#### The aff trades globalist capitalist exploitation for mercantilist capitalist exploitation-Don’t be fooled by their claims to “anti-capitalism”—. Private entities don’t need to appropriate themselves if they can rely on the colonial state to do it for them; the aff only dooms us to replicate the logic of the railroad, where the colonial state appropriated indigenous lands to hand them over for financialization as a way to reinfore whiteness.

The Interstellar Railroad, or Speculation and Shareholder Whiteness in the Space Economy Réka Patrícia Gál April 14, 2021

Indeed, **Musk has** carefully **positioned his company as a space transportation company, and has explicitly compared the SpaceX project to building the Union-Pacific Railroad — for space** (Robertson 2016). The colonial comparison is not surprising (Cowen 2020). **Proponents of space colonization have long drawn parallels to the colonization of the Americas, enthusiastically representing frontier pioneering and imperialist expansionism as imperative to US American national identity** (Billings 2007). The explicit comparison to North American railroad construction hints at a specific trend of space colonization advocacy that is focused on stimulating commercial space operations. **The industrialist argument is that just as the construction of the transcontinental railroad was best undertaken by private entrepreneurs who were incentivized by the government with land grants and subsidies, the US American government should similarly aid private entrepreneurs** **in the establishment of the New Space industry** (Mazlish 1965, Launius 2014, McCurdy 2019a). In fact, from the founding of SpaceX up to 2012, the additional government funding provided to SpaceX raised returns on investment by more than two percent--this is approximately the same return that a nineteenth century investor might have expected to gain if the railroad company they invested in received federal land grant subsidies (McCurdy 2019b, 48). **Looking at the transcontinental railroad and current space colonial initiatives in parallel can therefore provide a helpful analytic for understanding, and struggling against, such a colonial expansion.** What questions and conceptual understandings can thinking of commercial space travel alongside the transcontinental railroad generate? I am particularly interested in thinking this analogy through some of the concepts advanced by Manu Karuka in his recent monograph Empire’s Tracks (2019). Karuka argues that **the construction of the transcontinental railroad was foundational to the development of the modern US colonial state, which grew in tandem with finance capitalism and the modern corporation.** Karuka’s systematic analysis unveils two central concepts that are useful for understanding the outer spatial analogies. First, that the financial speculation accompanying the gold rush was foundational to the establishment of the settler society’s extractive social order. And second, that the logic of corporate shareholding has served, and continues to serve, as the core vehicle upholding the white supremacist social order. While SpaceX stocks are not publicly available yet, numerous venture capital firms have invested in the aerospace company, with some key investors being Peter Thiel’s Founders Fund, Google, and the Bank of America (McCurdy 2019a). **A landscape of speculation enfolds over the lonesome weightlessness of outer space as these powerful companies are investing towards capitalizing on future shareholding profits.** A future, which has been called into question by numerous people, because, as Shannon Stirone has put it simply: “Mars is a hellhole. [...] Mars will kill you.” Stirone explains that Mars has a very thin atmosphere and no magnetic field, which means that it has extremely high radiation, and no breathable air. All the while, the surface of the planet is −63 °C, and dust storms are extremely common. These concerns, however, continue to be ignored in favor of high-risk investment. The corporate expansion into outer space is coated in a language of equality – of providing equal access to the wonders of outer space for all. An example of this is the recent private mission into space entitled Inspiration4, which developed in cooperation with the online payments startup Shift4Payments, and is currently raffling a seat to a random winner. The lottery acts as aspirational evidence of equal opportunity: Musk claims that these private missions are necessary to eventually make it possible for “everyone” to go to space (Chang, 2021). But **Musk’s vision of making space travel affordable through economies of scale can only be made possible by creating initial demand through aspirational marketing. Just as railroad companies, aided by government grants and loosened regulations, facilitated the westward expansion of European colonists over Indigenous lands, so ought the colonization of Mars create a pastoral utopia in which inspiration and creativity for all abound.** Exactly how a trip to a Martian colony could be paid by anyone was revealed in recent Tweets by Musk in which he has reinvented indentured servitude for extraplanetary colonization (McKay 2020). **Territorial expansion, based on financial speculation, facilitated by corporations and using unfree imported laborers is exactly what Karuka unveils about the logics of railroad colonialism**. He explains, As investors became increasingly disconnected from the sources of their revenue, financial profits seemed to arise through agreements between individuals, seemingly separated from, even independent of, the sweat of specific bodies in specific places. With the maturation of the modern corporation in the wake of emancipation, investors imagined financial accumulation as autonomous from labor, whiteness as autonomous from blackness and indigeneity. (2019, 150) Here I want to hone in on Karuka’s key concept of shareholder whiteness. Karuka explains that slaveholders maintained their economic advantages after the emancipation of slaves by excluding Black people, the Chinese workers who constructed the railroad, and the Indigeous peoples whose lands they occupied, from corporate ownership. According to Karuka, “**Racism is an effect, not a cause, of imperialism**. [...] Whiteness is fiction, not a biological reality, [...] Finance capital and whiteness ripened through a historical elaboration of relationships between imperial corporations and colonial states, forging and sustaining continental imperialism” (Karuka 2019, 150). The extension into the cosmos has already been theorized by scholars as a way to allow for the unfettered continuation of capitalist accumulation, and the New Space companies of the last decade have repeatedly claimed humanity’s extension into the cosmos as an inevitable consequence of “progress” (Dickens 2007; Valentine 2012; Klinger 2017). **With little left on Earth to be financialized, companies are turning outer space itself into an asset. I could hardly think of a better example of fictitious capital that would produce such profound alien-ation from the act of production**. Whether we are thinking of asteroid mining, space settlements, or simply private space voyages, the shareholders are, and will continue to be, removed from production on our planet, but will in the event of space colonization also be separated from it by several atmospheric layers, hatches, pressurized rooms, and spacesuits. Karuka writes, **“the future of the corporation presupposes the future of the colonial state, and the law of the corporation colonizes the future”** (2019, 153), and his analysis of the role of the modern corporation in the establishment of the US colonial state proves to be an entirely-too fitting prediction of a future neoliberal space dystopia**. The particular colonial expansion perpetrated through the railroad was achieved through “blending the economic and military functions of the state”** (Karuka 2019, xiv). The policing of racial and territorial borders was at the heart of imperial expansion as the colonizing states guarded reservation borders as sites of containment. **It also allowed the states to enforce the rules of colonial market relations on occupied Indigenous lands. To this day, the militaries of the US naval empire serve the vital functions of presenting their interests at sea. This produces another apt analogy when we consider the same mercantilist logic is being extended into space with the recent development of the United States Space Force, a new branch of the Armed Forces that is meant to facilitate, and ultimately guard, the supremacy of the United States in outer space.** **Rather than produce a new world or a vastly different future, interstellar-railroad-colonialism seems to aim, at best, to re-entrench and, at worst, to** exacerbate **the ongoing inequalities that exist on Earth**. This is especially true for conditions produced in and through colonial relations. Space exploration is explicitly settler-colonial**.** It projects the same logic of terra nullius into outer space that was used as a justification for the appropriation and colonization of the North American lands that were inhabited by various Indigenous nations, while also reproducing existing colonial relations on Earth through the expansion of space colonization infrastructure. For example, the observatories, telescopes, and other space exploration related buildings continue to be erected on Indigenous lands all over Earth, from Hawaiʻi, through French Guiana all the way to Aolepān Aorōkin Ṃajeḷ (Marshall Islands) (Smiles 2020; Prescod-Weinstein et al. 2020; Durrani 2019). As his Tweet about indentured servitude in space shows, Musk is already counting on the extension of the (likely racialized) material exploitative practices from Earth to outer space. But this is also the one major difference between railroad colonialism and space colonization: while the colonial expansion in North America was articulated as the colonizing European’s ongoing fight against the sovereignty of the Indigenous peoples of Turtle Island**, the fight over territory in outer space might not be fought against extraterrestrial natives. Instead, it will likely continue to be fought against the sovereignty of Indigenous peoples on Earth, and in space, against other spacefaring nations, such as China and India.** As such, what remains open for me is to what extent shareholder whiteness remains the same, or transforms with this move of the corporation into outer space. Will whiteness remain the currency of the future, or will the shareholder privilege of the future turn towards something else, something new yet equally insidious? How does shareholder whiteness function under a global economy? And more importantly, what tools for resistance can we learn from those who struggled against colonial expansion and specifically, the transcontinental railroad? Can we break with the logics of finance capital, empire, and whiteness in interstellar space, and speculate towards a better future?

