific situation from which to apply the critique of recognition. In the age of academic identity politics, the identification of the self as a subject of trauma has emerged as the primary locus of (recognizable) enunciation. Many who are familiar with Eve Tuck’s work have read her critical analysis on the academy’s demand for damage-centered narratives and the kinds of traumatized neoliberal subjectivity they produce—as those who are continually indebted to a parasitic regime of recognition. When this critique is applied in debate, it frequently targets identity-politics models of intervention in academia which posit the traumatized subject as a primary locus of critique. For example, many of the ableism debates I’ve judged contained arguments locked entirely in this register—where the traumatized subject is itself offered as a structural analytic in a manner that is always parasitic on Blackness. Teams who read arguments that they refer to as “disability pessimism” and describe disability as a form of “ontological death” often go on to claim that no change has come from reading critical arguments in debate and that we should be pessimistic about the ability for debate to become more inclusive of disabled people. This is, at best, an appropriation of Afropessimism based on a reductive reading of Black debate. Significantly, the misrecognition of Black debate that is rearticulated through “disability pessimism” also includes the secondary claim that critical argumentation has not produced shifts in the institutional schema of debate. But “disability pessimism” would not exist without Black debate. You can’t bite Afropessimism and then disavow the intellectual labor of Black people as the condition of possibility for your argument. Worse still, “things have never changed in debate for disabled people,” is not an advocacy. It is just a recognized enunciation of the trauma of degraded subjectivity. In this example, the degraded subject masquerades trauma as analysis while occluding structural phenomena. They merely say, “The world is a horrible and traumatizing place for me, therefore listen to me reiterate my trauma.” And more often than not, as Eve Tuck writes, “All we are left with is the damage.”[5] These so-called interventions posited by identity politicians are ineffective in that they fail to provide a solution to a problem that they have misidentified because of their own egoistic (contingent) investments. In other words, identity politics doesn’t work because it is antiblack. Identity politics is only interested in iterating a degraded subject as fundamentally innocent of violence, ethical, and on the right side of history at all times, because of that person’s experience of a (contingent, as opposed to gratuitous) violence. Identity politics that have pushed us all to identify ourselves based on our traumas accrue, for Native people, in intra-communal policing strategies that use trauma as a site of authenticity—and authenticity as a foundational, genocidal gloss for identification. In many ways, this conversation about position begs a question of indigenous authenticity in debate—who is and is not really Native is a question fraught with centuries of historical baggage. And it carries weight in debate because the epistemic terrain of “indigenous scholarship” or “Native thought” demands a conversation about embodiment and experience as instantiations of the ontological. For Native people, the debate around authenticity is structured by a debate about blood quantum—or more accurately, blood quantum is one of the many genocidal registers through which we can understand the subject/object formation of the Native. Genocide and sovereignty are the co-constitutive registers determining Native position as being in/out of the world in the first instance. As Eve Tuck describes, those who are traumatized are seen as having truly lived. Trauma and authenticity slip between each other as discourses which authorize us to enunciate a “Native” experience, one that is apparently generalizable to experiences far beyond our own, and one that tends to be used in service of the land-based arguments about sovereignty that I have thoroughly critiqued above. The competitive space of debate exacerbates such trends. The slippage between trauma and authenticity is so real for us (perhaps because of the depth of genocide as a specter and its haunting gratuitous continuance) that it has become an easy disciplinary mechanism for creating affective investments in white racial kinship. In other words, Native people are still relying on Settler/Master regimes of recognition that can confer validation for certain (coherent) traumas. So you have a few Native people who are already insecure about whether or not we are indigenous enough, who seek to prove our authenticity by articulating it in the terms of trauma. But, under the structure I’ve described above, such trauma can only authorize our authenticity insofar as it can be made coherent to white judges in order to receive their validation and value! For many non-Black Native people in debate, this apparently justifies the slippage away from Blackness and the prioritizing of antiblack racial anxieties over an actual conversation about ontology and modernity. In other words, in an instance of identity politics, where trauma must be isolable, human, subjectified, and coherent in order to be validated as authenticity by the Settler/Master, sovereignty gets the job done in a way genocide does not. Again, it is the assumption that recognition by the Settler/Master is favorable, or even necessary, that motivates Native people’s investments in arguments about land, space, place, sovereignty, and treaties. It is also this assumption that facilitates the false move to authenticity (false in that it is only given coherence by a genocidal and antiblack apparatus of recognition). Native people have been (mis)recognized by the Settler/Master since Taino peoples were met with Columbus’ genocidal misrecognitions in 1492. Much of this (mis)recognition rests on the incoherence of genocide.

#### The valorization of resistance, survivability, and agency instrumentalizes black madness for white liberation and ignores how the black mad subject experiences asociality

