# Counter Sovereignty AC

#### **Settler colonialism is the governing thought of modernity that posits notions of control and desire into the Western man implanting the seed opportunity born out of genocide. Paperson ‘17**

[La Paperson, aka K. Wayne Yang, UC San Diego. 2017. “A Third University is Possible”. <https://manifold.umn.edu/read/a-third-university-is-possible/section/ba50806d-ff18-4100-9998-784aecb42ae4>] //recut faizaan

Land is the prime concern of settler colonialism, contexts in which the colonizer comes to a “new” place not only to seize and exploit but to stay, making that “new” place his permanent home. Settler colonialism thus complicates the center–periphery model that was classically used to describe colonialism, wherein an imperial center, the “metropole,” dominates distant colonies, the “periphery.” Typically, one thinks of European colonization of Africa, India, the Caribbean, the Pacific Islands, in terms of external colonialism, also called exploitation colonialism, where land and human beings are recast as natural resources for primitive accumulation: coltan, petroleum, diamonds, water, salt, seeds, genetic material, chattel. Theories named as “settler colonial studies” had a resurgence beginning around 2006. However, the analysis of settler colonialism is actually not new, only often ignored within Western critiques of empire. The critical literatures of the colonized have long **positioned the violence of settlement as a prime feature in colonial life** as well as in global arrangements of power. We can see this in Franz Fanon’s foundational critiques of colonialism. Whereas Fanon’s work is often generalized for its diagnoses of anti/colonial violence and the racialized psychoses of colonization upon colonized and colonizer, Fanon is also talking about settlement as the particular feature of French colonization in Algeria. For Fanon, the violence of French colonization in Algeria arises from settlement as a spatial immediacy of empire: the geospatial collapse of metropole and colony into the same time and place. On the “selfsame land” are spatialized white immunity and racialized violation, non-Native desires for freedom, Black life, and Indigenous relations. Settler colonialism is too often thought of as “what happened” to Indigenous people. This kind of thinking confines the experiences of Indigenous people, their critiques of settler colonialism, their decolonial imaginations, to an unwarranted historicizing parochialism, as if settler colonialism were a past event that “happened to” Native peoples and not generalizable to non-Natives. Actually, settler colonialism is something that “happened for” settlers. Indeed, it is happening for them/us right now. Wa Thiong’o’s question of how instead of why directs us to think of land tenancy laws, debt, and the privatization of land as settler colonial technologies that enable the “eventful” history of plunder and disappearance. Property law is a settler colonial technology. The weapons that enforce it, the knowledge institutions that legitimize it, the financial institutions that operationalize it, are also technologies. Like all technologies, they evolve and spread. Recasting land as property means severing Indigenous peoples from land. This separation, what Hortense Spillers describes as “the loss of Indigenous name/land” for Africans-turned-chattel, recasts Black Indigenous people as black bodies for biopolitical disposal: who will be moved where, who will be murdered how, who will be machinery for what, and who will be made property for whom. In the alienation of land from life, alienable rights are produced: the right to own (property), the right to law (protection through legitimated violence), the right to govern (supremacist sovereignty), the right to have rights (humanity). In a word, what is produced is whiteness. Moreover, it is not just human beings who are refigured in the schism. Land and nonhumans become alienable properties, a move that first alienates land from its own sovereign life. Thus we can speak of the various technologies required to create and maintain these separations, these alienations: Black from Indigenous, human from nonhuman, land from life. “How?” is a question you ask if you are concerned with the mechanisms, not just the motives, of colonization. Instead of settler colonialism as an ideology, or as a history, you might consider settler colonialism as a set of technologies—a frame that could help you to forecast colonial next operations and to plot decolonial directions. The Settler–Native–Slave Triad Does Not Describe Identities One of the main interventions of settler colonial studies has been to insist that the patterning of social relations is shaped by colonialism’s thirst for land and thus is shaped to fit modes of empire. Because colonialism is a perverted affair, our relationships are also warped into complicitous arrangements of violation, trespass, and collusion with its mechanisms. For Fanon, the psychosis of colonialism arises from the patterning of violence into the binary relationship between the immune humanity of the white settler and the impugned humanity of the native. For Fanon, the supremacist “right” to create settler space that is immune from violence, and the “right” to abuse the body of the Native to maintain white immunity, this is the spatial and fleshy immediacy of settler colonialism. Furthermore, the “humanity” of the settler is constructed upon his agency over the land and nature. As Maldonado-Torres explains, “I think, therefore I am” is actually an articulation of “I conquer, therefore I am,” a sense of identity posited upon the harnessing of nature and its “natural” people. This creates a host of post+colonial problems that have come to define modernity. Because the humanity of the settler is predicated on his ability to “write the world,” to make history upon and over the natural world, the colonized is instructed to make her [their] claim to humanity by similarly acting on the world or, more precisely, acting in his. Indeed, for Fanon, it is the perverse ontology of settler becomings—becoming landowner or becoming property, becoming killable or becoming a killer—and the mutual implication of tortured and torturer that mark the psychosis of colonialism. This problem of modernity and colonial psychosis is echoed in Jack Forbes’s writings: “Columbus was a wétiko. He was mentally ill or insane, the carrier of a terribly contagious psychological disease, the wétiko psychosis. . . . The wétiko psychosis, and the problems it creates, have inspired many resistance movements and efforts at reform or revolution. Unfortunately, most of these efforts have failed because they have never diagnosed the wétiko.” Under Western modernity, becoming “free” means becoming a colonizer, and because of this, “the central contradiction of modernity is freedom.” Critiques of settler colonialism, therefore, do not offer just another “type” of colonialism to add to the literature but a mode of analysis that has repercussions for any diagnosis of coloniality and for understanding the modern conditions of freedom. By modern conditions of freedom, I mean that Western freedom is a product of colonial modernity, and I mean that such freedom comes with conditions, with strings attached, most manifest as terms of unfreedom for nonhumans. As Cindi Mayweather says, “your freedom’s in a bind.”

