The People versus the Pipelines:

Energy infrastructure and liberal ideology in North American environmentalism

A Dissertation

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF

THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

BY

Kai Bosworth

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS

FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Dr. Arun Saldanha

June 2018

Acknowledgments

Bruce Braun, Vinay Gidwani, and Ajay Skaria have accomplished an astonishing task by funneling my unending but rather disjointed enthusiasm for reading into an actual research project. Their kindness and generosity in attending to my wayward thought and practice has been remarkable. For advising me to “think until it hurts,” Arun Saldanha has my perpetual appreciation.

For pushing my thought and politics to and beyond its limits, I must especially thank Out of the Woods, the Antipode Geographies of Justice crew, the Anthropocene Campus folks, and World of Matter. The Natural History Museum, especially Beka Economopolous, Jason Jones, and Steve Lyons, reshaped my understanding of politics and aesthetics in irreversible ways. Intellectual passion emerged from a series of conversations with an itinerant and patchwork community of geographers: Nic Beuret, Jesse Goldstein, Elizabeth Johnson, Anja Kaangeiser, Angela Last, Harlan Morehouse, Rory Rowan, and Stephanie Wakefield. Jeff Jenkins, Gabriel Piser, Levi van Sant, and Brett Zehner provided forms of support at important times during the course of research and writing.

The broader Minneapolis intellectual community, now or soon far aflung, formed the condition of possibility for laughter and survival alike: Morgan Adamson, Ateeb Ahmed, Nikhil Anand, Jake Barney, Tony Brown, Valentine Cadieux, Cesare Casarino, Charmaine Chua, Jacqui Daigneault, Stacy Douglas, Sinan Erensü, Joshua Eichen, Joe Getzoff, Anjali Ganapathy, George Henderson, Mingwei Huang, Jen Hughes, David Hugill, Simi Kang, John Kendall, Aaron Mallory, Laura Matson, Stuart McLean, Chase

Morgen, Devika Narayan, Sara Nelson, Julie Santella, Lisa Santosa, Stephen Savignano, Liz Schneider, Mike Simpson, Hillary Waters, and Ned Wilbur. More collectives: Human/Non/Human, Spinoza Scholarship Group, the Theoretical Humanities Collective, Theory Reading Group. A special mention must go to Lalit Batra, Laura Cesafsky, Julia Corwin, Spencer Cox, Jessi Lehman, and Bill Lindeke. I would have happily continued my Ph.D. for another eight years if you all hadn't left. Finally, I absolutely would not be where I am today without the guidance of Roopali Phadke and Stephanie Rutherford.

Sara Braun, whose time, knowledge, and labor was irreplaceable.

My parents, from whom my dedication to the world emerged. My mom deserves particular thanks for saving and mailing me hundreds of local news articles.

This research was conducted on the traditional and occupied lands of the Lakota, Dakota, Nakota, Ponca, and Ojibwe people. I hope it can contribute a small part towards understanding and dismantling such occupation.

This project is dedicated to the friends, interlocutors, and comrades here, there, and around the world who can't be named. You know who you are, and I hope this contributes to our solidarity.

Abstract

Contestation of the Keystone XL and the Dakota Access pipelines gathered in resistance a coalition of progressives, farmers and ranchers, environmentalists, and Native Nations. While these groups appear united in opposition to the pipeline, the principles and strategies of the grassroots at stake in this emergent environmental movement have been more heavily contested than recognized by existing literatures. While long-standing rifts certainly still exist between mainstream liberal environmental organizations and radical movements for environmental justice, I argue that the ideological field of contemporary environmentalism cannot be understood without taking into account the emergence of environmental populism. Populism is the ideology and political formation that takes "the people" as the principle and proper political actor. A mass movement of the people is positioned in opposition to corporations, corrupt institutions, and elites, all of whom trample upon their rights to participate and decide environmental futures. How does pipeline populism, as a collective social phenomenon, emerge from and transform contemporary ideologies of environmental politics? What consequences does it have for the political nexus of global climate chaos, racial capitalism, and ongoing settler colonialism? If we are right to think that only through people's movements can we adequately and democratically address global climate change, scholars and activists alike must understand the underlying tensions in the desires and ideologies of what is meant to be "the people's climate movement."

The People versus the Pipelines: Energy Infrastructure and Grassroots Ideology in North American Environmentalism addresses these questions by examining the internal tensions within populist ideologies in the Dakotas, Nebraska, and Iowa. Intervening in

interdisciplinary environmental scholarship and political theories concerning the relationships among ideology and desire in populist politics, this project develops a conceptual and methodological framework that understands environmental populism as emerging from resentment towards dispossession, democratic public participation, and expert knowledges. Through interviews, participant observation, and cultural and media analysis, I demonstrate how environmentalist practices are shifting from appeals to state institutions toward a movement of the people. I argue that while environmental populism attempts to take leave of elitism, its aspirations to ground property, democracy, and expertise emerge from liberal affective infrastructures and congeal into a political activism that can reproduce Euro-American, settler colonial, and nationalist tropes.

This research intervenes in interdisciplinary debates in environmental studies, political ecology, and political theory by questioning the role of environmentalism in sustaining a politics of exclusion through a left-populist ideology. I take up the complex problem of race and legacies of colonialism in movements against fossil fuels to demonstrate the sustained manner in which confronting structures of oppression elides liberal social justice movements. In making this argument, I show that the persistence of race and settler colonialism is not merely an effect of culture, history, or the state, but is also embedded in the liberal structures of contestation frequently upheld by political ecologists, including public participation, landed private property, and local and regional grassroots political formations. This research has implications for scholars and activists interested in contemporary environmental and climate justice, for political theories and public discourse on populism, and for those concerned with the intersection of race and settler colonialism in environmental politics.

Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Abbreviations

BHA – Black Hills Alliance

bpd – barrels per day

CIA – Cowboy-Indian Alliance

DAPL – Dakota Access Pipeline

DEIS – Draft Environmental Impact Statement

DEQ - Department of Environmental Quality

EIS – Environmental Impact Statement

EPA – Environmental Protection Agency

ERM – Environmental Resources Management

ETP – Energy Transfer Partners

FEIS – Final Environmental Impact Statement

FBI – Federal Bureau of Investigation

NEPA – National Environmental Policy Act

RCP – Revolutionary Communist Party

SEIS – Supplementary Environmental Impact Statement

PUC – Public Utilities Commission

UNFCCC – United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

Chapter 1. Introduction

Environmental populism and the challenge of planetary politics

Scholars of ecological politics have long critiqued American environmentalism for its elitism, upper-class orientation, technocratic approach to managing environmental problems, and its privileging and reinforcement of exclusionary whiteness. Many scholars rightly contrast this movement with a place-based politics of environmental justice, which would seek to ameliorate historical inequalities based on race, class, or gender. But this long-standing analytic division fails to capture the emergent force of environmental populism. Environmental social movements increasingly use a political strategy that mixes a critique of elitism, the language of environmental justice, and generic calls for returning power to the people. This form of environmental populism uses grassroots political organizing strategies to build alliances against elites, policymakers, and bureaucrats. In the face of corporate- and state-backed fossil fuel extraction accelerating climate change and with acute impacts on marginalized indigenous peoples worldwide, such widespread political organizing for environmental justice appears absolutely and immediately necessary. People power, grassroots democracy, and mass mobilization are increasingly positioned as the only way to avoid catastrophe and ensure justice.

But like other populist political movements, fundamental disagreements exist about what precisely it means to advocate for “people power” or to participate in a “mass movement of the people,” slogans that recall both American liberalism’s idealistic fantasies and the disastrous realities of its politics of exclusion. Consequently,

scholarship that relies on the analytic separation between mainstream technocratic environmentalism and local environmental justice can miss how the broad base of concern mobilized in environmental populism can renew an exclusionary politics of race and coloniality in new forms. If we are right to think that only through mass movements can we adequately and democratically address global climate change, scholars and activists alike must understand how the ideologies and practices of "the people's climate movement" reactivate the settler colonial politics of race and nation through reliance on liberal ideology.

The persistent failure of global governance institutions and national governments to adequately address climate change has resulted in a patchwork resurgence of environmental populisms around the world. Amidst the failure of meaningful agreement at the United Nations Copenhagen Summit, the People's Climate Summit in Cochabamba emerged to offer an alternative set of principles decrying capitalism as "an imperialist system of colonization of the planet" and calling for a "Global People's Movement for Mother Earth…based on the principles of complementarity and respect for the diversity of origin and visions among its members, constituting a broad and democratic space for coordination and joint worldwide actions" ("People's Agreement of Cochabamba" 2010). On the other hand, Paul Kingsnorth has used the occasion of the United Kingdom's leave from the European Union ("Brexit") to call for a reactionary environmentalism that would take up the language of the right against "the globalist class" and in favor of a "benevolent green nationalism" (Kingsnorth 2017). While these are utterly opposed political positions and organizing strategies, they both mobilize a language of populism.

In North America, a growing environmental populism was driven by, on the one hand, left-populist elements of the Occupy Wall Street movement, and on the other, a resurgent agrarian, environmentalist, and Native struggle against the Keystone XL pipeline. *The People versus the Pipelines: Energy Infrastructure and Liberal Ideology in North American Environmentalism* examines how these populist strategies and ideologies emerging from political organizing in the Dakotas, Nebraska, and Iowa contributed to the transformation of environmentalism while still reproducing ambivalent desires for liberal ideologies of property, democracy, and expertise. Intervening in interdisciplinary environmental scholarship concerning North American environmentalism, the climate justice movement, and Marxist literatures on race, liberalism, and democracy, I develop a conceptual and methodological framework that understands environmental populism as emerging from resentment towards dispossession, democratic participation, and elite knowledges. Through interviews, participant observation, and cultural and media analysis, my research demonstrates how environmentalist languages and practices are shifting from appeals to policymakers, technocrats, and state institutions toward a mass movement of the people. I argue that while environmental populism attempts to take leave of elitism, its aspirations to re-secure and ground property, democracy, and expertise in 'the people' frequently reproduce Euro-American, settler colonial, and nationalist constructions of political opposition. By foregrounding tensions within liberal environmentalism, this research is able to better see the persistence of racism and coloniality not as outside corruptive influences, but internal sites of struggle within progressive social movements.

