### 1AC – Loyola

#### We begin with the allegory of the creation of ABJECTION – one of those violent, dark revolts of being, directed against a threat that seems to emanate from an exorbitant outside or inside; neither subject nor object; ejected beyond the scope of the possible, the tolerable, the thinkable. The figure of the Leper thus lies at the corpse of the human, and the fetid air grows thick with the smell of rotting flesh – destroying the very capacity for certainty within the pure body. Abjection is not a “lack of cleanliness or health”, but rather a disruption of identity, system, or order by the in-between.

#### Thus, our 1AC begins from the position of SPITTING MONSTERS, COVID-19 HORROR, and that which we call the ABJECT which defies borders and is itself EXPELLED from the very condition of THOUGHT and LANGUAGE in order to create a conception of the self. Yet as we find today, that expulsion is never TRULY complete as traces of the abject, still find their way into our discussions and debates – causing us to ask “Who am I?”

Sax 20 [Marieka Sax, April 20 2020, Australian National University, Coronavirus Horror: A Reflection on Abjection and Embodied Weapons, https://cascacultureblog.wordpress.com/2020/04/20/coronavirus-horror-a-reflection-on-abjection-and-embodied-weapons/] RA

After conducting a further internet search, I became fascinated by the severity of the penal punishments assigned to the act of spitting in different countries during the COVID-19 crisis. I typed “spitting” and “coronavirus” in English as keywords into Google and obtained 8,720,000 results on March 31. These articles presented the act of spitting upon someone mainly as a life-threatening attack—an aberrant behaviour almost monstrous in its nature. As a violent assault, it evokes the abject and abjection associated with corporeal fluids and the horror of the pandemic crisis. In The Powers of Horror, Julia Kristeva elaborates the abject as what disrupts the “I.” The abject is the horror in response to the threatened dissolution of any border delimitating the interior and the exterior of the body: between purity and defilement, subject and object, or self and other. She locates the abject in crimes, corpses, and bodily fluids that are conceived as transgressions. In Kristeva’s definition, what causes abjection is not “lack of cleanliness or health”, but a disruption of identity, system or order by “[t]he in-between, the ambiguous, the composite” (1982: 4). The news articles also conjured the figure of the monster incarnated in the bodies of perpetrators who use their potentially deadly fluids—mostly saliva and blood in one case—to attack humans. Their ontological implications and varied social realities made monsters relevant for anthropological analysis. Yasmine Musharbash and Geir Henning Presterudstuen have put the monsters populating diverse field sites at the centre of their ethnographic analysis (2014; 2020). They have contextualized monsters within multiple temporalities of social change and traced their social trajectories. Because anthropologists’ monsters “deeply affect the lives of those they haunt,” their local manifestations should be studied in detail to reveal how people relate and respond to them (Musharbash 2014: 2). To understand their contextual positions, we must recognize that—more than mere constructs—monster realities are indeterminate. As Musharbash explains, anthropological contributions of “locally comparative understandings of monsters show the global diversity of contemporary understandings of power relations, crises, inequalities, anxieties, and traumas” (2014: 2). In the initial three dozen news headlines my internet search brought up, which illustrated the global distribution of cases, I identified tree main tendencies. The first tendency, which I call “Spitting monsters,” refers to offenders who were allegedly claimed to have the virus and who weaponized their bodily fluids against police officers and citizens. A couple of articles from the BBC (28 March and 30 March 2020) followed the case of a man in the United Kingdom who was sentenced to jail for 12 months, days after deliberately discharging his saliva onto two officers and having stated that he was infected. The Guardian (28 March 2020) covered several such incidents in the UK, including one where a man was taken into custody after having spat blood on the faces of police officers. Chief Superintendent David Duncan said, “this is extremely upsetting to victims and causes fear and increased anxiety at an already stressful time” (The Guardian, 28 March 2020). A similar case was reported by Radio New Zealand, about three police officers put in isolation after being spat at by a man they had arrested and who tested positive for COVID-19. According to the news report, the offender faced two charges: assault with intent to injure and resisting police. Nonetheless, if the officers became infected, he could potentially be sentenced to prison with the charge of “infecting with disease” (RNZ, 31 March 2020). In these stories, perpetrators intentionally put lives at risk by projecting their