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This strategy is not the only or primary way to read challenges to rac- ism and ableism. The problem exists (pace Hortense Spillers) at the level of grammar. These projects tend to have one vector: they “transform(ed) sys- tems and culture.”20 Note that transform operates as transitive where Black, disabled bodies perform the work of transformation rather than undergo the process of transformation. Yet Black, disabled bodies will not always behave as agents that transform or those who are transformed in equal mea- sure or, as noted above, with a degree of reciprocity. Allowing for more than one vector between Black, disabled bodies and the systems in which they operate clarifies the following: it is inaccurate that the only critical relation- ship between Blackness and disability (specifically, madness) is one of libera- tion from ableism. At times, Blackness exacerbates the presence of ableism, or cultural norms facilitate ableism.21 In accounting for these moments, I trouble the corollary of the logic above: namely, that whiteness withal the privilege embedded in it lacks the tools for its own liberation and must rely on Blackness to acquire its release. Here, Blackness becomes a reduced space where whiteness enacts its privilege by instrumentalizing Blackness. In this paradigm, Blackness for all its cultural complexity becomes another reac- tionary space that exists to indict whiteness, rather than a culture and sys- tem of thought all its own.22 We must consider the spaces when mere expo- sure of oppression is not only not emancipatory but can also be detrimental, where demonstration and acknowledgement of one’s various intersecting socially marginalized positions does not equal political agency. We must also consider what happens when Black cultural locations refuse whiteness as an interlocutor in favor of intraracial conversations. In short, when mad- ness is “a Black thang” (with all that evokes in terms of exclusivity and ableist objectification). I take up the question of intraracial context and conversation in the next discussion. For now, I turn to another foundational moment in the study of Blackness and disability to read in the breaks of the critical material. I con- tinue the conversation about the critical impulse of mutual constitution that looks to retrieve agentive stories of Black disabled folks as instantiations of anti-ableist radicality. Rosemarie Garland Thomson’s Extraordinary Bodies (1997) includes a chapter on physical disability in Ann Petry’s The Street, Toni Morrison’s oeuvre, and Audre Lorde’s Zami. Though Thomson’s dis- cussion does not explicitly discuss mental disability, cognitive impairment, or crazy-as-insult, I find it instructive for this conversation. Madness shad- ows each of the texts under scrutiny since the characters deviate from intra- cultural norms by being Black women who seek class ascension despite the odds (Petry) and wider American cultural norms by participating in and identifying with communities labeled deviant (and crazy) by the dsm IV (Lorde). Of course, Morrison’s characters are literally haunted by their ac- tions and kinfolk, which always forces the question of whether Morrison’s characters could be labeled crazy. It becomes useful to think about Mor- rison’s, Petry’s, and Lorde’s work (especially as part of Garland Thomson’s project) from the perspective of Octavia E. Butler: namely, that sanity is communally defined and anyone who deviates from agreed upon norms is treated as mad. The characters’ desires for themselves (and the methods they use to achieve them) exceed the racialized and gendered boundaries drawn for them. Indeed, because they also have physical disabilities, their behavior trespasses the boundaries drawn based on ability as well. Madness cannot be cleaved from these conversations. Thomson’s claims about the represen- tation of physical disability as agentive and liberatory have implications for whether madness has similar representational possibilities.23 Thomson offers that the collective project of these Black women’s writ- ings provides an antidote to white racist depictions. These powerful bodies— extraordinary, in Thomson’s lexicon—participate in a “collective project of cultural revision [that] challenges the African-American woman writer to produce a narrative of self that authenticates Black women’s oppressive history yet offers a model for transcending that history’s limitations.”24 Moreover, the primacy given to disabled women figures “reveals the shift in African-American literary representation from a modernist to a postmod- ernist mode, a change that parallels the ideological move of minority groups from assimilation to affirmation of cultural and ethnic differences.”25 While I partly agree that these representations “render oppression without rein- scribing it,”26 I hesitate to read in them the triumph that Thomson affirms. On the one hand, Thomson rightly points out that these characters do not completely represent physical deviance. On the other, they do not, as she says, “repudiate such cultural master narratives as normalcy, wholeness, and the feminine ideal.”27 I would attribute this aspect of their representation to the way that the social model of disability upon which Thomson relies does not fully account for the way madness shows up in these texts.28 The social model privileges a particular kind of mental agility and cognitive process- ing to combat the stigma and material consequences that arise as a result of ableism. In turn, the model dismisses madness as a viable subject position, ensuring that those counted as such—either by communal consensus or psy- disciplines—remain excluded from conversations about disability because they cannot logically engage. For the characters in Thomson’s study, this has the pernicious effect of erasing some of the master cultural narratives they work against: those that acknowledge their physical disability and link it to mental disability as a way to further disenfranchise and disempower them. Thomson’s work reads these figures (based on their representation of physical disabilities) as liberatory for the larger narrative and theoretical spaces of ethnic modernism. I hazard that these characters’ relationship to disability suggests an investment in internalized ableism, particularly vis- à-vis sexuality. For example, Thomson reads Ann Petry’s Mrs. Hedges, a tall, dark-skinned Black woman with avoirdupois who works as a madam, as one who refuses victimization. Important for this conversation is the way Mrs. Hedges is not only physically disfigured by burns but also read as ex- ceeding the gendered and racialized boundaries the text’s Black commu- nity (voiced through the protagonist) circumscribes for her. Her madness is not biomedically defined, but it carries psychosocial repercussions given how she is treated. Thomson bases her reading of Mrs. Hedges as liberatory on Hedges’s sexualized gaze on the main character and her profession as a madam. Yet, there is no room for Hedges to acquiesce to or enjoy the sexual- ized attention she receives from the rich white man who controls the street. The novel makes it clear that part of Hedges’s rejection of the man’s sexual advances is financial. She cannot be in bed with him literally and economi- cally. However, what the novel leaves open is that Hedges’s rejection of him is also about her own denigrated view of her sexuality.29 She is still limned as monstrous, grotesque, even if Hedges as a figure shifts the understand- ing of monstrosity. Inasmuch as Hedges’s physical disability allows her to move from one position in the economy to another more powerful one, she must rely on a chosen life of celibacy and a masculinized, monstrous ap- pearance to secure and maintain her new economic position. Her celibacy also shores up her power by keeping the madness of her disfigured, disabled, interracial sexuality in check. That is, though the disability is no longer in the background of the text, the cultural baggage of internalized ableism ap- pears in the foreground replete with eschewing sexual desire and limiting the association with traditional forms of femininity. Even if Petry’s proj- ect does—according to Thomson—pave the way for Black authors to shift from assimilation to affirmation and provide a challenge to the static rep- resentations of disabled figures in modernist texts, Mrs. Hedges’s refusal to engage in her own sexuality complicates a reading of this figure as liberatory vis-à-vis physical disability and the charges of madness that accompany her character. Reading Mrs. Hedges as agentive certainly poses challenges given the internalized ableism within Petry’s text, especially since the novel focuses on intraracial encounter. First, physical disability only liberates Mrs. Hedges from the intraracial economy of the street by providing an avenue for power. Yet, within intraracial encounter, she remains circumscribed by the discourses of madness because community members consider her mad for transgressing boundaries of race and gender. Second, the interracial encoun- ter does not allow for her agency within the critical literature. Thomson claims that Petry’s text, as well as the others, counters the limited represen- tations of disability within modernist texts. Implicitly, the logic of such a critical move—regardless of its truism—mandates that Blackness become the vehicle for (mostly white) others’ liberation from ableism in their read- ing practice. In that way, it is the presence of Blackness that shores up white liberalism by not only providing a representation of Blackness but also a complex rendering of white-centered notions of disability. Elsewhere, I have argued similarly—that we ought to attend to the way that Blackness and whiteness function in the interracial multiability en- counter. In my article on television’s Monk, I proposed that Blackness and madness cannot take up the same space within one interaction. I read the protagonist’s unnamed obsessive-compulsive disorder as a disability that “misfits” with other (usually minor) characters’ Blacknesses.30 At times, one is used for comedic fodder or erased in favor of representing the other or eclipsed as a way to demonstrate white liberalism. My article describes the relationship between these two identities as mutually constituted, but it evinces some slippage when attempting to discern why the protagonist’s disability erases the other characters’ Blackness. Since Blackness and mad- ness do not reside in the same body, the various drama-comedy scripts ter- giversate about what difference among difference can mean, often mobiliz- ing white liberalism to police disability and Blackness. Rereading my own work with an eye toward the breaks, I find that we not only lack a criti- cal vocabulary for describing Blackness and madness simultaneously, but it is also assumed that one must take priority over the other. The end result is that in this interracial encounter—whether fictionalized, theorized, or criticized—either Blackness or madness must be erased. Important for this conversation is that the multiracial, multiability encounter shifts depending on the social position of the characters. Blackness cannot and should not be marshaled as the radical space for white liberalism to mount its critique of ableism or racism. When Blackness and madness exist in the same space, multiple ways of reading should become possible, some of which eschew the possibility of radicality and others that might usher it in. The multiability interracial encounter also allows for Blackness and mad- ness to be erased when improperly thought of as agentive. Because both dis- courses are often conceptualized as unspeakable or illegible, their presence can facilitate and consolidate the power that creates abject material condi- tions. Nirmala Erevelles makes this point most forcefully: “The analytic category of disability is useful in destabilizing static notions of identity, ex- ploring intersectionality, and investigating embodiment, [yet] I argue that the effectiveness of much of feminist disability studies remains limited be- cause of its overreliance on metaphor at the expense of materiality.”31 In other words, Blackness and disability have the potential to destabilize the rhetoric of normalcy that holds them as abject, but they are curtailed in do- ing so when mislabeled as agentive. In Erevelles’s exploration of the lived conditions of war, she argues that when disability (both physical and men- tal) intersects with Black and brown bodies in the developing world or in disenfranchised communities within the developed world, their confluence indicts unchecked multinational corporate greed because it reveals the po- liticized nature of impairment. With this in mind, there can be no ableist or racist narrative available that prioritizes individualized achievement (read: overcoming) or bemoans bad luck (read: pity) because the root cause impli- cates specific governments, companies, the people who run them, and those who are complicit in them. In addition, Erevelles resists ascribing agency to the disabled people of color she discusses, perhaps because, in this version of David and Goliath, Goliath is winning. More to the point, the material conditions for celebration and agency require material resources not avail- able to everyone, and mere knowledge of one’s situation cannot be proxy for freedom from it, nor does awareness equal agency.