21st century environmentalism

The first intervention this project makes is to challenge both the analytical and historical distinction between environmental justice movements and mainstream environmental elitism or paternalism. A concept and recent history of environmental populism clarifies the political field in important ways. Against the managerial, expert-oriented, or Keynesian genre of liberal environmentalism, environmental populism is characterized by a trust in the people, in mass democracy. In contrast to environmental justice movements and struggles, environmental populism universalizes and generalizes the struggle of the people to reclaim their ability to live and flourish while not presuming a marginalized subject or population. Without a concept of environmental populism, we cannot understand the significance or shortcomings of contemporary climate justice movements.

Environmental justice movements of the 1990s demonstrated that marginalized indigenous communities and communities of color frequently faced disproportionate environmental burdens relative to wealthier white populations. These movements were themselves sometimes described by scholars as "eco-populist" (Szasz 1994; Meyer 2008). While mainstream environmentalism had long taken itself to have an ecological knowledge and politics unavailable to the poor, environmental justice movements instead demonstrated that environmental concerns were inseparable from poor people's movements, anti-racism, migrant rights, and Native sovereignty. Such a position required a redefinition of "Nature" beyond concern for endangered species or national parks to the workplace, the home, and the city. It seemed like the movement secured a major victory with the creation of Executive Order 12898 in 1994, which called for a federal strategy

for ameliorating environmental injustice. Scholars elaborated on the meaning of "justice" at the core of the environmental justice movement (Schlosberg 1999; Young 2011). The distributional concerns of environmental inequality were frequently wedded to legal and procedural concerns about democratic participation. Furthermore, scholars demonstrated the manner in which environmental injustice was relational, built through not only perpetuating environmental harms, but also privileges (Pulido 2000).

Prior to the mid-2000s, addressing climate change still seemed to be the province of the Big Greens (Ciplet et al. 2015, 169). This began to change in the mid-2000s, as global justice organizations began to see the UN process as a site of struggle. Organizing at the transnational level led to greater focus at the national level, as some of the more amenable Big Greens such as the Sierra Club were finally persuaded to foreground climate change and the impacts of fossil fuels. As a student, I was a part of this shift in what we began to call the "youth climate movement." Working from within and alongside the Big Greens, our goal was to get them to take seriously the environmental justice impacts of climate change and to push them to accept more radical tactics in confronting rather than working with the fossil fuel industries. Nonetheless, the scale of the problem seemed insurmountable, and the inchoate climate justice movement seemed to be pushed to the sidelines of the official UN process. For me and many of my friends, this was most visible in the twin disappointments of the Copenhagen Summit and the failure of the Obama Administration to pass a comprehensive climate change bill. Furthermore, the movement against climate change was ineluctably split at the activist level between policy- and lobbyist-oriented strategies and those of environmental justice organizing. Despite the foregrounding of folks like Van Jones and Green for All, many

environmental justice organizers found the whiteness of the climate movement, its focus on national policy mechanics, and its tendency to neutralize political claims to justice to be intolerable. Witnessing and participating in these constant missteps in attempting to align climate politics with environmental justice principles had an indelible mark on how I thought about the politics of climate change.

But while the national and international climate movements floundered in tense relationships with the Big Greens and the UN process, on the plains of the Midwest, another kind of environmentalist movement was beginning to take shape. Ranchers, farmers, tribal groups, environmentalists, students, and scientists began to resist the continental oil pipeline buildout in North America: first, against the Keystone I pipeline (which would be quickly completed in 2009), second, the Keystone XL pipeline, and later, the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL). The struggle against Keystone XL was for many environmentalists victorious. Although the southern half of the pipeline was built in 2011, enough visibility was raised that President Obama and the State Department rejected the permit for the more important northern leg of the pipeline. The ecological devastation being wrought in the Albertan tar sands increasingly became a matter of concern and pipeline routes across the continent became chokepoints vulnerable to political organizing. Since this time, activists and Native Nations across the continent have stalled or defeated several other major pipelines, and proposals for several future pipelines remain untenable.

On the other hand, however, the anti-pipeline movement was primarily a negative unity, for in adapting environmental populism to the plains, it combined several disparate and sometimes contradictory demands formed by various organizations, including:

grassroots rural community organizers, indigenous environmental justice groups, tribal governments, landowners emphasizing private property rights, longstanding liberal nonprofits committed to nonviolence, environmentalists concerned with the despoiling of nature, and radical organizations blockading the circuits of capital. The common ground of these groups was simply that the pipeline should not be built. It is important to further clarify, too, that pipeline populism does not encompass all pipeline opposition. Green anarchism was prevalent at various points along the pipeline, especially amongst the Tar Sands Blockade in Texas and Oklahoma and the Great Plains Tar Sands Resistance in Nebraska and South Dakota, who advocated for direct action rather than representational political mobilization. Tribal governments, political organizations, and Native socialists and anarchists approached the pipeline struggle with different and sometimes conflicting tactics to defend sovereignty and mobilize for decolonization. Environmental and climate justice organizations, like Rising Tide and Plains Justice, operated with much success. The liberal institutional elitism did not disappear, either. These political strategies formed shifting and overlapping tapestries of oppositional politics, with individuals and groups transforming their political stances, organizing in new and different manners, or dropping out of opposition altogether.

It is worth giving a brief example to demonstrate the manner in which populism differs in strategy, practice, and aesthetics. In the summer of 2017 with the DAPL defeat still fresh and anti-fascist organizing in the news, anarchists called for an anti-colonial bloc at a parade against Keystone XL in Nebraska. This was a relatively innocuous public action, in which they planned to wear masks and demonstrate a more radical alternative to what they saw as the “mainstream environmental groups are organizing this march”

(Anonymous 2017). The self-described populist organizers of the parade, Bold Nebraska, reacted with horror, reiterating that they did "not support or welcome anarchists or others wearing masks to the march." They went on to mention the parade is "a family event celebrating the 8 years all of our worked on stopping this pipeline with farmers, ranchers, Tribal Nation allies and climate advocates." Our understanding of this political field is impoverished without understanding the pull of populist politics.

As a signifier, populism can seem slippery and vague. Ernesto Laclau (2005) has argued, its pejorative use can hide its conceptual work. Populism is decried by establishment liberals as a way of equating "extremists" on the left and the right. Populism here poses an equal threat to liberal political order as consolidated in representational democracy and expert institutions. This sense of populism is derived in part from a traditional liberal elitism articulated best by the American historian Richard Hofstadter in a series of essays in the 1950s (Hofstadter 1960). Although his historical analysis was largely discredited in the US, it was popularized in Europe as a method of understanding the resurgent far right (Jäger 2017).

For the anticapitalist left, populism is seen to be a betrayal of class struggle and the delusion that democracy could lift us out of the climate crisis. Chris Hedges, for example, called the People's Climate March one of "the last gasps of conventional liberalism's response to the climate crisis" (Hedges 2014). Erik Swyngedouw suggests such climate populism is an "inherently reactionary" response to technocratic liberalism and thus "a key ideological support structure for securing the socio-political status quo" (Swyngedouw 2010, 223). For decolonial, climate justice, and anti-racist activists,

populism could seem to be just another turn in liberal multiculturalism, wherein the concerns of every identity position are rendered on a flat public sphere.

On the other hand, for social democrats and pragmatists, populism is a glimpse of radical or "real" democracy. It is this sense of populism which pipeline politics attempts to actualize, and which forms the main object of my analysis and critique. In Laclau's work, populism's indeterminacy and ability to make equivalences or "unlikely alliances" across different social identities is its contribution to "understanding something about the ontological constitution of the political as such" (Laclau 2005, 67). "The political" as such is the flexible interplay of difference and identity. Laclau's conceptual elaboration might be better specified in Laura Grattan's words, through the "rebellious aspirations" expressed in "the people" and its experimentation with "grassroots, participatory forms of collective decision-making and action" (Grattan 2016, 41, 44). Populism, like other left movements then, engages in "ongoing contests over the *horizons* of collective identity and democracy" (44).

In his study of the wave of contemporary urban protests in New York City, Cairo, Madrid, Athens, Istanbul, and Rio de Janeiro, Paolo Gerbaudo identifies a number of the key features and contradictions of this left-populism. Beyond Grattan's US-centric analysis, he sees the emergent of a *global* populism through a wedding of indignant citizenship with quasi-anarchist practices and critiques of the state form (Gerbaudo 2017). And challenging Laclau's abstract formulation, both Grattan and Gerbaudo (without citing each other) see left-populism's particularity in the connection between "the people" and a sense of *popular sovereignty*, the Rousseauian ideal of the rule of the people (Grattan 2016, 40; Gerbaudo 2017, 74). Such an orientation is also at stake in

Naomi Klein's assessment of the anti-extractive movement she calls Blockadia. This global opposition to fossil fuels and mining "perhaps…shouldn't be referred to as an environmental movement at all, since it is primarily driven by a desire for a deeper form of democracy" (Klein 2014, 295). Importantly again, Klein locates its roots in "a rich populist history of winning big victories for social and economic justice in the midst of large scale crises" (2014, 10).

Klein's assessment is doubly important for pointing at another aspect of populism – its relation to desire. In fact, central debates in political theory have emerged precisely through disagreements about what role desire plays in constructing a coherent subject of populism, and whether that concept of desire is negative or affirmative (Panizza 2005; Laclau 2005; Žižek 2006). Desire helps explain populism's power expressed in the people's collective imaginations of their own self-identity, their ascriptions of the systemic failures of capitalism to demonized individuals, and their utopian dreams of a better or different world. In short, desire forms the matrix through which populist ideology comes to make sense (as it does with any political ideology). To this kind of analysis, I add a sense of populism as a staging ground of the tensions within *liberal* ideology, tensions between popular sovereignty and representation, between democracy and territorial nationality, or between the affect and tone of democracy and its procedures and institutions. What does pipeline populism desire? Why is it compelling for its participants, and with what consequences for politics? Before beginning to answer these questions, it is important to briefly sketch the relationship between desire, ideology, and politics.

Desire, ideology, and politics

The second intervention this project makes is methodological and theoretical. I argue that as a form of political organization and discourse, environmental populism can best be analyzed through a modified and updated form of ideology critique drawn from Spinozist and Marxist modes of thought. The critical practice of investigating the genesis of ideologies avoids either staunch economic or material determinisms or free-floating discursive post-structuralisms. I nonetheless also intervene in this methodological tradition by demonstrating how contemporary ideology critique must remain materialist in tracing affective relations through political economy and reflexive in its understanding of the production of subjects. In doing so, such an ideology critique also offers unique tools to investigations of racial capitalism and settler colonialism.

