#### **Indigeneity constitutes a state of the feral savage that concretizes into a history of elimination, jettisoned from or assimilated into the national body to cohere settler temporality and the colonial imaginary. Indigeneity as a feral signifier in colonial meaning-making connotates a state of non-ontology that allows for the constitution of the human**

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Admittedly, the feral is a precarious space from which to theorize, sullied with an injurability bound up in the work of liberal humanism as such, an enterprise that weaponizes a set of moral barometers to distribute ferality unevenly to differently citizened and raced bodies—ones that are too close for comfort and must be pushed outside arm’s reach. Perhaps ferality traverses a semantic line of flight commensurate­ with that of savagery, barbarism, and lawlessness, concreting into one history of elimination: that is, a history of eliminating recalcitrant indigeneities incompatible within a supposedly hygienic social. The word savage comes from the Latin salvaticus, an alteration of silvaticus, meaning “wild,” literally “of the woods.” Of persons, it means “reckless, ungovernable” (“Savage”). In the space-time of settler states, savagery temporarily stands in for those subjectivities tethered to a supposedly waning form of indigeneity, one that came from the woods and, because of this, had to be jettisoned from or assimilated into the national body. Here is Audra Simpson on the history of Indian “lawlessness”: Its genealogy extends back to the earliest moments of recorded encounter, when Indians appeared to have no law, to be without order, and thus, to be in the colonizer’s most generous articulation of differentiation, in need of the trappings of civilization. “Law” may be one instrument of civilization, as a regulating technique of power that develops through the work upon a political body and a territory. (2014, 144) According to Simpson, the recognition of Indigenous peoples as lawless rendered them governable, motivating the settler state (here, Canada) to curate and thus contain atrophied indigeneities—and, consequently, their sovereignties, lands, and politics—within the borders of federal law (2014, 144-45). Similarly, in The Transit of Empire Jodi Byrd traces the epistemological gimmicks through which the concept of “Indianness” came to align with “the savage other” (2011, 27). For her, this alignment provided the “rationale for imperial domination” and continues to stalk philosophy’s patterns of thinking (ibid.). Simpson, writing about the Mohawks of Kahnawake, argues that “a fear of lawlessness” continues to haunt the colonial imaginary, thereby diminishing “Indigenous rights to trade and to act as sovereigns in their own territories” (2014, 145). We might take the following lyrics from the popular Disney film Pocahontas as an example of the ways indigeneity circulates as a feral signifier in colonial economies of meaning-making: [Ratcliffe] What can you expect From filthy little heathens? Their whole disgusting race is like a curse Their skin’s a hellish red They’re only good when dead They’re vermin, as I said And worse [English settlers] They’re savages! Savages! Barely even human. (Gabriel and Goldberg 1995) Savagery connotes a state of non-ontology: Indigenous peoples are forced to cling to a barely extant humanity and coterminously collapse into a putatively wretched form of animality. Savagery is lethal, and its Indian becomes the prehistoric alibi through which the human is constituted as such. Indigenous peoples have therefore labored to explain away this savagery, reifying whitened rubrics for proper citizenship and crafting a genre of life tangible within the scenes of living through that are constitutive of settler colonialism as such. These scenes, however, are dead set on destroying the remnants of that savagery, converting their casualties into morally compatible subjects deserving of rights and life in a multicultural state that stokes the liberal fantasy of life after racial trauma at the expense of decolonial flourishing itself. This paper is therefore interested in the subjectivities and forms of sociality that savagery destroys when applied from without, and the political work of appropriating that savagery in the name of decolonization. Ours is a form of indigeneity that hints at a fundamental pollutability that both confirms and threatens forms of ontology tethered to a taxonomized humanity built in that foundational episode of subjection of which Simpson speaks. I am suggesting that savagery always-already references an otherworld of sorts: there are forms of life abandoned outside modernity’s episteme whose expressivities surge with affects anomalous within the topography of settler colonialism. This paper is not a historicist or nostalgic attachment to a pre-savage indigeneity resurrected from a past somehow unscathed by the violence that left us in the thick of things in the first place. Instead, I emphasize the potentiality of ferality as a politics in a world bent on our destruction—a world that eliminates indigeneities too radical to collapse into a collective sensorium, training us to a live in an ordinary that the settler state needs to persist as such, one that only some will survive. This world incentivizes our collusion with a multicultural state instantiated through a myth of belonging that actively disavows difference in the name of that very difference. We are repeatedly hurried into a kind of waning sociality, the content and form of which appear both too familiar and not familiar enough. In short, we are habitually left scavenging for ways to go on without knowing what it is we want. Let’s consider Jack Halberstam’s thoughts on “the wild”: It is a tricky word to use but it is a concept that we cannot live without if we are to combat the conventional modes of rule that have synced social norms to economic practices and have created a world order where every form of disturbance is quickly folded back into quiet, where every ripple is quickly smoothed over, where every instance of eruption has been tamped down and turned into new evidence of the rightness of the status quo. (2013, 126) Where Halberstam finds disturbance, I find indigeneity-cum-disturbance par excellence. Halberstam’s “wild” evokes a potentiality laboured in the here and now and “an alternative to how we want to think about being” in and outside an authoritarian state (2013, 126-27). Perhaps the wild risks the decolonial, a geography of life-building that dreams up tomorrows whose referents are the fractured indigeneities struggling to survive a historical present built on our suffering. Ferality is a stepping stone to a future grounded in Indigenous peoples’ legal and political orders. This paper does not traffic in teleologies of the anarchic or lawless as they emerge in Western thought; instead, it refuses settler sovereignty and calls for forms of collective Indigenous life that are attuned to queerness’s wretched histories and future-making potentialities. Indigeneity is an ante-ontology of sorts: it is prior to and therefore disruptive of ontology. Indigeneity makes manifest residues or pockets of times, worlds, and subjectivities that warp both common sense and philosophy into falsities that fall short of completely explaining what is going on. Indigenous life is truncated in the biopolitical category of Savage in order to make our attachments to ourselves assimilable inside settler colonialism’s national sensorium. Settler colonialism purges excessive forms of indigeneity that trouble its rubrics for sensing out the human and the nonhuman. In other words, settler colonialism works up modes of being-in-the-world that narrate themselves as the only options we have. What would it mean, then, to persist in the space of savagery, exhausting the present and holding out for futures that are not obsessed with the proper boundary between human and nonhuman life? This paper now turns to the present, asking: what happens when indigeneity collides with queerness inside the reserve, and how might a feral theory make sense of that collision? Deadly Presents “I went through a really hard time… I was beaten; more than once. I was choked” (Klassen 2014). These were the words of Tyler-Alan Jacobs, a two-spirit man from the Squamish Nation, capturing at once the terror of queer life on the reserve and the hardening of time into a thing that slows down bodies and pushes them outside its securitized geographies. Jacobs had grown up with his attackers, attackers who were energized by the pronouncement of queerness—how it insisted on being noticed, how it insisted on being. When the dust settled, “his right eye [had] dislodged and the side of his faced [had] caved in” (ibid.). Settler colonialism is fundamentally affective: it takes hold of the body, makes it perspire, and wears it out. It converts flesh into pliable automations and people into grim reapers who must choose which lives are worth keeping in the world. It can turn a person into a murderer in a matter of seconds; it is an epistemic rupturing of our attachments to life, to each other, and to ourselves. It is as if settler colonialism were simultaneously a rescue and military operation, a holy war of sorts tasked with exorcising the spectre of queer indigeneity and its putative infectivity. I rehearse this case because it allows me to risk qualifying the reserve as a geography saturated with heteronormativity’s socialities. This is a strategic interdiction that destroys supposedly degenerative queer affect worlds, untangling some bodies and not others from the future. I don’t have the statistics to substantiate these claims, but there is an archive of heartbreak and loss that is easy to come by if you ask the right people. Indeed, what would such statistics tell us that we don’t already know? What would the biopolitical work of data collection do to a knowledge-making project that thinks outside the big worlds of Statistics and Demography and, instead, inside the smaller, more precarious worlds created in the wake of gossip? I worry about ethnographic projects that seek to account for things and theory in the material in order to map the coordinates of an aberration to anchor it and its voyeurs in the theatres of the academy. The desire to attach to a body is too easily energized by a biological reading of gender that repudiates the very subjects it seeks so desperately to know and to study. What about the body? I have been asked this question, again and again. A feral theory is something of a call to arms: abolish this sort of ethnography and turn to those emergent methodologies that might better make sense of the affects and life-forms that are just now coming into focus and have been destroyed or made invisible in the name of research itself. Queer indigeneity, to borrow Fred Moten’s description of blackness, might “come most clearly into relief, by way of its negation” (2014). Perhaps decolonization needs to be a sort of séance: an attempt to communicate with the dead, a collective rising-up from the reserve’s necropolis, a feral becoming-undead. Boyd and Thrush’s Phantom Past, Indigenous Presence thinks indigeneity and its shaky histories vis-à-vis