#### There is no difference between public and private space – the state promotes and sanctions the private sector. Not only does the aff do nothing, it legitimates the fiction that the actions of a coopted settler-colonial state are in fact for the people, while the state continues to make the private sector do its dirty work on command. Klinger,

Klinger, J. M. (2018). *Rare earth frontiers: From terrestrial subsoils to Lunar Landscapes*. Cornell University Press.

On November 24, 2015, US president Barack Obama signed the Spurring Private Aerospace Competitiveness and Entrepreneurship Act, which grants US citizens the legal right to claim outer space resources and to bring civil suits against enti- ties that pose “harmful interference” to the exercise of private property rights in outer space. Chapter 513, section 51303 states: “A United States citizen engaged in commercial recovery of an asteroid resource or a space resource under this chapter shall be entitled to any asteroid resource or space resource obtained, includ- ing to possess, own, transport, use, and sell the asteroid resource obtained in ac- cordance with applicable law, including the international obligations of the United States.” This legislation, which passed with bipartisan support,24 is an oblique attack on the reigning res communis regime espoused in the OST and the Moon Treaty. By granting US citizens property rights, primarily over asteroid resources and secondarily over “space” resources, the legislation attempts to present itself as consistent with the very international treaty obligations it undermines. It is physically impossible to mine rare earths for profit on the Moon or on any other body in outer space in a manner that is consistent with the provisions of the OST. **Mining obliterates a given landscape, while profiteering requires exclusive access. This is precisely why mining is so useful for extending territorial control to historically elusive places: because it quite simply, brutally, and unam- biguously eliminates the possibility for other uses of the site in question.** If it is a US company, rather than a US public venture, that establishes an exclusive min- ing site in outer space, the geopolitical ambitions of the United States would, in theory, be served either way. **In this case, the private sector can do the dirty work25 of fulfilling the state’s geopolitical agenda while the public sector provides protections and guarantees to the private sector.** But in fact, **a distinction between the public and private sector obscures more than it clarifies.** After all, many of the new space industries were founded by former state space agency personnel, and many of the most effective advocates for the privatization of space have backgrounds in both finance and government. **State promotion of the private sector in pursuit of lunar mining closely resembles the cases reviewed in the previous two chapters, wherein the private sector was selectively enlisted to execute the territorial agenda of the state.** In this case, **the national government provides force and backing to a risky and illegal venture in exchange for anticipated geopolitical advantages**. This is where critical geopolitics helps us see further than conventional geopolitics. Conventional geopolitics would hold that this is simply twenty-first- century statecraft instrumentalizing the private sector to further national inter- ests. For the moment, this particular contrivance of a public-private divide is conceived as enabling US actors on all sides to maximize benefits and dodge in- ternational treaty obligations while they territorialize the Moon. The flaw in this reasoning is the assumption that all interests are wedded to the US national interest, so the newly empowered private sector is imagined as acting as an extension of government interests. But there is no such guarantee. Critical geopolitics, by contrast, challenges fixed notions of the state and therefore fixed notions of public and private sector interests. Private sector firms, newly em- powered by the US government to sue any entity that damages their private interests in outer space, are free to contract with any paying customer regardless of their national origin or the integrity of their enterprise. With the case of the Moon, the stakes of the state’s investment in private sec- tor mining differ from those discussed in previous chapters. It is not just a matter of pursuing profit and geopolitical control, but of maintaining the status quo of the global political economy. Under the terms of the OST—to which all state ac- tors advancing space mining are party—any mineral extracted from the Moon would have to be distributed in a way that is “to the benefit of all peoples” on Earth. To pursue lunar mining in compliance with the OST would fundamentally change the global political economy of resource production and consumption from profiteering to sharing. There is no having it both ways—the terms of the OST have made it thus. Any state or nonstate entity doing otherwise would clearly be operating with impunity regardless of the verbal gymnastics involved in legislative attempts at the national scale to sidestep these agreements. But by insisting on a false premise of legal ambiguity at best and “chaos” at worst (Whit- tington 2013), **private sector actors can do the dirty work of the state, until such time that international treaties are supplanted or other parties acquiesce to violation as the new norm.** For a particular government to assert the right of its citizenry to mine resources in any particular place, and to secure for that citizenry the right to pursue puni- tive legal action against any entities who interfere with the exercise of their prop- erty rights is, by definition, an assertion of sovereignty over those places, whether they are scattered across multiple celestial bodies or consolidated in one place, such as on the Moon. Such claims directly and unambiguously contradict existing international treaty obligations of the United States. The SPACE Act attempts to evade this by concluding with a Disclaimer of Extraterritorial Sovereignty, elabo- rated in Section 403: “It is the sense of Congress that by the enactment of this Act, the United States does not thereby assert sovereignty or sovereign or exclusive rights or jurisdiction over, or the ownership of, any celestial body.” The United States need not assert sovereignty over an entire celestial body in order to claim a particular territory therein. After all, that is how the political ge- ography of Earth is organized: no single state controls the entirety of the celestial body we call home, but that does not negate the sovereignty of 192 national gov- ernments over their respective territories. The verbal gymnastics of the SPACE Act do not succeed in side-stepping the OST’s prohibition of assertions of national sovereignty “by means of use or occupation, or by any other means” (UN 1967, Article II). None of this is to suggest that a coherent agenda exists between the state and the private sector. Advocates of privatized space exploitation have multiple per- spectives on the role of the state. Some denigrate civilian space exploration as too slow (Wingo, Spudis, and Woodcock 2009) and bogged down in bureaucracy, which inhibits the fantastic innovation potential of the private sector (Jones 2013). Others see the state as critical to securing their investments. Of the signing of the SPACE act of 2015, Eric Anderson, cofounder and cochairman of Planetary Re- sources, Inc. gushed: “This is the single greatest recognition of property rights in history. This legislation establishes the same supportive framework that created the great economies of history, and will encourage the sustained development of space” (quoted in Navarro 2015). Regardless of their perspective, **private sector interlocutors are working toward capturing maximum possible support** and minimal regulatory intervention **from the public sector**. This effectively translates into massive transfers of public wealth to private hands while reducing oversight mechanisms concerning the use of that wealth. This coheres with the extensively theorized relationship between the “re- treat of the state” and the “financialization of everything” under contemporary neoliberalism. But as with other cases examined in this book, this is not simply a case of deregulation, but also of reregulation. **The proliferation of commercial space agencies represents not a retreat of the state per se, but rather a reconfiguration of state functions to support a program of redistributing public assets into the private sector in the name of beating a bogeyman from the East.** Indeed, the most vocifer- ous political, public, and legal opinion holds that the private sector should lead the way, and that “**the** **government should focus on its role as enabler**” (Whitehorn 2005). This is overwhelmingly compatible with the US government’s approach since the end of the Cold War (United States House of Representatives 1998).