Marxist and psychoanalytic ideology critique has received something of a bad rap over the past few decades. Critique, it has been argued, opened up the doors for anti-scientism and denial of facts, rendering scientific facts beyond contest (Latour 2004) or political truths relative (Badiou 2013). Ideology critique, especially as practiced by Marxists, seems to frequently arrive in theses of "false consciousness," wherein the analyst places themselves outside of ideology in order to reveal how it leads the masses astray. From a poststructuralist perspective, critique is said to rely on a non-relative or absolute "truth" hiding behind ideology or a material base or infrastructure which grounds it. Thus ideology critique is foundationalist or essentialist (Foucault 1980, 118). Furthermore, it seems that what critique *does* in or to the world is primarily destructive. Ideology critique is mean-spirited in its approach to social worlds, and thus produces only negative affects such as paranoia and suspicion in its wake (Sedgwick 2003). Ideology

seems to describe the social as too airtight, too structural, too deterministic, a world with no wiggle-room or "agency" for its subjects. Finally, ideology seems to be just words and images overlaying the real meat of our ignorance of (depending who you ask) capitalism, extractivism, the Anthropocene, corporeality, settler coloniality, infrastructures, facts, and/or science.

These critiques-of-(ideology)-critique are not without basis. Nonetheless, a host of scholarship has emerged within, alongside, and against such dismissive exonerations of ideology critique in order to rehabilitate it as a practice of understanding the tenuous production of political subjectivities. In particular, the scholars I am interested in have gone back to the work of Spinoza, that "matrix of every possible theory of ideology" (Althusser 1997, 7), in order to better clarify the relationship between desire, ideology, and political subjectivity. Contrary to the charges that ideology separates the realm of ideas from the social, material, ecological, or economic, in Spinoza we find instead first, a complex ontology of bodies and ideas interwoven with each other and, at the same time, an ontology that "forbids any kind of exit from thought to matter, insisting upon the irreducibility of one to the other" (Sharp 2011, 62). Ideology critique in this formulation is "not just a critique" of inadequate particular ideas of the world and our desires (which we *all* hold), but also "an explanation of this conception" (Read 2017, 26). As Antonio Negri puts it, the Spinozist project relies on the very articulation of the destructive "internal critique of the ideology" with an ethical-constructive "identification of the critical threshold of the system in the emergence of the irreducible ethicality of the world" (1991, 84). This is to say that "critique cannot be separated from construction" of a new ontology and politics (Read 2017, 21).

Yet while many will be comfortable with critique, surely *ideology* critique seems to rely on outdated conceptions of truth, sovereignty, and representation. I am sympathetic to such a position, but believe that an expansive and Spinozan concept of ideology need not produce judgmental chauvinism. Ideology is "the (overdetermined) unity of the real relation and the imaginary relation between [people] and their real conditions of existence" (Althusser 1969, 233–34). If we unpack or decompose these relations into their constituent parts, we find several complicating elements. First, ideology is an *overdetermined* unity which is to say a "structured unity" (Gidwani 2008, 4), which means that any given ideological system is a site of struggle and leakage of desires as much as it is consolidation of social reproduction. The concept of "structure" and the long-running structure-agency debates in the social sciences are in many ways emblematic of this problematic. Rather than abandon the concept of structure, I find it essential to understanding social reproduction and its possible leakages. In Deleuze's understanding, "structuralism is not at all a form of thought that suppresses the subject, but one that breaks it up and distributes it systematically, that contests the identity of the subject, that dissipates it and makes it shift from place to place" (2004, 190). Rather, it is a kind of "virtual, unconscious structure that is realized only in practice" (Gidwani 2008, 7).

Second, the *imaginary relation* at stake need not be transparently representational, but also includes, in Spinoza's words, "only a confused and mutilated knowledge of itself, of its own Body, and of external bodies" (EII P29 Cor).[1] This confusion is a necessary effect of desire, "man's very essence" (EIII Aff D1) constituted through the spatial arrangements that produce affective resonances in one's imagination. In this

manner, we could argue that "affect theory is another phase in the history of ideology theory…It enables us to formulate, without closing down, the investments and incoherence of political subjectivity and subjectification in relation to the world's disheveled but predictable dynamics" (Berlant 2011a, 53). Third, the affective realm constitutes *every* attempt at rationality, or the development of adequate ideas and it does so "with the same necessity" as inadequate or clear ideas (Spinoza EII P36). There is no form of thought that doesn't emerge from this play of forces, no free thinker who can escape it.

Fourth, the point of ideology critique is not to demonstrate and adjudicate true and false representations, but instead to examine the genesis of representation rather than take it at face value. Contrary then to what the "non-representational" approach popular in geography says of it, ideology critique in the Spinozan vein is inclusive of the non-representational in the genesis of images, illusions, and desires. As Deleuze puts it, "The point of critique is not justification but a different way of feeling: another sensibility" (Deleuze 1983, 94).

Finally, the "real conditions of existence" should also be treated expansively and, especially, *spatially* with reference to the individuation of a subject. Spinoza, and Althusser, Deleuze, and Negri following him, have already treated ideology critique as a practice of materialism. Hence, we can understand how "thinking takes place in the relationship of territory of the earth" (Deleuze and Guattari 1994, 85) or less naturalistically, within the relationship between structure and infrastructure. When Gilles

Deleuze and Felix Guattari argue that "desire is in the infrastructure," I take this as the significance of their meaning.[2] Lauren Berlant elaborates:

> "An infrastructural analysis helps us see that what we commonly call 'structure' is not what we usually call it, an intractable principle of continuity across time and space, but is really a convergence of force and value in patterns of movement that's only solid when seen from a distance…Thus, I am redefining ''structure'' here as *that which organizes transformation* and ''infrastructure'' as *that which binds us to the world in movement and keeps the world practically bound to itself*" (2016, 394)

Such a concept of infrastructure would also further remake a social-scientific investigation into desire (what I am calling "ideology critique"). As Berlant puts it, "one task for makers of critical social form is to offer not just judgment about positions and practices in the world, but terms of transition that alter the harder and softer, tighter and looser infrastructures of sociality itself" (2016, 394). Not so much a history or genealogy as a symptomatology or geology, an investigation into the infrastructural conditions of the emergence and persistence of ideologies.[3]

In the context of North American pipeline politics, such a theoretical position is also clarifying for understanding the relationship between infrastructure, race, and settler coloniality. Patrick Wolfe famously argued that "the primary motive for elimination is not race (or religion, ethnicity, grade of civilization, etc.) but access to territory. Territoriality is settler colonialism's specific, irreducible element" (2006, 388). Importantly, Wolfe recognizes settler colonialism's structural – rather than evental – nature. But Wolfe's understanding of territory and raciality as fundamentally separable orientations, as Iyko Day contends, "evacuates the proprietorial nature of whiteness" (2015, 107). If instead we understand territoriality – through defense of private property,

for example – as constitutive of ideology and also white subjectivity, then such a distinction must be mistaken. Consequently, my investigation in the context racial capitalism could be supplemented by an investigation of liberalism and its role in reproducing a settler-colonial politics of race and nation. Ideology has a foundational role in this social reproduction or repetition. If we properly understand social reproduction *as a site of struggle*, and if we understand such struggles as material, spatial, and ecological in character, then it becomes all the more clearer what the practice of investigating the conditions of ideological production has to offer for politics.[4]

Desire is inexorably tied to any concept of ideology critique, but we should be wary of a concept of desire that is always or wholly unconscious (Tuck 2010). If to examine ideologies is to demonstrate their relation to a (virtual) structure, it is also to show that in their actualization, the structure is always betrayed. For me, desire is one name for *both* aspects of that ambivalence. As Tuck and Yang argue, then, desire offers a kind of short-circuit or escape valve to the history that hurts (Jameson) or settler colonialism as structure (Wolfe). "Desire invites the ghosts that history wants exorcised, and compels us to imagine the possible in what was written as impossible; desire is haunted" (Tuck and Yang 2014a, 235).

Genres of liberalism

If anything is haunted, surely it is liberalism. Theoretical and historical examinations of liberalism demonstrate its strategies of exclusion are not incidential corruptions of an ideal form, but in fact sutured to both its theory and practice (Losurdo

2014; Mehta 1999). The third intervention I make is to see populist politics, despite its rebellious aspirations, as falling back on liberal objects of attachment. Populism is not liberal by definition, and most liberals are immensely afraid of populism's disregard for institution, process, and norm (Mann 2017; Riofrancos 2017a). Yet left-populism's mobilization of *popular sovereignty* fundamentally draws from a genre of liberalism, which might be traced from Jean-Jacques Rousseau to the United States' founders through the Progressive Era democratic theorists like John Dewey to contemporary theorists of strong democracy, direct democracy, or participatory democracy. This genre of liberalism has received less treatment in contemporary left critiques, in part because it seems to arrive uncomfortably close to our own moral politics.

As an ideological formation, I argue that pipeline populism both emerges from and ultimately reproduces attachments to landed property rights, public participation in environmental permitting, and scientific expertise and counter-expertise, while simultaneously pointing towards more radical possibilities outside the framework from which it derives. Whether explicit, unconscious, or affective, these attachments form the basic elements of desire that congeal into the populist contestation of pipelines. Concerns over landowner property rights were a central element of populist responses to the pipelines, and thus one aspect of the movement was fighting largely in favor of the liberal status quo rather than political transformation. This and other social demands transformed through decision-making spaces developed to elicit the voice of the people and to test the evidence and expertise in favor of or against pipeline projects. Populism emerges as a product of participatory political spaces, from sanctioned public participation meetings to marches, protests, and concerts. These "spatialities of contentious politics" (Leitner,

Sheppard, and Sziarto 2008) condition and are contested by the political subjects who engage in them.

Sticking to our commitment to ideology critique, rather than label and judge pipeline populism as a radical, liberal, or reactionary movement from the outset, investigating its genesis can better elucidate its fractures and leakages. It is in a primary contradictory affective-political *tension* that populism produces and is produced by subjects. These subjects are caught in a *tension of populist willing*, emergent between both a pull towards a *utopian fidelity* towards political transformation and *a drag* back into the everyday pragmatic muck of politics. The contradictory tensions between the pull and the drag – for example, between individualized attachments to private property and collective attachments to place and region – should be seen as under transformation and struggle within populism and between populism and other modes of doing politics.