corporeal fluids, potentially spreading the coronavirus among people. The United States has responded to such threats with extreme measures, as reported by Politico (March 24, 2020) in an article that includes a link to a memo from Deputy Attorney General Jeffrey Rosen, US Department of Justice. The official document informs that under federal terrorism laws, those who intentionally spread coronavirus could face criminal charges. Because coronavirus appears to meet the statutory definition of a “biological agent” under 18 US Code § 178, offences considered pandemic-related crimes, like the “purposeful exposure and infection of others” with COVID-19, “potentially could implicate the Nation’s terrorism-related status.” A second tendency I call “Monster’s fears and the imagined other.” Here I include news stories where offenders also used their saliva to attack, but instead of targeting police officers, they used their bodily fluids against other specific subjects—nurses and individuals with Asian background. In associating the discriminated and racialized bodies of their victims with the virus, perpetrators identified these bodies as the targets of their hate, anxiety and fear. According to The Independent (March 20 2020), England’s chief nurse and the director of policy of the Royal College of Nursing, both expressed their concerns for the country’s community nurses, who have been spat at and called “disease spreaders” by people while visiting patients in their homes wearing uniforms. Susan Masters (director of policy of the Royal College of Nursing) considered the abuse as “abhorrent behaviour.” In another news storing, The Daily Mail (March 26 2020) reported the horrific abuse of a young nurse in New South Wales, Australia. The article included the video the nurse shared in her social media account about being spat on her face by a patient at a hospital. She explained how the attacker excused himself by saying she was “going to get sick anyway.” The patient/attacker was suspected of having coronavirus, although it was not confirmed in the article. According to a source cited, such violent attacks are believed to be triggered by “frightened people who think they are at risk of catching the virus from healthcare workers.” Hate crimes like these have proliferated with racist attacks around the world. In New York a police officer reported an attack against an Asian man who was spat on the face by a younger attacker in Brooklyn (New York Post, March 25 2020). When asked for an explanation, the offender was quoted as addressing the victim with “You f–king Chinese spreading the coronavirus!” Two days later, a newspaper headline informed that “Asian-Americans report nearly 700 racist attacks in a week,” and being spat at was one among the offences (New York Daily News, March 27 2020). According to India Today (March 23, 2020) citizens in the northeastern region of India are being subjected to heightened racism and discrimination during the coronavirus pandemic. The article included photographs of a young Manipuri woman who was spat on her face and called “corona” by a man in Delhi. Local policed filed a complaint against the man under Section 509 of the Indian Penal Code for “outraging modesty of a woman.” The article’s author explained how “people are letting the hysteria come out in shameful and disgusting ways” because of their “fear” over the virus. In a third category of news stories, objects were identified as the receptacles of the offences and the mediators of potentially infected fluids. I refer to these object-centered attacks as “Monsters’ material mediations.” In the “Crime” section of the International Business Times (March 28, 2020), an article introduced the case of an expat working in Saudi Arabia infected with coronavirus, who faces the death penalty for spitting on shopping carts, coins and doors after being arrested in the Al-Baha region. A prosecutor stated that “the expat worker’s actions amount to first-degree murder.” Accordingly, in the Saudi context his conduct “is religiously and legally condemned.” All these stories have been part of the ongoing “coronavirus horror.” These horror stories illuminate the ambiguity separating the virus—the non-living entity—from human bodies, and convey the affects motivating the “monstrous bodies” of offenders and the abject nature given to perpetrators’ biological fluids. In this commentary, I have briefly explored the ways online news sources portray a real fear of indeterminate monsters: viruses, spitting aggressors, harmful bodily fluids, invisible enemies, contaminated organisms and unconventional weapons. The events narrated here made me reflect on the social and cultural implications of risk and security framing the links between trans-corporeal violence, the fluidity of hate, anxiety and fear, and abject corporealities. I bring these themes to the conversation on the global crisis raised by the coronavirus pandemic to introduce the politics of abjection of self and others, the circulation of affects, and the reproduction of bodily weapons as seen through the critical lens of monster anthropology.