#### **The critical purchase of the human relies on notions of agency which the mad black are barred from – the only ethical demand is to disinvest from the human**

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Both strategies for engaging the human have merit: find the traces of what and who is used to constitute the concept and underscore the processes by which the human creates itself as superior. Recall that the mad Black is both an embodied positionality and an aesthetic intervention. As such, it hints at some common conceptual ground and useful disagreements. The mad Black cannot so simply slip into history as an aberration, nor can it so easily slip out of history as a failure. Here, the mad Black advocates a con- sistent questioning of how abjection functions, and from where it arises. It also acts as an adroit poker player. It sees the ideology of ability and raises it the possessive investment in whiteness (pace George Lipsitz), questioning how one arrives at universality if the so-called soundness of the bodymind is not the sole reason for exclusion. That is, the mad Black reveals a set of breaks to read: without a reliance on ocularity and a skepticism about lin- ear conceptions of time and narrative, it disrupts the easy alignment of dis- ability with whiteness or Blackness with degradation. Reading these breaks requires the disruption courted by Sylvia Wynter’s refusal of the category Man and broaches what Siebers termed the “conceptual horizon” marked by the ideology of ability.23 Mad Blackness calls for no less than a retooling of the terms of humanity itself. It questions the desire for ability, and the desire for whiteness. Since the Enlightenment positions madness and Blackness as a set of “ontological foils for the modern, rational, European subject,”24 the fissures reveal where, how, and with whom current ideological investments lie. Further, their undoing and unmaking requires an unmooring that reck- ons with constructs that have heretofore been unavailable. As my previous comments suggest, there exist a few cultural and social locations that allow us to question the utility of the human. Specifically, the appeal to universality and the possessive investment in whiteness cohere in one’s relationship to the nation-state. How is one defined as a citizen if madness or Blackness functions as a default disqualification? Those schol- ars working on physical disability have given a cursory nod to abjection,25 madness forces disability studies to reckon with where abjection arises and how it might be embraced.26 Taking a methodological cue from Nirmala Erevelles, who explores what it might mean to embrace disability as a part of Blackness, we need to examine abjection as a social location where Blackness and madness can powerfully defang the critical purchase of the human. It is not coincidental that much of the work on madness comes from the fields of rhetoric and composition because so many of the narratives we embrace about madness view it as a fundamental issue of communication. These scholars intervene in the sacralized understanding of madness as uncom- municative and therefore unripe for analysis in perpetuity. Madness and Blackness exert hortatory pressure on all modes of critical analysis, forcing an examination of how we place the human at the center or overlook it as the default premise.27

#### Black madness is in the position of abjection and bare life in relation to whiteness – black mad bodies are securitized against because their mere existence disrupts the privileged notion of the autonomous bodymind