In contrast to similar conceptions of what Berlant calls "cruel optimism" (2011a) or an oscillation between populism's "rebellious and reactionary aspirations" (Grattan 2016), I argue that the tension of pipeline populism stages a different tone. Pipeline populism's solution to the problematic of the affective-political tension of transformational or redemptive politics is a denial of contradiction in favor of a *resigned pragmatism*. Rather than sever attachments to utopian liberal objects of desire - property, democracy, and popular expertise – populism seeks to accommodate as many as possible through unlikely alliances, a la a Rawlsian "overlapping consensus." But it does so with resignation and reluctance, because it seems other options are exhausted. My interlocutors rarely described democratic participation with any sense of aspiration, instead choosing frustration and annoyance to analyze what they saw as an ineluctably

corrupt system. This stems in part from the broader and seemingly intractable politics of oil, and returns us to the problem of planetary politics.

Oil, infrastructure, and populist politics

The fourth and final major intervention this work makes is with reference to the connection between the politics of oil, oil infrastructure, and populism. Oil appears to have an almost mystical effect on political worlds, almost as if the viscous black fluid draws out political corruption and ideological manipulation itself. Avoiding such oil determinisms, most critique of oil ideology argues that such a fetishistic understanding of oil ignores the manner in which it is saturated with social, cultural, and political relations. It seems to me that this problem returns us to the basic idealism of liberalism – if only we didn't have the ideological filter of liberal political thought, we would understand the violence that oil causes. Yet such a position misses the manner in which oil politics is intimately (which is to say affectively) wrapped up in contemporary populisms around the world.

In *Carbon Democracy*, Timothy Mitchell argues that interruptions of flows of fossil fuels formed one of the main platforms for the labor movement's power in the 20th century. Coal miner unions were able to build power in part by withholding flows of energy, thus forcing corporations to yield power to their grievances. The mechanization of the coal mining industry and the rise of oil as an energy source undercut this movement's power, in part because flows of oil were less labor intensive and more difficult to interrupt. Mitchell makes the crucial argument that

> "in building the infrastructure of oil, the petroleum companies were also laying out the infrastructure of political protest. The points of vulnerability where

> movements could organize and apply pressure now included a series of oil wells, pipelines, refineries, railways, docks and shipping lanes…at which a series of claims for political freedoms and more egalitarian forms of life would be fought" (2013, 103).

Against this seemingly democratic form of intervention led by workers and anti-colonial groups in the Middle East, Mitchell counterposes the institutions of 20th century liberal democracy – the post-Bretton Woods agreement, finance capital, and the revenue for building social programs, as they too were formed in relation to the power of oil.

Although the evidence for this claim is at times inconsistent, certainly we all agree that oil and oil infrastructure systems are contemporary sites of political struggle. But the meaning and effects of that struggle are sites of much disagreement among scholars. Even if we immediately leave behind well-critiqued deterministic readings of the "resource curse" (oil corrodes democracy) or "petropopulism" (oil funds lubricate the purchase of political support), oil politics still reads all-too-frequently even in Mitchell's formulation as a grandiose narrative that reproduces the fetishistic understanding of oil – ascribing to it causality for what are, in fact, social relations (Huber 2013).

Matthew Huber's emphasis on everyday life and social reproduction (2013, 16-19) leads him to conclude that the problem of oil is far more difficult than simply negation, instead pointing toward "difficult political questions surrounding the problematics of populism, liberal democracy, and what kinds of social conditions can generate new and more collective imaginaries of life itself" (2013, 153). Such an analysis is far more useful for understanding the manner in which energy, infrastructure, and politics web together a strikingly uneven yet overlapping genres of resistance to resource extraction. For example, Thea Riofrancos mobilizes such a social reproductive

framework to analyze both the populist discourse of resource extraction mobilized by Rafael Correa in Ecuador *and* the transnational mobilization against *extractivismo* led by indigenous Amazonians. Matthew Schneider-Mayerson (2015) demonstrates how transnational networks of peak oil activism participate in the 21st century reproduction of a genre of libertarian individualism and quietism. Stephanie LeMenager (2014) demonstrates how art and literature against oil cannot so easily extract themselves from either the genres or materials of the oil world. These are far more complex portraits of oil's uneven constitution of social and political worlds.

My work contributes to this genre of political analysis of oil politics by examining how certain desires to negate oil are in part generated by the broad institutional and cultural structures of the oil world and the planetary crisis it has caused. The seeming saturation of oil in all parts of politics is also *itself* an ideology – as the lifeblood of the nation and its economy and thus the corruption of all media and politics – creates all sorts of desires. These include those for a new political truth that can combat disinformation campaigns, for a "good life" that would not be dependent on foreign outsiders, and for a mass populism that enrolls *everyone* in a project of decarbonizing the economy. Pipeline populism, I hope, stays true to the richness of the genesis, and its limitations, contradictions, and possibilities, of this social imaginary.

Research Design

The main research question that this project initially asked was "How does pipeline populism, as a collective social phenomenon, emerge from and transform

contemporary ideologies of environmental politics?" It is worth unpacking the parts of this question and the implications for research design. The question delimits an interest in grasping the singularity of populist responses to the pipelines. This meant that I did not examine the Big Greens themselves (with the exception of local chapters of the Sierra Club), the state (except as it interfaces with populist groups), or radical left groups. Although the questions I ask in this work are grounded in conversations with Native friends and scholars, I do not claim to foreground Native activism, organizing, or epistemologies/ontologies in this work. I was guided in this design by the American Association of Geographers' Indigenous Peoples Specialty Group "Declaration of Key Questions about Research Ethics with Indigenous Communities" (2010). I was struck in particular by a question posed in that document "for non-Indigenous researchers":

> "How could you explore options for research that do not include "studying" Indigenous peoples? If non-Indigenous communities or institutions are a primary obstacle or barrier to Indigenous self-determination, would it be more helpful to the Indigenous community for you to study non-Indigenous policies or attitudes?" (2010, 4).

I realized early in my research design process that what I was most interested in with relation to the movement against the pipelines was the role of white settlers in anti-pipeline opposition and environmentalism more broadly, which I later came to understand as populist. This made the project doubly reflexive, as I was studying 1. My own community and subject position as an uninvited settler who has lived on and benefited from the lands of the Oceti Ŝakowiŋ Oyate, and 2. A form of environmental politics in which I had been extensively involved as a student organizer and participant in the "youth climate movement" from 2006-2009. One unavoidable risk of this analysis is

thus that it likely re-centers white settler ways of knowing and organizing politics and could de-center "Indigenous peoples own articulations of Indigenous-settler relations, their governance, legal, and diplomatic orders, and the transformative visions entailed within Indigenous political thought" (Snelgrove, Dhamoon, and Corntassel 2014, 26). I cannot claim that my research contributes to a political project of decolonization or is of any use to indigenous peoples. Like Tuck and Yang, I believe it to be axiomatic that "research may not be the intervention that is needed" (2014b, 813). Like Badiou, I believe philosophy can only follow or be conditioned by real politics (2012). Nonetheless, I firmly believe ideology critique is indispensable to the project of making actionable the sites and spaces of such interventions.

In order to answer these questions, I used a number of methods of humanistic and qualitative social science inquiry, including interviews, participant observation, and analysis of documents and media. I conducted a total of 12 months of empirical fieldwork in South Dakota, North Dakota, Nebraska, and Iowa, a timeline allowed me to respond to the changing political landscape of pipeline opposition from 2013 to 2016. In the summer of 2013, I lived in Winner, South Dakota, a small town of around 2,000 people near the southern border with Nebraska. In the summer of 2014, I lived in Rapid City, South Dakota, the biggest city in the western part of the state. This allowed me to travel both north to Harding County, east to the state capitol of Pierre, and to sites along the pipeline's route. In the summer of 2016, I lived in Brookings, SD in the eastern part of the state, intending to track opposition to the newly proposed DAPL, and able to drive to research sites in both North Dakota and central Iowa.

The broad parameters of pipeline populism afforded a number of sites of research and a large number of interlocutors. I interviewed members of, attended events organized by, or analyzed documents or discourse from the following organizations. Although only a few of these organizations, such as Bold Nebraska, explicitly call themselves populist, I do not take populism to have easily definable borders within these groups. Nonetheless, I consider all of these to have participated in pipeline populism in some way:

100 Grannies for a Livable Future
350.org (national)
Bakken Pipeline Resistance Coalition
Bold Iowa
Bold Nebraska
Cowboy and Indian Alliance (CIA)
Dakota Rural Action
Des Moines Catholic Worker
Energy Action Coalition
Interfaith Power & Light
Iowa 350.org
Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement
MN 350.org
Nebraska Easement Action Team
No KXL Dakota
Protect South Dakota Resources
Science and Environmental Health Network
Sierra Club North Star Chapter
South Dakota Peace and Justice Center
Women, Food & Agriculture Network

I used ethnographic methods to examine campaigns against pipelines in public spaces. These included observation at several different "spatialities of contentious politics" (Leitner, Sheppard, and Sziarto 2008). My research question discloses that I am interested in populism as a "collective social phenomenon"; thus while interviews were very important to elucidating the political field and strategy behind the scenes of political

melodrama, I found that spaces of collective action and subjectification were most relevant.

These include, first, participant observation in public participation meetings and evidentiary hearings associated with the federal Environmental Impact Statement and South Dakota Public Utilities Commission reviews. I also drew from recordings, transcripts, and news accounts of meetings I was unable to attend or which preceded my research. Public participation meetings and evidentiary hearings were key spaces of collective experience that shaped pipeline populism. Second, I attended around 30 public gatherings not interfacing with state institutions. These included three protest concerts, seven marches, four potlucks, three blockades or direct actions, one direct action training, and one eminent domain condemnation hearing. These events and my key summer living locations took place across the research area and can be seen below, along with the administrative boundaries of the seven Native American reservations in western South Dakota.