#### **The private appropriation of outer space is a mere extension to the violent colonial origins that corporations exercise and only feeds the settler mindset that they have authority over unclaimed land and control over those they deem inferior. Utrata 21**

Alina Utrata, 7-14-2021, "Lost in Space", Boston Review, https://bostonreview.net/articles/lost-in-space, //WHS-AK

As previously examined in [these pages](https://bostonreview.net/science-nature/byron-williston-case-against-mars), the space race of the Cold War was characterized by a triumphalism around the power and scientific capacity of nation-states. Today’s wave of space exploration, however, is being led by tech billionaires’ private space corporations for financial gain—and, if we believe Bezos and Musk, for the betterment of human civilization. But the rhetoric and history of celestial exploration revea[s] l how **the logics of capitalism, colonialism, and corporations have always been intimately, and violently, intertwined**. And, as history shows us, **allowing corporations the power to colonize space may result in outcomes that even states cannot control**. In the early years of Blue Origin, Bezos personally funded his company (by selling one billion of Amazon stock per year, he revealed in 2017) and initially focused on space tourism as a potential source of revenue, as well as a way—he claimed—to acclimate people to the idea of space travel. But Bezos watched as Musk’s SpaceX quickly eclipsed his company, both in size and success. Musk had funded SpaceX through a combination of venture capital investment and billions in government contracts. While Blue Origin has [never launched](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/26/science/spacex-moon-blue-origin.html) a rocket that achieved orbit, SpaceX has been flying NASA cargo to the International Space Station since 2012. Bezos and Musk spend millions of dollars lobbying Congress to continue funding their projects, which already recieve massive amounts of public money through government contracts. When Tesla received a $1.3 billion tax break to open a battery plant in Nevada in 2014, Bezos [sent off](https://www.simonandschuster.co.uk/books/Amazon-Unbound/Brad-Stone/9781398500969) an email to a fellow Amazon executive asking why Musk had been so successful at securing big government incentives. But now Bezos has nothing to complain about. Blue Origin routinely competes with SpaceX for contracts, and both companies spend millions lobbying Congress to continue funding these projects. After SpaceX initially won a contract to build a lunar lander, a short-lived amendment to the Endless Frontier Act which would have authorized $10 billion to NASA’s moon program and established a second award was even briefly nicknamed the “[Bezos Bailout](https://theintercept.com/2021/05/25/jeff-bezos-blue-origin-senate-bailout/).” It is true that Musk has a particular talent for securing government funding across his business ventures. In her book The Entrepreneurial State (2013), Mariana Mazzucato debunks the notion that free markets and small states, rather than government investment in technological innovation, create economic success. She documents how Musk’s companies SpaceX, Tesla, and SolarCity have received billions in government support, including grants, tax breaks, and subsidized loans. On top of that, they have also secured billions more in procurement contracts and direct investments in new technologies from NASA and the Department of Energy. (This government support is not marginal. Tesla only had its first [full-year profit](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/business/tesla-earnings.html) in 2020, although Musk has accumulated much of his personal fortune through ownership of the company’s stock.) But this outsourcing of colonization efforts to private corporations is not just a feature of the neoliberal state; **corporations have long been embedded in the history of colonization**. In the early days of colonization, though companies’ home states often provided them money and legitimacy for their ventures overseas, **governments did not always tightly control these endeavors.** For instance, the British East India Company—a “company-state,” as [coined](https://global.oup.com/academic/product/the-company-state-9780195393736?cc=gb&lang=en&) by Philip Stern—maintained armed forces, waged and declared war, collected taxes, minted coin, and at one point “ruled” over more subjects than the British state itself. As J. C. Sharman and Andrew Phillips noted in Outsourcing Empire: How Company-States Made the Modern World(2020), “in some cases, company-states came to wield more military and political power than many monarchs of the day.”Today states, not corporations, are perceived to be the truly dangerous actors in space exploration. But **corporations have long been embedded in the history of colonization.** Company-states were predicated on an understanding of sovereignty as divisible and delegatory, defying what we today consider “public” and “private” power. Compared to company-states at their zenith, even the largest modern-day multinational corporation—and certainly SpaceX and Blue Origin—has significantly less authority, with absolutely no military might to speak of. The monarchies that first granted monopoly charters to these voyaging companies, having evolved into modern states, have also consolidated sovereign authority and gained far more power than their antecedents in previous centuries. Today states, not corporations, are perceived to be the truly dangerous actors in space exploration. Particularly in the context of worsening U.S.-China relations, the militarization of space by states is often posited as the most likely way that celestial encounters may become violent. On this view, if private U.S. companies were to extract commercial resources from asteroids, it would be a much more peaceful prospect than the U.S. Space Force establishing a military base on the moon. However, this framing ignores **corporations’ violent histories and the deep connection between private commercial pursuits and systems of capitalism and colonialism**. Moreover, though states may help create and participate in these systems, they do not always control the forces they unleash. For example, there was nothing inevitable about the fact that the East India Company came under the control of the British state. Even when it did, it caused devastating impacts on both the places it claimed to “rule” as well as the state that had chartered and owned it, ushering in the age of the British Empire. As historian William Dalrymple, author of The Anarchy: The Relentless Rise of the East India Company (2019), [noted](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/mar/04/east-india-company-original-corporate-raiders), “It was not the British government that seized India at the end of the 18th century, but a dangerously unregulated private company. . . [that] executed a corporate coup unparalleled in history: the military conquest, subjugation and plunder of vast tracts of southern Asia. It almost certainly remains the supreme act of corporate violence in world history.” As contemporary companies set out to colonize space, we should ask whether modern states have a better grasp on how to control corporations and the violence that may result from battles over who ought to rule these settlers and resources. Though Blue Origin and SpaceX are indebted to the U.S. government for funding, U.S. regulators’ ability to manage these corporations—especially Musk’s—already appears limited. Musk’s [remarks](https://www.wsj.com/articles/elon-musk-tesla-spacex-regulators-crash-11619624227) toward U.S. regulators, even those investigating him, are infamous for being outrageous and crude—and his behavior is no less intransigent. For instance, in December of last year, SpaceX [refused to comply](https://www.theverge.com/2021/6/15/22352366/elon-musk-spacex-faa-warnings-starship-sn8-launch-violation-texas) with Federal Aviation Association (FAA) orders to abort a high-altitude test launch of its Starship rocket after the agency revoked its launch license due to atmospheric conditions. And this was not the first time Musk defied government authority. In May 2020 he [re-opened his Tesla factory](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-tesla-california-idUSKBN22N2EY) despite an Alameda county health order to shelter in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic, requesting on Twitter that police “only arrest him” if law enforcement took action. His companies have been repeatedly investigated and fined for various other regulatory and safety violations. (Reports have [claimed](https://revealnews.org/article/tesla-says-its-factory-is-safer-but-it-left-injuries-off-the-books/) that the Tesla factory