#### This semiotic formation is the ideological disposition against otherness that drives antiblack violence – the formation of social spheres hell bent on maintaining a white atmosphere. Politics today mirror that of Dr. Benjamin Rush who thought that blackness was a DISEASE and tried to ERASE IT from the flesh – the attachment of blackness to signifiers locks it down into signifiers like “slaveness” or “deviance”

Kee 15 [KEE, Jessica Baker. Black Masculinities and Postmodern Horror: Race, Gender, and Abjection. Visual Culture & Gender, [S.l.], v. 10, p. 47-56, oct. 2015. ISSN 1936-1912. Available at: <https://www.vcg.emitto.net/index.php/vcg/article/view/94>.] RA

Abjection is critical to understanding how bodies are assigned particular identities in visual representation. Julia Kristeva’s (1982) semiotic theory attempted an extension of Lacan’s mirror stage, which described how infants develop primary ego identification through subject/object separation, into the realm of bodily affects. Prior to abjection, the body exists as a constellation of affects and signs not yet organized by hegemonic binary symbolic language of subject/object. Through affective encounters, “objects and others are seen as having attributes, or certain characteristics, a perception and reading that may give the subject an identity that seems apart from some others” (Ahmed, 2005, p. 104). Abjection marks self/Other, inside/outside, and clean/unclean bodies through the expulsion of that which is not “I” and through the demarcation of spaces where such divisions blur and threaten the boundaries of subjective identity. Although abjection is intimately linked to disgust and taboo, it is “not lack of cleanliness or health that causes abjection but what disturbs identity, system, order. What does not respect borders, positions, rules. The in-between, the ambiguous, the composite” (Kristeva, 1982, p. 4). This ambiguous space exists between the semiotic realm of affects, which Kristeva associated with the maternal body, and the symbolic realm of language, associated with paternal judgment. Kristeva (1982) also identified abjection as a site of cultural production, which helps to describe how bodies are raced, classed, and gendered as “insiders” or “outsiders” within communities. Sara Ahmed (2005) suggested that “[t]he black body … may be read as Black insofar as “Blackness” has already accrued meanings, values, and associations over time, which make it readable as Black in the first place” (p. 107). Thus bodies do not inherently possess such characteristics, but accumulate them over time through affective encounters within unequal power relations. Fanon (2008) described the accrual of signifiers around Black male bodies as a process of epidermalization, or what Stuart Hall (1996) defined as “literally, the inscription of race on the skin” (p. 16). This inscription happens not via internal bodily affects but through the imposition of historical-racial schema upon the body by others—schema which are neither genetic nor biological but cultural and discursive, and yet ultimately come to signify certain bodies as “Other” within social and cultural communities. Thus non-White, non-male bodies are overcoded with signifiers, while White male bodies appear to exist “without properties, unmarked, universal, just human” (Dyer, 1997, p. 38). This results in an entrenched institutional power structure which Judith Butler (1993) identifies as an “exclusionary matrix,” creating “unliveable” and “uninhabitable” zones of social life which are nevertheless densely populated by those who do not enjoy the status of the subject, but whose living under the sign of the “unlivable” is required to circumscribe the domain of the subject. (p. 3) Although Butler’s analysis primarily addresses social abjection related to sexual difference, the cultural production of “Whiteness” as a norm also designates a realm of racially excluded Others (Dyer, 2002). As such, social constructions of race and gender are mutually constitutive of social identities and “ineluctably intertwined” in a “productively unstable alliance” (Dyer, 1997, p. 30). Richard Dyer (2002) argues for the textuality of representation—“what is represented in representation is not directly reality itself but other representations”—and cautions that the circulation of racial and gendered representations in visual culture also have direct material consequences on people’s lives (p. 2). William Pinar (2001) argued that the social construction of Black men as hypermasculine sexual threats to the White male patriarchal lineage fueled the institution of extralegal lynching (Figure 1) and the circulation of postcards and souvenirs commemorating such ghastly rituals. Such significations of race and gender worked together to abject Black male corpses in U.S. visual culture as cultural border objects. The U.S. historical prevalence of castration and sexualized torture/humiliation of Black male victims, in particular, positions lynching not only as anti-Black terror but also as a form of gendered sexual violence. Kristeva’s association of abjection with the feminine positions lynching victims as both racially abjected and symbolically castrated, and thus excludes them as racialized and gendered identities from the White patriarchal symbolic order (Scott, 2010).Cinematic lynching imagery cannot claim political neutrality within the exclusionary matrix, as images of lynching are part of a “visual history of the black as cowed, mutilated, dead” (Marriott, 2007, p. 186). Thus the horror images analyzed in this essay should not only be considered in relation to other cinematic representations of Black male abjection, but also to the real images of racial violence that have circulated for centuries within U.S. visual culture.