the language of haunting, where haunting is an endurant facet of “the experience of colonialism” (Bodinger de Uriarte 2012, 303). But, for me, ghostliness is differentially distributed: some more than others will be wrenched into the domain of the dead and forced to will their own ontologies into the now. Perhaps the universalist notion that haunting is a metonym for indigeneity repudiates the very life-forms that it claims to include: those who are differently queered and gendered, and, because of this, haunt waywardly and in ways that cannot be easily predicted (Ahmed 2015). This paper thus takes an imaginative turn and proceeds with something of an incantation to summon the figure of the queer Indigenous poltergeist—the feral monster in the horror story of decolonization. Queer Indigenous poltergeists do not linger inaudibly in the background; we are beside ourselves with anger, we make loud noises and throw objects around because we are demanding retribution for homicide, unloved love, and cold shoulders. We do not reconcile; we escape the reserve, pillage and mangle the settler-colonial episteme. Our arrival is both uneventful and apocalyptic, a point of departure and an entry point for an ontology that corresponds with a future that has yet to come. Sometimes all we have is the promise of the future. For the queer Indigenous poltergeist, resurrection is its own form of decolonial love. The poltergeist is an ontological anomaly: a fusion of human, object, and ghost, a “creature of social reality” and a “creature of fiction” (Haraway 1991, 149). From the German poltern meaning “[to] make noise, [to] rattle” and Geist or “ghost,” it literally means “noisy ghost,” speaking into existence an anti-subjectivity that emerges in the aftermath of death or murder (“Poltergeist”). It is the subject of Tobe Hooper’s 1982 film Poltergeist, which tells a story of “a haunting based on revenge” (Tuck and Ree 2013, 652). The film’s haunting is a wronging premised on an initial wrong: the eponymous poltergeist materializes when a mansion is constructed on a cemetery—a disturbing of spirits, if you will. José Esteban Muñoz argues that “The double ontology of ghosts and ghostliness, the manner in which ghosts exist inside and out and traverse categorical distinctions, seems especially useful for… queer criticism” (2009, 46). In this paper, the poltergeist names the form which indigeneity takes when it brings queer matter into its folds. In other words, this essay evokes haunting as a metaphor to hint at the ways in which queerness was murderously absorbed into the past and prematurely expected to stay there as an effect of colonialism’s drive to eliminate all traces of sexualities and genders that wandered astray. The poltergeist conceptualizes the work of queer indigeneity in the present insofar as it does not presuppose the mysterious intentions of the ghost—an otherworldly force that is bad, good, and undetectable all at once. Instead, the poltergeist is melancholic in its grief, but also pissed off. It refuses to remain in the spiritual, a space cheapened in relation to the staunch materiality of the real, and one that, though housing our conditions of possibility, cannot contain all of us. We protest forms of cruel nostalgia that tether ghosts to a discarded past within which queer Indigenous life once flourished because we know that we will never get it back and that most of us likely never experienced it in the first place. We long for that kind of love, but we know it is hard to come by. I turn to the poltergeist because I don’t have anywhere else to go. Help me, I could say. But I won’t. Queer indigeneity, then, is neither here nor there, neither dead nor alive but, to use Judith Butler’s language, interminably spectral (2006, 33). We are ghosts that haunt the reserve in the event of resurrection. According to Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, a reserve is a “tract of land, the legal title to which is held by the Crown, set apart for the use and benefit of an Indian band” (“Terminology”). The “reserve system” is part of the dispossessory ethos through which the settler state reifies land as the sign of sovereignty itself, and thus effects the political death of indigeneity, decomposing it into nothingness, into contaminated dirt. Reserves are the products of imaginations gone wild; they are ruins that bear “the physical imprint of the supernatural” on arid land, on decaying trailers arranged like weathered tombstones (Tuck and Ree 2013, 653). They are borderlands that connote simultaneous possession and dispossession: they represent the collision between settler sovereignty (insofar as the Crown holds the legal title to the land) and indigeneity (pointing to a genre of life that is distinctly Indigenous). Reserves were—some might say they still are—zones of death that regulated and regulate the movements of Indigenous bodies, quarantining their putatively contaminated flesh outside modern life in order to preserve settler-colonial futurities. It is as if the reserve were a site of complete atrophy, where indigeneity is supposed to waste away or degenerate, where queerness has already bled out. Look at the blood on your hands! The queer Indigenous poltergeist, however, foregrounds what I call a “reserve consciousness” —an awareness of the deathliness of the reserve. A reserve consciousness might be a kind of critical phenomenology that, to use Lisa Guenther’s description of this sort of insurgent knowledge project, pulls up “traces of what is not quite or no longer there—that which has been rubbed out or consigned to invisibility” (2015): here, the so-called on-reserve Indian. It might be about becoming a frictive surface; by rubbing up against things and resisting motion between objects, we might become unstuck. Queer Indigenous poltergeists are what Sara Ahmed calls “blockage points”: where communication stops because we cannot get through (2011, 68). That is, queer indigeneity connotes an ethical impasse, a dead end that presents us with two options: exorcism or resurrection. If settler colonialism is topological, if it persists despite elastic deformations such as stretching and twisting, wear and tear, we might have to make friction to survive. I turn to the reserve because it is a geography of affect, one in which the heaviness of atmospheres crushes some bodies to death and in which some must bear the weight of settler colonialism more than others. The violence done to us has wrenched us outside the physical world and into the supernatural. Some of us are spirits—open wounds that refuse to heal because our blood might be the one thing that cannot be stolen. Does resistance always feel like resistance, or does it sometimes feel like bleeding out (Berlant 2011)? Feral Socialities I must leave the beaten path and go where we are not. Queerness, according to Muñoz, is not yet here; it is an ideality that “we may never touch,” that propels us onward (2009, 1). Likewise, Halberstam suggests that the presentness of queerness signals a kind of emerging ontology. He argues that failure “is something that queers do and have always done exceptionally well in contrast to the grim scenarios of success” that structure “a heteronormative, capitalist society” (2011, 2-3). For Muñoz, queer failure is about “doing something that is missing in straight time’s always already flawed temporal mapping practice” (2009, 174). We know, however, that this isn’t the entire story. Whereas Muñoz’s queer past morphs into the here and now of homonormativity’s carceral tempos, indigeneity’s queernesses are saturated with the trauma of colonialism’s becoming-structure. Queer death doubles as the settler state’s condition of possibility. Pre-contact queer indigeneities had been absorbed into colonialism’s death grip; however, this making-dead was also a making-undead in the enduring of ghosts (Derrida 1994, 310). If haunting, according to Tuck and Ree, “lies precisely in its refusal to stop,” then the queer Indigenous poltergeist fails to have died by way of time travel (2013, 642). Queer indigeneity might be a kind of “feral sociality”: we are in a wild state after escaping colonial captivity and domestication. When the state evicts you, you might have to become feral to endure. To be feral is to linger in the back alleys of the settler state. It is a refusal of settler statecraft, a strategic failing to approximate the metrics of colonial citizenship, a giving up on the ethical future that reconciliation supposedly promises. As an aside, I suspect that the settler state’s reconciliatory ethos is always-already a domesticating project: it contains Indigenous suffering within the spectacularized theatre of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, building a post-Residential School temporality in which Indigenous peoples have been repaired through monetary reparations and storytelling. In the melodrama of reconciliation, the settler state wins its centuries-long war against Indian lawlessness by healing Indigenous peoples of the trauma that blocked them from becoming properly emotive citizens. Queer indigeneity, however, escapes discursive and affective concealment and therefore the category of the human itself, disturbing the binary clash between the living and nonliving by way of its un-humanity, a kind of “dead living” whereby flesh is animated through death. Perhaps we must become feral to imagine other space-times, to imagine other kinds of queerness. If settler colonialism incentivizes our collusion with the humanist enterprise of multiculturalism (and it does), what would it mean to refuse humanity and actualize other subject formations? In other words, how do the un-living live? Here, I want to propose the concept of “Indian time” to theorize the temporality and liminality of queer indigeneity as it festers in the slippage between near-death and the refusal to die. Indian time colloquially describes the regularity with which Indigenous peoples arrive late or are behind schedule. I appropriate this idiom to argue that the presentness of queer indigeneity is prefigured by an escape from and bringing forward of the past as well as a taking residence in the future. To be queer and Indigenous might mean to live outside time, to fall out of that form of affective life. Indian time thus nullifies the normative temporality of settler colonialism in which death is the telos of the human and being-in-death is an ontological fallacy. It connotes the conversion of queer indigeneity into non-living matter, into ephemera lurking in the shadows of the present, waiting, watching, and conspiring. Where Jasbir Puar argues that all things under the rubric of queer are always-already calculated into the state’s biopolitical mathematic, queer indigeneity cannot be held captive because it cannot be seen—we are still emerging in the social while simultaneously altering its substance (2012). If decolonization is, according to Tuck and K. Wayne Yang’s reading of Frantz Fanon, an “unclean break from a colonial condition,” perhaps the queer Indigenous poltergeist is feral enough to will a decolonial world into a future that hails rather than expels its ghosts (2012, 20). The queer Indigenous poltergeist might have nothing else to lose.