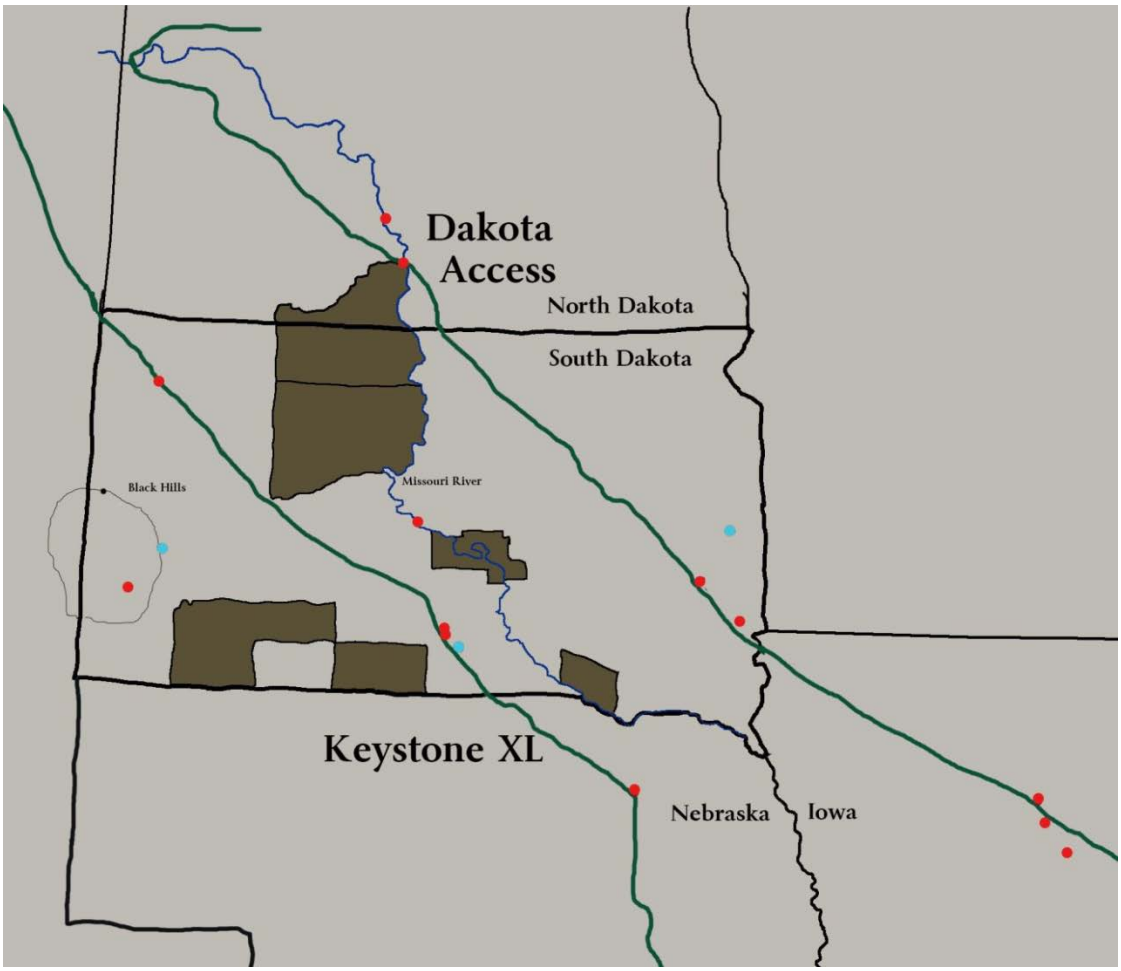


Figure 1: Project Area sketch map with key research sites

Third, I conducted 23 semi-structured interviews with key individuals in the pipeline opposition movement. These included community organizers, landowners, lawyers, activists, and environmentalists. One group interview was conducted with four interlocutors. I also interviewed some more marginal participants in the pipeline opposition movement, including an attendee of but one public meeting, a pipeline skeptic who became a supporter, and a vehement pipeline opponent who was not connected to any political organization. The movement against the pipelines on the Great Plains was not a mass mobilization even if it liked to imagine itself as such, and only a handful of

individuals were active throughout the three years I conducted research. To protect individual identities and sensitive information, all names of interlocutors as well as significant identifying details have been changed in this document.

Finally, a vast array of documents and online relationships were important to this analysis. I surveyed the transcripts of around 3,500 unique public comments made in person and online. I did not read and then code all of these comments in order to inductively discover discursive patterns, but instead sampled based on keywords. I followed closely texts, flyers, pamphlets, e-mail blasts, facebook conversations and other electronic documents through which social movement organizing over large distances of space is increasingly organized. I have included some analysis of the way in which local, national, and environmental media and literature represent pipeline populism. Taken together, these sources allowed a rich analysis of the changes in public discourse and strategy of pipeline opposition from its inception to the present.

I spent some six weeks in total in July, August, and October 2016 at the Sacred Stone Camp on the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation in North Dakota. I conducted no research activities while there. I decided before engaging in this space that these activities were completely off limits for ethical, political, and security reasons. Although my own political activities, and the broad politics of the blockade inevitably condition what, why, and how I think, I feel in many ways “the academy doesn’t deserve” (Tuck and Yang 2014b, 813) to know about these struggles.

Plan of Dissertation

Almost every political study of populism begins by noting its vague definition, to the point that denunciations of the use of populism as an incoherent concept are almost as common as condemnations of its political form. Ernesto Laclau (2005) goes so far to suggest that this is not due to some conceptual failure on our part, but rather to the plastic and multiplicitous nature of populism itself. Similarly, I also contend that ideological struggles over the nature and significance of contemporary populism on the left are due in part to its own internal tension produced in its affective infrastructure. In Chapter 2, I provide my own theoretical contribution to this field by unraveling liberal, Marxist, and psychoanalytic approaches to the study of populism. The unique theoretical edifice I construct is based off bringing into relation 1) a materialist analysis of desire, as it forms 2) the racial subjects of possessive individualism, whose social demands congeal into 3) populism as political ambivalence.

I have contended that we cannot understand the contemporary political field of environmentalism without an understanding of populism. But is this merely a "contemporary field", or does the lens of environmental populism also compel us to look back on the history of American environmentalism and American populism in a new light? What political or movement cultures and political-economic situations form the raw materials of populist social formations? Chapter 3 examines three historical slices of the structure of environmental populism in western South Dakota. I examine the history of the Farmer's Alliance and People's (or Populist) Party in the region, environmental justice organizing in the 1980s, and pipeline opposition over the last decade. This chapter engages in the complex and fascinating historiography of populism, paying particular

attention to how accounts of populism might better attend to its articulations or disarticulations with land and environmentalism, settler colonialism, and radical left politics.

While political ecologists have analyzed the role of private property in creating and sustaining ecological inequalities, this approach does not often take property as a foundational element of racial capitalism. Chapter 4 argues that the defense of private property in contestation of North American oil pipelines demonstrates the centrality of property not only to the structural reproduction of capital, but also to its Euro-American subject. Emphasizing their affective attachments to land and resentment at dispossession, landowners and populist environmental organizations in the Great Plains frequently compared individual, white experiences of eminent domain to the historic and ongoing dispossession of Native Nations by suggesting "they're treating us like Indians." I trace the ways in which the affective anxieties of property congealed into the social demands of pipeline populism. In order to account for the reproduction of white supremacy in environmentalism, I argue that we must understand how its oppositional politics are linked to economic interests and political desires for the maintenance of landed private property.

Forums of public participation in environmental permitting and review are centrally important spaces for the raising of demands like the restitution of property rights. But they are also important staging grounds for populism's meta-concern with a deficit in democratic decision-making and the corrupt influence of oil. Historically, populism has both a strong commitment to public participation and governance. But like desire more generally, populism is never satisfied with the actual performance of public

participation. Chapter 5 examines the supposed irrelevance of official public participation to the actual decision-making processes of environmental permitting. I demonstrate how spaces of public participation create the frustration and annoyance that cohere into environmental populism. But rather than immediately move to the critical outside of public participation, I'm interested in why subjects keep returning to these spaces and demanding more participation. I argue that it is with a kind of *resigned pragmatism* that permitting is approached. Populists don't think public participation constitutes "real democracy," but they do feel like official avenues must be exhausted in order to move on or elsewhere.

Testimony against the pipelines relies not simply on the emotional experiences or narratives of land defense. In evidentiary hearings, pipeline opponents enthusiastically threw themselves into scientific review. Against the image of populism as fundamentally anti-scientific or anti-expert, I demonstrate how populism was predicated on a particular experience of expertise. Populists attempted to prove through collection of knowledge and evidence and development of expertise that the pipeline should not be built. Although they were staunch in the belief of the truth of their position, the dismissal of scientific evidence in evidentiary review proved to be the last straw for many. Using the knowledge and collective practices accumulated in these spaces, opponents finally took leave of the institutional process.

What can we learn about populism and environmental politics from pipeline opponents? In the conclusion, I reiterate the major contributions of this work as they pertain to contemporary environmental politics and oil on the one hand, and theories of

populism on the other. I conclude by returning to a radically innovative document from the early 1980s in South Dakota – the Declaration of Dependence on the Land.

Chapter 2. Populism and political desire in spatial and political theory

Introduction

In identifying environmental degradation as the primary and obvious problem facing human life today, environmentalism's primary political activity has been consciousness-raising, both rational and emotional. Decrying ignorance and apathy towards ecological destruction, environmentalism operated as though "if only people *knew* and *cared* more, then environmental action would take place everywhere!" In contrast to that elitist or patarnalistic environmentalist position that the masses don't know or care, populists argue that the problem is instead that corrupt policymakers, ineffective establishment institutions, and fossil fuel corporations have consolidated power for their own benefit, rendering the masses inconsequential. So, it follows, political power should be returned to the constituent source from which it is derived: the people.

At face value, the populist assessment of the political field seems completely appropriate. National and international policy has failed to meaningfully address climate change, oil corporations have wreaked havoc on our understanding of truth, and mainstream environmental organizations seem committed to incrementalism and accommodation. Yet populism is seen to be something of a "dangerous excess" (Grattan 2016, 40) of democracy. For critical theorists, populism reflects, like a mirror, the bankrupt results of democratic idealism (Panizza 2005) or forms its shadowy aftereffects (Žižek 2006). Furthermore, populism's broad brush strokes, its grassroots organizing strategies, and the political subjects it produces ineluctably lead to its fracture. As Giorgio Agamben summarizes, this is because the language of "the people" at the same

time names both “the constitutive political subject as well as the class that is excluded” (Agamben 2000, 29). Populist ideology is thus stuck in a vacillation between its claims to be or represent both particular and universal, the outside and the totality, “a body of citizens or a mass of outcasts” (Crépon, Cassin, and Moatti 2014, 752).