#### **This expulsion of the abject was not a singular event from the past but rather, world trade policy contains within its cracks and fissures, the dark undertones of the Leper Colony, in which the abject body of the Leper was caught between containment and sick-fascination as it existed to be locked away while simultaneously experimented on in order to find so-called “solutions” for its pathology – including the acts of skin bleaching and other rituals to extract the disease from the desecrated body of the human.**

#### The development of medicine cannot be separated from the need to protect against disease. The Leper Colony must be centered- it cannot be disentangled from COVID-19 induced xenophobia which is a prior ethical consideration to debate on drug regulation because it makes it impossible to fight epidemics.

CHANDRASHEKHAR 20 [VAISHNAVI CHANDRASHEKHAR, MA in science journalism from Columbia University, FROM LEPROSY TO COVID-19, HOW STIGMA MAKES IT HARDER TO FIGHT EPIDEMICS, <https://www.science.org/news/2020/09/leprosy-covid-19-how-stigma-makes-it-harder-fight-epidemics>] RA

History suggests stigma often sweeps beyond realistic concerns about contagion. In the mid to late 1800s, people in the United Kingdom panicked over leprosy, seeing the disease in racist terms, notes medical historian Shubhada Pandya, who is associated with the Acworth Leprosy Museum in Mumbai. An 1862 article in The BMJ said the countries of Asia were "infested" with leprosy "in proportion to the physical and moral degradation of their people." An 1898 colonial law empowered officials in India to round up and isolate homeless patients in institutions that were often segregated by sex to prevent procreation. In 1873, Norwegian scientist Gerhard Armauer Hansen isolated the bacterium that causes leprosy. During the mid to late 20th century, researchers developed treatments and the disease became less common. Still, people with leprosy continued to be shunned. Patients themselves internalized the stigma: Just last year, researchers who interviewed residents of a leprosy colony in Ghana reported that even people who were cured preferred to stay in the colony because they were ashamed of their disease and expected to be ostracized at home. Health-related stigma can sometimes have a "compounding effect" on other kinds of prejudice, exacerbating inequality, says Wim van Brakel, medical director of NLR, an international nongovernmental organization to fight leprosy in Amsterdam. For example, according to a 1996 ethnographic study in Thailand, many older people associated leprosy with begging, probably because in the past, ostracism and disability threw patients with the disease into poverty and eventually begging. A similarly outdated view has shaped perceptions in India. "The image people have is that if I get leprosy, I become like that maimed beggar at the traffic light," van Brakel says. The bright spot is that helping people with one aspect of their plight may alleviate others. In a randomized controlled study of leprosy patients in Indonesia from 2011 to 2014, van Brakel found that improving their socioeconomic situation with loans and training helped reduce their perceptions of social stigma and boost their participation in society. Yet uprooting old views remains a challenge. Even in 2018, a survey of people in Cameroon indicated that one-quarter of 233 respondents believed leprosy was caused by a spell. Most knew the disease was curable, but more than one-quarter said they would not marry someone who had had it. In India, laws making the disease grounds for divorce were removed only last year. Quantifying fear In some countries, most people said they wouldn't buy vegetables from a seller who had HIV. But people in other nations were less fearful. 100 % Ethiopia South Africa Kenya Turkmenistan Jamaica Haiti Cuba Egypt Guatemala Mexico Philippines Vietnam India Thailand Ghana DRC Nigeria 80 60 40 20 0 (GRAPHIC) N. DESAI/SCIENCE; (DATA) UNAIDS Even the disease's name has come to mean outcast: We describe those we shun as "lepers." Scientists tried to change the name to Hansen's disease, but the old name stuck. Ashim Chowla, former head of the nonprofit Lepra India, says people today still flinch when he tells them he has been treated for leprosy. "The identity never really goes away." Chowla, now CEO of the India HIV/AIDS Alliance, admits to some schadenfreude seeing people in his middle-class neighborhood turn on each other today because of COVID-19. Indian elites "who never thought they would get the diseases of the poor," he says, are getting a taste of "the ostracism that leprosy patients have faced for thousands of years." LEPROSY HAS LONG EPITOMIZED the stigma associated with disease. But in the 1980s, a virus emerged that quickly became the new "gold standard of stigma," Weiss says: HIV. At first, AIDS, the disease caused by HIV, was seen as a health threat largely for gay men, injecting drug users, and sex workers. The initial response was marked by moral panic, similar to old views of leprosy. Some religious groups saw the illness as a curse or punishment. People with the disease faced discrimination and government neglect in most countries, says Laura Nyblade, an expert on HIV discrimination with RTI International. Social scientists like Weiss had used survey and interview methods to measure stigma and discrimination in mental illness and leprosy, creating "stigma scales" to quantify it. With the advance of HIV, researchers began to develop similar scales for that virus. In 2008, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) launched the People Living with HIV Stigma Index as a tool to generate evidence for advocacy. By November 2017, more than 100,000 people living with HIV had been interviewed in more than 50 languages by trained interviewers who themselves had HIV. Interviewers asked, for example, whether someone had been insulted