#### The genocide of the Native clears the way for intra-Settler discussions of ethical value. To be alive is to stand upon this Indian burial ground we call the world – to be alive is to be unethical.

Wilderson 10 (Frank, Full Professor of Drama and African American studies at the University of California, Irvine *Red, White, and Black: Cinema and the Structure of U.S. Antagonisms* pp. 214-220) NIJ

Mogie’s surrealist demand, “send me a big…fat woman …[to] cover up all the cracks in my shack,” goes to the heart of the matter. Red flesh can only be restored, ethically, through the destruction of White bodies, because the corporeality of the indigenous has been consumed by and gone into the making of the Settler’s corporeality. Mogie wants what he has lost; not just his labor power, not just his language or land, but the raw material of his flesh. And, like most “grassroots Indians,” he knows precisely where it went—into the Settler’s “body”—and thus he knows precisely from where to repossess it. Though Mogie’s shack is small, we know from earlier scenes that it has at least two rooms. Therefore, to stretch a White woman across its interior, window-to-window, wall-to-wall, corner-to-corner, and then stretch her across the door, would be to reconfigure her body into grotesque and unrecognizable dimensions. There are serious doubts as to whether a White woman, even as large a White woman as Mogie Yellow Lodge is demanding from the President, “the Great White Father in Washington,” would survive such an ordeal. Imagine such a demand being made, such wallpapering taking place, en mass, on a scale which even Mogie’s inebriated imagination has not yet grasped. [General Andrew Jackson] instructed his troops to cut the noses of the corpses so that no one would be able to challenge the body count. They had bushel baskets full of noses that they brought back. This [practice] got him elected President. [He] campaigned on the basis that he had never met a recalcitrant Indian that he had not killed and never killed an Indian that he had not scalped and that anybody who wanted to question the validity of what he was saying was invited to tea in his parlor that evening so he could display the scalps and prove his point. [He] rode with a saddle bridle made out of the skin of an opposing Indian leader. This is the President of the United States. (Churchill: Book Tour Speech July 31, 2004) One begins to see how wallpapering or insulating one’s room not with “bushel baskets” of White female skin but with even one White woman is simply out of the question. Mogie’s demand, then, is laughed off—managed, constrained, marginalized—by the script. “Hey, ya wanna see me piss in my pants?” are the words he is made to utter next. Words portrayed as the surreal ruminations of an Indian who has reached the end of his inebriated tether, and not as the wisdom of a man who could lead his people. The film is nervous in the face of Mogie’s demand not because of its absurdity but because of its authority. But Mogie is demanding no more of the Great White Father, no more of civil society, than he has already given. In fact, he is demanding less. His surrealism indicates a qualitatively similar ontological relationship between the Red and the White as exists between the Black and the White. The Middle Passage turns, for example, Ashanti spatial and temporal capacity into spatial and temporal incapacity—a body into flesh. This process begins as early as the 1200s for the Slave. lxxvi By the 1530s, Modernity is more self-conscious of its coordinates, and Whiteness begins its ontological consolidation and negative knowledge of itself by turning (part of) the Aztec body, for example, into Indian flesh (Judy (Dis)Forming the American Canon 81). In this moment the White body completes itself and proceeds to lay the groundwork for the intra-Settler ensemble of questions foundational to its ethical dilemmas (i.e., Marxism, feminism, psychoanalysis). In the final analysis, Settler ontology is guaranteed by way of a negative knowledge of what it is not, rather than by way of its positive claims of what it is. Ontological Whiteness is secured not through its cultural, economic, or gendered identities; but by the fact that it cannot be known (positioned) by genocide (or by Accumulation and Fungibility). This negative knowledge has its pleasures… [Unlike Jackson’s army of the early 19 th century, the 16 th century Dutch] didn’t take the noses and they didn’t take the scalps. They took whole heads because they wanted to identify the fact that they had eradicated the entire leadership of the opposition. They brought the heads back to the central square in New Amsterdam [now Manhattan] where the citizenry began to celebrate. They turned it into a sport. People who had participated in the expedition had themselves a jolly game of kick ball using the heads and the citizenry sat around and cheered…(Churchill 7/31/04) …has a sense of affilial inclusion and filial longevity… [In 1864, the 3 rd Regiment of the U.S. Calvary] returned to Denver [Colorado] with their trophies [the vaginas of Native American women stapled to the front of their hats] and held a triumphal parade. [They] proceeded down Larimore Street…and the good citizenry stood up and cheered wildly...[T]he Rocky Mountain News [described it as] “an unparalleled feat of martial prowess that would live forever in the annals of the history and nobility of the race.” (7/31/04) …has a capacity for territorial integrity… Scalp bounties…were officially claimed bounties that were placed on Indians in every antecedent colony in the Eastern Seaboard—French, English, and Spanish. I don’t know about the Dutch. They killed all the Indians around before they had the chance to need a bounty. But from the antecedent colonies this law transferred to every state and territory in forty-eight contiguous states. (7/31/04) …that is, it has the capacity to transform Clearing from a verb into Clearing as a noun… Every [state in the union] placed a bounty on Indians, any Indians, all Indians. [For example in the] Pennsylvania colony in the 1740s, the bounty [was] forty pounds sterling for proof of death of an adult male Indian. That proof of death being in the form of a scalp or a bloody red skin…Proof of death in that form got the bearer of the proof forty pounds sterling. Forty pounds sterling in the 1740s was equivalent to the annual wage of your average farmer. This is big business. Twenty pounds sterling would be paid for proof of death in the same form of an adult female. Ten pounds sterling for proof of death of a child, a child being defined as human being of either sex under ten years of age down to and, yes, including the fetus…In Texas this law was not rescinded until 1887, [when] the debate in the Texas legislature concluded that there was no reason to continue because there was no long sufficient numbers of living Indians in the entire state of Texas to warrant the continuation of it. It had accomplished its purpose. (7/31/04) …and just like that, Little Baby Civil Society was walking on its own two feet. To Grown-up Civil Society (Mogie’s “Great White Father in Washington”) Mogie Yellow Lodge submits his own “personal” genocide reparations bill. A bill that accounts for the perfect symmetry through which Whiteness has formed a body (from the genitals to the body politic) out of “Savage” flesh. The symmetry’s perfection becomes clear when one realizes that today’s 1.6%-to-80.6%, “Savage”-to-Settler ratio is a pure inversion of the sixteenth century’s “Savage” to Settler ratio. lxxvii “Send me a big woman. A fat woman! So that when I sleep with her she’ll cover up all the cracks in my shack and stop the wind from blowing through” is a demand so ethically pure that the film finds it unbearable and, as such, is unable (unwilling?) to let Mogie state it without irony. And yet, Mogie’s outbursts like this—“outbursts” because they are generally infrequent and contained by pity or humor—are the few moments when the film engages the ethical dilemmas of the Settler/“Savage” antagonism (genocide and its impossible semiotics) instead