### FW

#### I value morality as per the evaluative term “ought” in the resolution.

#### 1 – The meta ethic is contractarianism – morality is a guide to action, so it must provide reasons that could actually obligate us, and only rules that we would willingly accept could obligate us. Gauthier 1: Gauthier, David P. *Morals by Agreement*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1986.

Moral principles are introduced as the objects of full voluntary ex ante agreement among rational persons.  Such agreement is hypothetical, in supposing a pre-moral context for the adoption of moral rules and practices.  But the parties to agreement are real, determinate individuals, distinguished by their capacities, situations, and concerns.  In so far as [Since] they would agree to constraints on their choices, restraining their pursuit of their own interests, they acknowledge a distinction between what they may and may not do. As rational persons understanding the structure of their interaction, they recognize a place for mutual constraint, and so for a moral dimension in their affairs.

#### 2 – Burdens – the aff burden is to prove that a free press has the moral obligation to prioritize objectivity over advocacy, and the neg burden is the converse – that’s most textual since the rez is comparative.

#### 3 – In democracies, only Public Reason can determine which rules have bindingness, since only reasonable rules that we would willingly accept could obligate us in an ostensibly free system.

Quong, Jonathan, "Public Reason", The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Spring 2018 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2018/entries/public-reason/>.

Public reason requires that the moral or political rules that regulate our common life be, in some sense, justifiable or acceptable to all those persons over whom the rules purport to have authority. It is an idea with roots in the work of Hobbes, Kant, and Rousseau, and has become increasingly influential in contemporary moral and political philosophy as a result of its development in the work of John Rawls, Jürgen Habermas, and Gerald Gaus, among others. Proponents of public reason often present the idea as an implication of a particular conception of persons as free and equal. Each of us is free in the sense of not being naturally subject to any other person’s moral or political authority, and we are equally situated with respect to this freedom from the natural authority of others. How, then, can some moral or political rules be rightly imposed on all of us, particularly if we assume deep and permanent disagreement amongst persons about matters of value, morality, religion, and the good life? The answer, for proponents of public reason, is that such rules can rightly be imposed on persons when the rules can be justified by appeal to ideas or arguments that those persons, at some level of idealization, endorse or accept. But public reason is not only a standard by which moral or political rules can be assessed: it can also provide standards for individual behavior. Because we make moral and political demands of each other, if we are to comply with the ideal of public reason, we must refrain from advocating or supporting rules that cannot be justified to those on whom the rules would be imposed. We should instead, some insist, only support those rules we sincerely believe can be justified by appeal to suitably shared or public considerations—for example, widely endorsed political values such as freedom and equality—and abstain from appealing to religious arguments, or other controversial views over which reasonable people are assumed to disagree. In this way, public reason can be presented as a standard for assessing rules, laws, institutions, and the behavior of individual citizens and public officials.

#### 4 – The Public Reason can only be elucidated through universally non-coercive and intersubjective discourse about the factual states of affairs – any other norm risks excluding marginalized discursive practices.

Quong, Jonathan, "Public Reason", The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Spring 2018 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2018/entries/public-reason/>.

Some philosophers present the idea of public reason, or the public use of reason, as an essential and central part of the nature of rational discourse about moral norms. Habermas’s influential account of discourse ethics (Habermas 1990; Habermas 1996) has been presented by some as grounding a conception of public reason in this way. On this view, the validity of moral and political norms can only be established by an intersubjective and idealized practice of argumentation. Only through an inclusive and noncoercive discursive process where all participants are equally situated can genuinely intersubjectively valid norms emerge. Habermas thus proposes a dialogical principle of universalization, (U), stating that a moral norm “is valid just in case the foreseeable consequences and side-effects of its general observance for the interests and value-orientations of each individual could be jointly accepted by all concerned without coercion” (Habermas 1998, 42). For Habermas, this principle follows from the presuppositions of rational moral discourse. Thus, at least on one interpretation, to engage in reasoned moral or political argument with others is to commit oneself to something like the idea of public reason—to commit oneself to finding norms that could be jointly accepted by all concerned without coercion. On this account, public reason is grounded in the nature of reasoned moral argument: one cannot, without contradiction, avoid the idea of public reason insofar as one wants to engage in reasoned moral or political argument with others.Although Habermas’s account of discourse ethics has been influential amongst those who favor some version of discursive or deliberative democracy (Bohman 1996; Chambers 1996; Dryzek 1990; Dryzek 2000), its capacity to serve as the basis for public reason is the subject of a number of criticisms. Perhaps most importantly, by grounding public reason in a broader account of truth, validity, and rational argument, public reason becomes tied to a specific and controversial philosophical doctrine. But some proponents of public reason believe its role is to serve as a mechanism of justification amongst persons who reasonably disagree about philosophical and other issues typically embedded in what Rawls calls comprehensive doctrines (Rawls 1996, 13). If one believes the idea of public reason should stand apart from any particular comprehensive doctrine or philosophical theory of truth and rationality, the appeal to the presuppositions of rational discourse will be a problematic basis for public reason (see Rawls 1996, 376–381).