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To be clear, Butler’s aesthetic intervention does not exclusively exist in the ideological spaces of syntax and punctuation. One of the rules of science fiction is that the world the author creates must abide by its own internal logic. Within the world of Fledgling, part of the internal logic is the history of the Ina people. Though Butler does not break the rule insisting on an in- ternal logic, she does not abide by the idea that the characters must be aware of the internal logic to which they abide. That is, the Gordons’ liberalism and silence and the antagonists’ hatred and genocide are two sides of the same narrative coin. They each participate in an act of historiographical revision, changing their past relationship to disability and Blackness by ex- cising them. Unlike the critical impulse that permits representational detec- tive work to recuperate Black disabled bodies and experiences, they cannot recuperate that which they do not think they have lost. They cannot treat as radical that which they considered so abject so as to not exist at all. But- ler’s text intervenes in the narrative logic that assumes the accepted stories about Ina origin and history are complete without the input of either the present or purported anomalies from the past. Ina construct the absence of Blackness and madness as a ballast of their identity ab ovo. The Gordons do not want to admit to the idea of Ina racists. They do not want to deal with the reality that Ina can be gravely mentally injured. (In point of fact, Shori’s father, Iosif, is the only Ina who acknowledges that her head injury could be part of Ina experience.) Racism and ableism exert differing pressures on Ina history and ontology. Each destabilizes the Ina’s notion of self, such that their only recourse is denial. To embrace the presence of racism in that moment would be to admit the possibility of dishonor and to more heavily court embarrassment and shame regarding Ina history or identity. To think about Ina injury, particularly amnesia, troubles the overarching paradigm they have developed for discussing their relationship to illness. Most often, they think in terms of physical disabilities, usually temporary injury that can be rectified, such as broken bones or pierced flesh. Here, Shori’s amne- sia upsets their understanding of themselves as generally sound—in rela- tion to humans superlative—in mind and body. The absence of a possibility for cure destabilizes an aspect of themselves they consider fundamental— memory as tied to their longevity and as a necessary tool for their survival. Since mutual constitution occasions the recuperation of Blackness and mad- ness, they would be absorbed in their history or origin stories but not nor- malized based on abjection. According to these Ina, they were not present to be absorbed at all. This historiographical maneuver implies that madness and Blackness have and create separate historical trajectories which, when combined with a history that insists on whiteness and ability, is destructive to their sense of self. By muddying history, Butler allows Black madness to shift one of the hallmarks of science fiction: the audacity to imagine the future. The at- tempted genocide and the rhetoric of erasure push toward creating a bare life for Shori. Agamben develops the concept of bare life to account for those who exist between zoe (mere life) and bios (good life) and whose existence is included as a part of the Western cultural landscape but occluded from visual representation or polite conversation. Moreover, those with bare lives lose their rights as citizens, and their existence is limned by their fungibil- ity. Alexander Weheliye revises this concept to think through the Middle Passage instead of the Muselmann of the Holocaust, remarking that other bodies in the Western world are also susceptible to bare lives. In Weheliye’s revision, the bare lives to which Black people become susceptible are made possible by their de facto and long-standing position of fungibility vis-à-vis the state.68 In Shori’s case, the possibility remains that bare life becomes af- fixed to her Black amnesiac body not simply by virtue of genocidal action but also because of the accepted idea that the Ina exist outside the confines of race and racialization discourses. In thinking through Shori’s Black madness as variation rather than aber- ration, the text opens the space for Shori to display certain kinds of agency, loosen the hold of a bare life. Yet because her allies have to advocate for her to be considered Ina, I am hesitant to ascribe to Shori’s Black madness an agentive quality. That is, how far away from a bare life can she be if her ex- istence must be consistently justified before their Council of Judgment, and even then not fully decided or accepted? Black madness remains a provo- cation. Even as it forms the locus for the invagination of their history and the fold of their future, it both allows for agency and forecloses it. Black madness remains a wrinkle in the linear progression of history and time because of its opposition to their dominant ideology. As a result, it cannot have anything but a vexed agency, nor can it create itself outside the confines of a bare life. Moreover, Black madness, given its loss of time (amnesia) and aversion to time (changing the narrative) shifts the possibility of recupera- tion as a form of agency. Linked as it is to a bare life, affixed in history as such, it cannot fully recuperate its past nor rewrite the history to tell its story from its perspective.

#### **The impact is antiblack ableism that justifies suffering beyond suffering under the guise of hyper/ability**

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By using historical and theoretical examples from Black Studies and Disability Studies, we show that a Black feminist disability framework is emergent and intersectional. These examples, when analyzed with such a framework in mind, are rich with unexplored connections across both disciplines. Embedded within the narratives of some of the central figures and theories of these fields are the ingredients for creating the unifying framework. For example, the excess strength and otherwise “too muchness” of Blackness is an oft-deconstructed trope in Black Studies. The myth of the strong Black woman has been critiqued in many ways, notably by a powerful range of Black feminist scholars but has rarely been examined as a form of ableism—internalized or social (Beauboeuf-Lafontant 2009; Cole and Guy-Sheftall 2009; Collins 2000, 2005; Giddings 2007; Harris-Perry 2011; Mataka 2000). The myth suggests that Black women are uniquely strong, able to endure pain, and surmount otherwise difficult obstacles because of their innate tenacity. Black women are disallowed disability and their survival is depoliticized. Survival is a form of resistance and a source of celebration, particularly in the face of the reality that, as Lucille Clifton said, “Every day something has tried to kill me and has failed” (Clifton 1993, 25). There is a productive tension in recognizing the critical connections of the celebration of survival in the context of the demands made on Black bodies to transcend all suffering (Derricotte 2010). Resilience is praised while trauma, violence, and pain are too common to actually be interrogated for very long. The logic of Black hypervisibility produces subjects that are barred from weakness—and disability in Western thought as figured through non-normative bodies is the ultimate sign of unsuitability. To counteract such notions of unsuitability, a form of strategic essentialism has been adopted that upholds internalized ableism and ultimately disallows Black suffering through embracing an identification with this presumed hyper-ability. How many of us grew up with parents who warned us of having to be twice as good as our white counterparts? Designed to fortify Black children against the profound racism that is masked in a masquerade of meritocracy, this notion of having to be “twice as good,” while often true, also marks the difficulties with discussing trauma, health disparities, and psychiatric or physical disabilities within Black communities. If one is not able to work twice as hard to keep up with the masquerade, then what value does one have to the project of Black redemption? The cultural tradition from which this adage stems has been supported by studies and corroborated with empirical evidence. Black people are more likely to be surveilled, punished, and passed over for promotion than their white counterparts in all societal institutions. Black workers must demonstrate a significantly higher level of skill than their white counterparts in order to keep their jobs despite receiving lower wages and fewer opportunities for promotion (White 2015). Black people cannot afford to be disabled when they are required to be phantasmically abled in a white supremacist society. By bringing disability studies and a Black feminist theoretical lens to address this myth, scholars are better able to explain Black people’s reluctance to identify as disabled and potentially offer new strategies for dismantling ableism within Black Studies.