#### The evocation of common heritage of “mankind” always excludes those who are the constitutive excluded—mechanisms like the Moon treaty purport to be for the good of common humanity, but they in fact just reinforce the nation-state’s ability to make sovereign decisions over space. Cornum 18,

Cornum, Lou. “Event Horizon.” *Real Life Mag*, 12 Mar. 2018, https://reallifemag.com/event-horizon/.

The word *pioneer*, usually attached to innovation, is never too far from people like Jeff Bezos or Elon Musk or Peter Thiel. These men’s careers in tech startups, their origins in the digital commerce boom, and their pioneer identities were forged on the electronic frontier. Like pioneers of industry in the colonial expansion of the Americas, these men operate on the knife’s edge of sovereignty as it cuts a path for both state and capital to consolidate power. In space, these men see a chance to loosen further the bonds that still restrain the endless capital they’ve been chasing in their imagined rocket ships. Investors, architects of the financial and material future, have taken to using the term “NewSpace” to refer to the almost accessible ventures of asteroid mining, space shipping, spaceship travel, and other forms of space commerce. Still, there are fminor contractual obstacles. **Even at the void’s edge, there is a treaty.** A couple of treaties actually. **Out there the governments still rely on these dusty remnants of the dying beast of nation-state sovereignty and the apparatuses of international relations first created to aid and abet the global distribution of white men’s control. The Outer Space Treaty of 1967, which has a more precise formal name** — Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, Including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies — **may seem surprisingly benevolent. It is sometimes summarized as saying that *nobody can own space*. But while it outlaws national appropriation, it allows incorporation without the state.** In a demotion from the sensual feel of its phrasing, “celestial bodies” become the body politic, managed sites of bans and requirements. While the U.S. did sign the Outer Space Treaty of 1967, it did not sign the 1979 Moon Treaty**,**more formally known as the Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies. The Moon Treaty, among other directives, bans any state from claiming sovereignty over any territory of celestial bodies; bans any ownership of any extraterrestrial property by any organization or person, unless that organization is international and governmental; and requires an international regime be set up to ensure safe and orderly development and management of the resources and sharing of the benefits from them. It also bans military activity such as weapons testing or the founding of extraterrestrial military bases (though it’s hard to see U.S. presence anywhere in the stars or on Earth as anything other than militaristic). **Evoking the common heritage of “mankind,” the Moon Treaty could appear a pie-in-the-sky attempt at more equitable relations to land than have been established on Earth since the advent of private property and national borders. But it is of course expressed only in the stop-gap measure of treaties that assign power to states, governments, and resource-management regimes. The power of the treaty is in its possible revoking. In making the decision to sign the treaty or not sign the treaty, the collectives state their unquestioned right to make decisions in space at all. Space is a place where old and new sovereignties, like asteroids desired for mining, are colliding or sometimes colluding. There is a line connecting the Dutch East India Company, the Hudson Bay Company, and SpaceX. These companies begin as corporate endeavors, but then as now the nation-state is sticky: It finds a way to adhere.** Take the case of Luxembourg, a polity that lives on tax loopholes (allowing large corporations to move money in and out of the nation with utmost secrecy and minimal charges) where, as Atossa Araxia Abrahamian [reports for the *Guardian*](https://www.theguardian.com/news/2017/sep/15/luxembourg-tax-haven-privatise-space), private space companies are finding their funding allies for financed trips to the moon, Mars, and the interstellar spots for satellites. The mixing of business and research mixes the money and power hungering of technocrats who don’t just want to own businesses but want people to see their businesses as the shareholders of humanity’s future.In middle school we didn’t have model U.N., but we did have model Earth. For field trips we’d be taken away to Biosphere 2, a site for space-colonization experiments built by Space Biosphere Ventures but owned by Columbia University by the time I visited. In these field trips to the desert outside a town auspiciously named Oracle, we walked around the display vivarium, always being reminded to call it biosphere *two*— biosphere *one* was the earth outside, the one we had momentarily left behind and one day might leave behind for good. That old planet was a past prototype. But the new prototype was itself already a defunct research facility. The closed-system experiment with human subjects had failed twice in the ’90s, and it now rests as one of the many dreams littering the desert of a new world.When a world is new, it creates alongside a space held for the older worlds. This is the drama between what can be brought from before and what will be made anew. It is why Aeneas carried his dying father Anchises on his shoulders out of Troy on his way to found Rome. The traveler always brings baggage. Jeff Bezos would like to be the one who carries that baggage to space or controls the robots and poorly paid temporary laborers who accomplish the carrying. In this supposedly new space, the regimes of inequality will be quite familiar. The space-goers insist it is something called humanity, with the ingrained hierarchical legacies of this category, that will be going.Leaders in industry who have always wanted to be world leaders are now positioning themselves as leaders of outer worlds. Elon Musk makes union busting seem like a cosmic necessity for the continuation of human life. The material and subsequent cultural valorization of certain kinds of work in the tech industry, wherein the “great minds” make all the money and those who maintain the machinery of day-to-day existence are treated like the shit they’re supposed to take, does not end at the stratosphere.Even the more lofty moral considerations of outer-space ethics (e.g., is terraforming ever morally acceptable?) often ignore their fundamental basis in deathly processes still very much situated on Earth. Any outer-space endeavor today or in the near future will be an extension of the life-destroying capacities of capitalists and their colonial countries. On the [Deep Space Industries page](https://deepspaceindustries.com/mining/) for asteroid mining, the exploitation and extraction of minerals is heralded as “an unlimited future for all mankind**.” The endless extension of capitalist accumulation comes with an extension of this delusion of “all mankind.” As if all such projects, the project of humanity itself, has not always been an exclusionary one.** SETI may appear to inhabit a different realm of speculation than that of the grandstanding services-and-commodities pioneers. But its project also follows a willful ignorance about human history and the exclusions that make humanity as a class possible. SETI proponents, much like Musk and his ilk, view themselves at the forefront of a new breakthrough not necessarily of capital but of knowledge. Their sites of expansion are not centered so much on the territories capital requires in order to enclose, privatize, and extract until depletion (though they can be intimately connected, as in the development of the university and research centers as global actors of dispossession), but on sites of encounter. Outer-space commerce and funded extraterrestrial contact-seekers operate on and reinforce damaging notions of land, life, and the future that actually hinder the survival of most Earth dwellers rather than provide anything like meaningful hope. Stories of contact are only ever understood as colonial stories. Every inquiry of future contact with extraterrestrial life, from academic and government-funded to amateur and whimsical, relies on the same stale comparisons of colonial conquest. Columbus, of course; Captain James Cook, often. Every episode of the podcast *Making New Worlds: Why Are We Going?*features historical authorities commenting on colonial situations of the past and comparing them to hypothetical situations with extraterrestrials. The topics convened by those who are granted the authority to speak on them are conducted under the tyranny of certain givens, the most persistent and damning of them being contact as conquest.