for being HIV-positive or been denied access to health care. Studies showed stigmatization burdened people with HIV psychologically, as Shaikh and her family experienced with the coronavirus. Stigma also caused people to hide their disease, lessened adherence to treatment, and worsened health outcomes. People with HIV who perceived high levels of social stigma were 2.4 times as likely to delay entering care until very ill, according to a meta-analysis of 10 studies published in 2017. One in five people living with HIV avoided going to medical facilities because they feared discrimination, according to data collected from 2011 to 2016 in 19 countries. And University of Washington researchers found in 2019 that Black women living with HIV who scored high on stigma measures also reported more days of missed treatments and higher viral loads. All those findings suggest stigmatization can spur the spread of disease. In some settings, stigma could be responsible for 35% to 51% of infant infections with HIV because it reduced mothers' adherence to treatment, according to a 2017 modeling study by Nyblade and colleagues. People already living at the margins suffer even more. In one study in Russia, 30% of female sex workers said they had been refused medical care because of their work, which puts them at risk of contracting HIV. In a study in Argentina, 40.7% of transgender women, who have higher rates of HIV, said they avoided clinics because of their transgender identity. According to a 2015 survey in New York City, African migrants with undocumented status chose not to disclose HIV status to families and communities, fearing they might lose needed social support. Like other marginalized groups, they "stayed hidden and disengaged with health care," the study said. As with leprosy, social attitudes were intensified by legal discriminations that never fully went away. Some aspects of HIV transmission, such as not disclosing that one is infected, are still criminalized in 72 countries, including the United States, according to UNAIDS. Thirty countries ban people's entry or residence on the basis of HIV status. "A critical lesson from HIV is that addressing stigma from the outset of a pandemic can be critical to an effective response," Nyblade says. "If people fear stigma, they will be reluctant to get tested, disclose they have symptoms, and seek care." More than 30 years after the disease emerged, she says, "stigma continues to be a major barrier to ending the HIV pandemic." A black-and-white illustration of a woman in an apron breaking several egg-sized skulls into a skillet A 1909 illustration reflects the vilification of Irish cook Mary Mallon, who unwittingly spread typhoid.FOTOSEARCH/GETTY IMAGES STIGMATIZATION OFTEN DEEPENS existing fault lines based on class, caste, race, or any "outsider" status. Those dynamics can be self-perpetuating: Marginalized groups who live in crowded conditions with less access to health care are often hit harder by disease—and then are blamed for it. Migrants are especially vulnerable to vilification. Mary Mallon, an Irish immigrant cook in early 1900s New York City, was dubbed "Typhoid Mary" for being an asymptomatic carrier of the typhoid bacteria. After infecting several wealthy households, where some members died, she was forced into quarantine in a hospital on an island near the city, where, she complained in a letter to her lawyer, she was "a peep show" for visitors. In late 2010, Dominicans blamed migrant workers for a cholera outbreak that began when Nepali peacekeepers inadvertently introduced it to neighboring Haiti. Researchers from Emory University found that Dominicans connected the outbreak to character flaws or unhygienic habits among immigrant Haitians, who faced structural problems including lack of access to safe water and sanitation. One year into the epidemic, the government may have worsened the situation by making it more difficult for immigrants to get the legal status needed for health insurance. COVID-19, too, may become associated with specific groups, says medical anthropologist Alexandra Brewis-Slade of Arizona State University, Tempe. "It is politically expedient and useful to be able to blame and distract," giving politicians an excuse for public policy failures, she says. Stigmatization "discourages investment [in combatting disease] because it devalues the people who would benefit most," she says. "Stigma is often beneficial to those in power." Nyblade agrees that "COVID-19 may provide an excuse to further stigmatize already stigmatized groups." In India, where a Hindu nationalist party is in power, many people targeted an international Muslim conference held in the country in March with the social media hashtag #CoronaJihad. The Bombay High Court recently dismissed police charges filed against attendees for spreading the disease. Indeed, many incidents in the current pandemic echo familiar patterns of animosity, especially in areas where the coronavirus has newly entered. Apartment dwellers on the outskirts of Mumbai, where COVID-19 cases have been growing, recently tried to throw out resident nurses because of fear that the nurses would bring the virus home. In the Indian state of Karnataka, 35 migrant workers who had returned to their village from Mumbai in June were quarantined. When seven tested positive, the group vanished overnight. "They feared reprisals," says Edward Premdas Pinto, a public health activist at the Centre for Health and Social Justice who works in the region. In one rural village, Pinto says, an elderly man returned from the hospital to find that his family had fled the house, fearing his return. He hanged himself. And in the United States, an advocacy group has recorded about 2600 hate-related incidents against Asian Americans between March and August, including spitting, racial slurs, and even assault. Many abusers specifically referred to the coronavirus.