does not have proper hazard signage because Musk “does not like the color yellow.”) Is it simply the case that Musk, like many powerful men before him, receives preferential treatment from the state? Or are the state and its regulatory agencies truly unable to control him? Colonial destruction was justified by a specific ideology that made a certain view of the world, and humanity’s role in it, appear natural and inevitable. Musk, for his part, does not seem particularly cowed. After the December rocket launch incident, the FAA announced that additional measures, including having an FAA inspector on site, will be imposed on SpaceX during future launches. In response Musk tweeted on January 28 that the FAA “rules are meant for a handful of expendable launches per year from a few government facilities. Under those rules, humanity will never get to Mars.” For Musk, becoming an inter-planetary species is an existential matter for human civilization, far more important than rules and regulations. Both Bezos and Musk use the language of moral imperative when talking about space colonization: humanity must not merely explore space, but settle it, too. The two engineers can easily explain the technical dimensions of their plans to colonize the cosmos. Though these plans differ—Bezos wants to establish artificial tube-like structures floating close to Earth, whereas Musk wants to terraform Mars—the political philosophies underpinning them are remarkably similar. Both offer utopian visions of humanity in space that attempt to provide technological solutions to the political problems that colonialism and capitalism have caused. In 1982 Bezos [said](https://www.cnbc.com/2018/08/31/amazon-jeff-bezos-proposed-colonizing-space-high-school-graduation-speech.html) in his high school valedictorian speech that “the Earth is finite and if the world economy and population is to keep expanding, space is the only way to go.” His views have not changed much since then. “[Within a few centuries] we’ll be using all of the solar energy that impacts the Earth,” he [told](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GQ98hGUe6FM) a crowd at an event hosted by Blue Origin. “That’s an actual limit.” This Malthusian logic underpins his arguments about the inevitability of humanity’s growth and the necessity of expanding into space. There are short-term problems, he explains, such as poverty and pollution, and there are long-term problems, such as running out of energy. If we do not want to become “a civilization of rationing and stasis,” Bezos [warns](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GQ98hGUe6FM), we must expand to the stars where “resources are, for all practical purposes, infinite.” For Musk space colonization is also a means to preserve human civilization, albeit as a hedge against eventual extinction. “I don’t have an immediate doomsday prophecy,” he [told](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H7Uyfqi_TE8) an international conference in 2016, “but history suggests that there will be some extinction event. The alternative is to become a space-faring civilization and multi-planetary species.” Whereas Bezos emphasizes the cyclical logic of capitalist growth—we must expand, in order to keep expanding—Musk is more explicit in his plans for colonial settlement. One of his proposals—to allow individuals to purchase one-way tickets to Mars which can be paid off through promised jobs in the new colony— has been [called](https://gizmodo.com/elon-musk-a-new-life-awaits-you-on-the-off-world-colon-1841071257) Martian indentured servitude. “Mars would have a labor shortage for a long time,” Musk explained, so “jobs would not be in short supply.” And while Bezos imagines that humans will be able to travel between Earth and space often, Musk [contends](https://www.cnbc.com/2020/03/09/spacex-plans-how-elon-musk-see-life-on-mars.html) that the Mars colony should be self-sufficient, able “to survive if the resupply ships stop coming from Earth for any reason.” Imperialist conceptions of ownership transform space into an “empty frontier” where certain individuals can project their political dreams. For two entrepreneurs whose businesses have been lauded as exceptionally visionary, their celestial utopias stand out for their lack of political creativity and awareness. Bezos’s notion that imperial expansion is the only way to support an ever-growing population is an old colonialist appeal, now repackaged for the stars. The infinite need for resources, as well as the “poverty and pollution” that Bezos dismisses as short-term problems, are deeply enmeshed in capitalism’s cycles of extraction and are currently causing Earth’s climate crisis. Given the green-orientation of his enterprises, Musk is presumably aware of the climate crisis—or at least the opportunities it presents for government funding. Yet he has not explicitly named climate change as one of the potential “extinction events” that a Mars colony might protect against. Putting aside the question of whether terraforming Mars is actually feasible—for the record, a Nature Astronomy article [suggests](https://www.nature.com/articles/s41550-018-0529-6) it is not—settling space won’t be cost-free to Earth. As science writer Shannon Stirone [pointed out](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2021/02/mars-is-no-earth/618133/) in The Atlantic, “Mars has a very thin atmosphere; it has no magnetic field to help protect its surface from radiation from the sun or galactic cosmic rays; it has no breathable air and the average surface temperature is a deadly 80 degrees below zero . . . . For humans to live there in any capacity they would need to build tunnels and live underground.” The environmental and human destruction necessary to make space habitable would dwarf any technological or political response needed to stop the climate crisis now. **And—like capitalism and climate change—the impacts of colonizing space will be far worse for some rather than others, particularly in the Global South.** For example, when Indonesian president Joko Widodo offered SpaceX the island of Biak in Papua, home to an ongoing secessionist campaign, local communities protested that the building of the launch station would cause vast ecological damage and community displacement. They had reason to worry. This is precisely what happened in Boca Chica, a small town on the southern tip of Texas where SpaceX had [built](https://www.vicetv.com/en_us/video/between-musk-and-mars/5f500fb3c83b9a3d80247a84) a previous launch site. After SpaceX moved into town, [residents of the Texas community were pushed out](https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2020/02/space-x-texas-village-boca-chica/606382/) from their homes as the area became unsafe due to rocket activity, which has since [damaged](https://au.news.yahoo.com/concern-after-wildlife-refuge-showered-with-rocket-parts-115609011.html) a wildlife refuge in the area. SpaceX has offered to purchase residents’ homes, but below the price many think is fair. An email from SpaceX to Boca Chica holdouts [stated](https://www.vice.com/en/article/z3ep4y/spacex-is-trying-to-force-residents-out-of-a-small-texas-village), “As the scale and frequency of spaceflight activities at the site continue to accelerate, your property will frequently fall within established hazard zones in which no civilians will be permitted to remain, in order to comply with all federal and other public safety regulations.” SpaceX’s impact on the area demonstrated little concern for its displacement and damage of the local community. While we all may use, explore, or research space, no state can claim to own it—though this does not mean states will not try. Musk and Bezos rely on the notion that colonizing space somehow differs from colonizing Earth. Implicit in their arguments is the belief that it was not the systems of colonial-capitalism, but rather the context surrounding their implementation, that wreaked havoc in the past. **On this view, although previous colonization attempts often unleashed genocidal violence, that history cannot be repeated in space.** After all, no one lives there. **This perspective ignores the fact that colonial destruction was justified by a specific ideology that made a certain view of the world, and humanity’s role in it, appear natural and inevitable**. **The idea that space is open for the taking simply because “no one is there” finds root in the exact colonial logics that have justified settler genocide for centuries: that only certain people, using resources in certain ways, have a claim to land and ownership. Imperialist conceptions of ownership thus transform space into an “empty frontier” where certain individuals can project their political dreams, whether they be extractive manufacturing industries or settler colonies.**