#### **The alternative is a methodological and narratological mad blackness that disrupts notions of ocularity and linearity while refusing calls to radicality, agency, and solutions**

Pickens 19 – Therí:  Assistant Professor of English at Bates College. Her research focuses on Arab American and African American literatures and cultures, Disability Studies, philosophy, and literary theory, Therí Alyce Pickens, 2019, *Black Madness :: Mad Blackness*, Duke University Press, p 17-18

Considering Black cultural contexts where mental illness and cognitive dis- ability occur, the two major Western modes of interpretation—ocularity and (drawing on our earlier conversation) linear time—no longer retain the exclusive right to interpret meaning. The Black mad are, in some sense, no more. They become the mad Black. I theorize mad Black and mad Blackness as a formulation that disrupts the ocular and linear legacies of the West’s conception of space and time, respectively. To theorize the concept of the mad Black or mad Blackness opens up critical space to consider how the dis- courses of madness and Blackness not only operate in intraracial spaces but also intensify and dismantle common understandings of each other. When mad becomes a modifier for Black it carries with it the charge of excess (i.e., more Black, really Black, unapologetically Black, Blackity Black), anger, and insanity as it simultaneously functions as an intensifier for Blackness itself. In some ways, madness amplifies Blackness in this conception, pushing it to excess, but it also has the potential to dismantle it. Said potential lies precisely in the disruption of Western space and time. Sight no longer acts as the dom- inant modeof sense making. Linear progressions of time no longer capture the movement of subjects and objects through narrative. Mad Blackness fills in the gaps heretofore created by reading strategies (i.e., mutual constitution) that rely on these two Western modalities of interpretation. For instance, Octavia E. Butler’s mad Black character cleaves time from space with her very existence, such that the linear progressive narrative plane is disrupted. She also foregrounds the lie in thinking of the impeachability of sight as the dominant mode of interpretation. Her allies cannot see her illness. Their understanding based on sight—no matter its superlative quality— is impoverished. The mad Black then is not solely disruptive because of its embodiment. But also, the mad Black figure and mad Blackness stage a narratological intervention in how we analyze and tell stories about race and disability writ large. Mad Blackness describes the aesthetics of a text that refuses to adhere to ocularcentrism or linearity. In these texts—including but not lim- ited to the ones in these conversations—madness and Blackness pervade the structure of the text such that linear renderings of the narrative always do a disservice to the text and an emphasis on sight forecloses interpretive possibility. To be clear, it is not that ocularcentrism and linearity are wholly inappropriate, but rather that they are explicitly incomplete due to the influ- ence of madness and Blackness in the structure and characters of the text. As a result, mad Blackness necessarily critiques texts that denigrate madness or Blackness or both. Despite, and perhaps owing to, this disruptive quality, I would not define mad Blackness as a revolutionary force, nor would I expect mad Black figures to offer solutions. Their disruption—of interpretation, of narrative—does not require that they provide solutions, since that contrasts their suspicion of linearity and teleology, nor does it require that they be benevolent, since that often requires they be in service of those that create and maintain anti- Black ableist and sanist structures. This book, Black Madness :: Mad Black- ness, is one such example of a mad Black text. As I mentioned, the conversa- tions herein reveal critical conversations to themselves, and seek to perturb some of the foundations upon which Black studies and disability studies rest all while yoking them irrevocably together.

#### **Our mad methodology allows for the extension of radical compassion to disembodied voices that condemns Western boundaries of sanity**

Bruce 21, La Marr Jurelle Bruce earned his BA in African American Studies and English & Comparative Literature from Columbia University and his PhD in African American Studies and American Studies from Yale University. June 2021, *How to Go Mad without Losing Your Mind*, Duke University Press, p 9-11

Mad methodology seeks, follows, and rides the unruly movements of madness. It reads and hears idioms of madness: those purported rants, raves, rambles, outbursts, mumbles, stammers, slurs, gibberish sounds, and unseemly silences that defy the grammars of Reason. It historicizes and contextualizes madness as a social construction and social relation vis-à-vis Reason. It ponders the sporadic violence of madness in tandem and in tension with the structural violence of Reason. It cultivates critical ambivalence to reckon with the simultaneous harm and benefit that may accompany madness. It respects and sometimes harnesses "mad" feelings like obsession and rage as stimulus for radical thought and action. Whereas rationalism roundly discredits madpersons, mad methodology recognizes madpersons as critical theorists and decisive protagonists in struggles for liberation. To be clear, I am not suggesting that madpersons are always already agents of liberation. I am simply and assuredly acknowledging that they can be, which is a heretical admission amid antimad worlds. I propose a mad methodology that neither vilifies the madperson as evil incarnate, nor romanticizes the madperson as resistance personified, nor patronizes the madperson as helpless ward awaiting aid. Rather, mad methodology engages the complexity and variability of mad subjects. Regarding anger, the warrior poet Audre Lorde asserts that it is "loaded with information and energy." Mad methodology is rooted in the recognition that phenomenal madness, medicalized madness, and psychosocial madness, like angry madness, are all "loaded with information and energy." Mad methodology proceeds from a belief that such information can instruct black radical theory and such energy can animate black radical praxis. Most urgently, mad methodology primes us to extend radical compassion to the madpersons, queer personae, ghosts, freaks, weirdos, imaginary friends, disembodied voices, unvoiced bodies, and unReasonable others, who trespass, like stowaways or fugitives, in Reasonable modernity. Radical compassion is a will to care for, a commitment to feel with, a striving to learn from, and an openness to be vulnerable before a precarious other, though they may be drastically dissimilar to yourself. Radical compassion is not an appeal to an idyllic oneness where difference is blithely effaced. Nor is it a smug projection of oneself into the position of another, thereby displacing that other. Nor is it an invitation to walk a mile in someone else's shoes and amble, like a tourist, through their lifeworld, leaving them existentially barefoot all the while. Rather, radical compassion is an exhortation to ethically walk and sit and fight and build alongside another whose condition may be utterly unlike your own. Radical compassion works to impart care, exchange feeling, transmit understanding, embolden vulnerability, and fortify solidarity across circumstantial, sociocultural, phenomenological, and ontological chasms in the interest of mutual liberation. It persists even and especially toward beings who are the objects of contempt and condemnation from dominant value systems. It extends even and especially to those who discomfit one's own sense of propriety. Indeed, this book sometimes loiters in scenes and tarries with people who may trouble readers. I hope that this book also models the sort of radical compassion that persists through the trouble. I characterize mad methodology as a parapositivist approach insofar as it resists the hegemony of positivism. (As a philosophical doctrine, positivism stipulates that meaningful assertions about the world must come from empirical observation and interpretation to generate veritable truth. However, when engaging the phenomenal, the spiritual, the aesthetic, the affective, and the mad, we must deviate from the logics of positivism.) Mad methodology finds great inspiration in other cultural theorists' parapositivist approaches, including the Apostle Paul's account of "faith," Édouard Glissant's "poetics of relation," Avery Gordon's haunted and haunting sociology, Saidiya Hartman's "critical fabulation," Jack Halberstam's "scavenger methodology," Ann Cvetkovich's compilation of an "archive of feelings," Christina Sharpe's "wake work" and Patricia J. Williams's "ghost gathering." These thinkers study sublime, opaque, formless, subjunctive, scarce, dead, and ghostly phenomena that thwart positivist knowing. As a parapositivist approach, mad methodology does not attempt to wholly, transparently reveal madness." How could it? Madness, after all, resists intelligibility and frustrates interpretation. Conceding that I cannot fully understand the meaning of every encounter, I often precede my observations with the qualifiers maybe, it might be, and it seems. Between these covers, I madness embrace uncertainty and irresolution. I heed poet-philosopher Glissant's insistence that "the transparency of the Enlightenment is finally misleading... It is not necessary to understand someone-in the verb 'to understand' [French: comprendre] there is the verb 'to take' [French: prendre]-in order to wish to live with them.I want to live with the madpersons gathered in this study, but I do not t to take them. I strive to pursue madness, but not to capture it. Recall that II began this chapter by warning you to hold tight. Mad methodology also, sometimes, entails letting go: relinquishing the imperative to know, to take, to capture, to master, to lay bare all the world with its countless terrors and wonders. Sometimes we must hold tight to steady ourselves amid the violent tumult of this world-and sometimes we must let go to unmoor ourselves from the stifling order imposed on this world. I am describing a deft dance between release and hold, hold and release. In short, mad methodology is how to go mad without losing your mind. At length, this book will show you.