#### 5 – Objectivity is a process, not an ends.

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To do this, as a consequence of their allergic reaction to epistemology and their need to be, in some way, useful, ‘truth’ – a truth, ‘journalistic truth’ – becomes glossed as ‘objectivity’. The term first appears in connection with journalism in 1911, in the same year as the trade’s arrival on the US college campus as a degreeworthy subject.19 Being objective was a central factor in the drive towards professionalism, constructing the journalist ‘as an impartial mass-informer’.20 For Jay Rosen, objectivity is a ‘public philosophy’ which is ‘one of the identifying features of journalism in the United States and perhaps the major contribution American journalism has made to the rest of the world’.21 But, beware (perhaps) of Americans bearing gifts: objectivity is just another philosophical can of worms and journalists are just as confused about it as they are about truth. For the lexicographers, objectivity is a journey while truth is a state, meaning that the former is defined as the process of reaching a state of truth (whatever that is) through a process independent of individual subjectivity arising from perception, emotions, or imagination. And in philosophy too, it stands in a binary opposition with subjectivity, and is seen to be most achieved in the case of ‘knowledge which bears no sense of the knowers’, as, ideally, with science.

#### The standard is consistency with the intersubjective norms governed by the Public Reason.

#### Prefer –

#### Ethical frameworks must be theoretically legitimate. Framework is functionally a topicality debate about how to define the terms of the resolution. Prefer this definition:

#### [A] Resource disparities—a focus on evidence and statistics privileges debaters with the most preround prep which excludes small schools without a lot of prep. The 1ac burden structures the debate such that the each debater has access to the ballot using solely analytical arguments. That controls the internal link to other voters because a pre-req to debating is access to the activity.

#### [B] Performativity: The existence of the Public Reason is a prerequisite to the process of justifying any argument – the existence of debate’s time and speech structure show that intersubjective norms are empirically valid. Willing that we should abide by any other ethical theory presupposes that we could be convinced of it which implies the existence of a public reason. That implies denying the 1ac standard loses you the ballot because you’re inadvertently denying that an intersubjective reason to vote for the neg could exist under the current norms of debate.

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### Offense

#### I affirm – In a democracy, a free press ought to prioritize objectivity over advocacy by adhering to journalistic practices mandated by principles of Public Reason.

Fox, Carl. “Public Reason, Objectivity, And Journalism In Liberal Democratic Societies.” Res Publica 19 (3). 2013. <https://philpapers.org/rec/FOXPRO>.

Another potential objection to my proposal is that it would effectively declaw journalists. If there are ways of presenting facts, or even facts themselves, that are utterly unpalatable to an otherwise reasonable comprehensive doctrine then they must be considered inappropriate and off limits. Will journalists, therefore, find themselves rendered toothless, struggling to find neutral facts and neutral ways of presenting them? This criticism, while natural, is based on a misunderstanding of how public reason works. It is not concerned with narrowing the available scope of arguments or modes of presentation to only the select few that every reasonable person accepts and agrees with. Rather, it mandates journalists to proceed in a manner that we can reasonably expect others to accept as reasonable. The criticism misunderstands public reason as setting the bar far too high. For journalists, controversial material is perfectly appropriate subject matter so long as it is researched, selected, and presented in accordance with principles that can be satisfactorily justified. While there may be many who vehemently disagree with the content or conclusions of a journalistic article or report, it is legitimate in so far as it is insulated by the method of its production. Indeed, this is intended to be one of the strengths of recasting journalistic objectivity as an exercise in public reason. At this point we should also note that journalism as public reason will not inevitably lead to sterile uniformity in the reporting of stories or the communication of opinion. Indeed, Rawls (2005, p. 240) defends public reason from the objection that when used in decision making it will not guarantee a single, unanimous outcome. It does place strict limits on the methodology that journalists should apply, but in practice these will serve as ideal goals, goals which journalists will strive to realise asymptotically, ever nearing an ideal which will serve as an ultimate standard.



#### We’ll defend the method of the veil of ignorance – journalists ought to assume a position in which they are blind to their own initial position, and remove arbitrary advocacy based in social contingencies.

Freeman, Samuel. 2012 "Original Position." Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/original-position/#ArgForDifPri

“The remedy for such biased judgments is to redefine the initial situation. Rather than a state of nature Rawls situates the parties to his social contract so that they do not have access to knowledge that can distort their judgments and result in unfair principles. Rawls's original position is an initial situation wherein the parties are without information that enables them to tailor principles of justice favorable to their personal circumstances. Rawls says, “Among the essential features of this situation is that no one knows [their] place in society, [their]class position or social status, nor does any one know [their] fortune in the distribution of natural assets and abilities, [their] intelligence, strength and the like. I shall even assume that the parties do not know their conceptions of the good or their special psychological propensities. The principles of justice are chosen behind a veil of ignorance” (TJ, 12/11). This veil of ignorance deprives the parties of all knowledge of particular facts about themselves, about one another, and even about their society and its history. The parties are not however completely ignorant of facts. They know all kinds of general facts about persons and societies, including knowledge of the relatively uncontroversial laws and generalizations derivable from economics, psychology, political science, and biology and other natural sciences. They know then about the general tendencies of human behavior and psychological development, about biological evolution, and about how economic markets work, including neo-classical price theory of supply and demand. As discussed below, they also know about the circumstances of justice—moderate scarcity and limited altruism—as well as the desirability of the “primary social goods” that are needed to live a good life and to develop their “moral powers.” What they lack however is knowledge of any particular facts about their own lives or other persons' lives, as well as knowledge of any historical facts about their society and its population, level of wealth and resources, etc.. Rawls thinks that since the parties are required to come to an agreement on objective principles that supply universal standards of justice applying across all societies, knowledge of particular and historical facts about any person or society is morally irrelevant and potentially prejudicial to their decision. Another reason for Rawls's “thick” The veil of ignorance is that it is designed to be a “position of equality” (TJ, 12/11) that represents persons purely in their capacity as free and equal moral persons. The parties in the original position do not know any particular facts about themselves or society; they all have the same general information made available to them. They are then situated equally in a very strong way, “symmetrically” (JF 18$) and purely as free and equal moral persons. They know only characteristics and interests of themselves in their capacity as moral persons—their interests in developing the moral powers of justice and rationality, their need for the primary social goods, and so on.”