#### The endless terrain of space naturalizes settlerism not only in space but within the unethical legislative capacity of the state in the status qou. Any form of liberating conquest only justifies settler colonialism both on our planet and beyond and perfects the settler project. Smiles 20 (Deondre Smiles, PhD, is an Ojibwe, Black, and settler citizen of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe and is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Geography at the University of Victoria, in B.C., Canada. Smiles is an Indigenous geographer, chair of the Indigenous Peoples Specialty Group of the American Association of Geographers, and a member of the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association and Canadian Association of Geographers. "The Settler Logics of (Outer) Space". 10-26-2020. https://www.societyandspace.org/articles/the-settler-logics-of-outer-space. Accessed 11-28-2021, HKR-RM)//retagged faizaan

The fact that similar language is being used around the potential of American power being extended to space could reasonably be expected, given the economic and military potential that comes from such a move. Space represents yet another ‘unknown’ to be conquered and bent to America’s will. However, such interplanetary conquest does not exist solely in outer space. I wish to situate the very real colonial legacies and violence associated with the desire to explore space, tracing the ways that they are perpetuated and reified through their destructive engagements with Indigenous peoples. I argue that a scientific venture such as space exploration does not exist in a vacuum, but instead draws from settler colonialism and feeds back into it through the prioritization of ‘science’ over Indigenous epistemologies. I begin by exploring the ways that space exploration by the American settler state is situated within questions of hegemony, imperialism, and terra nullius, including a brief synopsis of the controversy surrounding the planned construction of the Thirty Meter Telescope on Mauna Kea. I conclude by exploring Indigenous engagement with ‘space’ in both its Earthbound and beyond-earth forms as it relates to outer space, and what implications this might have for the ways we think about our engagement with space as the American settler state begins to turn its gaze skyward once again. I position this essay alongside a growing body of academic work, as well as journalistic endeavors (Haskins, 2020; Koren, 2020) that demands that the American settler colonial state exercise self-reflexivity as to why it engages with outer space, and who is advantaged and disadvantaged here on Earth as a result of this engagement. A brief exploration of what settler colonialism is, and its engagement with ‘space’ here on Earth is necessary to start. Settler colonialism is commonly understood to be a form of colonialism that is based upon the permanent presence of colonists upon land. This is a distinction from forms of colonialism based upon resource extraction (Wolfe, 2006; Veracini, 2013). What this means is that the settler colony is intimately tied with the space within which it exists—it cannot exist or sustain itself without settler control over land and space. This permanent presence upon land by ‘settlers’ is usually at the expense of the Indigenous, or original people, in a given space or territory. To reiterate: control over space is paramount. As Wolfe states, “Land is life—or at least, land is necessary for life. Thus, contests for land can be—indeed, often are—contests for life” (2006: 387). Without land, the settler state ‘dies’; conversely, deprivation of land from the indigenous population means that in settler logic, indigeneity dies (Povinelli, 2002; Wolfe, 2006.) The ultimate aims of settler colonialism is therefore the occupation and remaking of space. As Wolfe (2006) describes, the settler state seeks to make use of land and resources in order to continue on; whether that is through homesteading/residence, farming and agriculture, mining, or any number of activities that settler colonial logic deems necessary to its own survival. These activities are tied to a racist and hubristic logic that only settler society itself possesses the ability to make proper use of land and space (Wolfe, 2006). This is mated with a viewpoint of landscapes prior to European arrival as terra nullius, or empty land that was owned by no one, via European/Western conceptions of land ownership and tenure (Wolfe, 1994). Because of this overarching goal of space, there is an inherent anxiety in settler colonies about space, and how it can be occupied and subsequently rewritten to remove Indigenous presence. In Anglo settler colonies, this often takes place within a lens of conservation. Scholars such as Banivanua Mar (2010), Lannoy (2012), Wright (2014) and Tristan Ahtone (2019) have written extensively on the ways that settler reinscription of space can be extremely damaging to Indigenous people from a lens of ‘conservation’. However, dispossession of Indigenous space in favor of settler uses can also be tied to some of the most destructive forces of our time. For example, Aboriginal land in the Australian Outback was viewed as ‘empty’ land that was turned into weapons ranges where the British military tested nuclear weapons in the 1950s, which directly led to negative health effects upon Aboriginal communities downwind from the testing sites (Vincent, 2010). Indigenous nations in the United