#### Settler colonialism is an ongoing structure, not an event. The erasing of Native history, life and culture are ongoing devastating impacts that outweigh the affirmative. The affirmative actively participates in the settler colonial project of erasure---anything that does not start from the question of settler colonialism removes indigeneity from history. Settlerism is an everyday process shaped by affective investments in institutions that claim jurisdiction over native land. Legal and political action is inextricably dependent on the elimination of the native.

#### **Barker12**

—MA U of Victoria, BASc McMaster University [Adam J., “(Re-)Ordering the New World: Settler Colonialism, Space, and Identity” Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, University of Leicester 224-234, December 2012]

Dynamics of Erasure **It is important to begin by investigating the erasure of Indigenous presence from place.** Erasure is essential to both occupation and bricolage, the two other colonising acts that are critical to settler colonial spatial production. **Erasure of Indigenous presence can take many forms and may precede and continue throughout the time of Settler occupation**. The variety of ways that settler colonialism produces space is predicated on consuming elements of Indigenous relational networks. Elements of Indigenous relational networks are extracted (removed from contexts that sustain meaning), processed and redeployed through settler colonial social space. What is Erasure? Historical geographer Cole Harris chose to reprint his essay ‘The Good Life Around Idaho Peak, originally researched and written more than thirty years ago, in a 1997 collected volume partly because it contains an egregious error that reflects the mind‐set of colonialism” (xvi). In the first version of this essay, Harris asserted that Idaho Peak, north of Nelson, British Columbia, had never been a site of Indigenous settlement. In the 1997 volume, he recanted: “[m]y proposition that no Native people had ever lived near Idaho Peak is absurd, and grows out of the common assumption, with which I grew up, that a mining rush had been superimposed on wilderness” (p.124). Harris, one of the most important and influential scholars of British Columbia’s native‐newcomer history, bases this striking reversal on a 1930 report by ethnographer James Teit of which he had previously been unaware. Based on interviews conducted between 1904 and 1907 with elders of the Sinixt (Lake) people whose ancestors had lived in the region, Teit’s report details Indigenous peoples’ village sites and the devastating impacts of imported disease (pp.194‐195). In this case, **not only were the physical bodies and communities of Indigenous peoples destroyed and reduced by pathogens introduced by European and American newcomers, even Settler knowledge of indigeneity was discarded and ignored**. In Harris’ analysis, “[m]ine is another example, from one who should have known better, of the substitution of wilderness for an erased Native world” (1997 p.xvi). **This is erasure:** the total removal of Indigenous being on the land, even from history, **memory, and culture, to facilitate the transfer of those lands. This can even be accomplished without the removal of Indigenous bodies; it is the relational networks with place that sustain Indigenous being that are the true targets of erasure.** Veracini notes that settler colonialism is most often pursued by settler collectives operating in corporate form (Veracini, 2010a pp.59‐62). **It is easy and not uncommon to ascribe Settler peoples the role of occupation while attributing erasure to a combination of ‘just war’ by state and imperial para‐/military** forces, and uncontrollable diseases like smallpox or influenza, washing Settler hands of responsibility. Individual Settler people deny their colonial responsibilities through this corporate ‘limited liability’ such that settler colonialism “obscures the conditions of its own production” (p.14). **However, Settler peoples are — historically and in the present — directly implicated in acts of erasure.** It is more acceptable to suggest that the British Empire or the American state ‘have colonised’ than to suggest that the Settler populations of the northern bloc ‘are colonisers/colonial.’ **This is part of the complex dynamic whereby Settler people**, even as they are or become aware of the existence of settler colonial atrocities, are able to deny their own complicity (Regan, 2010) or even those of their forbears.60 **The goal of erasure is the reconciliation of the colonial difference through the materialisation of perceived terra nullius** (Tully, 2000), an ‘empty land’ that, if not actually empty, is at least open: to the entrance of settlers, to being reshaped, to the extraction of advantage. The literature on terra nullius is extensive, and it was recently condemned as part of the ‘doctrine of discovery’ by the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (2012). For the purposes of settler colonial erasure, terra nullius can be thought of as the creation of a vast, conceptual space of exception. Settler state sovereignty is premised on spaces of exception that reduce Indigenous people to homo sacer (Morgensen, 2011), and **Settler identities are entwined with spatial segregation through frontier narratives that exile indigeneity to the wilderness beyond the reach of the civilising state (Larsen, 2003 pp.92‐94). Thus state space is premised on the erasure of indigeneity itself; Indigenous bodies stripped of sacred nature can be consumed or disposed of in a variety of ways without consequence. The governmental act of regulating and extinguishing indigeneity exceeds Settler sovereignty in two major ways: first, in the extension of the power of life or death over populations whose relationships are not considered part of the state** (thus an extra‐territorial assertion of sovereign power), **and second, in the extension of the state over territories to which Settler people have no legitimate claim based on the presence of Indigenous peoples.** According with Agamben’s observations of the creation of spaces of exception and the imposition of spatial restriction, and the reduction of human life to numbers, both Canada and the United States imposed ‘band lists’ on Indigenous communities. These lists of names of ‘official’ members, later identified by personal identification cards (numbered), issued by the government, were used to control Indigenous movements on and off of reserves and to prevent the entry of Indigenous individuals into colonial spaces, like cities and towns (Frideres et al., 2004 pp. 95‐102). Further, the governments of these states have turned the extermination of Indigenous peoples into a demographic problem. By claiming the sole responsibility to determine who is ‘Indian’ (as per the Constitution in Canada or a whole host of statutes at federal and state levels in America), states were able to legislate rules of heritage. These ‘status’ laws — based often on varying levels of blood quantum in the USA (Garoutte, 2003 pp.38‐60), and an odd, collaping system of parentage in Canada (Lawrence, 2003 p.6) — ensure that, even as Indigenous populations increase, ‘Indian’ people are disappearing. Physical Erasure **Indigenous peoples perceived across settler colonial difference are often constructed as a threat**: to the advantages conferred by the occupation of spaces of opportunity, to the safety of Settler people and to the norms and ‘civilised’ values of settler colonisers. As a consequence, all manner of violence is directed at Indigenous peoples, **resulting in the physical elimination, removal, or disappearance of indigeneity** from place. Physical erasure of Indigenous peoples is often initiated extraterritorially by para‐/military forces. This is important for understanding the concept of ‘the frontier’ (below); however, it should not be read to implicate only metropole powers in physical erasure.Settler collectives also participate in the physical erasure of Indigenous peoples and spaces. With rare exceptions, it has been expected that Indigenous peoples will assimilate into and disappear from Settler spaces, rather than the other way around. There are, of course, exceptions to this. There are widespread accounts of Settler people either excluded or exiled from larger collectives, or remnants of failed or collapses collectives, being adopted into Indigenous societies. For example, the second Roanoke colony is believed to have been assimilated into local Indigenous societies sometime between 1578 and 1590 (Kupperman, 2000 p.12). In a different but related vein, the Métis people of the Red River Valley, while a hybrid of Scottish, French, English, Cree and other peoples, are widely recognised as an emergent Indigenous peoplehood (Read & Webb, 2012; Tough & McGregor, 2011). Although the Métis are both culturally and genetically related to European