#### That affirms – it requires journalists prioritize objectivity and necessitates a transparent and democratic process by which information is sourced and disseminated.

Fox, Carl. “Public Reason, Objectivity, And Journalism In Liberal Democratic Societies.” Res Publica 19 (3). 2013. <https://philpapers.org/rec/FOXPRO>.

It is not enough to present the extreme sides of an argument, or to approach both the government and the opposition for quotes. The vital role of journalism in a liberal democracy necessitates a transparent process and an ethos that is hostile to bias. With the intention of recasting the journalistic commitment to objectivity as a definite methodology, I turn now to a discussion of Rawls’s conception of public reason. Public Reason Rawls (1999, 2005) came to be deeply concerned with the implications of what he thought of as the brute fact of reasonable pluralism.5 Reasonable and rational people, intelligent and thoughtful in their attempts to understand and solve fundamental common problems seem inevitably to differ and disagree. Indeed, Rawls described several ‘burdens of judgment’, such as complex and conflicting evidence, the inherent difficulty involved in the weighting of various considerations, and the subtle and shifting subjective biases that arise of the experience of living life itself,6 so as to demonstrate the inevitability of conflict in the generation and application of foundational values and beliefs.7 These factors lead ultimately to a myriad of substantially different worldviews or comprehensive doctrines and, following Mill, he thought that it can be perfectly reasonable for people to disagree so deeply. However, while we have no option but to come to terms with reasonable pluralism, the difficulties it presents are enormous. Indeed, one of the chief tasks of political philosophy is the project of reconciling these doctrines in order to make a legitimate and stable political association a possibility. The idea of public reason is Rawls’s answer to a vital question posed by reasonable pluralism, namely; how can a political community containing many comprehensive doctrines collectively decide fundamental political questions in spite of the apparently irreconcilable conflicts generated by these doctrines? Resolving this problem provides a template for a public sphere robust enough to withstand the difficulties that trouble, for example, Habermas. For Habermas (1996, 2008), the public sphere and the ability of private people to engage in rational public communication was a purely historical development that owes its origin to the radical effect of emerging capitalist values and strategies on the feudal hierarchy of the thirteenth century. It existed only briefly and soon flickered out, extinguished by the march of the very same political, social, and economic forces which gave rise to it. What remains for autonomous individuals is to commit to his ideal discourse theory, which espouses the creation of ideal conditions where ‘everyone is required to take the perspective of everyone else, and thus project herself into the understandings of the self and the world of others’ (Habermas 1995, p. 117). Ideal role-taking, he argues, can produce a common ‘we-perspective’ which will eventually allow for undistorted communication. This is how we can (objectively) share the information we need to participate in political institutions and hold public authorities to account. The problem with using ideal discourse theory to model journalistic objectivity is that, unlike public reason, it requires a profound shift in our collective moral thinking when, if I am correct, we can follow Rawls in more pragmatically demanding that particular institutions conform to the rules of public reason.8

### U/V

#### Interp – negatives must only the defend the converse of the resolution. Violation – it’s preemptive.

#### [1] Textuality – rez is innately comparative as per the word “prioritize” which means neg should defend the converse since the negation of a comparative is the contrapositive. Logic is a voter since it’s the only way arguments can be evaluated to be valid or sound.

#### [2] Predictability – converse is the most predictable since it’s tied to the rez which is the only stasis point in debate before the round – that incentivizes better research since affs can prep topic literature and write frontlines which compare warrants which is most educational.

#### [3] Strat skew – defending the converse makes the debate 1:1 which is most fair – fairness is a voter since it’s key to evaluating who’s the better debater. It’s best for clash since it prevents uplayering and incentivizes comparative analysis of the warrants. Comparative analysis of the warrants incentivizes topic research – especially important since there’s only one tournament on the topic. Running positions not converse to the resolution take more time to argue against than the alternative and remove the affirmatives ability to extend evidence from the AC as defense or turns on the NC requiring the aff to either take extended time for extensions or rebuttals making the already short 1ar excessively difficult. Skew is irreversible and the highest impact since it’s always actual abuse and can’t be resolved without dropping the debater for violating the interp.

#### [4] Ground – Neg intrinsically has more strategy since there’s always more reasons why something is wrong than why it’s right – forcing them to defend the converse equalizes ground which equalizes access to the ballot. Also it’s impossible to turn an argument which denies an assumption of the rez without double turning yourself but defending the converse solves this.