States have struggled with environmental damage related to military-industrial exploitation as well. But, what does this all look like in regard to outer space? In order to really understand the potential (settler) colonial logics of space exploration, we must go back and explore the ways in which space exploration became inextricably tied with questions of state hegemony and geopolitics during the Cold War. US and Soviet space programs were born partially out of military utility, and propaganda value—the ability to send a nuclear warhead across a great distance to strike the enemy via a ICBM and the accompanying geopolitical respect that came with such a capability was something that greatly appealed to the superpowers, and when the Soviets took an early lead in the ‘Space Race’ with Sputnik and their Luna probes, the United States poured money and resources into making up ground (Werth, 2004). The fear of not only falling behind the Soviets militarily as well as a perceived loss of prestige in the court of world opinion spurred the US onto a course of space exploration that led to the Apollo moon landings in the late 1960s and the early 70s (Werth, 2004; Cornish, 2019). I argue that this fits neatly into the American settler creation myth referenced by Trump—after ‘conquering’ a continent and bringing it under American dominion, why would the United States stop solely at ‘space’ on Earth? To return to Grandin (2019), space represented yet another frontier to be conquered and known by the settler colonial state; if not explicitly for the possibility of further settlement, then for the preservation of its existing spatial extent on Earth. However, scholars such as Alan Marshall (1995) have cautioned that newer logics of space exploration such as potential resource extraction tie in with existing military logics in a way that creates a new way of thinking about the ‘openness’ of outer space to the logics of empire, in what Marshall calls res nullius (1995: 51)[i]. But we cannot forget the concept of terra nullius and how our exploration of the stars has real effects on Indigenous landscapes here on Earth. We also cannot forget about forms of space exploration that may not be explicitly tied to military means. Doing so deprives us of another lens through which to view the tensions between settler and Indigenous views of space and to which end is useful. Indeed, even reinscribing of Indigenous space towards ‘peaceful’ settler space exploration have very real consequences for Indigenous sovereignty and Indigenous spaces. Perhaps the most prominent example of the fractures between settler space exploration and Indigenous peoples is the on-going controversy surrounding the construction of the Thirty Meter Telescope on Mauna Kea, on the island of Hawaii. While an extremely detailed description of the processes of construction on the TMT and the opposition presented to it by Native Hawai’ians and their allies is beyond the scope of this essay, and in fact is already expertly done by a number of scholars[ii], the controversy surrounding TMT is a prime example of the logics presented towards ‘space’ in both Earth-bound and beyond-Earth contexts by the settler colonial state as well as the violence that these logics place upon Indigenous spaces, such as Mauna Kea, which in particular already plays host to a number of telescopes and observatories (Witze, 2020). In particular, astronomers such as Chanda Prescod-Weinstein, Lucianne Walkowicz, and others have taken decisive action to push back against the idea that settler scientific advancement via space exploration should take precedence over Indigenous sovereignty in Earth-space. Prescod-Weinstein and Walkowicz, alongside Sarah Tuttle, Brian Nord and Hilding Neilson (2020) make clear that settler scientific pursuits such as building the TMT are simply new footnotes in a long history of colonial disrespect of Indigenous people and Indigenous spaces in the name of science, and that astronomy is not innocent of this disrespect. In fact, Native Hawai’ian scholars such as Iokepa Casumbal-Salazar strike at the heart of the professed neutrality of sciences like astronomy: One scientist told me that astronomy is a “benign science” because it is based on observation, and that it is universally beneficial because it offers “basic human knowledge” that everyone should know “like human anatomy.” Such a statement underscores the cultural bias within conventional notions of what constitutes the “human” and “knowledge.” In the absence of a critical self-reflection on this inherent ethnocentrism, the tacit claim to universal truth reproduces the cultural supremacy of Western science as self-evident. Here, the needs of astronomers for tall peaks in remote locations supplant the needs of Indigenous communities on whose ancestral territories these observatories are built (2017: 8). As Casumbal-Salazar and other scholars who have written about the TMT and the violence that has been done to Native Hawai’ians (such as police actions designed to dislodge blockades that prevented construction) as well as the potential violence to come such as the construction of the telescope have skillfully said, when it comes to the infringement upon Indigenous space by settler scientific endeavors tied to space exploration, there is no neutrality to be had—dispossession and violence are dispossession and violence, no matter the potential ‘good for humanity’ that might come about through these things.