Yet while most political theorists agree that the people is not self-evident, but rather emerges through its iterative performances or inventions (e.g., Badiou et al. 2016), massive disagreements exist over the sources and implications of such a political discourse. Out of what elements is populism constructed, and with what consequences for the political subjects it conditions? Can the broad, international resonance of “the people” be tied in some way to “the American innovation in politics [as the] desire to truly implement the classical idea of popular sovereignty” (Laugier 2014, 751)?

This chapter analyzes three broad assessments of populism which can be discerned in contemporary Marxism. First, Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (Laclau and Mouffe 1985; Laclau 1979, 2005; Mouffe 2000, 2005, 2016), argue that populist politics is the agonistic political form of democracy. Populism here represents a mode of incorporating the diverse positions of “new social movements” like ecological politics and social justice into the transformational radical democratic project of democratic socialism. I call this position *populism as radical democracy*.

Such a position is abhorrent for post-Lacanian Marxists such as Slavoj Žižek (2017), Jodi Dean (2009, 2017), and Erik Swyngedow (2010, 2011; Swyngedouw and Wilson 2014), for whom populism’s attachment to radical democracy obscures its reactionary shadow. Populism here substantiates its others as demonized foreigners, thus securing its nationalist and anti-revolutionary subject. It obscures the political stakes of

the left. And populism signals the ultimate denuding of the revolutionary class project, a blockage of proper politics by a nebulous and ultimately reactionary movement. I call this position *populism as post-political consolidation.*

In contrast to the above positions, Laura Grattan (2016), Lauren Berlant (2011b, 2011a), and others following a Spinozist position (Sibertin-Blanc 2013; Read 2017; Sharp 2011; Thoburn 2016; Povinelli 2017) have developed an understanding of populism as emergent from the transindividual affective field of politics. In this formulation, populism's affective infrastructure – both aspirational and cruel – indicates a meaningful if faltering desire for the political or for political transformation, even as that transformation returns to the tense and form of liberal politics. Here, populism persists and insists as a process of constructing the people or political belonging anew as an open set. I call this position *populism as political ambivalence*.

While I agree most closely with the latter position that traces populism's ambivalent desires through to the fragmented subject produced as a residuum, I also find that such analyses sometimes incompletely account for the spatial situations which condition such affects. Namely, I want to both pay appropriate respect to the fragmentary nature of the everyday, the ordinary, and the banal, while also understanding how exceptional political events can recompose or *reterritorialize* subjects to fit within the tenuous status quo of liberalism. This is especially so insofar as contemporary populism is capable of functioning ideologically to reconfirm the supposed inevitability of racial capitalism and settler colonialism.

The obdurate persistence of accumulation by dispossession, landed private property, exploitation of labor, and ultimately the debilitation, exhaustion, and

elimination of black, indigenous, and people of color worldwide (differentially and relationally so) demands a resolutely materialist argument. That white subjects like myself can be (consciously or unconsciously) both sympathetic with struggles against this system and reproductive of its broad outlines in thought and political practice cannot be explained in any simple manner with recourse to an understanding of discourse or culture on the one hand, or the racial state on the other. Instead, I argue that Spinozism is crucially important to understanding, analyzing, and ultimately abolishing the manner in which these *desiring* subjects emerge in and through determinate spatial conditions of capital.

Figure 2: the infrastructure of populist subjects

In the final part of this chapter, and throughout this dissertation, my analysis of populism brings together three somewhat heterodox aspects of Marxist methodology which I take as axiomatic. First, against a Marxism that views ideology or subject formation as somehow secondary or superstructurally positioned in relation to "the material" a.k.a. "the economic," I take desire as folded into the infrastructure. We might also think of the subjects that desire calls forth as a broadly construed "libidinal economy" that is isomorphic with the "political economy." Racial partitions in labor,

private property, and social reproduction are essential to both the necessary functioning and pathological excess of this system. Second, the theories and methodologies of "affect" and "affectability" should be understood as "another phase in the history of ideology theory" (Berlant 2011a, 53). The critical task is not to debunk and thus to show that consciousness is false, but instead to demonstrate (to the extent possible) the *genesis*[5] of particular affective attachments, from spatial situations, as they congeal into a populist social demands.

Third and finally, materialist analysis of affect and desire (as they are performed in populist politics) are not just one lens through which race and racism could be examined, but are more fundamentally central to abolishing the racial subject as that which (is imagined to be he who) escapes affectability or spatiality. Denise Ferreira da Silva argues this "transparency thesis" grounds the ongoing production of the Euro-American subject which appears free in its interior-historical genesis, in stark contrast to its "affectable" racial others, rendered determinate by their exteriority. Marxism, she indicates, injects some "promises [of] uneasiness" (da Silva 2007, 192) into this scenario. Because Marx and Engels take into account that "consciousness [is] an effect of material production," they center "actual conditions [and thus] open up the possibility of a critical analysis of the social in which spatiality – where 'being and meaning' emerge in exteriority-affectability – became the privileged moment of signification" (da Silva 2007, 192). Although it is tentatively formed in Silva's work, comprising only five or so pages of a complex and under-recognized masterpiece, in my eyes, such an argument forms the very fulcrum between theories of political subjectivity and political analyses of racial capitalism and settler colonialism.

I maintain that Marxism is not a total theory, but a finite science, and "it is on the basis of its conscious finitude that it is possible to pose all of our major problems" (Althusser 2017). Marxism is never alone, never finished or exhausted. No supplement makes it complete. Yet from within a fidelity to something called "Marxism" we should still be able to demonstrate the manner in which the ideological and the material, and the evental and the everyday intersect and recompose the subject positions of liberalism capable of reifying or exceeding contemporary racial capitalism and settler coloniality.

Populism's discontents

In much of political theory and public press, populism is used as a pejorative term. For many European political theorists, populism is solely associated with the far right – nationalist groups who foment racist myths of foreigners and disregard mediation of political institutions in order to consolidate their own unity. As the political theorist Nadia Urbinati claims, populism is "deeply inimical to political liberty insofar as it…revokes the mediation of political institutions and maintains an organic notion of the body politic" (1998, 110). The tradition of American liberalism, especially that associated with the Keynesian tradition has consistently decried populism's "paranoid style," to use Richard Hofstadter's influential phrase (1960). In this formulation, populism signifies the excess and end of liberal democracy, for it stages popular sovereignty but in fact foments conspiratorial theories of power that easily devolve into racist, xenophobic, and anti-Semitic mythology that poses a threat not just to democracy but to civilization itself (Mann 2017). Populism signifies for the political center "a catch-all label for everything

they dislike" (T. Wood 2016), thus allowing the signification of as a set individuals as fundamentally different as Silvio Berlusconi, Bernie Sanders, Hugo Chávez, Donald Trump, and Juan Perón (Riofrancos 2017a; T. Wood 2016). The denunciation of populism (in favor of order, rationality, or emotionless politics) serves an important purpose of consolidating the technocratic and managerial power of liberal democracy's elites – "those who would manage the people, who want to secure the people's freedom, but cannot trust the people to do so" (Mann 2017, 113). It is thus a bedrock of liberal political thought.[6]

Mainstream environmentalism rarely uses populism as a signifier, but it has historically operated with this same paternalist attitude towards populist politics that bears similarity to that of Keynesian liberalism. Environmentalists often feel as if they are among an embattled minority awakened to the destruction of planet earth by their ecological knowledge or wisdom. They believe that the vast majority of individuals will never appreciate the value of nonhumans nor act on environmental values, so the masses must be guided by complex laws enforced by the state. For example, Aldo Leopold, the prominent developer of the concept of a land ethic, argued that

> "The concept of land as a community, of which we are only members, is limited to a few ecologists. Ninety nine percent of the world's brains and votes have never heard of it. The mass mind is devoid of any notion that the integrity of the land community may depend on its wholeness, that this wholeness is needlessly destroyed by present modes of land-use, or that the land-sciences have not yet examined the possibilities of preserving more of it" (quoted in Meyer 2008, 222–23).

Leopold associates the masses with a fundamental deviation or fall from a more integrated, natural wholeness, which can only be seen by an exclusive few.

Environmentalism is able to denounce mass politics by claiming it is an expression of false consciousness – the masses are duped by their base desires.

A more contemporary denunciation of popular environmentalism can be seen in the extremely influential book *Break Through: From the Death of Environmentalism to the Politics of Possibility* by liberal policy wonks Ted Nordhaus and Michael Shellenberger, published as an essay in 2004 and an expanded book in 2007. Nordhaus and Shellenberger argue that place-based, small-scale environmental activists upheld as heroes of environmentalism have little effect on improving our planetary environment. Indeed, they point out that they rest on a specious moral understanding of capital-n Nature as separate from humanity, and so can only reproduce tragic, disempowering narratives of humanity's downfall.

This argument will be familiar to many geographers, as the authors crib heavily from their friend and colleague, Bruno Latour. However, their political end is not to propose a more radical world of equality and justice, but rather to reinforce the necessity of technocratic neoliberal policies that do not fundamentally change regular peoples' interests in consumption and economic growth. A key chapter of the book that links these claims hinges on a comparison of contemporary environmentalism with populist politics. While many populists decried the inequalities of Gilded Age or Depression-era economics and fought for prosperity for all, they rhetorically emphasized that producers were victims of forces beyond their control. This narrative, the authors argue, bears a structural similarity with that of environmentalism's tragic (or apocalyptic) tale. Contra those who would be inspired by radical agrarian organizing, Nordhaus and Shellenberger find populists to be "insecure, desperate, and often quite mean and prejudiced"

(Shellenberger and Nordhaus 2007, 159). Neither populism nor environmentalism, they argue, offer any hope for the future, as both political discourses can only produce disempowering politics. While not always presented in terms of populist politics, similar accounts of everyday, democratic resistance seen throughout political ecology, garnered the infamously disparaging and dismissive ire of Vayda and Walters in their accusation that political ecology has "a populist political agenda" (Vayda and Walters 1999, 170).

Liberal critiques or fears of the masses are thus easy to expose as reproductive of their own class position and consolidation of power. The pejorative use of populism to discredit enthusiastic or overly emotional social movements transparently allows political liberals to appear above this emotional fray. Populism is seen to be a consolidation of disparate political forces, confusing them in a vague manner that allows the most reactionary to succeed. Populist movements are described as exclusionary and often nationalistic because relying on "the people" (writ large) sometimes entails grounding that people in a territorially or racially-bound community. Populism's preference for direct and unmediated knowledge and political action make it seem anti-intellectual and naturalistic. In its environmentalist form, populism is denounced as an irrational rejection of technocratic institutions. Populism as a political concept is similarly critiqued for its vagueness – what attributes could populism even hold, when it seems to be both itself and its opposite?