#### An acausal driver must exist. [1] Infinite regress – all sound arguments have bounded premises and conclusions, which means a sound argument justifying the existence of the first substance implies the existence of a factor which caused that first substance to come into being. The fact that we can posit such a sound argument implies the existence of the acausal driver. [2] Ontological argument – an acausal factor must contain every non-contradictory attribute, and existence is an attribute, which means the acausal factor has the attribute of existence. [3] Natural law – every natural relationship must have been brought about some factor, and we know that natural relationships exist (gravity, particle physics, strong and weak atomic forces) which means a factor must have brought it about. Since laws of nature cannot be reduced further that means only the acausal factor could have brought it about. [4] The best neuroscientific, psychological, and medical proves that an acausal factor must exist.

Andrea Lavazza, Neuroethics, Centro Universitario Internazionale, Arezzo, Italy, Free Will and Neuroscience: From Explaining Freedom Away to New Ways of Operationalizing and Measuring It, 2016, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4887467/> ///AHS PB BRACKETED FOR CLARITY

All these experiments seem to indicate that free will is an illusion. Yet, these relevant experiments can be interpreted in many ways. A possible view is that, in some way, determinism can be observed directly within ourselves. This interpretation might lead to the conclusion that free will is just an illusion. In fact, if one considers as a condition of free will the fact that it should be causa sui (i.e., it should be able to consciously start new causal chains), such a condition is incompatible with determinism as it is usually defined. For it, in fact, all events are linked by casual relations in the form of natural laws, which started long before we were born and which we cannot escape. However, determinism has generally been regarded as a metaphysical claim, not refutable by empirical findings. One could properly talk of automatism in the brain, not of determinism, based on the evidence available. (In any case, endorsing indeterminism might lead to consider our behavior as the causal product of choices that every time produce different results, as if we rolled a dice. This doesn’t seem to make us any freer than if determinism were overturned; cf. Levy, 2011). Most importantly, another feature of freedom seems to be a pure illusion, namely the role of consciousness. The experiments considered thus far heavily question the claim that consciousness actually causes voluntary behavior. Neural activation starts the decisional process culminating in the movement, while consciousness “comes after”, when “things are done”. Therefore, [and] consciousness cannot trigger our voluntary decisions. But the role of consciousness in voluntary choices is part of the definition of free will (but the very definition of consciousness is a matter of debate, cf. Chalmers, 1996). Empirical research in psychology also shows that our mind works and makes choices without our conscious control. As proposed by psychologist Wegner (2002, 2003, 2004) and Aarts et al. (2004), we are “built” to have the impression to consciously control our actions or to have the power to freely choose, even though all that is only a cognitive illusion. Many priming experiments show that people act “mechanically” (even when their behavior might appear suited to the environment and even refined). Automatic cognitive processes, of which we aren’t always aware, originate our decisions, and they were only discovered thanks to the most advanced scientific research. Ultimately, consciousness, which should exercise control and assess the reasons for a choice, is thus allegedly causally ineffective: a mere epiphenomenon, to use the terminology of the philosophy of mind. This is what has been called Zombie Challenge, “based on an amazing wealth of findings in recent cognitive science that demonstrate the surprising ways in which our everyday behavior is controlled by automatic processes that unfold in the complete absence of consciousness” (Vierkant et al., 2013).

#### The existence of an acausal factor implies advocacy is impossible – advocacy is defined as support for a cause (Merriam Webster) but the existence of an acausal factor denies the existence of free will which means individuals cannot rationally choose to support one cause over another. That means you auto affirm – determinism implies unilateral stasis meaning empirical objectivity is necessarily true which means you must prioritize it over advocacy.

#### Interpretation: The negative must concede the affirmative framework if the affirmative framework was disclosed 30 minutes before, it has an impact calc section that allows for negative ground and if it’s Rawlsian.

#### Violation: It’s preemptive

#### Standards -

#### Planks solve their offense – prevents any auto affirm frameworks and allows for clash on the advantage through the impact calc section, disclosure allows for research on our specific phil which creates phil education.

#### Inclusion – Rawls forces people to think about their subject position and privilege they have in the world compared to other groups, making a white guy think about what it would be like to have a knee on his neck is good. Inclusion outweighs

#### Sequencing – you need to access the procedure in the first place to access procedural fairness

#### Time skew- Winning the negative framework moots 6 minutes of 1AC offense and forces a 1AR restart against a 7 min 1NC – that outweighs

#### Quantifiability and reversibility – I can’t get back time lost and it’s the only way to measure abuse.

#### Prep skew- We can’t predict every single negative framework before round but they know the resolution coming into round which makes pre-tournament prep impossible. Especially true since there are millions of K’s and NC’s that could negate - Prep skew outweighs

#### Sequencing- It’s a perquisite engaging in-round since you need prep to debate

#### Engagement- It ruins the quality and depth of discussions that make debate rounds educational.

#### Identifying shared apocalyptic threats to settler and indigenous peoples enables plural future-making that challenges colonialist structures

Weiss 18 [Joseph Weiss, Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Wesleyan University, “Shaping the future on Haida Gwaii: Life beyond Settler Colonialism,” 2018, UBC Press, pp. 181-191, EA]

Signs of the Future

One of the more recent additions to the social landscape of Old Massett, which I noticed on a return visit in 2014, was a series of blue signs that had appeared in many of the lawns on reserve and a good few uptown. The sign was a good two feet high and emblazoned with capitalized text: UNITED AGAINST ENBRIDGE. Below the text was a picture of a salmon. The salmon and the first word, “UNITED,” were in stark, attention-grabbing white, while the rest of the text was in black. The signs, I later discovered, were distributed for five dollars each by the Friends of Wild Salmon, a coalition of northern BC residents – including both First Nations and non-First Nations members – working together to oppose the Enbridge Gateway Pipelines Project. 1 Perhaps appropriately, then, I noticed the sign on the lawns of both Haida and non-Haida, in Old Massett, (New) Masset, and out by Towtown.