#### The ROB is to vote for the debater that best exposes the fold – exposing these breaks in knowledge production is a pre-requisite to deconstructing violence because these discussions are always just erased

Pickens 19 – Therí:  Assistant Professor of English at Bates College. Her research focuses on Arab American and African American literatures and cultures, Disability Studies, philosophy, and literary theory, Therí Alyce Pickens, 2019, *Black Madness :: Mad Blackness*, Duke University Press, p 15-16

To that end, I draw on those who read within the folds and breaks, a concept and methodology that attends to connections between discourse and materiality as infinite and inextricably bound. The complex web of re- lationships between Blackness and madness (and race and disability) is con- stituted within the fissures, breaks, and gaps in critical and literary texts. Hortense Spillers’s work in “Interstices: A Drama of Small Words” (1984), and “‘Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe’: An American Grammar Book” (1987), opens up this critical space and methodology in her discussion of the flesh. She depicts the flesh as a text that has, makes, and acquires meaning. The flesh of Black women in particular, since it has been erased from history, in its abrogated status exists within what Deleuze later terms the fold: a space not solely of possibility, but one that continuously gets erased. Since Deleuze develops the fold vis-à-vis Leibniz’s understanding of the Baroque aesthetic (read: within a tradition of Western and Enlightenment thought), I find it useful to think through how the fold shows up in the aesthetic praxis of the artists-theorists under scrutiny. The fold exists within the self, between the self and other, and between groups of others, as a space from which to interpret and understand the various critical and creative possibilities avail- able. In addition, development does not occur on a linear plane: it constantly folds, unfolds, and refolds. Most important for my readings, the fold func- tions as a space that creates and sustains possibility. Spillers’s work not only anticipates Deleuze but also expands its reach by making explicit which sub- jects consistently live within the fold, an idea disability studies scholar Len- nard Davis echoes when he writes about the way ideas and subjects within the fold get erased.48 Yet, the fold as understood by Deleuze is not merely the place where history and aesthetics rest. It is mercurial and oppositional, since, as Hortense Spillers theorized prior to Deleuze, it is emblazoned on Black flesh. Fred Moten’s In the Break: The Aesthetics of the Black Radi- cal Tradition (2003) conceptualizes the “break,” a methodological kissing cousin to the fold, as a racialized space that pinpoints how history, music, and race—as discursive concepts and material consequences—function as oppositional even as they are coextensive. Moten’s “break” signals the kind of rupture that creates and catastrophizes Blackness and madness, which he punctuates by using other words to describe the break like the cut, or the process of breaking, like invagination, or intussuscepted (all of which I borrow).

## Case

#### Colonialism is not ontological – fails to explain violence and is not the root cause of everything

Ribeiro 11 – (2011, Gustavo Lins, PhD in Anthropology, Ángel Palerm Chair of the Autonomous Metropolitan University of Iztapalapa (Mexico City) and is a Distinguished Scholar at the Iberoamericana University, “Why (post)colonialism and (de)coloniality are not enough: a postimperialist perspective,” Postcolonial Studies, 14:3, 285-297)

The stress on colonialism, neo-colonialism, internal colonialism, postcolonialism and the coloniality of power is welcome. No one doubts the power of structuration of colonialism. However, I would like to explore the idea that we cannot think of the ‘structural power’ of colonialism as a lasting force that always overruns others, especially those that are unleashed by what might be called ‘the nationality of power’. 21 For me, postcolonialism and the coloniality of power coexist in different forms and intensities, in different national scenarios, with the nationality of power as well as with the globality of power. On the one hand, however strong transnational forces may be, we cannot diffuse the power of nation-states in global entities such as the world system, nor can we reduce them to mechanic responses to supranational dynamics. On the other hand, colonialism cannot become an interpretive panacea, nor the latest example of historical determinism.

The fact that peripheral countries are the privileged scenario for postcolonial and decolonial interpretations becomes a problem when we realize that the most powerful nation-state of current times, the United States, is a former British colony. If the explanation for this exception is that there are different colonial experiences that may result in different postcolonial and decolonial experiences then subalternity within the world system is not a necessary result of the colonial experience or an intrinsic quality of postcoloniality and decoloniality. What I am saying is that an overemphasis on colonialism and on coloniality can curiously (re)generate precisely what needs to be criticized and surpassed: an explanation that accepts subalternity as a destiny of former colonies.

My argument calls for a sharper consideration of the ‘causal hierarchies’ among colonialism and other historical processes in diverse concrete scenarios.22 I am implying that by transforming colonialism and not capitalism into the primordial focus of analysis we underestimate the current importance of nation-states and their elites, as well as deviate from understanding the particular characteristics of the power relations of the current relationships between nation-states and the world system. In some places, these relationships are 200 years old or more, if we include in our list the US, the first politically independent modern republic. Isn’t this a sufficient amount of time to create particular interests and dynamics that are central to the construction of any future scenario?