The liberal critique of populism can be contrasted with the analysis of many contemporary Marxisms. Although his work emphasizes the antagonistic construction of a people, Jacques Rancière argues that populism is the fusion of the force of a mass of people combined with the "ignorance attributed to that same great number" and their

racism, which is "essential for this construction" (Badiou et al. 2016, 102). For Slavoj Žižek, populism basically has two fundamental characteristics: "populist discourse displaces the antagonism and constructs the enemy" (Žižek 2006, 555). Contrary to the argument of liberals that populism is too antagonistic, Žižek argues that it instead just shifts class-based antagonism onto a mythically substantial racial or identity-based struggle. The geographer Erik Swyngedouw has extended this analysis to what he calls "climate populism," arguing that the focus on apocalyptic threats to the people and nature produces an imperative that is "inherently non-political and non-partisan" (Swyngedouw 2010, 223). To summarize this position (which we'll return to in a moment), populism is taken to substantialize and consolidate the Schmittian political division between friend and enemy, yet fails to understand and thus take responsibility for the constructed nature of this antagonistic division. It thus fails to pinpoint any relationship between *contingent* political antagonism and the material exploitation embedded in and *necessary* to the capitalist economy.

The critiques of populist tendencies towards reaction or even "emotion" made by both liberals and Marxists can make it seem like populist political discourse has no origin or legacy in liberal political thought. But this is anything but the case; populism does not only stage the broad problem of political communities of difference, but also more specifically "the American innovation in politics…the desire to truly implement the classical idea of popular sovereignty" (Laugier 2014, 751). From Robspierre to Rousseau, Madison to de Tocqueville, "the people" is symbolically constructed as the underdog, the outsider, and the excluded or marginalized as much as the unified or homogeneous. Thus critical assessments of populism's limits must at least be contrasted with a recent wave of

resuscitations of populism's important – if ambivalent – role in democratic political culture, especially for the left.

Populism as radical democracy

Most Marxists would agree with liberals that a people cannot be presupposed, but must be forged. Unlike liberalism, however, Marx argued that the genesis of "the people" in a naturalized individual protecting his private property is largely ideological. Like Hegel, Marx argued that by presupposing the individual as the constituent element of the collective, liberalism merely supplanted historical attachments to collectives with ahistorical, easily rationalized thought experiments. By contrast for Marx, a dialectical or antagonistic split runs through every people, preventing either collective unity or a simple, atomistic fragmentation of particular elements. This section describes the stakes of analyzing this split within the ideological construction of the people as elaborated most clearly by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe.

Some Marxists describe the split lodged in the people as a substantial and complete contradiction between two classes, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, which would eventually be overcome through a redemptive unification named communism. The split of the classes is often grafted on to another division, that between the base (material-economic relations) and the superstructure (culture, politics, ideology). The concept of ideology has often been understood as a veil that prevented the masses from seeing the truth of the split in exploitation and consequently the necessity of class struggle as a strategy. The argument, in part derived from the early text *The German Ideology*, often

draws directly or indirectly on the sentiment that, in Marx's words, "the ruling ideas are nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material relationships, the dominant material relationships grasped as ideas" (Marx and Engels 1970, 39).

Consequently, if one grasped instead the truth of a proletarian class position (a material relationship), one could assume that one's concept of the mode of production was unobstructed (or *conscious*), and consequently was a scientific or objective practice somehow outside the ideology that the masses experienced. For these reasons, much of 20th century Marxist theory treated with derision any antagonistic yet partial form of politics that took either "the people" writ large or a particular demand (for recognition, national liberation, for clean water, for gender equality) as distractions from the class struggle.

In the 1960s, Anglophone and Francophone Marxisms found themselves grappling with these problems of ideology and the manner in which they seemed to be disparaged in Marxist politics. The supposed wisdom of prior generations of Marxists, especially as it was handed down through communist parties, seemed to be not only failing to produce meaningful political change, but actively preventing it. Socialists and communists increasingly seemed to betray their stated goals and accept passive assimilation into the state. On the other hand, the proletariat of the world was not rebelling quite as expected. The teleology cemented into Marxist historicism and the humanist faith in the working people increasingly seemed not just insufficient but outright incorrect.

During the 1960s, the liberal interpretation of agrarian radicalism upheld in American history was also being sharply rebuked as a veil for elitist politics and

reconstructed instead as a form of radical democracy. In an explicitly Marxist vein, Norman Pollack saw Midwestern Populist organizers as espousing a sometimes-revolutionary philosophy. In 1962, Pollack would argue that "Populism described the results of ideology, and Marx the causation" (Pollack 1976, 92). But it was Lawrence Goodwyn, a civil rights organizer and historian, who would mount perhaps the most famous and lasting defense of populism as a movement for radical democracy in his 1976 *Democratic Promise: The Populist Moment in America* (and its 1978 abridged version, *The Populist Moment: A Short History of the Agrarian Revolt in America*).

Goodwyn saw in the Farmer's Alliance alienated workers attempting to understand and wrest themselves collectively from their economic conditions. He influentially described populism's *movement culture* which was "in the most fundamental meaning of the word, 'ideological': it encouraged individuals to have significant aspirations in their own lives, it generated a plan of purpose and a method of mass recruitment, it created its own symbols of politics and democracy in place of inherited hierarchical symbols, and it armed its participants against being intimidated by the corporate culture" (1978, 178). These works, among others, spurred not only an historical re-evaluation of populist politics in the United States, seeing it less as a paranoid, anti-intellectual movement, but instead as "the largest democratic mass movement in American history" (1978, vii).

Within this context, Marxist historians and theorists had to reach outside of their standard texts for tools of analysis for understanding "ideology." For Francophone Marxist theory, the concept of the unconscious found in psychoanalysis seemed most germane. Although there is much disagreement among the various approaches that

emerged in an attempt to fuse Marxism with Freudian and Lacanian thought, broadly speaking we can summarize the upshot of such a synthesis in three points. First, no historical teleology, development, or synthesis is present within capitalism or history; rather, any such historical movements are riven with contingency. Second, the unity or totality of either a class or revolutionary subject position as the *a priori* historical actor could no longer be assumed. The working class was never complete but always fractured by spatial, sexual, and racial divisions of labor that resulted in uneven economic, political, and environmental effects. Finally and consequently, economic or material relations could no longer be assumed to be fully primary, but instead could be affected recursively by political ideologies. To some critics, these conclusions spelled the end of real Marxism or "true socialism" for they seemed to present a "decisive detachment of politics from class…by making ideology and 'discourse' – themselves conceived as autonomous from class – the principal historical determinants" (E. M. Wood 1999, 47). To others, such syntheses demonstrate the finitude of Marxism (Althusser 2017) and its necessary complementarity by other modes of thought.

The collective effort of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe constitutes the most sustained critical effort at revising Marxist thought on politics, with massive consequences for the thought of populism. Together in their seminal *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* (1985) and in several books and articles prior and afterward, Laclau and Mouffe argue against the dogma of the Second International and for a constructive and decidedly populist politics that aggregates social demands to build hegemony.[7] Their thought is worth discussing at length.

Against the teleological historicism, class unicity, and economic determinism of orthodox Marxism, Laclau and Mouffe instead view politics as a war of position on an ideological terrain. Instead of ready-made identities, classes, or peoples, they argue that ideology *forms* subject positions through the relational interplay or *articulation* of different social demands. Laclau and Mouffe define ideology as "an organic and relational whole, embodied in institutions and apparatuses, which welds together a historical bloc around a number of basic articulatory principles" (Laclau and Mouffe 1985, 67). Given this definition of ideology, one cannot so easily see it as a mere expression of an underlying economic essence or interest, but instead a complex, fragmentary and ultimately extra-economic set of *political* relations. Any ideological system that is dominant at any given time must contend with the emergence of counter-hegemonies, and thus class struggle plays itself out in the political. Laclau and Mouffe contend that while this process can be understood abstractly or formally, it must also be explained empirically or historically.

To this Gramscian understanding of politics they extend a further Lacanian focus on the non-totality of the subject to the social formation and a Schmittian concept of antagonism. Every social formation is riven by contradictions that can best be understood as *antagonisms*, to the point that the concept of 'social formation' and its implied spatial discreteness itself becomes "meaningless" (1985, 130). These antagonisms are irreducible to the capitalist relation or class struggle and instead collectively construct a radical democracy. Furthermore, because ideological hegemonies and counter-hegemonies are both quilted around master (empty) signifiers, they can never achieve totality or completion. The war of position on the terrain of ideology is thus one of a

constant and never-ending play of establishing equivalences and differences between different social demands. From this analysis, they set a different agenda for radical politics in which the pluralism of social demands (urban, ecological, decolonial, feminist, etc.) can compose and recompose rather than privileging socialism or even anticapitalism as such.

Since *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, both Laclau and Mouffe have extended their analysis in important and different ways. In a series of books (2000, 2005), Chantal Mouffe has clarified the necessity of antagonism – and its more civil twin, agonism – to radical democracy in the face of the moribund anti-political consensus that there is no alternative to neoliberalism. In addition to Gramsci, Mouffe has shown the centrality of Carl Schmitt's thought to a radical re-evaluation of liberalism. Ernesto Laclau, for his part, sought to show in somewhat more detail the ways in which the construction of a people – populism - constitutes a dimension of the political as such rather than merely a residue of or reaction to the post-political technocracy. Given the present concerns, I will focus on Laclau's immense contribution in *On Populist Reason* as well as the problems it poses.

As both a political concept and an empirical descriptor, populism is often noted for its vagueness, imprecision, and ambiguity. It confusingly tends to denote both an *alternative* to other more demarkable political formations like democracy, socialism, or totalitarianism *and* a shapeshifting political formation that can be invested with any content whatsoever. Rather than seeking to redefine populism according to some more precise logic, Laclau flips the script and shows that populism's vagaries are in part what define it. Much like his previous argument made with Mouffe, Laclau argues that a

people is formed through a contradictory process of negotiating the differences and equivalences of social demands under a name that would still aspire to the universal.