The signs may have been new, but their message is one that should have become familiar to us at this point: the people of Haida Gwaii oppose “Enbridge” – that is, the Enbridge Northern Gateway Pipelines Project. The project, first proposed in the mid-2000s, seeks to construct two pipelines to transport crude oil and condensate from northern Alberta to Kitimat on the coast of British Columbia. The oil would then be transported via super-tanker from the coast, through the Hecate Strait that passes between the west coast and the islands of Haida Gwaii, before being exported to other nations (particularly China). Enbridge has been perceived as receiving heavy support for the project from Canada’s then Conservative government, headed by Stephen Harper, and, in 2013, the Enbridge Joint Review Panel – despite the words of hippies and Haida alike, alongside fierce opposition from all over the Northwest Coast – approved the pipelines, albeit with 209 required conditions. 2 For its supporters, the Enbridge Pipelines Project promises a future horizon of economic prosperity, one that unequivocally justifies any environmental risk in the present.

For its opponents on Haida Gwaii, Enbridge presages a rather different future, one in which the unpredictable waters of the Hecate Strait all but guarantee a tanker spill. Such a spill would devastate the waters and lands of the islands and the neighbouring coastline of British Columbia, destroying the fish and poisoning the plants that currently draw on ocean waters and the animals that feed thereon. Neither eagles nor ravens could survive, living as they do on a diet that consists primarily of marine life. All this would all but guarantee the disappearance of Eagles and Ravens, the Haida people whose lifeways are so fundamentally tied to the islands of Haida Gwaii. Haida Gwaii could no longer be home. A song recorded in protest again Enbridge by Aboriginal artist Kinnie Starr and animated as a music video by Haidawood, 3 a team of Haida and non-Haida stop-motion artists and animators, makes this threat explicit, asking in its opening lines: “Who will save our waters, save them for our great granddaughters, save them for our great grand-daughter’s sons, ... save them before all is dead and done?” 4

This nightmare future, this future that is no future, is one that looms large over the whole of this book. It is familiar because it is a reiteration of the horror of ecological cataclysm that the CHN formed itself in opposition to, that the hippies risk metonymically bringing about by taking from the lands and waters without respect. But it is also familiar because, in a broader sense, it is the future that settler colonialism attempted to give to Native peoples – indeed, rendered as their already given destiny. This is the future of Indigenous erasure, of ultimate disappearance, of a closed temporality that can only end in “all dead and done.” However, Haida people take the future of “no future” neither as inevitable nor as already determined; rather, the work of future-making acts to ward off the nightmare future of Haida erasure, putting in its place multiple possible futures in which Haida people continue. Take the blue signs on the lawns of the Masset(t)s, Old and New, implicitly answering Kinnie Starr’s question with the bold declaration that the islands (will) stand “UNITED” against Enbridge. But the social significance of these futures is never encompassed solely by the ways in which they respond to the threat of nightmare futures. As we have seen, the production of a future of Haida and non-Haida unity is considerably more complicated than a declaration of shared solidarity, speaking, as it does, to a particular history of Haida and settler relations and fantasy schemas, and productive ways in which non-Haida can be integrated into Haida systems of sociality and responsibility. To speak of a future united against Enbridge is thus necessarily to speak of many other things, just as is the case when speaking of a future of Haida return, a future of care-full leadership, or a future of traditional authority. Larger social worlds unfold out of the constitution of particular futures.

This is why, more than anything, I want to make clear that the significance of Haida future-making does not lie simply in the specific ways in which individual futures respond to the particular dilemmas of the settler colonial present; rather, what is most crucial about future-making as a way of thinking out from within the temporal brackets of settler colonialism’s deferred erasure is the fact of future-making itself. What matters most is the capacity to say, as Haida rapper Ja$e ElNino does in a guest appearance in Starr’s song, “Now expect the best from the northwest / What’s next? Just guess.” ElNino asserts the openness of the future, challenging his listeners to attempt to predict the field of possibilities still to come. At the same time, ElNino clearly locates the space out of which this field of possibilities emerges – “expect the best from the northwest,” he raps, specifying the capacity to produce “what’s next” as belonging to the “northwest,” to the coast’s First Nations and perhaps also to their non-Indigenous allies, united against Enbridge. In so doing, ElNino rejects the overdetermination of his lands and his people, suggesting that they themselves have the capacity to build their own futures that, by virtue of their very existence, challenge settler projects of destruction, environmental and otherwise.

This is the space of possibility that I sketch out in Shaping the Future on Haida Gwaii. Now I want to highlight its significance for our understandings of Indigenous political life under settler colonialism and within the field of political anthropology more generally. Thinking and working with the future in the ways that Haida people do can be understood as its own potent assertion of sovereign self-determination, even though it is not restricted to any one particular legal or political claim. Rather, Haida forms of future-making track between the formal realms of law and politics and a host of other concerns, constraints, aspirations, and projects in everyday Haida life. The constitution of an autonomous Haida government that promises to protect the islands from settler incursion for the sake of future generations co-exists with the hope that those future generations will also find success in the settler world. Love for Haida Gwaii and the desire for it to endure ecologically can be understood equally as the ground for proper Haida care-full politics, the opportunity for non-Haida to learn to engage respectfully with Haida on significant environmental issues, and the object of problematic hippie fantasies. The fact that such moments can be encompassed within a relatively coherent Haida lived world and can be imagined as part of Haida futures suggests that Haida are actively retaking – and to an extent have already retaken – control of their continuing existence outside the temporal foreclosures of the project of settler colonialism.