#### Vote affirmative for a monstrous transgression of intellectual property protections for medicine. Only a confrontation with the abject COVID MONSTER can disrupt the edifice of medical colonialism which makes policy action into a velvet glove on the iron fist of militarism.

#### The Role of the Judge is to confront Abjection. Our move towards the subject in process is the condition of possibility for the creation of new meaning, new identity, and learning

Semetsky 15 [Inna Semetsky, 12 May 2015, Reading Kristeva through the Lens of Edusemiotics: Implications for education, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2015.1032187>] RA

Abjection is one of the composites comprising ‘the “structure” of the subject in process’ (Stone, 2004, p. 108). Such unstable structure accords with the edusemiotic perspective and is constituted by dynamic processes and relations that transform it. The dictionary definitions of abjection include the condition of being servile, wretched, or contemptible. Abject experiences represent something utterly hopeless, miserable, humiliating, and cast aside as if traversing the ‘border of ... condition as a living being’ (Kristeva, 1982, p. 3) when it becomes nearly impossible to withstand the effect of a rapid and shocking change characterising any crisis. Abjection repre- sents ‘one of those violent, dark revolts of being’ (Kristeva, 1982, p. 1) when the habitual binary opposites as the categories of true vs. false, right vs. wrong etc. betray their strict logical boundaries and become uncertain, fragile and fluid. They become subject to semiotic interpretation in life, in experience. Indeed, a genuine sign as a minimal unit of description in edusemiotics is a relational entity fluctuating between what is commonly perceived as isolated dualistic categories, such as Cartesian substances of mind and matter. Human beings as abjects literally exist in-between such categories as life and death because in such events ‘death [is] infecting life’ (Kristeva, 1982, p. 4). Instead of the logic of identity that guarantees certain unambiguous references corresponding to their linguistic representations (such as life or death), semiotic logic defies the either– or dualism. The paradoxical logic of both-and is a distinguished feature of genuine signs, and ‘abjection is above all ambiguity’ (1982, p. 9). Thinking exceeds its sole adherence to Cartesian consciousness; instead it is ‘the twisted braid of [unconscious] affects and [conscious] thoughts’ (1982, p. 1, brackets mine) that permeate abject experiences in the midst of a crisis which is strongly felt rather than merely (re)cog- nised. Describing abjection, Kristeva uses the infinitive ‘to fall’, cadere in French, hence cadaver or corpse, choosing dramatic vocabulary to describe affects at the level of the bodily, involuntary (hence unconscious) actions in contrast to Cartesian rationality or conscious will: ‘My body extricates itself, as being alive, from that border ... my entire body falls beyond the limit—cadere, cadaver. ... “I” is expelled’ (Kristeva, 1982, pp. 3–4). This part of one’s self that is ‘I’ is so desperate and feels overwhelmed to such an extent that it becomes greater than its own stable subjectivity: an autonomous heavy body ‘which is dissociated, shattered into painful territories, parts larger than the whole’ (Kristeva, 1998, p. 152). But because such is the only and immediate life- world known by the ‘I’, the very act of the fall or separation leads to the subject becoming a jettisoned object in this process. There is no anthropocentric ‘I’ as the self-conscious Cartesian Cogito; and we understand why Kristeva says, ‘it is no longer “I” who expel, [but] “I” is expelled’ (1982, p. 4) in an involuntary and unconscious action. Kristeva borrows the notion of the excluded from Mary Douglas, thus affording abjection a greater, social dimension in terms of taboos based on binary coding and resulting in separation and segregation of gender, class, race, age, language, or culture. Still, albeit destructive, as a Freudian death drive, the expulsion of the ‘I’ is also the mechanism of ‘relaunching ... of life’ (Kristeva, 1998, p. 144), that is, abjection’s role doubles as a creative function in the construction of subjectivity and the transformation of reality. Such is dialectics inscribed in the dynamics of semiotic process when signs are bound to become other. The ‘I’ partaking of the corpse indicates a semiotic break- down of the distinction between subject and object, and the corpse serves as a primary example traumatically reminding us of our own finitude, fragility and materiality; but according to Kristeva, so does Auschwitz, which serves as a symbol of a real-life particularly destructive, violent and immoral event. Such events function as signs to educate us in the edusemiotic process of creating their meanings. Semiotic Logic of the Included Middle An a-signifying rupture is produced between subject and object, and it is in this rup- ture where a Peircean interpretant that creates a synthetic ‘sense of learning’ (Peirce, 1931–1935, CP 1.377) is inserted. It is a distinctive feature of edusemiotics that our experience represents an informal school with its many life-lessons. The logic of iden- tity, of the excluded middle (either–or), gives way to the logic of the included middle (both-and). Such elusive, yet included, third element—an interpretant—is part and parcel of the relational dynamics of signs. Prior to direct verbal representations of the conscious mind there are unconscious affects as signs that act at the level of the body. So an interpretive work needs to be done, not unlike Freud’s dream interpretation. Affects comprise a semiotic dimension that indeed precedes a symbolic one consisting