peoples, they assert indigenised networks of being on the land rather than dominating colonial displacement of indigeneity.61 Indigenous networks were capable of absorbing these non‐indigenous Others absent the violent intercession of colonial force. As Chapter 3 has shown, settler colonial space is created by the direct assertion of Settler power over place with the result that exceptional examples such as Roanoke or the Métis are rare. Of course, personal relationships between Settler and Indigenous peoples are not completely encompassed by the drive for erasure, but **the threat of colonial violence is ever‐present**. Even when pursued ‘peacefully,’ intermarriage and socialintegration of Indigenous peoples into Settler spaces occurs in a highly coercive and uneven environment. For example, settler colonial logics that divide and sort have consistently dehumanised Indigenous people, and especially Indigenous women (Smith, 2005; Maracle, 1996 pp.14‐19), leading to widespread gendered and racialised violence. The selective dehumanisation of Indigenous women by settler colonisers contributes to very real physical erasures; consider the contemporary case of the hundreds of missing and murdered Indigenous women in and around Vancouver (Dean, 2010 p.14). More broadly, Settler collectives also play direct roles in spreading disease (Swanky, 2012; Wright, 1992 pp.74, 103‐104) and in extermination through dispossession. Returning to the example of the Pacific Northwest, Settler ranchers did not necessarily intend to physically erase Indigenous populations, but as they monopolised both grazing lands and food markets in the British Columbia Interior, they deprived Indigenous communities of networks of resources that had sustained them since time immemorial (Thistle, 2011; Harris & Demeritt, 1997 pp.234‐240). Erasure through deprivation continues to this day. Despite the fact that Settler societies of the northern bloc are among the most affluent in history, Indigenous communities continue to endure starvation, lack of access to clean drinking water, lack of medical and other health and social services (including education), enforced isolation, and denial of a sufficient land base for social health and reproduction. **Conceptual Erasure As well as the removal of the physical presence of Indigenous people from the land, settler colonial logics call for the removal of Indigenous peoples — at least as autonomous, intelligent actors —** from the understood history **of places** (Veracini, 2007). **Bureaucratic management techniques ensure that the business of solving the ‘Indian problem’ does not impact on the daily life of the average Settler person** by positioning Indigenous populations as inventories to be liquidated rather than people to be engaged with. Erasure has been at times a matter of counting: how many ‘Indians’ are left, how many fewer than last year, how much property should be allocated ‘per Indian,’ and when will the ‘vanishing Indian’ become reality (Veracini, 2010a: 39‐40; Neu, 2000). **This** further allows individual Settlers to deny complicity in the erasure **of Indigenous presence: the modern, industrial state counts, includes or excludes, and ultimately disposes of Indigenous peoples, and the state is impersonal.** That the state exists because of settler colonisation, **that Settler people serve as bureaucrats and colonial agents, or that erasure and occupation go hand in hand is rarely acknowledged**. Indigenous histories, especially those living histories sustained in oral traditions, are the storehouse of knowledge of rituals, sacred places, and place‐ based personalities and tend to confound settler colonisation. These histories constantly remind Settler peoples of their illegitimacy on the land; they point out that there are ways of relating to place beyond the understanding of contemporary Settler peoples; and, they provide a source of strength and identity for Indigenous groups even after they have been separated from their places or their spaces have been replaced by colonial spaces. As Holm et al., point out, even the stories of loss regarding a sacred space can be a source of identity (Holm et al. 2003 pp.9‐12; see also Chapter 1). **Settler colonisers**, then, if **they wish to avoid the discomfort associated with living Indigenous histories, must follow a logic of deliberately constructing histories in** which Indigenous peoples are either absent or relegated at the margins. **These then serve as the reference point for Settler people to judge their own ‘progress’ or ‘development’** as a people against anachronistic ‘savages’ who lack agency or power. This is also projected temporally forward: settler colonisation does not intend simply to erase these histories, but also to predetermine the future through “master narratives” (Austin, 2010) of technological progress, the inevitability of civilisation, rights‐based social assimilation, and the wholesale replacement of Indigenous systems of law and governance (Alfred, 2009a). Settler collectives create and perpetuate Settler myths such as the “Peacemaker myth” (Regan, 2010), the heroic trope of the frontier pioneer (Nettlebeck & Foster, 2012), and the up‐by‐the‐bootstraps myth of the self‐made Settler (Ramirez, 2012), to name but a few. Often these myths were created and are perpetuated by playing off of stereotypes about settlement in other colonial jurisdictions. Historian Chris Arnett has remarked: ... there remains the colonial myth that, contrary to what happened south of the 49th parallel, the British resettlement of British Columbia was benign, bloodless and law‐abiding ... Granted the “Indian Wars” of British Columbia came nowhere near the wholesale slaughter of aboriginal people that too often characterized the inter‐racial conflict in the western United States, but as one historian has observed, “human conflict does not decline in complexity as it does in scale.” Artnett, 1999 p.14 Both American and Canadian settler colonisation involved in varying combinations: treaty‐making and breaking; violent military and para‐military force; and, concerted attempts at cultural assimilation or extermination. In Regan’s work, she positions the peacemaker narrative in opposition to the violent reality of residential schools (Regan, 2010). As she points out, many physical buildings of residential schools still exist, though Settler people are unable to “see” them (2010 pp.5‐6). Steeped in national myths premised on narratives of treaty making and cooperation, and especially played off against perceptions of American ‘militant’ conquest, residential schools physically disappear to Settler Canadians: the structures are not seen, the damage not perceived. The residential school project in Canada, jointly pursued by the federal government and churches, was premised on the belief that ‘primitive’ and ‘disappearing’ Indigenous peoples could best be served by ushering their extinction through assimilation.62 However, given that the role of residential schools in erasure cannot be denied, Settler people instead must either deny their own involvement with them (and thus with settler colonisation) or deny that they existed at all. **This is symptomatic of widespread Settler denial that serves not just to erase indigeneity,** but also to erase the colonising act of erasure. **Erasure and Transfer Erasure is required at some stage for each type of** settler colonial land transfer. Sometimes this is obvious; for example “necropolitical transfer” (Veracini, 2010a: 35) involves the physical liquidation of Indigenous peoples by military action. However, erasure is involved in many other kinds of transfer either concurrent to (and hidden by) occupation and bricolage, or (usually) before or after these other colonising acts. Notably, Veracini describes that “perception transfer” — “**when indigenous peoples are** disavowed **in a variety of ways and their actual presence is not registered** (... for example, when indigenous people are understood as part of the landscape)” — **“is a crucial prerequisite to other forms of transfer**” (Veracini, 2010a p.36). Veracini then draws attention to an important dynamic: “when really existing indigenous people enter the field of settler perception, they are deemed to have entered the settler space and can therefore be considered exogenous” (2010a p.36). The implication is that erasure is unidirectional. **Indigenous peoples cannot be retrieved or revived from their erased condition without serious disruption to settler colonial space. All transfer**, regardless of whether it relies on physical or conceptual erasure, **is intended to be permanent**. Arguments that certain kinds of transfer are ‘better’ than others — such as the Canadian assertion of the peacemaker myth juxtaposed against violent American frontier adventurism — are seeking to differentiate between genocidal acts based on arbitrary distinctions, splitting colonial hairs.