#### Thus we affirm the appropriation of outer space by private entities is unjust as an act of counter-sovereignty.

#### Our advocacy doesn’t just disapprove space exploration, but rather is an act of decolonization that removes the rights from the state and destabilizes its settlerist control. Sturm 17

Sturm, Circe. Associate Professor Dept of Anthropology at UT Austin — Ph.D., University of California, Davis, "Reflections on the Anthropology of Sovereignty and Settler Colonialism: Lessons from Native North America." Cultural Anthropology 32, no. 3 (2017): 340–348. https://doi.org/10.14506/ca32.3.03

Jessica Cattelino’s (2008)book High Stakes: Florida Seminole Gaming and Sovereignty provides an excellent case for understanding how these competing assertions of sovereignty play out on the ground. She offers two important interventions. The first moves us beyond classical debates about sovereignty that view it as either autonomous and inherent (a by-product of peoplehood or kingly authority, for instance) or derivative and dependent (as something that stems from external political recognition by other sovereigns).4 Instead, she explores interdependent forms of sovereignty that are negotiated, partial, insecure, and demand diplomacy on all sides.5 In her second major contribution, Cattelino explores how the circulation of capital is a sovereign force in and of itself, one that provides a key to how sovereignty functions in these more interdependent forms. She provides a neo-Simmelian analysis of the ways in which Florida Seminoles exploit the fungibility of casino money, meaning its ability to be exchanged with other forms of symbolic and material capital, in ways that help shore up their own political authority and well-being as a community.6 **The upshot of this body of work in Native North America is that the state power generated by colonialism, in any of its forms, remains highly insecure and not a privileged site of sovereign authority. In fact, state sovereignty as a repressive force generates various forms of resistance to that sovereignty, including a whole slew of countersovereignties that exceed its more legal, formal, authorized, recognized, and official versions** (see Cramer 2005; Klopotek 2011; Povinelli 2002; Miller 2003). Anthropologists working around the world have expended a great deal of energy analyzing different cases in which state sovereignty is challenged, though often these examples focus on extralegal, criminal, and violent forms of resistance (Hansen and Stepputat 2006, 304–6). Indigenous studies adds to this discussion an attention to the everyday forms of sovereignty generated in response to settler state authority. Elizabeth Povinelli’s (2006) work on self-sovereignty offers an important example, one in which she explores how intimacy is linked to modern notions of freedom and social order, becoming yet another space for everyday expressions of lived sovereignty—a point also taken up in the work of Mark Rifkin (2011, 2012) and Scott Morgensen (2011b). Yet the most pathbreaking research to come along in recent years that explores extra-state forms of sovereignty is that of Audra Simpson (2014) in her book Mohawk Interruptus: Life across the Borders of Settler States. Simpson takes on the concept of resistance and offers instead the idea of refusal. **Theories of resistance tend to focus attention on how aspects of domination get reproduced by those doing the resisting, meaning that in countering oppression, the terms of debate and terrain of conflict are already predetermined**—thus the idea that counterhegemony retains a kernel of hegemony, heterodoxy that of orthodoxy, violence begets more violence, and so on. Simpson’s theory of **refusal offers something else entirely**: **refusal is neither derivative nor reproductive, but rather an outright rejection of the externally imposed logics of settler-state sovereignty**. In other words, the logic of elimination is met with the logic of indigenous continuity, and border crossings that demand settler-state passports are met with tribally generated documents that insist on Mohawk nationhood. **Refusal is affective, material, historical, ideal, and even pleasurable—an act possibly more ontological than anything else of indigenous people insisting on their own unique way of being.** Simpson’s work has much to offer anthropologists working in other contexts, particularly those who want to rethink theories of power. As I have been arguing throughout this essay, such insights stem in part from a critical engagement with twined critiques of sovereignty and settler colonialism. These two analytical frameworks offer anthropology important correctives for thinking about indigenous people and their experiences. A case in point is the recent controversy surrounding the Massachusetts senator Elizabeth Warren’s claims to Cherokee and Lenape ancestry, and how it reveals a particularly strong tendency in the United States and Canada to minoritize indigeneity and take what should be debates about sovereignty, citizenship, political authority, and territorial jurisdiction, among other issues, and turn instead to questions of racial and cultural authenticity, or even genetic descent (Franke-Ruta 2012; Krieg 2016).7 The controversy involves, on the one hand, Senator Warren, born and raised in Oklahoma, who has claimed an indigenous identity for several decades, based almost exclusively on family stories of descent from a Cherokee great-grandmother. On the other hand are members of the Republican Party, who have accused Warren of both fanciful invention and racial opportunism, and then took the opportunity to ridicule her during public debates with Hollywood war whoops, tomahawk chops, and derogatory taunts. Lost in the controversy is any attention to American Indian identity as a political status, one that rests on tribal sovereignty and the fundamental premise that tribes have the sovereign right to determine their own citizenry. Lost, too, is attention to the way in which racism and white supremacy undergird settler colonialism and are both being manifested not only in the racist behavior of Warren’s Republican opponents but also in her narratives of indigenous decent, for these, too, are often linked to a settler desire to incorporate and domesticate indigeneity (Sturm 2011).

#### There is no neutrality in the fight against the state. Thus, the role of the ballot is to vote for who best centers themselves in the center of Native scholarship and demands.