We might ask, however, to what extent this reassertion of the rights to continuing existence is of largely symbolic significance in the context of the seeming fixity of colonial nation-states and the domination of Native (and non-Native) lives by the demands of settler capitalism. To what extent can Haida people determine their futures if those futures are always calibrated according to the demands and expectations of settler society, economically and otherwise? What does future-making truly accomplish, especially when it is as much aspirational as it is something that has the capacity to be actualized? I argue that Haida future-making unsettles. It does not overthrow colonial domination, nor does it carve out an autonomous Indigenous space within Canada; rather, it proceeds through interdependencies and adoptions, ambivalences and anxieties, situating Haida people as necessarily in relation to and in relations with non-Haida. But this is also its potential power. Just as the forms of Haida time work to gradually realign temporal sensibilities on Haida Gwaii even as they appear to be bounded within the constraints of settler time-discipline, Haida future-making carries the potential for the strategic reiteration of the settler colonial present, shifting its realities even as it reinscribes them.

Sovereignty

Haida future-making takes place in the midst of a struggle over sovereignty. And this not just in the sense of the Council of the Haida Nation’s ongoing assertion of its sovereign right to govern the lands and waters of Haida Gwaii on behalf of all Haida people. Rather, as Joanne Barker argues, over the course of the latter half of the twentieth century sovereignty has emerged as a “particularly valued term within Indigenous scholarship and social movements and through the media of cultural production. It [is] a term around which analyses of Indigenous histories and cultures were organized and whereby Indigenous activists articulate their agendas for social change” (Barker 2005b, 18). Through the assertion of sovereignty, Indigenous political leaders, activists, and scholars refute “the dominant notion that Indigenous people [are] merely one among many ‘minority groups’ under the administration of state social service and welfare programs”; instead, “sovereignty defines Indigenous people with concrete rights to self-government, territorial integrity, and cultural autonomy under international law” (Barker 2005b, 18). The trouble is, of course, that Indigenous claims to sovereignty are always made within the context of colonial nation-states, whose own legitimacy is put at risk both by the prospect of self-determining Indigenous Nations (re-)emerging within their boundaries and by the troubling of their own historical narratives of sovereign rights (Comaroff and Comaroff 2003). One of these narratives reinterprets Indigenous lands as terra nullius and thus open to occupation. Thus, while sovereignty might indeed “define” Indigenous peoples with concrete rights to territorial title and self-determination, in theory equal under international law to the states who also lay claim to their territories, that definition does not in and of itself make possible the practice of this sovereignty. In this regard, settler states such as Canada have shifted in their response to First Peoples’ sovereignty claims from outright rejection to selective recognition, but even the latter still positions Native nations as being subject to the authority and oversight (if not the structural forms) of the state.

This means that Indigenous governments such as the CHN are in a precarious position, attempting to constitute their own sovereign authority without access to many of the conventional means of sovereignty in Western political thought – for example, the monopoly on legitimate violence (Weber 1946), decisive authority to make and enact law (Schmitt 2005), and/or exclusive territorial control (Brown 2010; Hobbes 1994). Alongside this precarity is the equally anxious question of whether or not sovereignty is even an appropriate analytic around which to centre Indigenous rights precisely because it is historically a Western concept, one that has been drawn on to dispossess Indigenous peoples over the course of settler colonial history (Barker 2005b, 18–19). Indeed, the very next essay in Barker’s edited volume, by Taiaiake Alfred, categorically rejects sovereignty, calling it an inappropriate tool for Indigenous political assertions not only for these reasons but also because it draws attention away from developing and furthering “genuinely” Aboriginal political modes of thought (Alfred 2005; see also Alfred 2009).

The fact that sovereignty remains such a preeminent concept in the struggle for Indigenous rights even though it is both epistemologically problematic and politically constrained has meant that there has been a recent push in both anthropology and Indigenous studies to “widen” the definition of sovereignty so that it might encompass multiple forms of Indigenous social, political, and legal practice outside of the conventional purview of “sovereign power” (e.g., Cattelino 2008; Richland 2011; Simpson 2000, 2014). Or, as Joanne Barker puts it:

There is no fixed meaning for what sovereignty is – what it means by definition, what it implies in public debate, or how it has been conceptualized in international, national, or Indigenous law. Sovereignty – and its related histories, perspectives, and identities – is embedded within the specific social relations in which it is invoked and given meaning. How and when it emerges and functions are determined by the “located” political agendas and cultural perspectives of those who rearticulate it into public debate or political document to do a specific work of opposition, invitation, or accommodation. It is no more possible to stabilize what sovereignty means and how it matters to those who invoke it than it is to forget the historical and cultural embeddedness of Indigenous peoples’ multiple and contradictory political perspectives and agendas for empowerment, decolonization, and social justice. (Barker 2005b, 21, emphasis in original)

The opening up of sovereignty as flexible, multiple, and subject to all manner of diverse rearticulations carries particular weight since, as a historical concept in Western political theory, sovereignty is overwhelmingly concerned with closure. As Wendy Brown argues in her Walled States, Waning Sovereignty, the classic vision of sovereign power rests in the capacity to divide the inside from the outside, to make borders around a people – a “nation” – and separate that people from those outside it. Thus Schmitt’s “friend-enemy” distinction, for instance, or even John Locke’s consistent preoccupation with fences as a way of marking the existence of territory (Brown 2010; Schmitt 1996; Locke 1988). The historical conditions of Indigenous sovereignty claims in the context of settler colonialism make such absolute closures impossible for Indigenous peoples.