of the ethical dilemmas of the Settler/“Savage” conflict (sovereignty and its semiotics of loss). Again, it is not that Mogie’s demand is absurd and unethical, but rather that it is a demand so pure in its ethicality that it threatens the quotidian prohibitions which, in Modernity, constrain ethics. The demand is far too ethical for the film to embrace and elaborate at the level of narrative. It is a demand that must be policed by sovereign powers. Exploring Skins’ cinematic strategies reveals this containment as an effort to manage the spectator’s interpellation by the dilemmas of Mogie’s ruination and by they demand that ushers forth from his “flesh.” Mogie’s surrealism seeks to cull power directly from the subjectivity of the Settler, what Ward Churchill calls the “imperial integrity of the US itself” (Marxism and Native Americans 202). This idea of culling power, resources, and Human life directly from the imperial integrity of the US, especially when we think that imperial integrity through the banality of White bodies (in other words, through the “innocence” of today’s citizen), is indicative of the kind of unflinching paradigmatic analyses which allowed Ward Churchill to embrace the 9/11 attack on the World Trade Center within forty-eight hours of its occurrence, a moment in time when Settler Marxists and Settler progressives either suddenly became mute, or stumbled over their own tongues in half-hearted attempts to simultaneously condemn the attack and explain its political and historical rationale. Churchill’s embrace of the event is not synonymous with either celebration or condemnation. It goes without saying that Churchill also refused to be interpellated by the pageantry of mourning that followed in the wake of 9-1-1. But Settler radicals and progressives assailed him for meditating on the attack from within the questions of the genocided “Savage,” rather than from within an ensemble of questions allied with Settler’s grammar of suffering, exploitation and alienation. People on the Left tried to shame Churchill for embracing incoherent terror (suicide bombers) instead of morally and politically sanctioned revolutionary action (like the Zapatistas or the Sandanistas). Others chided him for advocating violence in any form. Many said that now is not the time for a scathing critique; “our” nation is in mourning. And there were those who wagged their finger and reminded him that there were members of the working class (not just police agents and investment bankers) who died in the Twin Towers. These nay-sayers all made their arguments at the level of experience, and Churchill, rather handily, answered them at the level as well. But I am neither interested in his interlocutors’ chiding nor in his response. The Left’s attack on Churchill’s embrace of the 9-1-1 attacks is important not for the social issues it raises, the myriad of things it claims it is concerned about, but rather for the grammar of suffering shared across the board, those building blocks through which loss is conceptualized in such a way that makes it impossible for the “Savage” to function, grammatically, as their paradigm of suffering, and even less as its paradigmatic agent for change. Had Churchill’s interlocutors been more honest, they would have used fewer words—not draped their rejoinders with the veil of issues from the realm of experience (i.e., tactics) —and said, quite simply, “We will not be led by the ‘Savage;’ death is not an element constituent of our ontology.” Unlike the narrative and cinematic strategies of Skins, Churchill’s meditation on 9-1-1 embraces, rather than contains, Mogie Yellow Lodge’s demand. Churchill’s work is authorized by Mogie Yellow Lodge’s grammar of suffering which, inter alia, forecloses upon Churchill’s passing judgment on the tactical ethics of either the attack on the World Trade Center or, for that matter, Mogie’s attack on the body of White femininity. Churchill accepts this foreclosure and works off of it. He does not feel constrained by it but finds it enabling of a quality of reflection that would be otherwise inconceivable: There can be no defensible suggestion that those who attacked the Pentagon and the WTC on 9-1-1 were seeking to get even with the U.S. Still less is there a basis for claims that they “started” something, or that the U.S. has anything to get even with them for. Quite the contrary. For the attackers to have arguably “evened the score” for Iraqi’s dead children alone, it would have been necessary for them to have killed a hundred times the number of Americans who actually died. This in itself, however would have allowed them to attain parity in terms of real numbers. The U.S. population is about fifteen times the size of Iraq’s. Hence, for the attackers to have achieved a proportionally equivalent impact, it would have been necessary that they kill some 7.5 million Americans. (On the Justice of Roosting Chickens: Reflections on the Consequences of U.S. Imperial Arrogance and Criminality 14) Churchill reflects upon the event of 9-1-1 in such a way as to make it impossible to talk about it as an event. This is a marker of the philosophical brilliance and rhetorical dexterity foundational to Churchill’s thirty-odd books, articles, and recorded speeches. This dexterity allows the work to be conversant with the actual details and “facts” of the event (as presented and cathedralized by White civil society). Yet instead of becoming mired in the bog of concerns which makes the event as “event” (details and common sense ethics) Churchill jettisons common sense and presses the details into service of an ensemble of questions animated by the ethical dilemmas of “Savage,” and not Settler, ontology. He can do this on behalf of those who are not even Native Americans (in this passage, Iraqis) because he provides them with the “Savage” as a lens through which they can do ethnographic and political work on the Settler as specimen. In other words, in his chapter on 9-1-1, his argument is made in such a way that, to be interpellated, the reader must adjust the logic of his/her political experience to fit the logic of “Savage” genocidal ontology—and not vice versa. The reader must be subordinated to, and incorporated by, Redness, or else the reader will experience the piece in the same way that the viewer is meant to experience Mogie Yellow Lodge: as a scandal, as a problem in need of fixing. Churchill continues to subordinate the “facts” of 9-1-1 to an ethical examination of Settlerism by reminding the reader that the U.S. is “fifteen times the size” of Iraq, therefore 9-1-1 would have had to have had a death toll of “7.5 million Americans” in order to have “achieved a proportionately equivalent impact” (14). In the very next paragraph, Churchill corrects himself and insists that 7.5 million is the number of American children the attackers would have had to have killed in order to achieve parity. This is followed by a list of even more corrections, in which Churchill recalculates the meaning of parity based solely on the U.S.’s deracination of Iraq since 1990 (further down the correctives will lead him to the “Savage” and to the Slave). True parity would result in 7.5 million dead American children, 15 million dead American adults, the obliteration of “sewage, water sanitation and electrical plants, food production/storage capacity, hospitals, pharmaceutical production facilities, communication centers and much more.” The effects of which would mean not just mass death but “a surviving population wracked by malnutrition an endemic disease” (14). “Indeed, applying such standards of ‘pay back’ vis-à-vis American Indians alone would require a lethal reduction in the U.S. population…of between 96 and 99 percent” (15). Suddenly, Mogie Yellow Lodge’s demand for parity (just one big fat White woman to cover up the cracks in his shack) sounds downright generous. Mogie is demanding one Settler, a far cry from demanding parity for ontological death. Were he to demand parity the U.S. “would run out of people long before it ran out of compensatory obligation” (Churchill Roosting Chickens 14-15).

