#### I endorse that outer space should be appropriated by private entities to engage in flat ontology. It is important to note the specific wording of the resolution which is key to flat ontology. As opposed to persons, companies or any referent to consciousness, the word entities is used, which just means “something that has separate and distinct existence and objective or conceptual reality”. Entities could be anything with being not confined to human-persons.

#### This isn’t an odd concept, in actuality there are legally sanctioned instances of this already on the earth, wherein non-human objects are recognized as having the same ontological rights as humans.

(https://www.farmersalmanac.com/a-tree-that-owns-itself-25869)

A Tree That Owns Itself? How did a tree that sits on an 8' x 8' parcel of land in Athens, Georgia, get to own itself? Find out! We can see this with **The Johnson tree**, wherein the it **is recognized as owning itself and a specific plot of land around it.** Trees are trees and because they aren’t people, they don’t get to legally own property. Or do they? In Athens, Georgia, there is a tree that begs to differ. This is the famous Tree That Owns Itself, or more correctly, the Son of the Tree That Owns Itself, since the original Tree was claimed by storm damage. How did this tree get ownership of itself and the land that it sits on?

#### In fact, indigenous environmentalists advocate for equal legal statuses of non-human objects. A case in point would be a river granted equal legal and human rights, one of which is appropriate itself. NPR 19’

(https://www.npr.org/2019/08/03/740604142/should-rivers-have-same-legal-rights-as-humans-a-growing-number-of-voices-say-ye)

In early July, **Bangladesh became the first country to** [**grant all of its rivers the same legal status as humans**](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-bangladesh-landrights-rivers/fears-of-evictions-as-bangladesh-gives-rivers-legal-rights-idUSKCN1TZ1ZR)**.** From now on, its **rivers will be treated as living entities in a court of law.** The landmark ruling by the Bangladeshi Supreme Court is meant to protect the world's largest delta from further degradation from pollution, illegal dredging and human intrusion. **"In Bangladesh, the river is considered as our mother," says** Mohammad Abdul **Matin**, general secretary of Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon, a Dhaka-based environmental group. As Bangladesh sits where three major rivers converge and empty into the Bay of Bengal, nearly 100% of its land is delta land, he tells NPR. Following the ruling, anyone accused of harming the rivers can be taken to court by the new, government-appointed National River Conservation Commission. They may be tried and delivered a verdict as if they had harmed their own mother, Matin says. **"The river is now considered by law, by code, a living entity, so you'll have to face the consequence by law if you do anything that kills the river,"** Matin says. Article continues after sponsor message What is environmental personhood? The river is now considered by law, by code, a living entity, so you'll have to face the consequence by law if you do anything that kills the river. Mohammad Abdul Matin, general secretary of Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon Bangladesh follows a handful of countries that have subscribed to an idea known as [environmental personhood](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2935007). It was first highlighted in essays by University of Southern California law professor Christopher D. Stone, collected into a 1974 book titled [Should Trees Have Standing? Toward Legal Rights for Natural Objects](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/533631/pdf). Stone argued that if an environmental entity is given "legal personality," it cannot be owned and has the right to appear in court. **Traditionally, nature has been subject to a Western-conceived legal regime of property-based ownership,** says [Monti Aguirre with the environmental group International Rivers](https://www.internationalrivers.org/user/233). **"That means ... an owner has the right to modify their features, their natural features, or to destroy them all at will,**" Aguirre says. **The idea of environmental personhood turns that paradigm on its head by recognizing that nature has rights and that those rights should be enforced by a court of law. It's a philosophical idea**, says Aguirre, with indigenous communities leading the charge. **"Many indigenous communities recognize nature as a subject with personhood deserving of protection and respect, rather than looking at it as a merchandise or commodity over which are property rights should be exercised,"** she says. And the movement is growing, she says, though with variations. [THE TWO-WAY](https://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/) [A New Zealand River Now Has The Legal Rights Of A Human](https://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2017/03/16/520414763/a-new-zealand-river-now-has-the-legal-rights-of-a-human) In 2008, [Ecuador](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/lsi.12141) became the first country to enshrine the legal rights of nature in its constitution. [Bolivia](https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2011/apr/10/bolivia-enshrines-natural-worlds-rights) passed a similar law in 2011. Meanwhile, [New Zealand](https://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2017/03/16/520414763/a-new-zealand-river-now-has-the-legal-rights-of-a-human) in 2017 became the first country to grant a specific river legal rights, followed by the [Indian state of Uttarakhand](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-india-water-lawmaking/indias-sacred-ganges-and-yamuna-rivers-granted-same-legal-rights-as-humans-idUSKBN16S109). This year, the city of Toledo, Ohio, passed what is known as the [Lake Erie Bill of Rights](https://www.vox.com/future-perfect/2019/2/26/18241904/lake-erie-legal-rights-personhood-nature-environment-toledo-ohio) to protect its shores, making it one of several U.S. communities to have passed legislation [recognizing the rights of nature](https://theconversation.com/when-a-river-is-a-person-from-ecuador-to-new-zealand-nature-gets-its-day-in-court-79278).