We might add, though, that the persistent presence of these claims also challenges the closure of the settler nation-state. Indeed, this is part of Brown’s point. The fact that we see ever more spectacular performances of sovereign power on the part of contemporary nation-states – for example, the titular “walls” that are being constructed along the borders of an increasing number of states – is a sign of the insecurity of their political authority (Brown 2010). 5 The conditions of settler colonial sovereignty, in other words, may be rather more “open,” and thus closer to those of Indigenous “nation-within-nations,” than they may at first appear. If this means, in turn, that the future for settler political life is becoming as uncertain as the future for Indigenous life has been since the advent of settlement, then this means what we have already begun to see: the dilemmas facing the Haida people in their future-making practices are also the dilemmas facing settler society. Take, for example, how the absence of any “one” definitive governing entity compels the constitution of an aspirational framework of accountability that could, were it realized, render Haida relations navigable to the many governments that claim Haida loyalty. Such dilemmas are not restricted to the Haida sociopolitical world; rather, they may be endemic to contemporary democratic societies and the multiple forms of governance (licit and otherwise) that emerge therein.

In suggesting that there are Haida ways of refiguring a shared Haida-settler set of contemporary problematics, we might think of Haida future-making both as an instantiation of the multiple, flexible, and always contingently located practices of sovereignty to which Barker points and as a different way of thinking about Indigenous political potentiality. In the former sense, Haida future-making is without doubt concerned with carving out spaces in which Haida existence can continue, expand, and change without losing the capacity to reproduce itself as Haida existence – thus the processes of homecoming or the explicitly political attempts to establish control over the islands for future generations. If the absence of Indigenous sovereignty is the absence of the capacity of an Indigenous people to (self)-determine their own futures, then the constitution of Haida futures can be seen as sovereign work, whether in the overt sense of the CHN’s assertions or in the somewhat more implicit mode of Alice Stevens’s proposed mass adoptions. Significant here, though, is the fact that these acts of future-making carry meanings beyond their status as responses to the social and political dilemmas of contemporary Haida life. Thus Alice Stevens’s adoption project seeks to bring hippie children into the framework of Haida kinship relations, not only neutralizing their potential threat but also constituting a complex new network of social relations between Haida and non-Haida whose potential significance goes well beyond the protection of Haida territory and resources. Thus the CHN emerges as a state-like governing entity through its authorizing promise to take care of the islands, but in so doing it takes on a series of new roles in Haida political life whose full consequences remain to be seen. If it is a sovereign action to envision an opening of possible futures for Haida people, then this very openness might also exceed the boundaries of sovereignty as a problematic for Indigenous people even as it responds to them.

Which is also, perhaps, why Haida futures seem so consistently to sketch out social, ecological, and political fields that encompass non-Haida – more, that are futures for Canada as well as for the Haida people living within the nation-state’s borders. What would it mean to figure an Indigenous sovereignty that speaks beyond itself, one that promises to invert the order of settler domination through reconfiguring the shared futures of Indigenous and settler peoples? This would not be a sovereignty premised on territorial closure or even absolute political autonomy. It would, however, decisively overturn any settler colonial anticipations of the inevitable erasure of Native peoples. Quite the opposite, it would position Indigenous practices of anticipation, aspiration, certainty, and anxiety at the forefront of contemporary modes of political imagination. Rather than perceiving Indigenous peoples to be running out of time, we might all be understood – or at least imagined – to be running on Haida time.

Whether or not we accept the possibility that Haida future-making opens up the boundaries of sovereign possibility for Indigenous people, what is not contestable is that Haida people continue. They continue traditional practices and lifeways in sometimes transformed, sometimes continuous ways. They continue asserting their capacity to engage with settler Canadian society. And, more than anything, they continue to assert their right to envision, imagine, expect, contest, and constitute their futures. This is not always as explicit as the CHN’s authoritative attempts to safeguard the islands or even as Alice Stevens’s adoptions. More often than not, Haida people produce their futures simply by not even considering the possibility that this is not something they can, should, and have a right to do. They treat their right to continue temporally, socially, and otherwise as if it were already given and so work to reconfigure the present to make it so.