#### The specter of extinction is a result of settler anxieties that arise not only from settlerism’s guilt for destroying the planet’s ability to sustain itself, but also from the settler’s need to strengthen solidarity and defer confrontation with native genocide

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**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 settler colonial 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. 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 settler colonial 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 nineteenth century 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. I argue that we need a more nuanced understanding of how they encode a specifically settler-colonial framework for imagining the future, one that has implications for how we understand contemporary literatures from settler societies, and which allows us to see extinction as a genuine, if flawed, attempt to envisage social change. In the remainder of this paper I consider extinction’s function as a metaphor of decolonization. I use this phrase to invoke, without completely endorsing, Tuck and Yang’s argument that to treat decolonization figuratively, as I argue extinction narratives do, is necessarily to preclude radical change, creating opportunities for settler ‘moves to innocence’ that re-legitimate racial inequality.13 The counterview to this pessimistic perspective is offered by Veracini, who suggests that progressive change to settler-colonial relationships will only happen if narratives can be found that make decolonization thinkable.14 This article enters the debate between these two perspectives by asking what it means for settler writers to imagine the future via the trope of extinction. Does extinction offer a meaningful way to think about ending settler colonialism, or does it re-activate settler-colonial patterns of thought that allow exclusionary social structures to persist? I explore this question with reference to examples of contemporary literary treatments of extinction from select English-speaking settler-colonial contexts: South Africa, Australia, and Canada.15 The next section of this article traces key elements of extinction narrative in a range of settler-colonial texts, while the section that follows offers a detailed reading of one of the best examples of a sustained literary exploration of human finitude, Margaret Atwood’s Maddaddam trilogy (2003–2013). I advance four specific arguments. First, extinction narratives take at least two forms depending on whether the ‘end’ of settler society is framed primarily in historical-civilizational terms or in a stronger, biological sense; the key question is whether the ‘thing’ that is going extinct is a society or a species. Second, biologically oriented extinction narratives rely on a more or less conscious slippage between ‘the settler’ and ‘the human’. Third, this slippage is ideologically ambivalent: on the one hand, it contains a radical charge that invokes environmentalist discourse and climate-change anxiety to imagine social forms that re-write settler-colonial dynamics; on the other, it replicates a core aspect of imperialist ideology by normalizing whiteness as equivalent to humanity. Fourth, these ideological effects are mediated by gender, insofar as extinction narratives invoke issues of biological reproduction, community protection, and violence that function to differentiate and reify masculine and feminine roles in the putative de-colonial future. Overall, my central claim is that extinction is a core trope through which settler futurity emerges, one with crucial narrative and ideological effects that shape much of the contemporary literature emerging from white colonial settings.

#### Indigeneity as the corporal and geospatial locus of disease haunts the 1AC’s discourse of disease

Belcourt 17 (Billy-Ray, Driftpile Cree Nation, 2016 Rhodes Scholar, Reading for an M.St. in Women's Studies at the University of Oxford and Wadham College "Meditations on reserve life, biosociality, and the taste of non-sovereignty" Settler Colonial Studies, pp. 2-8) NIJ // recut aaditg

The main argument of this paper is that the feeling of indigeneity is the miserable feeling of not properly being of this world, and that a disease like diabetes mellitus is a key manifestation of this sort of exhausted existence. To do this, I pursue the secondary claims that indigeneity is a zone of biological struggle and that the reserve is something of a non-place calibrated by affects I want to group under the sign of misery. Yes, misery is a bad word. Harsh, even. But I think it is big enough to conceptualize the cramped conditions under which life is haphazardly improvised on the reserve. Misery wears you down, effecting both a corporeal fragility and an intellectual fatigue that double as sociality’s background noise. I am recruiting misery here because it does not rest on the eventful. Instead, it blends into ordinary time. It is possible to make joy or to feel enlivened within a miserable context. But, misery circumscribes the body’s potentialities. If misery is a part of slow death’s arsenal, if it hangs ‘in the air like a rumor’,6 then there is no easy way out. Existence is what taxes.7 If the reserve is a geography of misery, then it is where being in life feels like falling out of it. There, negative affect bubbles just below a collective ‘threshold of awareness’,8 but nonetheless fills out a confined area, mutating over time into the bodies that people it. Misery flattens subjectivity and makes us submit to its tempos, operating here as both a pesky obstacle to radical worldings and as an affective atmosphere that ‘hover[s] around daily practices of survival’.9 Unlike the cruel optimist about which Lauren Berlant writes,10 the band member is not oblivious to the cruelties of her object attachments. She knows or is repeatedly told they are damaging, but cannot easily forge new ones, if only because the reserve absents the possibility of making life unhinged by the rote of premature death. She is stuck in a rut that was dug in the name of a colonial ethos bent on disappearing Indians from the future, a rut whose chronic episodes of biopolitical tragedy are somehow still bearable by those who endure them. The goal is not to be better at life, but simply to keep at it, even if ‘it’ taxes and eschews happiness without becoming too conspicuous. The reserve is thus where we should go to think about what happens when surplus populations get stowed away from the ‘what’ of what makes life worth living, if we describe ‘life’ as a mix of reckless capitalist worldings and racist histories of uneven precarity and safety. Here, I want to ask the tricky question: might biosocial trauma partly make up indigeneity’s racial terrain? For me, the biosocial is where biology’s politics are thinkable, where bodily production and statecraft meet, where sickness coheres as a racialized symptom of a world that is not good for most of us. The biosocial is where disease’s raciality takes shape. As I see them, indigeneity and sickness are co-constitutive categories in a day and age where health is the biopolitical measure of a subject’s ability to adjust to structural pressures endemic to the affective life of setter colonialism. This is thus also a story about the politics of interpretation, about how we take stock of the horrors of Indigenous embodiment and how we might do it differently. If indigeneity is where the fantasy of self-sovereignty is especially weak (none of us are self-sovereign), then colonial publics hone in on and amplify this weakness to show that the world is not ours to freely inhabit. Again, in what follows, I take diabetes mellitus as a case study in the quiet forms of non-sovereignty that proliferate on the reserve, a place where living, dying, and failed flourishing always hang in the balance.11 2 B.-R. BELCOURT Downloaded by [Lorenzo Veracini] at 22:07 10 October 2017 Dying and misery are affective bedfellows. ‘Dying’ is an adjective used to describe a noun ‘on the point of death’. To be ‘on the point of death’ is to exhibit a mode of being in the world that leaves loose ends untied. This is to say (1) that death’s origin story amasses small and big culprits as time passes such that it becomes laborious to track its long political history. Scapegoats like genes, for example, dilute the recent past’s lethal ecologies. And (2) that there is an indeterminacy with which subjects and objects die: slowly or quickly, suspiciously or predictably – or a cacophonous mix of all of these. There is always something left to be said at the funeral. One of the conditions of Indigenous life today is manslaughter hidden under the ruse of botched ways of populating the world. ‘Dying’ is a present participle too: it describes the affective energies of an inchoate happening, or time’s rupture between life as we knew it and death. It is a process of becoming liminal that is phenomenologically promiscuous. Its affects range from shock to agony to a kind of cold sobriety. Death’s grammar is telling: to die is to have been dying, and ‘has been’ takes a subject and the ‘of’ or the ‘from’ of ‘dying’ piece together a causal relation that looks like a crime scene. Is dying worth zeroing in on if it could be said that we are all dying, that to be human or to be in life is in fact to be dying? Of course, though, death is not fairly apportioned when empire’s worlds are wrangled together by the unlivability of toxic pockets of minoritarian life. And, dying unevenly stands in for ordinary life’s sociability in a big world whose public feelings circulate in the build up before and in the aftermath of racial crisis. Perhaps dying is the racialized state of not properly ‘having’ or ‘being in’ a body.12 Perhaps it is where the advance of life eventually gets quasi-melodramatic via a biopolitical drive to palliate racial surplus until an assailant (the state) gets acquitted by time’s shoddy memory work and all you are left with is a body beside itself. The reserve, however, is a site of augured disappearance propped up in the wake of insidiously lawful world-breaking events,13 ones whose delayed traumas fester beneath the skin. For Donna Haraway, the Anthropocene – the current geological era in which the social is animated by human-made ecological catastrophe and the anxieties produced by it – pressures us to strategize about what she calls ‘the arts of living on a damaged planet’.14 Indigenous worlds, however, have been sutured by this sort of apocalypticism for quite some time now.15 The arts of living on a damaged reserve have little do with building pleasurable collectivities, as Haraway sees it globally. Rather, we have to figure out how to ward off an impoverished social life that our cells know is coming. What does it mean to politically commit to a place that wears you down in order to maintain an allegiance to indigeneity’s visible cultural forms? Is this all some of us have left? Here is the historical aporia: in a twenty-first-century Canada manned by a liberal prime minister dedicated to politically diluted forms of reconciliation, Indigenous peoples are nonetheless still feeling the affective wrath of the long-twentieth century’s colonial statecraft. 16 Justin Trudeau’s is a national culture of sentiment that buries his and previous Canadas’ complicities in decades-long biological warfare against Indigenous life. Speaking to an audience of residential school survivors during the launch of the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada in December 2015, Trudeau said: To the former Indian residential school students who came forward and shared your painful stories, I say: thank you for your extraordinary bravery and for your willingness to help SETTLER COLONIAL STUDIES 3 Canadians understand what happened to you…The burden of this experience has been on your shoulders for far too long. The burden is properly ours as a government, and as a country …This is a time of real and positive change.17 Note how Trudeau’s authoritative speech acts fail also to be performative, if performative speech aims to bring about that which it names.18 His tears are epistemological hallucinogens, 19 luring us into an era of settler governance he vows is attuned to Indigenous grievances, one that pledges to stop hurting us. That is, he lauded Indigenous elders for opening themselves up to a nation-state that broke open their worlds, assuring them that the past’s injustices would not live again in the present. Alas, bad feelings do not go away because a head of state asks them to, especially if the conditions under which they germinate are left intact. The affect of the now and the near future is sickness, and this is a structural diagnosis. The reserve, then, is where life is lived at the edge of the world, a bio-necropolitical gulag of sorts where slow death stunts indigeneity’s future-bearing potentiality. Put differently, it is an incubator of deadened life, where the plasticity of the life-death binary is worked up so as to harvest bodies that are stripped of vitality and sensation. For Jasbir Puar, the ‘bio-necro collaboration’ is where the sovereign thirst for blood and the management of biological life operate harmoniously – an addendum to Foucault’s biopower, which Puar argues overlooks ‘biopower’s direct activity in death’ in a so-called age of terror.20 As Scott Morgensen pointed out in 2012, settler colonialism too churns out its own type of biopower, one that aggressively seeks to eliminate and then replace Indigenous peoples, and coterminously to extend the ‘West’s’ juridical reach across the globe. Indeed, to make everywhere its colony.21 My claim, then, is that the reserve worlds death-worlds, to use Achille Mbembe’s term,22 whose poisonousnesses flatten into indigeneity’s hardened arenas of life. It is a coral whose biopower is characterized by the mismanagement of biological life, where disease control has been avoided as a method of ethico-political abandonment. Sometimes negligence is the form that state power takes. Which is to say that ongoingness on the reserve is an aspirational deadlock stymied by negative affects like hunger, nausea, and dizziness. For Sara Ahmed, this style of getting by produces a racial fatalism of sorts. She writes, ‘some are assumed to be inherently broken as if their fate is to break’.23 If we die, things go on as if nothing happened. Indeed, some die so that ‘the nothing’ can happen. Those that do not neatly or properly enflesh the human as such occupy the social as if they were always-already missing something, as if they were broken beyond repair. We might ask: what does it mean to be with feelings of loss in a world in which losing things is a condition of political becoming, a world in which maintaining one’s attachments to life routinely becomes too tiring to keep up with? What does dying’s repetition do to the ordinary’s promise to keep us a part of something durable? These questions point to the plight of those doomed to shoulder health’s discontents. Put differently, disease cathects indigeneity within a present that is not only not enough, but also deadly – a present which generates forms of non-sovereignty that are tasted. According to Berlant and Lee Edelman, non-sovereignty is ‘the notion of a subject’s constitutive division that keeps us, as subjects, from fully knowing or being in control of ourselves’. 24 For Berlant, love launches something of a becoming-non-sovereign, as it compels us to submit to its potentialities while rendering unpredictable the substance of the future.