#### Private entities, such as non-human objects, and things of natures should be able to appropriate themselves.

**The alternative is to view the world through a lens of flat ontology**

**we must view the world differently through justification for actions predicated as ontologically important—a flat ontology holds that all objects equally exist**

**Bryant 10** (Levi, prof of phil @ Collin College, Flat Ontology, http://larvalsubjects.wordpress.com/2010/02/24/flat-ontology-2/)

For DeLanda, then, **flat ontology signifies an ontology in which there is only one ontological “type”: individuals**. Thus for DeLanda the relationship between species and organism is not a relationship between the universal or essence that is eternal and unchanging and the particular or the organism as an instance of the species. Rather, **both species and organisms are individuals that are situated in time and space**. **If species are not eternal essences or forms defining what is common to all particulars of that species, if they exist in space and time, then this is because species, as conceived by biology are not types but rather are really existing reproductive populations located in a particular geography at a particular point in time. For DeLanda, then, being is composed entirely of individuals**. While I find much that is commendable in DeLanda’s ontology, where the sorts of entities that populate being are concerned, I’m a bit more circumspect. At present **I’m not ready to throw in with DeLanda and the thesis that there are only individuals**. I am agnostic on the question of whether universals exist, and my intuitions strongly lean in the Platonic direction of **treating numbers as real objects in their own right that have being independent of human mind**s. If this is the case, if numbers are real, then I have a difficult time seeing how they can be treated as individuals in the sense that DeLanda intends and, moreover, I do not think that the genetic concerns that preoccupy DeLanda are relevant to questions of number, i.e., a genetic account of how numbers come to be– if, in fact, they do come to be and are not eternal objects –does not get at what numbers are. Consequently, if, within the framework of onticology, “**flat ontology” doesn’t signify that only individuals exist, what does it signify? On the one hand, it signifies the trivial thesis that all things that are are objects. Objects differ amongst one another having their own unique properties and qualities (e.g. numbers have a different structure than organisms, obviously) but they are no less objects for this reason**. On the other hand, and more fundamentally, flat ontology is designed to stave off strategies of what Harman refers to as ways of undermining and overmining objects. In short, a **flat ontology is an ontology that refuses to undermine or overmine objects**. What, then, does it mean to undermine or overmine objects. Of the two strategies, the concept of undermining is the easiest to get. **Undermining is that operation by which the thinker attempts to dissolve the object in something deeper of which the object is said to be an unreal effect. Consequently, the minimal operation of undermining lies in 1) the assertion of a fundamental strata of reality that constitutes the “really real”, and 2) the dissolution of the object** in and through that stratum. Lucretius is a prime example of an underminer. When Lucretius compares atoms to the alphabet and objects and states-of-affairs to words and sentences, what he is claiming is that atoms are the “really real” and that objects composed of atoms are bare epiphenomena that do not really have being in their own right (this is somewhat unfair to Lucretius as he does nod here and there to **emergent properties that result only from relations** among atoms). Likewise, when Plato distinguishes between the forms and appearances, he reveals a strategy of undermining. All the entities and states-of-affairs we see in the world around us are, under one reading of Plato, mere copies of the forms that lack genuine and full being in their own right. When Badiou claims that being qua being is pure multiplicity without one, he is an underminer, treating structured situations as mere ephemera that are not true realities in their own right. Consequently, one claim of the **flat ontology advocated by onticology is a vigorous rejection of this sort of reductivism. To be sure, the mereological considerations borne out of OOO dictate that objects are composed of other objects, or that a rock also contains atomic particles and perhaps even “strings”, but the being of each and every object is irreducible in its own right. While it is certainly true that rocks are made up of atoms, the atoms are not more real than the rock and the rock is not less real than the atoms or atomic particles.** This is the “weird mereology” of OOO, so forcefully developed by Harman and presenting a real challenge and alternative to the infinite multiplicities of Badiou, that undermines our traditional understanding of part-whole relations. **The atoms are objects in their own right. The rock is an object in its own right. The being of the rock is not shorthand for “collection of atoms”. There is a link between these objects but it is a link between distinct objects. Within the framework of onticology, the proper being of an object is its virtual endo-relational structure and that endo-relational structure is not a property of the parts that compose the object, but rather belongs to the object itself**. The parts of my body, for example, are constantly changing (cells die, cells are produced) but my proper being as an object or substance, my virtual endo-relational structure, remains the same. **The flatness of flat ontology is thus first and foremost the refusal to treat one strata of reality as the really real over and against all others. It doesn’t forbid or reject talking about interesting correlations among objects such as the relation between atoms and a rock or a person and the neuronal web of the brain, but it does hold that this is a relation between objects, not a relation between appearance on the one hand and reality on the other hand. In this respect, flat ontology endorses** Latour’s thesis **that “nothing is, by itself, either reducible or irreducible to anything else”** (Irreductions, 1.1.1).

**The role of the ballot is to vote for whoever best promotes a more object oriented ontology. not fiated impacts. Prefer because:**

1. **Portable skills: Allowing debate to be a space where we focus on the way students think and not the imagined impacts builds better advocacy skills for students that are translatable to the world outside debate.**
2. **Ivory Theory: Allowing fiated impacts means that debaters can haphazardly read mundane impacts that could happen from their plan and not develop real skills to analyze the real world. This creates an army of debators that are disconnected with real world change.**