#### State space exploration destroys the hope for indigenous and afro futurism, subsuming space with ­­­­­­­­settlerism. Thus, the alternative is to make space for indigenous and afro futurism. Reject all instances of settler moves to innocence. Cornum 15.

Cornum, L., & Cornum, L. (2017, April 18). *The space ndn's star map*. The New Inquiry. Retrieved February 19, 2022, from https://thenewinquiry.com/the-space-ndns-star-map/

**For indigenous futurism**, technology is inextricable from the social. **Human societies are part of a network of wider relationships with objects**, animals, geological formations and so on. **To grasp our relationship with the non-human world here on Earth, we must also extend our understanding of how Earth relates to the entirety of the cosmos.** We live on just one among millions of planets, each an intricate and delicate system within a larger, increasing complex structure. For the indigenous futurist endeavor, striving to understand the ever-multiplying connections linking us to the beginning of the universe and its constant expansion also entails unraveling the intricate relations that make up our Earthly existence. Zainab Amadahy, who identifies as a person of mixed black, Cherokee and European ancestry, grounds her writing practice in illuminating and understanding networks of relationships: “I aspire to write in a way that views possible alternatives through the lens of a relationship framework, where I can demonstrate our connectivity to and interdependence with each other and the rest of our Relations.” **Her** 1992 novel ***The Moons of Palmares*** examines the relationships, both harmful and collaborative, between indigenous peoples and descendants of slaves in an outer space setting that merges histories of the Black Atlantic with the colonial frontier. In a provocative bit of plotting, she casts an indigenous character, Major Eaglefeather, as an oppressive foreign force in the lives of an outer space labor population that has shaped its society in remembrance of black slave resistance in North/South America and the Caribbean. The story **follows Major Eaglefeather’s decision to reject his ties to the corporate state and support a rebel group of laborers**. The name Palmares is taken from a real-world settlement founded by escaped slaves in 17th-century Brazil, which is also known to have incorporated indigenous peoples and some poor, disenfranchised whites. In a chronicle written in the late 17th century, these *quilombos* are described as networks of settlements that lived off the land and were supplemented by raids on the slave plantations where the inhabitants were formerly held**. It is said that in Palmares the king was called Gangasuma, a hybrid term meaning “great lord” composed of the Angolan or Bandu word *ganga* and the Tupi word *assu*. The word succinctly captures the mixture of cultures that banded together in Palmares to live together on the margins of a colonialist, slave-holding society. While Palmares was eventually destroyed in a military campaign, it lives on as a legend of slave rebellion and utopian possibility that Amadahy finds well suited for her outer space story about collaborative resistance to state power and harmful resource extraction processes. Outer space, perhaps because of its appeal to our sense of endless possibility, has become the imaginative site for re-envisioning how black, indigenous and other oppressed people can relate to each other outside of and despite the colonial gaze.** Amadahy’s work is crucial for a critical understanding of the space NDN. **The space NDN cannot allow him or herself to fall into the patterns of domination and kyriarchy that have for too long prevailed here on Earth as well as speculative narratives of outer space. Afrofuturists have looked to space as the site for black separatism and liberation. If the space NDN is truly committed to being responsible to all our relations, it is imperative for our futurist vision to be in solidarity with and service to our fellow Afrofuturist space travelers. Our collective refusal of colonial progress (namely, our destruction) means we must chart other ways to the future that lead us and other oppressed peoples to the worlds we deserve.** *The Moons of Palmares* works toward this end by revealing the strong connections between indigenous and black histories, narratives and ways of living. **Indigenous futurism is indebted to Afrofuturism: Both forms of futurism explore spaces and times outside the control of colonial powers and white supremacy.** These alternative conceptions of time reject the notion that all tradition is regressive by narrating futures intimately connected to the past. SF and specifically the site of outer space give writers and thinkers the imaginative room to envision political and cultural relationships and the future decolonizing movements they might nourish. This focus on relationship, especially as posited by Amadahy, also accounts for those forms of indigeneity that persist among peoples either stolen from their lands or whose lands have been stolen from them. As the writer Sydette Harry recently posted on Twitter, “Black people are displaced indigenous people.” However, because of the processes of forced relocation and slavery and continuing anti-black racism, black people are often denied claims to indigeneity. There is also a pernicious erasure of black NDNs in America and Canada. **In exploring outer space, black authors are also able to assert their own relationship to land both on Earth and in the cosmos.** The Black Land Project (BLP), while not an explicitly futurist organization, fosters the kind of relationships to land on Earth that futurist authors and thinkers envision in outer space. In a recent podcast, *Blacktracking through Afrofuturism*, BLP founder and director Mistinguette Smith discusses how walking over the routes of the Underground Railroad brought forth alternate dimensions and understandings of time outside the settler paradigm of ownership. These are aspects of relating to land that the Afrofuturist and the space NDN (identities which can exist in the same person) bring with them on their travels. This focus on relationship rather than a strict idea of location speaks to the way in which the space NDN can remain secure in their indigenous identity even while rocketing through dark skies far from their origins. This is not to demean the work of land protectors and defenders who risk serious repercussions for resisting corporate and state encroachment on indigenous territories. The space NDN supports those who are able and choose to remain on the land, while also hoping to broaden understandings of indigeneity outside simple location. **Locations of course are never simple. It is the settler who wishes to flatten the relation between place and people by claiming land through ownership. Projecting themselves forward into faraway lands and times, the space NDN reveals the myriad ways of relating to land beyond property.**