Beyond the Settler Colonial Moment

That the Haida people believe in their right to determine their futures does not mean that they believe that they have any exclusive power to do so in precisely their own terms. To paraphrase Marx, Haida people make their own futures, but they do not make them as they please. 6 As has been noted, the flow of Haida departures and returns unfolds within the broader context of the settler, capitalist state; indeed, these departures and returns are made necessary by the current absence of economic opportunity on island, just as the arrival of potentially threatening strangers is a result of their privileged position in the very capitalist economy they seek to escape. Constituting futures in which Haida people have the freedom to engage with that economy (and settler society more generally) as they see fit while retaining the capacity to come home reiterates the inescapability of some form of engagement with the mainstream settler economy. Likewise, the notion of Haida Gwaii as Haida homeland cannot be separated from current Haida struggles to assert their rights to the lands and waters of Haida Gwaii, the resources found therein, and the sovereign capacity of Haida people to govern themselves and the islands in the ways they find appropriate. This is, recall, the very crux of the CHN’s commitment to the assurance of futurity, as it is only by positioning itself as the rightful, sovereign government of the Haida Nation and its homeland of Haida Gwaii that it can adequately care for the islands and protect them from external threat. And the continued advance of the Enbridge project, despite fierce opposition from the CHN, the Old Massett Village Council, their Haida constituents, and the non-Haida actors with whom they are “united against Enbridge” gave the nightmare futures of environmental collapse a frightening immanence. The assertion of the openness of the future is made, in short, in and against a context in which closures remain endemic.

But note what has changed in the nature of these closures since the forecasts of Indigenous disappearance with which Shaping the Future on Haida Gwaii begins. In the narratives of colonial actors like Duncan Campbell Scott, it was absolutely clear that “Indians” were disappearing because their social worlds were being superseded by more “civilized” ways of living and being, ways that Native peoples would inevitably adopt; if they did not, they would perish outright. There was a future: it was simply a settler one. But the nightmare futures that Haida work to ward off in their own future-making reach beyond Haida life alone. Environmental collapse, most dramatically, threatens the sustainability of all life; toxins in the land and the waters put human lives at risk regardless of their Indigeneity, race, or gender (e.g., Choy 2011; Crate 2011). Put another way, the impetus for non-Haida to be “united against Enbridge” with their Indigenous neighbours is due to the fact that an oil spill would profoundly threaten the lives and livelihoods of non-Aboriginal coastal residents. Nor is the anxiety that young people might abandon their small town to pursue economic and educational advantages in an urban context limited to reserve communities: the demands of capitalist economic life compel such migrations throughout the globe. The nightmare futures against which Haida people constitute alternatives are not just futures that threaten the erasure of Indigenous peoples under settler colonialism: they are also futures that threaten the erasure of settler society itself.

The work of Haida future-making, then, is not restricted to the borders of reserves like Old Massett or Skidegate, porous as they may already be; instead, in Haida future-making we find the implicit assertion that Haida people can make futures that address the dilemmas of Haida and settler life alike – futures that can at least “navigate,” to borrow Appadurai’s phrasing, towards possible futures that do not end in absolute erasure. If Povinelli and Byrd are correct and settler liberal governance makes itself possible and legitimate through a perpetual deferral of the problems of the present, then part of the power of Haida future-making is to expose the threatening non-futures that might emerge out of this bracketed present. This work reveals as a lie the liberal promise of a good life always yet to come and attempts, instead, to constitute workable, livable alternatives. In so doing, Haida futures challenge the possibility that there could be any single, coherent settler future. The imaginary of “replacement” that grounds the settler colonial project is revealed as an aporia, an empty anticipation that at best only masks the complex and shifting landscape of Indigenous-settler relationships that characterize contemporary settler states like Canada. There is no one liberal good life waiting on the horizon, and there is no horizon in the settler state that can be imagined without the presence of Haida and other Indigenous peoples.

This, I would submit, is the unsettling dimension of Haida future-making, its capacity to reveal that, as Derrida might say, settler colonial time has always been “out of joint” with itself (Derrida 1994). 7 And it gains this unsettling capacity precisely because Haida future-making as we have seen it does not (and perhaps cannot) escape from the larger field of settler-colonial determination. Existing as a nation within a nation, envisioning ways of being Canadian that do not conflict with the essential practices, values, and traditions of Haida history, Haida future-making is at the same time Canadian future-making. Incorporated within the Canadian settler state, Haida people now have no choice but to make futures for it, even as they do so in terms of their own particular perspectives and histories. Perhaps what remains is for the rest of Canada to catch up. After all, when Ja$e ElNino suggests that the members of his audience can only guess at what’s next, he might be implying that they lack the conceptual resources to truly make their own futures, something that is most definitely not the case for Haida people. “Expect the best from the northwest,” he sings.

Or so we hope. So much of future-making is ideational. It emerges in discourse as people talk about how things are and how they should be, as they assert what will certainly happen in defiance of other possibilities, make claims and offer criticisms, make plans and voice hopes. What will come to pass from it all is rarely terribly clear. We are not sure, for instance, whether other projects like the Enbridge Northern Gateway Project will emerge, even though that project has been rejected, at least for now, by the federal government. But this does not mean that future-making does not accomplish social work. Thinking about the future enables Haida people to address dilemmas of the present, to suggest solutions to issues that seem intractable in the moment. These are not just the problems of Indigenous people; rather, we have seen that many rural communities face challenges of mobility and migration, that questions of political accountability resonate across (neo)liberal democracies, and that environmental struggles seek to protect the planet itself. As part of Haida lived worlds, these futures ground various political and social strategies that address contemporary concerns on Haida Gwaii. So, too, they sketch out different relationships between Haida and non-Haida, sometimes totally new, more often simply shifted towards the more respectful, the more care-full, the more equitable. And regardless of what emerges from any of these particular futures, for good or for ill, they represent, in the strongest possible terms, the assertion that Haida life has not been foreclosed in contemporary Canada; rather, Haida people continue, and they continue to imagine, anticipate, predict, work towards, and aspire to their futures. Not just about to be erased, not always about to disappear. Ongoing.