of definite words (at the level of propositional consciousness): instead, it needs to be interpreted and articulated in semanalysis so that acquire meanings. The breakdown of existing meaning in abject experiences is a precondition for creating a new one! The confrontation with the old unconscious habits produces crises that serve as living, informal, lessons whenever we are confronted with the otherness inherent in signs. The alien other appears to forever remain foreign, strange, bordering on what Lewis and Kahn (2010), in the context of exopedagogy, designate as ‘monstrous contami- nant that undermines notions of [habitual] dichotomy’ (p. 13) between what, in the framework of the logic of the excluded middle, would forever remain in the comfort zone on its own side of the border. Abjection is monstrous and uncanny (as Freud would say) because of its terrifying in-distinction that breaks down the logical categories and dichotomies of rational thinking. It is crisis that ‘draws me toward the place where [old] meaning collapses’ (Kristeva, 1982, p. 2). Abject experience is a sign of ‘the breaking down of a world that has erased its borders’ (Kristeva, 1982, p. 4)—thus, it initiates the edusemiotic process of becoming other. Edusemiotics posits the process of becoming as the very condition for being! Signification, according to Kristeva, always functions as a fluctua- tion between stability and instability, or a static quality and the negation of a stasis. The breakdown of the old habits comprising the usual ‘order of things’ (using Foucault’s trope) negates one’s static self-identity within the existing order. Still it simultaneously creates the conditions for the production of new order and new identity, albeit through abjection, an abject becoming an ambiguous sign as the very subject in process. It is because of abjection, that the Ego undergoes extreme humilia- tion and the loss, in the psychoanalytic tradition, of its defence-mechanisms: it is dri- ven to ‘a downfall that carries [it] along into the invisible and unnameable ... Never is the ambivalence of drive more fearsome than in this beginning of otherness’ (Kristeva, 1997, p. 188); still such downfall is the necessary precursor for becoming-other! The principle of non-contradiction that continues to haunt education since the days of Aristotle’s syllogistic logic on the basis of which teachers demand unambiguous, ‘right’ answers becomes moot. Instead it is contradiction—in the form of abjection or crisis—that is not to be silenced but needs to be acknowledged in edusemiotics because it is lived experience that elicits genuine learning in contrast to formal instruction. Speaking of contradiction, Kristeva stressed that its conditions were ‘always to be understood as heterogeneity ... when the loss of unity, the anchor of the process cuts in [and] the subject in process discovers itself as separated’ (1998, p. 149). The loss of unity indicates an a-signifying relation between the categories, a gap or difference as a learning space bridged by a semiotic interpretant in its function of making sense for abject (unthinkable and contradictory, from the analytic perspec- tive) experiences. In the midst of such perplexing event it is ‘the impossible [that] constitutes [the subject’s] very being’ (Kristeva, 1982, p. 5). Such event is as yet beyond our conscious comprehension, it ‘cries out’ (Deleuze, 1995, p. 148) in uncon- scious affects and unspoken emotions hiding in the pre-symbolic, pre-expressive— semiotic—dimension. Still we can evaluate it and thus learn from such abject experience. Although the interpretation of the cultural text when ‘revelation bursts forth’ (Kristeva, 1982, p. 9) seems by itself to be a violent act, in the sense of its shattering one’s set of habitual beliefs and accepted norms, such violence ‘rejects the effects of delay’ (Kristeva, 1998, p. 153) and hence—rather than breaking the subject— contributes to making the subject anew, to re-making it! Signs are ever-changing in their becoming other signs, and logic as semiotics implies, respectively, that education becomes transformative and creative. Breakdown in existing meaning indicates a breakthrough towards a new meaning, a new way of life betraying a privileged state adopted by an individual or by culture as a whole. The learning space is produced when one’s ‘fortified castle begins to see its walls crumble’ (Kristeva, 1982, p. 48): signs often portend, and the subject experiences a kind of psychoanalytic catharsis or revelation whenever a psychological, ideological, cultural, political, educational or any other stagnant system of outlived habits, beliefs and values begins to break down. Human subjectivity is a genuine sign, a subject in process permeated by the string of interpretants producing ever new meanings in the circumstances of experience due to the paradoxical logic of the included middle inscribed in semiosis as the transformative process of the evolution of signs. The change at the level of awareness represents dialectics that constitutes the dou- ble process of negation and affirmation embedded in the construction of identity of the subject in process: signs-becoming-other-signs; self-becoming-other. Negation is characterised by a temporary interruption in the periodic dynamic process, within which a pause appears, as claimed by Kristeva, in a form of a surplus of negativity, which would ultimately destroy the balance of opposites. The subject, contrary to the a priori constituting Cartesian subject, becomes in fact constituted in the process of learning from experience. The dialectical process exists in its semiotic, quasi-objective reality even before becoming an object of conscious recognition when presented in the form of affective and portending signs.