#### The role of the ballot is to vote for the debater with who best resists imperialism.

#### Colonialism functions in education through rhetorical imperialism, decolonial framing and discourse is key.

**Grande**, Sandy 20**15**: *Red Pedagogy: Native American Social and Political Thought, Tenth Anniversary Edition* . United States of America. Rowman & Littlefield Publisher Inc. (pp 55-56). Sandy Grande is associate professor and Chair of the Education Department at Connecticut College. Her research interfaces critical Indigenous theories with the concerns of education. In addition to Red Pedagogy: Native American Social and Political Thought. (HTE)

**However the question of sovereignty is resolved politically, there will be significant implications on the intellectual lives of indigenous peoples, particularly in terms of education.** Lyons (2000, 452) **views the history of colonization, in part as the manifestation of “rhetorical imperialism,” that is “the ability of dominant powers to assert control of others by setting the terms of the debate.”** He cites, for example, Marhsall’s use of “rhetorical imperialism” in the Worcester v. Georgia opinion: “(T)reaty’ and ‘nation’ are words of our own language, selected in our diplomatic and legislative proceedings…having each a definite and well-understood meaning. We have applied them to Indians, as we have applied them to other nations of the earth. They are applied to all in the same sense” (Lyons 2000, 425). Indeed, through history of federal Indian law terms and definitions have continually changed over time. Indians have gone from ‘sovereign’ to ‘wards’ and from ‘nations’ to ‘tribes,’ while the practice of treaty making has given way to one of agreements (Lyons 2000, 453). **As each change served the needs of the nation-state, Lyons argues that “the erosion of Indian national sovereignty can be credited in part to a rhetorically imperialist use of language by white powers”** (2000, 453). Thus, just language was central to the colonialist project, it must be central to the project of decolonization. Indigenous scholar Haunaini-Kay Trask writes, “Thinking in one’s own cultural referents leads to conceptualizing in one’s own world view which, in turn, leads to disagreement with the eventual opposition to the dominant ideology” (1993, 54). **Thus, where a revolutionary critical pedagogy compels students and educations to question how “knowledge is related historically, culturally and institutionally to the processes of production and consumption,” a Red pedagogy compels students to question how (whitestream) knowledge is related to the process of colonization.** Furthermore, **it asks how traditional indigenous knowledge can inform the project of decolonization**. In short, this implies a threefold process of education. Specifically, a **Red pedagogy necessitates: (1) the subjection of the process of whitestream schooling to critical pedagogical analyses; (2) the decoupling and dethinking of education from its Western, colonialist contexts; and (3) the institution of indigenous efforts to reground students and educations in traditional knowledge and teaching.** In short, a Red Pedagogy aims to create awareness of what Trask terms “disagreements,” helping to foster discontent about the “inconsistencies between the world as it is and as it should be” (Alfred 1999, 132).

## On case

#### Space junk is already orbitting us, and the aff can never solve the root cause – at best, they only reduce new debris. – but the only way to guarantee debris crashes don’t happen is to actually remove the debris instead of just marginally stopping how much new debris gets created (bucket example can be used in 2n). According to Rhimbassen, private appropriation is key to active debris removal, also known as ADR, the only real, long-term solution to debris,

Maria Lucas-Rhimbassen\*, Cristiana Santos\*, George Antony Long\*\*, Lucien Rapp\* 2019, “Conceptual model for a profitable return on investment from space debris as abiotic space resource” https://chaire-sirius.eu/documents/c798f8-eucass-fp0602-1906190421.pdf