Carlson 16

[Elizabeth Carlson, PhD, is an Aamitigoozhi, Wemistigosi, and Wasicu (settler Canadian and American), whose Swedish, Saami, German, Scots-Irish, and English ancestors have settled on lands of the Anishinaabe and Omaha Nations which were unethically obtained by the US government. Elizabeth lives on Treaty 1 territory, the traditional lands of the Anishinaabe, Nehiyawak, Dakota, Nakota, and Red River Metis peoples currently occupied by the city of Winnipeg, the province of Manitoba, (2016): Anti-colonial methodologies and practices for settler colonial studies, Settler Colonial Studies, DOI: 10.1080/2201473X.2016.1241213, //recut FD WHS

Arlo Kempf says that ‘where anticolonialism is a tool used to invoke resistance for the colonized, it is a tool used to invoke accountability for the colonizer’.42 Relational accountability should be a cornerstone of settler colonial studies. I believe settler colonial studies and scholars should ethically and overtly place themselves in relationship to the centuries of Indigenous oral, and later academic scholarship that conceptualizes and resists settler colonialism without necessarily using the term: SCT may be revelatory to many settler scholars, but Indigenous people have been speaking for a long time about colonial continuities based on their lived experiences. Some SCTs have sought to connect with these discussions and to foreground Indigenous resistance, survival and agency. Others, however, seem to use SCT as a pathway to explain the colonial encounter without engaging with Indigenous people and experiences – either on the grounds that this structural analysis already conceptually explains Indigenous experience, or because Indigenous resistance is rendered invisible.43 Ethical settler colonial theory (SCT) would recognize the foundational role Indigenous scholarship has in critiques of settler colonialism. It would acknowledge the limitations of settler scholars in articulating settler colonialism without dialogue with Indigenous peoples, and take as its norm making this dialogue evident. In my view, it is critical that we not view settler colonial studies as a new or unique field being established, which would enact a discovery narrative and contribute to Indigenous erasure, but rather take a longer and broader view. Indigenous oral and academic scholars are indeed the originators of this work. This space is not empty. Of course, powerful forces of socialization and discipline impact scholars in the academy. There is much pressure to claim unique space, to establish a name for ourselves, and to make academic discoveries. I am suggesting that settler colonial studies and anti-colonial scholars resist these hegemonic pressures and maintain a higher anti-colonial ethic. As has been argued, ‘the theory itself places ethical demands on us as settlers, including the demand that we actively refuse its potential to re-empower our own academic voices and to marginalize Indigenous resistance’.44 As settler scholars, we can reposition our work relationally and contextually with humi- lity and accountability. We can centre Indigenous resistance, knowledges, and scholarship in our work, and contextualize our work in Indigenous sovereignty. We can view oral Indigenous scholarship as legitimate scholarly sources. We can acknowledge explicitly and often the Indigenous traditions of resistance and scholarship that have taught us and pro- vided the foundations for our work. If our work has no foundation of Indigenous scholarship and mentorship, I believe our contributions to settler colonial studies are even more deeply problematic.

#### Utilitarian framing should be rejected, it normalizes white pleasure and abstracts from indigenous violence. Extinction is a settler narrative that obscures the foundations of settler violence and precludes politics of decolonization.

Dalley 16 Hamish Dalley (2016): The deaths of settler colonialism: extinction as a metaphor of decolonization in contemporary settler literature, Settler Colonial Studies, DOI: 10.1080/2201473X.2016.1238160 SJBE