#### The ROB is a call for the radical demand that the affirmative be condemned, be forced to confront the genocide which makes it possible without hope of redemption

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Native feminist politics of decolonial refusal and Black feminist abolitionist politics of skepticism informed by a misandry and misanthropic distrust of and animus toward the (over)representationof man/men as the human diverge from the polite, communicative acts of the public sphere, much like the politics of the “feminist killjoy.”4 [INSERT FOOTNOTE: I use “misandry” (hatred of men) and “misanthropic” (distrust or deep skepticism about humankind or humanity) to illustrate how Sylvia Wynter and other Black scholars attend to the ways that the human— and investments in the human—and its revised forms or genres of the human as woman/feminist still reproduce violent exclusions that make the death of Black and Native people viable and in-evitable. In other words, neither men nor women (as humans) can absorb Black females/males/children/LGBT and trans people into their collective folds. Both the hatred of “misandry” and the distrust and pessimism of “misanthropy” are appropriate methods to describe the inflection of the critique levied by Wynter and the other Black scholars examined in this article. END FOOTNOTE] Throughout this article, I deploy the term “feminist” both ambivalently and strategically to mark and distinguish the scholarly tradition created by Black and Native women, queer, trans, and other people marginalized within these respective communities and their anticolonial and abolitionist movements.5 [INSERT FOOTNOTE: See Sylvia Wynter’s afterword, “Beyond Miranda’s Meanings: Un/silencing the ‘Demonic Ground’ of Caliban’s ‘Woman,’” in Out of the Kumbla: Caribbean Women and Literature, ed. Carole Boyce Davies (Chicago, Ill.: Africa World Press, 1990) 355– 72. Wynter warns Black women in the United States and the Caribbean that they need not uncritically embrace womanism as a political position, which can effectively oppose the elisions, racism, and false universalism of white feminism. “Feminism” as well as “womanism” are bounded and exclusive terms that do not effectively throw the category of the human into continual flux. END FOOTENOTE], Until a more useful and legible term emerges, I will use “feminist” to mark the practices of refusal and skepticism (misandry/misanthropy) as ones that largely exist outside more masculinist traditions within Indigenous/Native studies and Black studies. “Decolonial refusal” and “abolitionist skepticism” depart from the kinds of masculinist anticolonial traditions that attempt to reason Native/ Black man to White Man within humanist logic in at least two significant ways. First, neither participate in the communicative acts of the humanist public sphere from within the terms of the debate. Further, they do not play by the rules.6 [INSERT FOOTNOTE: See the critiques of the anticolonial tradition within Caribbean philosophy articulated by Shona Jackson in her book Creole Indigeneity (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012). Jackson argues that anticolonial Caribbean masculinist philosophy tends to argue from inside the logic of Western philosophy in order to counter it. For instance, in a valorization of the laborer as human and inheritor of the nation-state, Caribbean philosophy tends to reproduce the Hegelian telos of labor as a humanizing agent for the slave, which inadvertently makes the slave a subordinate human and effectively erases the ostensibly “nonlaboring” humanity of Indigenous peoples in the Anglophone Caribbean. END FOOTENOTE] Specifically, the Native and Black “feminist” politics discussed throughout launch a critique of both the logic of the discussion about the human and identity as well as the mode of communication. In fact, practices of refusal and skepticism interrupt and flout codes of civil and collegial discursive protocol to focus on and illumine the violence that structures the posthumanist discourse. Attending to the comportment, tone, and intensity of an engagement is just as important as focusing on its content. The particular manner in which Black and Native feminists push back against violence is important. The force, break with decorum, and style in which Black and Native feminists confront discursive violence can change the nature of future encounters. Given that Black women who confront the logics of “nonrepresentational theory” are really confronting genocide and the white, whimsical disavowal of Black and Native negation on the way to subjectlessness, it is understandable that there is an equally discordant response. Refusal and skepticism are modes of engagement that are uncooperative and force an impasse in a discursive exchange. This article tracks how traditions of “decolonial refusal” and “abolitionist skepticism” that emerge from Native/Indigenous and Black studies expose the limits and violence of contemporary nonidentitarian and nonrepresentational impulses within white “critical” theory. Further, this article asks whether Western forms of nonrepresentational (subjectless and nonidentitarian) theory can truly transcend the human through self- critique, self-abnegation, and masochism alone. External pressure, specifically the kind of pressure that “decolonial refusal” and “abolitionist skepticism” as forms of resistance that enact outright rejection of or view “posthumanist” attempts with a “hermeneutics of suspicion,”7 [INSERT FOOTNOTE: See the work of Black feminists such as Susana M. Morris, author of Close Kin and Distant Relatives: The Paradox of Respectability in Black Women’s Literature (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2014), as well as womanist theologians who appropriate the phrase “hermeneutics of suspicion” as coined by Paul Ricoeur to describe the reading and interpretive practices of Black woman who are distrustful of traditional tropes about heteronormativity or conventional ways of thinking about what is natural and normal. Further, in Morris’s case, as well as within the tradition of Black women of faith and theologians, canonical and biblical texts are interpreted through a lens that acknowledges white supremacy and misogyny, and critically challenges racism and sexism (or kyriarchy in Morris’s case). Within Black feminist and womanist traditions, it is a position that can recognize the limitations of text and that refuses to accept the doctrine, theories, or message of an ideology wholesale. END FOOTENOTE] is needed in order to truly address the recurrent problem of the violence of the human in continental theory. While this article does not directly stake a claim in embracing or rejecting identity per se, it does take up the category of the human. Because the category of the human is modified by identity in ways that position certain people (white, male, able- bodied) within greater or lesser proximity to humanness, identity is already taken up in this discussion. Conversations about the human are very much tethered to conversations about identity. In the final section, the article will explore how Black and Native/Indigenous absorption into the category of the human would disfigure the category of the human beyond recognition. Engaging how forms of Native decolonization and Black abolition scrutinize the violently exclusive means in which the human has been written and conceived is generative because it sets some workable terms of engagement for interrogating Western and mainstream claims to and disavowals of identity. Rather than answer how Native decolonization and Black abolition construe the human or identity, the article examines how Native and Black feminists use refusal and misandry to question the very systems, institutions, and order of knowledge that secure humanity as an exclusive experience and bound identity in violent ways. I consider the practices and postures of refusal assumed by Native/Indigenous scholars such as Audra Simpson, Eve Tuck, Jodi Byrd, and Linda Tuhiwai Smith to be particularly instructive for exposing the violence of ostensibly nonrepresentational Deleuzoguattarian rhizomes and lines of flight. While reparative readings and “working with what is productive” about Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari’s work is certainly a part of the Native feminist scholarly tradition, this article focuses on the underexamined ways that Native feminists refuse to entertain certain logics and foundations that actually structure Deleuzoguattarian thought.8 [I thank one of the reviewers, who reminded me that Native feminist thought’s engagement with continental theory, specifically the work of Deleuze and Guattari, can be likened more to “constellations” as it takes up Deleuzoguattarian thought rather than a single point that always departs from a place of refusal. END FOOTENOTE] Further, I discuss “decolonial refusal” in relation to how Black scholars like Sylvia Wynter, Zakiyyah Iman Jackson, and Amber Jamilla Musser work within a Black feminist tradition animated by a kind of skepticism or suspicion capable of ferreting out the trace of the white liberal human within (self-)professed subjectless, futureless, and nonrepresentational white theoretical traditions. In other words, in the work of Sylvia Wynter, one senses a general suspicion and deep distrust of the ability of Western theory — specifically its attempt at self-critique and self-correction in the name of justice for humanity— to revise its cognitive orders to work itself out of its current “closed system,” which reproduces exclusion and structural oppositions based on the negation of the other.9 [INSERT FOOTENOTE: See Katherine McKittrick, “Diachronic Loops/Deadweight Tonnage/Bad Made Measure,” Cultural Geographies 23, no. 