If one of the aims of critical theory is to overcome an unjust past and contribute to the construction of a different future, then utopias are a most important object of desire in the progressive intellectual scene. While I am favourable to ideological struggles\*without them it wouldn’t be possible to denaturalize the naturalized present\*I want to advocate for more utopian struggles in a juncture where there is a dearth of future scenarios strong enough to galvanize the imagination of a great number of political actors. This is one of the reasons why I offered the notion of post-imperialism. Living in a world region that has a longstanding experience with imperialism\*in its soft and hard expressions\*the imagining of life after imperialism can prove to be an exercise in creativity and audacity\*qualities many times denied to the ‘subalterns’.

#### No matter the context, the word development evokes the memory of what those lower in society are not, killing value to life- The affirmative can’t separate themselves from the word’s connotations

Esteva, 92 (Mexican activist, "deprofessionalized intellectual" and founder of the Universidad de la Tierra in the Mexican city of Oaxaca - (Gustavo, “The Development Dictionary A Guide to Knowledge as Power”, ed by Wolfgang Sachs, p. 10-11)

Throughout the century, the meanings associated with urban development and colonial development concurred with many others to transform the word 'development', step by step, into one with contours that are about as precise as those of an amoeba. It is now a mere algorithm whose **significance depends on the context** in which it is employed. It may allude to a housing project, to the logical sequence of a thought, to the awakening of a child's mind, to a chess game or to the budding of a teenager's breasts. But even though it lacks, on its own, any precise denotation, it is firmly seated in popular and intellectual perception. And it always appears as an evocation of a net of significances in which the person who uses it is **irremediably trapped.** Development cannot delink itself from the words with which it was formed - growth, evolution, maturation. Just the same, those who now use the word cannot free themselves from a web of meanings that impart a specific blindness to their language, thought and action. No matter the context in which it is used. or the precise connotation that the person using it wants to give it, the expression becomes qualified and coloured by meanings perhaps unwanted. The word always implies a favourable change, a step from the simple to the complex, from the inferior to the superior, from worse to better. The word indicates that one is doing well because one is advancing in the sense of a necessary, ineluctable, universal law and toward a desirable goal. The word retains to this day the meaning given to it a century ago by the creator of ecology, Haeckel: 'Development is, from this moment on, the magic word with which we will solve all the mysteries that surround us or. at least. that which will guide us toward their solution.' But for two-thirds of the people on earth, this positive meaning of the word 'development' - profoundly rooted after two centuries of its social construction -is a reminder of what they are not. It is a reminder of an undesirable, undignified condition. To escape from it, they need to be enslaved to others' experiences and dreams.

#### **Their land acknowledgement is a settler move to innocence – that undermines decolonial possibility and turns the entirety of the K**

Asher et al 18, Lila, undergraduate student at the University of Toronto in Equity Studies and Environmental Studies, Joe Curnow, assistant Professor at the University of Manitoba, Amil Davis, masters student in Geography at the University of Toronto, Curriculum Inquiry, “The limits of settlers’ territorial acknowledgements”, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/03626784.2018.1468211>, Accessed 5/16/21 VD

Despite the learning that territorial acknowledgments generated within the group by combatting erasure and unsettling settlers, settler discomfort quickly capped the potential of the practice to aid in decolonial work. We argue that territorial acknowledgments became a way of insulating individual participants and the group as a whole from having to deal with our complicity in the colonial systems that we had begun to understand. Across our data, we saw territorial acknowledgments mobilized by settlers as a move to innocence. Tuck and Yang (2012) argue, Settler moves to innocence are those strategies or positionings that attempt to relieve the settler of feelings of guilt or responsibility without giving up land or power or privilege, without having to change much at all. In fact, settler scholars may gain professional kudos or a boost in their reputations for being so sensitive or self-aware. Yet settler moves to innocence are hollow, they only serve the settler (p. 10). Territorial acknowledgments served settler comfort because they were easily completed and contained in a way which marked us as good and enabled us to move on with the meeting without disruption. This was made manifest in statements that established that we were good, as well as through moves to contain the territorial acknowledgment and move on with “our regularly scheduled programming.” Moves to contain territorial acknowledgments and Indigenous content to a narrow portion of the agenda kept these topics from having a larger impact on our work, instead allowing many of us to feel as though we had done enough for the day. This is similar to how Khelsilem (2014) and Vowel (2016) describe territorial acknowledgments as a box-ticking exercise – a way to get the task of being a good ally over with. These moves to innocence undermined the decolonial pedagogical possibilities of territorial acknowledgments within Fossil Free UofT.

#### Ontology is bad – applying a fundamentally white theory to coloniality only reproduces their impacts

Todd 16, Zoe, Métis anthropologist and scholar of Indigenous studies, human-animal studies, science and technology studies and the Anthropocene, Journal of Historical Sociology, “An Indigenous Feminist’s Take On The Ontological Turn: ‘Ontology’ Is Just Another Word For Colonialism”, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/johs.12124>, Accessed 7/9/21 VD