Settlers love to contemplate the possibility of their own extinction; to read many contemporary literary representations of settler colonialism is to find settlers strangely satisfied in dreaming of ends that never come. This tendency is widely prevalent in English-language representations of settler colonialism produced since the 1980s: the possibility of an ending – the likelihood that the settler race will one day die out – is a common theme in literary and pop culture considerations of colonialism’s future. Yet it has barely been remarked how surprising it is that this theme is so present. For settlers, of all people, to obsessively ruminate on their own finitude is counterintuitive, for few modern social formations have been more resistant to change than settler colonialism. With a few exceptions (French Algeria being the largest), the settler societies established in the last 300 years in the Americas, Australasia, and Southern Africa have all retained the basic features that define them as settler states – namely, the structural privileging of settlers at the expense of indigenous peoples, and the normalization of whiteness as the marker of political agency and rights – and they have done so notwithstanding the sustained resistance that has been mounted whenever such an order has been built. Settlers think all the time that they might one day end, even though (perhaps because) that ending seems unlikely ever to happen. The significance of this paradox for settler-colonial literature is the subject of this article. Considering the problem of futurity offers a useful foil to traditional analyses of settlercolonial narrative, which typically examine settlers’ attitudes towards history in order to highlight a constitutive anxiety about the past – about origins. Settler colonialism, the argument goes, has a problem with historical narration that arises from a contradiction in its founding mythology. In Stephen Turner’s formulation, the settler subject is by definition one who comes from elsewhere but who strives to make this place home. The settlement narrative must explain how this gap – which is at once geographical, historical, and existential – has been bridged, and the settler transformed from outsider into indigene. Yet the transformation must remain constitutively incomplete, because the desire to be at home necessarily invokes the spectre of the native, whose existence (which cannot be disavowed completely because it is needed to define the settler’s difference, superiority, and hence claim to the land) inscribes the settler’s foreignness, thus reinstating the gap between settler and colony that the narrative was meant to efface.1 Settler-colonial narrative is thus shaped around its need to erase and evoke the native, to make the indigene both invisible and present in a contradictory pattern that prevents settlers from ever moving on from the moment of colonization.2 As evidence of this constitutive contradiction, critics have identified in settler-colonial discourse symptoms of psychic distress such as disavowal, inversion, and repression.3 Indeed, the frozen temporality of settler-colonial narrative, fixated on the moment of the frontier, recalls nothing so much as Freud’s description of the ‘repetition compulsion’ attending trauma.4 As Lorenzo Veracini puts it, because: ‘settler society’ can thus be seen as a fantasy where a perception of a constant struggle is juxtaposed against an ideal of ‘peace’ that can never be reached, settler projects embrace and reject violence at the same time. The settler colonial situation is thus a circumstance where the tension between contradictory impulses produces long-lasting psychic conflicts and a number of associated psychopathologies.5 Current scholarship has thus focused primarily on settler-colonial narrative’s view of the past, asking how such a contradictory and troubled relationship to history might affect present-day ideological formations. Critics have rarely considered what such narratological tensions might produce when the settler gaze is turned to the future. Few social formations are more stubbornly resistant to change than settlement, suggesting that a future beyond settler colonialism might be simply unthinkable. Veracini, indeed, suggests that settler-colonial narrative can never contemplate an ending: that settler decolonization is inconceivable because settlers lack the metaphorical tools to imagine their own demise.6 This article outlines why I partly disagree with that view. I argue that the narratological paradox that defines settler-colonial narrative does make the future a problematic object of contemplation. But that does not make settler decolonization unthinkable per se; as I will show, settlers do often try to imagine their demise – but they do so in a way that reasserts the paradoxes of their founding ideology, with the result that the radical potentiality of decolonization is undone even as it is invoked. I argue that, notwithstanding Veracini’s analysis, there is a metaphor via which the end of settler colonialism unspools – the quasi-biological concept of extinction, which, when deployed as a narrative trope, offers settlers a chance to consider and disavow their demise, just as they consider and then disavow the violence of their origins. This article traces the importance of the trope of extinction for contemporary settler-colonial literature, with a focus on South Africa, Canada, and Australia. It explores variations in how the death of settler colonialism is conceptualized, drawing a distinction between historio-civilizational narratives of the rise and fall of empires, and a species-oriented notion of extinction that draws force from public anxiety about climate change – an invocation that adds another level of ambivalence by drawing on ‘rational’ fears for the future (because climate change may well render the planet uninhabitable to humans) in order to narrativize a form of social death that, strictly speaking, belongs to a different order of knowledge altogether. As such, my analysis is intended to draw the attention of settlercolonial studies toward futurity and the ambivalence of settler paranoia, while highlighting a potential point of cross-fertilization between settler-colonial and eco-critical approaches to contemporary literature. That ‘extinction’ should be a key word in the settler-colonial lexicon is no surprise. In Patrick Wolfe’s phrase,7 settler colonialism is predicated on a ‘logic of elimination’ that tends towards the extermination – by one means or another – of indigenous peoples.8 This logic is apparent in archetypal settler narratives like James Fenimore Cooper’s The Last of the Mohicans (1826), a historical novel whose very title blends the melancholia and triumph that demarcate settlers’ affective responses to the supposed inevitability of indigenous extinction. Concepts like ‘stadial development’ – by which societies progress through stages, progressively eliminating earlier social forms – and ‘fatal impact’ – which names the biological inevitability of strong peoples supplanting weak – all contribute to the notion that settler colonialism is a kind of ‘ecological process’ 9 that necessitates the extinction of inferior races. What is surprising, though, is how often the trope of extinction also appears with reference to settlers themselves; it makes sense for settlers to narrate how their presence entails others’ destruction, but it is less clear why their attempts to imagine futures should presume extinction to be their own logical end as well. The idea appears repeatedly in English-language literary treatments of settler colonialism. Consider, for instance, the following rumination on the future of South African settler society, from Olive Schreiner’s 1883 Story of an African Farm: It was one of them, one of those wild old Bushmen, that painted those pictures there. He did not know why he painted but he wanted to make something, so he made these. […] Now the Boers have shot them all, so that we never see a yellow face peeping out among the stones. […] And the wild bucks have gone, and those days, and we are here. But we will be gone soon, and only the stones will lie on, looking at everything like they look now.10 In this example, the narrating settler character, Waldo, recognizes prior indigenous inhabitation but his knowledge comes freighted with an expected sense of biological superiority, made apparent by his description of the ‘Bushman’s’ ‘yellow face’, and lack of mental self-awareness. What is not clear is why Waldo’s contemplation of colonial genocide should turn immediately to the assumption that a similar fate awaits his people as well. A similar presumption of racial vulnerability permeates other late nineteenthcentury novels from the imperial metropole, such as Dracula and War of the Worlds, which are plotted around the prospect of invasions that would see the extinction of British imperialism, and, in the process, the human species. Such anxieties draw energy from a pattern of settler defensiveness that can be observed across numerous settler-colonial contexts. Marilyn Lake’s and Henry Reynold’s account of the emergence of transnational ‘whiteness’ highlights the paradoxical fact that while white male settlers have been arguably the most privileged class in history, they have routinely perceived themselves to be ‘under siege’, threatened with destruction to the extent that their very identity of ‘whiteness was born in the apprehension of imminent loss’. 11 The fear of looming annihilation serves a powerful ideological function in settler communities, working to foster racial solidarity, suppress dissent, and legitimate violence against indigenous populations who, by any objective measure, are far more at risk of extermination than the settlers who fear them. Ann Curthoys and Dirk Moses have traced this pattern in Australia and Israel-Palestine, respectively.12 This scholarship suggests that narratives of settler extinction are acts of ideological mystification, obscuring the brutal inequalities of the frontier behind a mask of white vulnerability – an argument with which I sympathize. However, this article shows how there is more to settler-colonial extinction narratives than bad faith.