1 (2016): 3– 18, doi:10.1177/14744740156 12716, for an exemplary explication of how Sylvia Wynter uses the decolonial scholarship of an “autopoiesis.” END FOOTENOTE] Wynter’s study of decolonial theory and its elaboration of autopoiesis informs her understanding of how the human and its overrepresentation as man emerges. Recognizing that humans (of various genres) write themselves through a “self- perpetuating and self- referencing closed belief system” that often prevents them from seeing or noticing “the process of recursion,” Wynter works to expose these blind spots.10 [INSERT FOOTNOTE: See McKittrick, “Diachronic Loops,” in which the author cites the importance of the work of H. Maturana and F. Varela, Autopoiesis and Cognition: The Realization of the Living (London: D. Reidel, 1972), for the study of the human’s process of self- writing. END FOOTNOTE] Wynter understands that one of the limitations of Western liberal thought is that it cannot see itself in the process of writing itself. I observe a similar kind of cynicism about the way the academic left invokes “post humanism” in the work of Jackson and Musser. Musser in particular questions the capacity of queer theories to turn to sensations like masochism within the field of affect studies to overcome the subject. Further, Jackson’s and Musser’s work is skeptical that white transcendence can happen on its own terms or rely solely on its own processes of self-critique and self- correction. I read Jackson’s and Musser’s work as distrustful of the ability for “posthumanism” to be accountable to Black and Indigenous peoples or for affect theory on its own to not replicate and reinforce the subjugation of the other as it moves toward self- annihilation. Both the human and the post human are causes for suspicion within Black studies. Like Wynter, the field of Black studies has consistently made the liberal human an object of study and scrutiny, particularly the nefarious manner in which it violently produces Black existence as other than and at times nonhuman. Wynter’s empirical method of tracking the internal epistemic crises and revolutions of Europe from the outside has functioned as a model for one way that Black studies can unfurl a critique of the human as well as Western modes of thought. I use the terms “misanthropy” and “misandry” in this article to evoke how Black studies has remained attentive to, wary about, and deeply distrustful of the human condition, humankind, and the humanas-man/men in the case of Black “feminists.” Both Black studies’ distrust of the “human” and Black feminism’s distrust of humanism in its version as man/men (which at times seeks to incorporate Black men) relentlessly scrutinize how the category of the human and in this case the “posthuman” reproduce Black death. I link misandry (skepticism of humankind-as-man) to the kind of skepticism and “hermeneutics of suspicion” that Black feminist scholars like Wynter, Jackson, and Musser at times apply to their reading and engagement with revisions to or expansions of the category of the human, posthuman discourses, and nonrepresentational theory In this article, I connect discursive performance of skepticism to embodied and affective responses I have witnessed in the academy that challenge the sanctioned modes of protocol, politesse, and decorum in the university. For example, Wynter assumes a critically disinterested posture as she gazes empirically on and examines intra-European epistemic shifts over time. Paget Henry has described Wynter as an anthropologist of the Occident, as Europe becomes an object of study rather than the center of thought and humanity.11 [INSERT FOOTNOTE: Paget Henry, Caliban’s Reason: Introducing Afro-Caribbean Philosophy (New York: Routledge, 2002), 19. END FOOTENOTE] Throughout the body of Wynter’s work, she seems to be more interested in drawing our attention to the capacity of European orders of knowledge to shift over time— or their fragility— than in celebrating the progress that European systems of knowledge have claimed to make. Wynter’s tracking is just a tracking and not a celebration of the progress narrative that Western civilization tells about itself and its capacity to define, refine, and recognize new kinds of humanity over time. This comportment of critical disinterest is often read as an affront to the codes and customs of scholarly discourse and dialogue in the academic community, particularly when it is in response to the white thinkers of the Western cannon. Decolonial refusal and abolitionist skepticism respond to how perverse and reprehensible it is to ask Indigenous and Black people who cannot seem to escape death to move beyond the human or the desire to be human. In fact, Black and Indigenous people have never been fully folded into the category of the human. As Zakiyyah Iman Jackson has argued, It has largely gone unnoticed by posthumanists that their queries into ontology often find their homologous (even anticipatory) appearance in decolonial philosophies that confront slavery and colonialism’s inextricability from the Enlightenment humanism they are trying to displace. Perhaps this foresight on the part of decolonial theory is rather unsurprising considering that exigencies of race have crucially anticipated and shaped discourses governing the non- human (animal, technology, object, and plant).12 [Zakkiyah Iman Jackson, “Review: Animal: New Directions in the Theorization of Race and Posthumanism,” Feminist Studies 39, no. 3 (2013): 681. END FOOTENOTE] A crucial point that Jackson emphasizes is that Black and Indigenous studies, particularly decolonial studies, has already grappled with and anticipated the late twentieth century impulses inspired by Leo Bersani and Lee Edelman to annihilate the self and jettison the future. Indigenous and Black “sex” (as activity, reproduction, pleasure, world-building, and not-human sexuality) are already subsumed by death. For some reason, white critical theory cannot seem to fathom that self- annihilation is something white people need to figure out by themselves. In other words, “they can have that.”13 [INSERT FOOTNOTE: This is a colloquialism or form of vernacular often used by Blacks and People of Color to express that they disagree with something and more specifically reject an idea and will leave that to the people whom it concerns to deal with. END FOOTNOTE] Within Native feminist theorizing, ethnographic refusal can be traced to Audra Simpson’s 2007 article, “On Ethnographic Refusal.” In this seminal work, Simpson reflects on and gains inspiration from the tradition of refusal practiced by the people of Kahnawake.14 [INSERT FOOTNOTE: Simpson’s ethnographic work specifically focuses on the Kahnawake Mohawk who reside in a reservation in the territory is now referred to as southwest Quebec. END FOOTNOTE] Simpson shares that Kahnawake refusals are at the core and spirit of her own ethnographic and ethical practices of refusal. I was interested in the larger picture, in the discursive, material and moral territory that was simultaneously historical and contemporary (this “national” space) and the ways in which Kahnawakeronon, the “people of Kahnawake,” had refused the authority of the state at almost every turn. The ways in which their formation of the initial membership code (now replaced by a lineage code and board of elders to implement the code and determine cases) was refused; the ways in which their interactions with border guards at the international boundary line were predicated upon a refusal; how refusal worked in everyday encounters to enunciate repeatedly to ourselves and to outsiders that “this is who we are, this is who you are, these are my rights.”15 [INSERT FOOTNOTE: Audra Simpson, “On Ethnographic Refusal: Indigeneity, ‘Voice’ and Colonial Citizenship,” Junctures: The Journal for Thematic Dialogue, no. 9 (December 2007): 73. END FOOTNOTE] Because Simpson was concerned with applying the political and everyday modes of Kahnawake refusal, she attended to the “collective limit” established by her and her Kahnawake participants.16 [INSERT FOOTNOTE: Ibid., 77. END FOOTNOTE] The collective limit was relationally and ethically determined by what was shared but more importantly by what was not shared. Simpson’s ability to discern the collective limit could only be achieved through a form of relational knowledge production that regards and cares for the other. Simpson recounts how one of her participants forced her to recognize a collective limit. Approaching and then arriving at the limit, Simpson experiences the following: And although I pushed him, hoping that there might be something explicit said from the space of his exclusion— or more explicit than he gave me— it was enough that he said what he said. “Enough” is certainly enough. “Enough,” I realised, was when I reached the limit of my own return and our collective arrival. Can I do this and still come home; what am I revealing here and why? Where will this get us? Who benefits from this and why? And “enough” was when they shut down (or told me to turn off the recorder), or told me outright funny things like “nobody seems to know”— when everybody does know and talks about it all the time. Dominion then has to be exercised over these representations, and that was determined when enough was said. The ethnographic limit then, was reached not just when it would cause harm (or extreme discomfort)— the limit was arrived at when the representation would bite all of us and compromise the representational territory that we have gained for ourselves in the past 100 years.17 [INSERT FOOTNOTE: Ibid., 78. END FOOTNOTE] Extending her discussion of ethnographic refusal beyond the bounds of ethnographic concerns, Simpson also ponders whether this enactment of refusal can be applied to theoretical work