I left the hall early, before the questions were finished: I was unimpressed. Again, I thought with a sinking feeling in my chest, it appeared that another Euro-Western academic narrative, in this case the trendy and dominant Ontological Turn (and/or post-humanism, and/or cosmopolitics—all three of which share tangled roots, and can be mobilised distinctly or collectively, depending on who you ask), and discourses of how to organise ourselves around and communicate with the constituents of complex and contested world(s) (or multiverses, if you’re into the whole brevity thing) - was spinning itself on the backs of non-European thinkers. And again, the ones we credited for these incredible insights into the ‘more-than-human’, sentience and agency, and the ways through which to imagine our ‘common cosmopolitical concerns’ were not the people who built and maintain the knowledge systems that European and North American anthropologists and philosophers have been studying for well over a hundred years, and predicating many of their current ‘aha’ ontological moments (or re-imaginings of the discipline) upon. No, here we were celebrating and worshipping a European thinker for ‘discovering’, or newly articulating by drawing on a European intellectual heritage, what many an Indigenous thinker around the world could have told you for millennia: the climate is a common organizing force! Once again, I felt as though I was just another inconvenient Indigenous body in a room full of people excited to hear a white guy talk around themes shared in Indigenous thought without giving Indigenous people credit or a nod. Doesn’t this feel familiar, I thought. What struck me here was the unintentional (even ironic) evocation of theories about the climate as a form of aer nullius,3 which it often becomes in Euro-Western academic discourses: where the climate acts as a blank commons to be populated by very Euro-Western theories of resilience, the Anthropocene, Actor Network Theory and other ideas that dominate the anthropological and climate change arenas of the moment. Of course, I extend due credit to Latour for framing it as a space of ‘cosmopolitical concern’ – which does make space for other ontologies and charismatic beings to exist within it, including the Inuit concept of Sila. However, my concern here is not really with Latour himself, but with how a Euro-Western audience consumes Latour’s argument (and the arguments of others writing and thinking about the climate, ontologies, our shared engagements with the world) without being aware of competing or similar discourses happening outside of the rock-star arenas of Euro-Western thought. I do not think Latour intended to elide decades of Indigenous articulations and intellectual labour to render the climate a matter of common concern. Nor do I think he intended to suggest that his notion of the climate as a matter of ‘common cosmopolitical concern’ was indeed the first of such calls. But the structures that produce talks like the one I attended make it easy for those within the Euro-Western academy to advance and consume arguments that parallel discourses in Indigenous contexts without explicitly nodding to them, or by minimally nodding to Indigenous intellectual and political players. Because we still practice our disciplines in ways that erase Indigenous bodies within our lecture halls in Europe, we unconsciously avoid engaging with contemporary Indigenous scholars and thinkers while we engage instead with eighty year old ethnographic texts or two hundred year old philosophical tomes. In events like the one I attended in Britain, we implicitly give credit to the person at the lectern, and that person is very rarely an Indigenous thinker. Was it entirely Latour’s fault, therefore, that he did not mention Inuit? If a European audience is not familiar with the breadth and depth of Indigenous thinking and how strongly it influences many of the current strands of post-humanism and the Ontological Turn (Watts 2013), can a speaker be blamed for side-stepping a nod towards Inuit climate advocacy in a discussion of the ‘climate as common cosmopolitical concern’? Should I welcome his silence: better that he not address Indigenous thinking than to misinterpret it or distort it? As Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee scholar Vanessa Watts (2013) points out, the appropriation of Indigenous thinking in European contexts without Indigenous interlocutors present to hold the use of Indigenous stories and laws to account flattens, distorts and erases the embodied, legal-governance and spiritual aspects of Indigenous thinking. So there is a very real risk to Indigenous thinking being used by non-Indigenous scholars who apply it to Actor Network Theory, cosmopolitics, ontological and posthumanist threads without contending with the embodied expressions of stories, laws, and songs as bound with Indigenous-Place Thought (Watts 2013: 31) or Indigenous self-determination. Her writing affirms what I witnessed directly as an Indigenous woman from North America moving through the halls of the UK academy: Indigenous stories are often employed without Indigenous peoples present to engage in the application of them in European work. However, there is a risk as well, to Indigenous thinking not being acknowledged at all. How do we hold these two issues in tension and apply them accountably in anthropology? I concede that there are elements of post-humanism, cosmopolitics and the Ontological Turn that could potentially be promising tools in the decolonial project, if approached with an attention to the structural realities of the academy. In my current work (Todd 2015a; Todd 2015b) I now cite Juanita Sundberg (2013) extensively, who describes her own efforts to engage with post-humanism as a decolonizing tool kit, while flagging how euro-centric the project of post-humanism remains. Specifically, she points out (2014: 35) that Euro-American framings of post-humanism have a tendency to erase Indigenous epistemes and locations. Further, she argues that posthumanist thought makes a common error of asserting the nature/culture split as a universal phenomenon rather than a reality localised to specific knowledge traditions (Sundberg 2014: 35). Sundberg and Watts both provide Euro-Western scholars with practical tools for employing Indigenous ontologies in their work with care and respect: account for location (Sundberg 2014) and Indigenous Place-Thought (Watts 2013: 31) - and consider the ongoing colonial imperatives of the academy.

#### Using the classroom as a site to decolonize thought oversimplifies the Western-Indigenous relationship and history, is counter-productive, and creates a close minded dichotomy between primitivism and modernity which turns their project.

Nakata et al 2012, N. Martin Nakata, Victoria Nakata, Sarah Keech & Reuben Bolt Nura Gili Centre for Indigenous Programs, University of New South Wales, Australia, “Decolonial goals and pedagogies for Indigenous studies,” Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society Vol. 1, No. 1, 2012, <http://decolonization.org/index.php/des/article/view/18629>, KEL

A number of points are threaded through our argument. We agree that anti-colonial critique is a fundamental beginning point for unsettling entry-level students’ presuppositions about Indigenous-Western relations. However we argue that the end-point of instating regenerated Indigenous ‘ways’ or ‘traditions’ as the counter-solution to overcoming colonial legacies occurs too hurriedly in some scholarly analysis and in lecture settings. In this process, explorations in lecture rooms skip the more complex theoretical dilemmas students need to engage with to understand the conceptual limits of their own thinking, as well as the discipline’s, and to critically engage propositions from within Indigenous Studies scholarship. Our stance also leads us away from approaches that focus on decolonising students. Approaches that focus on changing students’ thinking through constant engagement with or reflection on their complicity with colonialism, its knowledge, and its privileges personalises a deep political and knowledge contest in ways that can be counter-productive for both students and their educational goals. Our argument is that the complex grounds of this ‘Indigenous-Western’ contest make it a difficult task to resolve what is colonial and what is Indigenous, or what ultimately serves Indigenous interests in contemporary knowledge practice. Furthermore, the quest to resolve this contest in lecture rooms relies on engaging students in an oversimplification of the way colonial, Western, and Indigenous meanings are produced and operate in contemporary lifeworlds. We propose that students might be more disposed to understanding the limits of their own thinking by engaging in open, exploratory, and creative inquiry in these difficult intersections, while building language and tools for describing and analysing what they engage with. This approach engages the politics of knowledge production and builds critical skills — students’ less certain positions require the development of less certain, more complex analytical arguments and more intricate language to express these arguments. Pedagogically, we propose this as a way to also prevent slippage into forms of thinking and critical analysis that are confined within dichotomies between primitivism and modernity; and as a way to avoid the closed-mindedness of intellectual conformity, whether this be expressed in Indigenous, decolonial, or Western theorising.