#### Their techno-rationalist disadvantages are an investment in abjection – The fetishization of dying is a self-defeating superlative which normalizes colonial violence.

Mitchell 17 [Audra Mitchell, September 27, 2017, Decolonizing against extinction part II: Extinction is not a metaphor – it is literally genocide, <https://worldlyir.wordpress.com/category/colonisation-and-settler-colonialism>] RA

Extinction has become an emblem of Western, and white-dominated, fears about ‘the end of the(ir) world’. This scientific term is saturated with emotional potency, stretched and contorted to embody almost any nightmare, from climate change to asteroid strikes. In academic and public contexts alike, it is regularly interchanged with other terms and concepts – for instance, ‘species death’, global warming or ecological collapse. Diffused into sublime scales – mass extinctions measured in millions of (Gregorian calendar) years, a planet totalized by the threat of nuclear destruction – ‘extinction’ has become an empty superlative, one that that gestures to an abstract form of unthinkability. It teases Western subjects with images of generalized demise that might, if it gets bad enough, even threaten us, or the figure of ‘humanity’ that we enshrine as a universal. This figure of ‘humanity’, derived from Western European enlightenment ideals, emphasizes individual, autonomous actors who are fully integrated into the global market system; who are responsible citizens of nation-states; who conform to Western ideas of health and well-being; who partake of ‘culture’; who participate in democratic state-based politics; who refrain from physical violence; and who manage their ‘resources’ responsibly (Mitchell 2014). Oddly, exposure to the fear of extinction contributes to the formation and bolstering of contemporary Western subjects. Contemplating the sublime destruction of ‘humanity’ offers the thrill of abjection: the perverse pleasure derived from exposure to something by which one is revolted. Claire Colebrook detects this thrill-seeking impulse in the profusion of Western blockbuster films and TV shows that imagine and envision the destruction of earth, or at least of ‘humanity’. It also throbs through a flurry of recent best-selling books – both fiction and speculative non-fiction (see Oreskes and Conway 2014; Newitz 2013; Weisman 2008). In a forthcoming intervention, Noah Theriault and I (2018) argue that these imaginaries are a form of porn that normalizes the profound violences driving extinction, while cocooning its viewers in the secure space of the voyeur. Certainly, there are many Western scientists, conservationists and policy-makers who are genuinely committed to stopping the extinction of others, perhaps out of fear for their own futures. Yet extinction is not quite real for Western, and especially white, subjects; it is a fantasy of negation that evokes thrill, melancholy, anger and existential purpose. It is a metaphor that expresses the destructive desires of these beings, and the negativity against which we define our subjectivity.