#### Refusal is generative and catalyzes endurance in the face of the political – refuse to fake a political that doesn’t exist. The question is not whether Native people want the world, but if the world wants Native people

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\*Note #1: Article pronouns have not been edited to reflect the reader’s subject position – we recognize “ours” does not refer to the reader of this evidence

\*\*Note #2: Edited for ableist rhetoric

**It’s tough**: **knowing that you might not get the world you want and the world that wants you** back, **that** your bones might never stop feeling achy and fragile from the wear and tear of mere existence, **from the hard labour** of getting through the day. **Ours are** bodies that have been depleted by time, **that have been wrenched into a world they can’t properly bend or squirm** into **because our flesh is** paradoxically both **too much and not enough** for it. **In the wake of** both eventful and slowed kinds of **premature death**, **what does it mean that the state wants** so eagerly **to move Indigenous bodies, to touch them, so to speak?** Reconciliation is an affective mess: it **throws together and** condenses histories of trauma and their shaky bodies and feelings into a neatly bordered desire; **a desire to let go, to move on, to turn to the future with open arms**, as it were. **Reconciliation is stubbornly ambivalent in its potentiality**, **an object of desire that we’re not entirely certain how to** acquire or substantiate, **but one that the state** – reified through the bodies of politicians, Indigenous or otherwise – **is telling us we need.** In fact, Justice Murray Sinclair noted that the launch of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s final report on December 15, 2015, puts us at the “threshold of a new era in this country.”[1] **I am interested in how life might be lived willfully and badly in the face of** governmental forms of redress **when many of us are stretched thin**, how **reconciliation**, **though instantiating a noticeable shift in the national affective atmosphere**,[2] doesn’t **actually** remake the substance of the social or the political such that we’re **still** tethered to scenes of living that can’t sustain us. What I am trying to get at is: **reconciliation works insofar as it is a way of looking forward to being in this world**, at the expense of more radical projects like decolonization that want to experiment with different strategies for survival.[3] **This way of doing things isn’t working and**, because of that, **optimism is hard to come by.** According to cultural theorist Ann Cvetkovich, political depression emerges from the realization“that customary forms of political response, **including direct action and critical analysis**, are no longer working **either** to change the world or to make us feel better.”[4] It is **the pestering sense that whatever you do, it won’t be enough**; that **things will continue uninterrupted**, **teasing you because something different is all you’ve wanted from the start.** **To be politically depressed is to worry about the temporal reach of neoliberal projects** like reconciliation, **to question their orientation toward the future because the present requires all of your energy** in order to feel like anything but dying. **Political depression** is of a piece with a dispossessory enterprise that **remakes the topography of the ordinary such that the labour of maintaining one’s life becomes too hard to keep up.** We have to wait for the then and there in the here and now; how do we preserve ourselves until then? As Leanne Simpson points out, **reconciliation has been reparative for some survivors**, encouraging them to tell their stories, to keep going, so to speak.[5] **But,** what of the gendered and racialized technologies of violence that created **our scenes of living**, **scenes we’ve been forced to think are of our own choosing?** **Optimism** for the work of reconciliation **disappeared in the face of multiple crises**: of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls**, of** HIV infection rates**, of** mass incarceration**, of** diabetes**, of** suicide. Reconciliation, at once a heuristic and a form of statecraft, fakes a political that doesn’t **actually** exist **as such**, one that not only presupposes that we – Indigenous peoples, that is – are willing to stay attached to it, but that we are already folded into it, that we’ve already consented to it. What does it mean, for example, to consent to a nation-to-nation relationship if there are no other options to choose from? **Reconciliation wants so badly to be a keyword of sorts**, to contain so much inside its semantic confines, **to be “wide-reaching in its explanatory power.”**[6] I’m not surprised things have started to leak all over the place. Decolonization might need something of an affective turn: I think there are ways of being attuned to our bodies such that we can gauge if our visceral responses are trained or not, parasitic or not. In short: **what do our tears signal**, what do his – Justin Trudeau’s – signal? **We cry because pain holds our world together.** **I don’t want pain to hold our world together anymore.** Perhaps **admitting we are politically depressed is one of the most important things we could do in** this day and age. **When** survival becomes radical **and death becomes part and parcel of the ordinary itself**, **political depression might be our only point of departure.** But, **political depression is also about dreaming up alternatives that can sustain** your **attachments to life.** Cvetkovich reminds us that **we need** “other **affective tools for transformation**” **because** hope and ~~blind~~ [recurrent] allegiance have failed **too many of us** too often.[7] I am interested in **the** generative work of pessimism, how being fed up propels us onward, and keeps us grounded in the now, such that we can make it to the future, even if that’s just tomorrow. As Kim TallBear put it, we’ve been living in a post-apocalyptic world (in its ecological ruins and in the face of its crisis-making politics) for quite some time,[8] one that exhausts our bodies to the point of depression and death and one **that slowly removes us from the non-normative or the astray.**[9] We are stuck **in the thick of things**, left clinging to an impasse without an exit strategy. We might need reconciliation today, but Indigenous peoples need a more capacious world-building project for tomorrow, one that can bear all of us and the sovereignties built into our breathing. **We should not be asked: do you want the world today? Instead,** we should be asking: does the world want us?