Indeed, **new technological initiatives evolving around ADR confirm the possibility of recycling space debris and transforming them into fuel**. Such initiatives come from, among others, the public sector (e.g. DARPA), spin-offs such as Russian Space Systems stemming from public agencies, which announced successful developments earlier in 2019, and **the private sector, such as the Australian start-up Neumann Space, which is among the first actors to look into the technology from a business model angle. Policy and legal limitations include, but are not limited to, the fact that space debris, regardless of their partial or total dysfunctionality, are under the jurisdiction and control of the State having registered it** (registry or mon commonly referred to as the launching State [4]). **Registry State jurisdiction and control can only be transferred to another State, not to a private entity**. Indeed, Article VIII of the Outer Space Treaty of 1967 (OST) decrees that the nationally registering launching State retains “jurisdiction and control” of any launched spacecraft or component part. Article VIII reads, in relevant pat, as follows: “A State Party to the Treaty on whose registry an object launched into outer space is carried shall retain jurisdiction and control over such object, and over any personnel thereof, while in outer space or on a celestial body. Ownership of objects launched into outer space, including objects landed or constructed on a celestial body, and of their component parts, is not affected by their presence in outer space or on a celestial body or by their return to the Earth [5]”. **Under Article VIII, the owner (operator) of a satellite or space object retains its ownership rights at all time [6]. Likewise, title to a satellite as well as any component part of a satellite always remains with the owner as space law does not provide for any divesting of title. Therefore, no actor other than the Registry State or owner has the right to rendez-vous a decommissioned satellite or consent to the extraction or recycling of each particular piece of space debris. This circumstance bars the rush to space debris and lessens the expectations of economic incentives in that respec**t. Other policy limitations include the perceived or real dual nature (civil and military) of ADR and consequently a reluctance from the Department of Defence (DoD) to facilitate/enforce military ADR which might add tensions to the already “congested, contested and competitive” space domain. Furthermore**, policy was adopted by no other than NASA to limit its own ADR capacity for several reasons, budget being one of them: “While these small research and development grants are a step in the right direction, NASA has also decided to set strict limits on its investment in carrying research and development of ADR technologies forward. In June 2014, NASA formally adopted a policy to limit its ADR efforts to basic research and development of the technology up to, but not including, on-orbit technology demonstrations. It is believed that the main reason for this limitation was an unwillingness by NASA to take on a potentially costly major new initiative without additional funding** from Congress [7]”. Our paper will try to reconcile these divergences and propose a model taking into account legal, policy and economic needs, all the more since the Technology Readiness Level (TRL) seems to take a maturing path. The stakes reside into boosting the Demand Readiness Level (DRL), still on the rocks, by ensuring a constructive, prosperous and thriving market, especially at a time when cleaning space is becoming an emergency for maintaining the security of critical space infrastructure [8]. Our model will essentially rely on the space insurance (both property and liability) as the nexus for an innovative solution from the legal, policy and economic standpoints. Our rationale is to upgrade, from a top-down approach, the on-orbit property insurance regime from optional to compulsory, and the onorbit liability regime from fault-based to absolute (or strict as in environmental law), getting thus rid of the difficult burden of proving fault in orbit, which is still required within the Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects of 1972 (Liability Convention). As of now, property and liability insurance are required in some States only at the launching phase. Since all objects launched into space are under the ultimate liability of the Registry or “launching” State in case of harming a third party, some States require further liability insurance caps. However, currently, on-orbit property insurance remains only optional and liability kicks in if fault is established and proven, which is difficult, which may deter OOS efforts and ADR initiatives such as recyclers.

#### The recognition of collective vulnerability through the deployment of collective extinction *cannot* be used to justify the furtherance of colonialist practices without reinforcing the position of indigenity as non-life.

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With these considerations in mind, let us go back to **Chakrabarty’s notion that the Anthropocene scenario of collective extinction requires that ‘we’ the ‘human’ species activate a ‘common’ ethical or pre-political stance that might take humans beyond the divisive (in)justices of politics**. For that purpose, he borrows the notion ‘epochal consciousness’ from philosopher Carl Jaspers who coined it in the 1950s while contemplating the potential and imminent destruction of the planet by the atomic bomb: An epochal consciousness cannot be charged with the function of producing solutions for an epochal crisis because all possible concrete solutions of an epochal problem—and Jaspers welcomes them all—will be partial or departmental, one important department being that of politics, the specialization of politicians (2016: 146) **Epochal consciousness therefore has to be pre-political, leading humans to feel as one whole**: ‘It is about how we comport ourselves with regard to the world under contemplation in a moment of global crisis; it is what sustains our horizon of action’ (2016: 146). It is, for Chakrabarty, ‘a thought space that came before and above/beyond politics, without, however, foreshortening the space for political disputation and differences’ (2016: 181). **Despite the notion of epochal consciousness being precarious and at risk of shattering into fragments again, for Chakrabarty ‘it remains a thought experiment in the face of an emergency that requires us to move toward composing the common’** (2016: 146–147). **What Chakrabarty refers to as ‘our smaller histories of conflicting attachments, desires and aspirations’ (2016: 183) are, from the vantage points of Palestinian Indigenous nature and people, shown to be the very sites through which – historically and in the present day – profoundly unequal and violent processes have effected techniques of extinction (fossilisation) of Indigenous Life. The supposed aggregate merging of ‘human’ and ‘natural’ in the Anthropocene is not merely an unfortunate bi-product of economic and technical development or nuclear testing. The pervasive and strenuous – yet unfinished and fractured – endeavour to make the settlers and settler-Nature Indigenous, show the centrality of colonial geonto-politics in ordering and reordering the boundaries between Life and Nonlife. From this point of view, rather than a single species ‘impacting’ upon nature, threatening extinction for a common humanity, it is more appropriate to argue that the very possibility of human and non-human Life is determined by past and ongoing colonial architectures of power. Although the ‘Anthropocene’ offers us a fuller and more complex understanding of the ontological depth and temporal scales of violence, it does not in itself offer hope that this violence might be subsumed under the planetary whole. In this sense, while recognising the heuristic potential of calling for an epochal consciousness in the face of threats of collective extinction, we would argue that a mood of common vulnerability must reinforce and expand, rather than suspend or defer, attention to local and time-bound injustices. Recognising and resolving such injustices should be a necessary prelude to facing, in an ethical mood, the common threat we do face as a species.** This is particularly so when, as the case of Palestine shows, **Indigenous populations have historically been – and continue to be – de-humanised, disposed of, violently erased or consigned to the sphere of Nonlife**. Conclusions In this article, we have explored the **historical and contemporary example of settler colonialism in Palestine suggesting that the recasting of the Life/Nonlife divide has been not incidental to, but part-constitutive of, the political operation of this project. As constitutive modalities of settler colonialism, Life and Nonlife are always discursively assigned rather than being straight forward ontological givens, and this assigning is the result of intra-human injustices and political struggles albeit through their entanglement with the nonhuman. By reading settler colonialism in Palestine through the lens of geontopower, we aimed to offer a case in point to challenge suggestions that questions of intra-human justice can be occluded by a more encompassing Anthropocene condition of collective vulnerability.** From the vantage point of Palestine, we argue the contrary: **given that power and politics are at the very core of the ways in which nature and humans become enmeshed or forcibly separated, only when these inequalities are conceived, and then foregrounded, is there a possibility of recognising a common or global vulnerability**. **For Palestinian refugees and their nature, the threat of collective extinction is not a future common risk, but a process entrenched in their everyday reality since 1948.** Like aboriginal Australians and other native populations, Palestinians were ‘fossilised’ and their entanglements with nature were forced to the Nonlife side of the geonto-political distinction (the ‘desert’ and the ‘virus’, to use Povinelli’s evocative figures). Importantly, however, we also showed how these operations are fractured and unfinished. Drawing from sources as diverse as personal memories, ethnographic explorations, novels and works of art, we showed that ecological ruins not only bring to light what has been destroyed, allowing the recovery of traces of a previous life, but also most crucially have an afterlife, unsettling politically drawn Life/Nonlife boundaries**. Far from a nostalgic claim to a pristine and authentic life-world that preexisted the settler colonial intervention, indigeneity thus signifies an intimate form of reciprocation of native people to their vegetation and animals – an Indigenous entanglement, which proved recalcitrant to taming and fossilisation. It is perhaps no coincidence that Sabr, the Arabic name for the cacti fruits, also means patience and signifies endurance as a natural and human virtue**