Laclau is careful not to paint an impoverished picture of social demands as if they were merely self-interested particularisms. Rather, he argues that these demands function as *partial objects* in the double sense of partial: those objects to which one is partial (attached through desire), and those objects which are not merely parts-of-a-whole, but parts which *disclose* the whole (Laclau 2005, 114). Partial objects are the objects which desire[8] invests in substitution for the unrepresentable and lost figure of the primordial mother. They are fractures not just in the figure of the subject, but that the subject discovers shared with being itself. As Deleuze puts it, "the crack is no more internal than external" (1990, 155) and its discovery allows the *investment* of the partial object to be experienced as a partial enjoyment.

This explanation of partial objects has several political consequences for analysis of populism. First, it offers a way of conceiving the *affective* investment in populism outside of that model provided by early crowd theorists or propagandists. The previous model of psychic investment in a charismatic figurehead analogizes populism (and indeed, nearly all collective action) as fascism. Gustav Le Bon, Gabriel Tarde, John Dewey, and Sigmund Freud, each in their unique ways, argued that the prevalence of emotion in crowd behavior led to irrationality and chaos, rather than the ordered and rational individuality required by liberal democracy. Consequently, it becomes easier to see why analyses of populism post-World War II wielded the term in a derogatory manner: it represented everything that was wrong with the social in a rational and secular democratic state. Second, it allows a better understanding of the relationship between

heterogeneous parts and their unity-in-difference. The external differentiation of a people (friend vs enemy) must be complimented by an understanding of its internal differentiation or else populism could only ever be interpreted as identification of the substantial kind (a la racism or nationalism). And finally, it represents a real shift from the arguments made in Laclau's earlier work.

But we are left with a quandary: if Laclau's formal analysis is correct, then the oscillating emptiness or floating character of the signifiers that quilt together a people has a historical and heterogeneous content that is merely contingent. A people's content would be its differential and evolving set of social demands, here set in equivalence, here fractured by their necessary crack. This heterogeneous content tends to be *given* a consistent form ("social formation"), whether left or right, nationalist or proletarian. Laclau flirts with an argument that the raw matter of the heterogeneous is analogous to Bataille's heterogeneity (Bataille 1985), but what the former misses is that the latter found in heterogeneity or base matter both a) a fundamental creativity that broke through the hylomorphic model that attributes precedence to form, and b) the distinct and present danger of fascism in locating excess in heterogeneity and desire.[9]

Although Laclau claims that the populism he analyzes appears as the excess of liberal democracies[10] – especially those with a tendency towards homogeneous Third Way or consensus politics – the lack of an explicit connection between the liberal political context, the material-economic realities of capitalism, and the possibility of devolving into fascism render his account ultimately unconvincing. With only a contingent relationship of identification to the state or economy, the social demands that constitute Laclau's conception of populism appear to be primarily reparative and reactive.

Despite frequent reference to Gramsci's "war of position," Laclau and Mouffe decidedly state that their view of antagonism is a "demilitarization" of this conflict. The upshot of democracy for them is that by institutionalizing antagonism, it contains violence. Politics becomes war by other means while the most violent, despicable wars and exploitations continue to be authorized by democracies. Consequently, what is lacking in Laclau's analysis is any conception of the relationship between social and spatial organization and the necessary violence that capitalism and the liberal state create in attempting to mediate forms of social organization and heterogeneous peoples.

For this reason, although Laclau and Mouffe have been inspirational to European left populist parties in Greece and Spain, they ultimately conclude, in Mouffe's assessment, that populism "must be conceived as a 'radical reformism' which strives to recover and deepen democracy" (Shahid 2016). Their examinations of populism as radical democracy formalize the internal fissures within populist movements, taking their diverse quilting of the representation of the people at face value. Consequently, these thinkers romanticize populist organizing while making it difficult to understand how it can reproduce hierarchies and exclusions. This delineation of political tactics – from antagonism to agonism – demonizes moves towards broader structural economic change as "unrealistic." Chantal Mouffe reproduces the Third Way politics she critiques when assessing that Leftists are "wrong when they publicly advocate for the destruction of capitalism, of the state, and things like this. This is the part of the left that has always existed without any real influence, power, or strategy" (Shahid 2016). Tactically and discursively, structural change, from direct action tactics to revolutionary strategy, is rendered unhelpful to the popular cause because it alienates potential allies. Such a

politics does little to explain populism's power, persuasion, or potential reactionary slippages.

Populism as post-political consolidation

Laclau's argument and the broader spread of populist language has been critiqued most heavily by Marxists attempting to understand contemporary "post-politics." Now, it is important to be clear here that the latter term usually refers to contemporary Third Way liberalism or its deliberative, technological, Habermasian solutions, which Mouffe also completely and expertly opposes (Mouffe 2000, 2005). In a post-political situation, "'The people' – as a potentially disruptive political collective – is replaced by the population – the aggregated object of opinion polls, surveillance, and bio-political optimization" (Swyngedouw and Wilson 2014, 6). The people, as a category of identification, is thus displaced by the post-political or managerial, yet it re-emerges as its complementary and reactionary subject of opposition. Thus the only extent to which politics can occur is either in its depoliticized liberal form or its hyperpoliticized antagonistic one. Yet because populism contains "a minimal de-politicization, 'naturalization,' of the political" (Žižek 2017, 281), it can only result in nationalism, racialism, or proto-fascism. Against Laclau's formalism, the argument goes, populism-in-action always contains a reactionary element.

For Slavoj Žižek, populism provides at the very least the "potential suspension of democratic rules" (2017, 264) or the post-political hegemony. Consequently, he is not overtly concerned with liberal hand-wringing concerning populism's supposedly

undemocratic or excessive character. Yet Žižek sees populism as intimately connected to the post-political situation – as its reaction or "inherent shadowy double…one is almost tempted to say as its *supplement* in the Derridean sense" (268). Herein lies its seeming promise as the return of the political. But this is not political antagonism in a proper form. Instead, populism's "reliance on a substantial notion of 'the people'" (265) ultimately leads to its reactionary character. In short, while the people does not exist "in reality," for populists it (and its enemy) *does* exist, at least minimally, in a substantialized manner. By this, Žižek wants to indicate that even though Laclau's formal analysis seems to lead one to believe there is nothing *necessarily* reactionary, racist, or nationalist about populism's politics, its necessary (ontological) embodiment in a people and an enemy means that it always harbors a fascist tendency.

This is not to suggest that *all* excess is determined in this manner. Instead, it is just to demonstrate that populism – as one social excess – functions *as if* the people and its enemy have some minimally substantial or essential difference. The consequences of this are that populism's enemy is externalized and demonized as *the* cause of social disruption. Succinctly, the result of such an operation is that populism mystifies its enemy as a "corrupt intruder" (Žižek 2017, 304). The problem populism poses is thus seen to be one of *corruption* rather than, in Marxist analysis, a vision of the symptom as structurally endemic to the system.

Drawing heavily from Žižek, the geographer Erik Swyngedouw suggests that contemporary climate politics operates in precisely such a manner, coining the term "climate populism" to describe the situation. Climate populism substantializes and displaces political antagonism onto carbon dioxide as the figure of corruption, which thus

must be exterminated. In his formulation, "populist demands are always addressed to the elites. Populism as a project addresses demands to the ruling elites (getting rid of immigrants, saving the climate…); it is not about replacing the elites, but calling on the elites to undertake action" (Swyngedouw 2010, 223). In contrast to Laclau, then, for Swyngedouw populism is simply the urgent complaining of non-subjects who foreclose "universalization as a positive socio-environmental injunction" (224). Unlike Žižek then, Swyngedouw (at least in 2010) argues that populism is inherently post-political. It reinforces and gives power to techno-managerial approaches to solving ecological problems. One can even think about this spatially, as Geoff Mann and Joel Wainwright relate in the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCC):

> "It was a street festival for climate justice, with cheering crowds, red balloons, spirited costumes. But it was a party in a bottle. Entering the 'green zone' (police-speak for space where protest is permitted) was straightforward, but exiting was difficult. Hemmed in by police on all sides, we were cut off even from nearby neighborhoods, let alone the delegates at Le Bourget. Moreover, while the performative act of protest was to 'draw our red line,' it was unclear what we were demanding. What were we claiming was nonnegotiable, that is, what was it we categorically rejected or considered absolutely essential? The COP process? This particular agreement? Capitalism? There were no speakers to articulate possible answers to these questions, only changes, signs, and slogans" (Mann and Wainwright 2018, 162).

To Mann and Wainwright, these climate justice actions were cleaved from actual decision-making and thus seemed to dovetail with support of post-politics. The abstract demands formed an alliance, but with no proper name for itself and no content to its opposition. Because that power is vague, cordoned off, and without name, it can be appropriated by anyone or (more likely) simply dissipates.

It isn't difficult to imagine the protestors chanting "this is what democracy looks like" outside the COP negotiations. Yet Jodi Dean most convincingly argues that such counterclaims based on "democracy" are also depoliticizing. The Left (broadly speaking) continually fantasizes about a democracy "that works," blaming (for example) oil companies or party leaders for not remaining faithful or properly representing the people. As Naomi Klein puts it, the global climate justice movement "perhaps…shouldn't be referred to as an environmental movement at all, since it is primarily driven by a desire for a deeper form of democracy" (Klein 2014, 295). Through such desires, the contemporary Left thus repeats a kind of Rousseauian idealism – the pure idea has simply been corrupted by its actualization. The problem is that in doing so, they absolve themselves of responsibility for the situation

Dean suggests that the Left should "eschew the legitimizing shelter of the term *democracy*" (2009, 84). This is a position I wholeheartedly agree with, and more often than not, I find myself convinced by her articulation of a "sovereignty of the people," wherein sovereignty is reconceived as an incomplete willing directed towards remaking the world (and thus ourselves), and the people reimagined not as "the vague and abstract concept" but instead "a revolutionary, discriminating concept of 'the people' - the revolutionary alliance of the oppressed" (Lukács, quoted in Dean 2012, 70). Dean also critiques contemporary emphases on populism, arguing in a somewhat Hegelian manner that "populism is indifferent to its setting, as if there were no material determinations of political possibility. The state and the economy are taken as given, the task of identity construction and articulation occurring in civil society" (Dean 2017, 43).

What minimally unites this line of thought with those of Žižek and Swyngedouw is the injunction that populism cannot take into account the structural exploitation inherent in capitalist economies, or economic violence more widely. Instead, it defaults to a kind of multicultural democratic politics, what John Rawls terms an "overlapping consensus" (Rawls 1999, 340). But the problem remains: why does democracy hold such a grip on us despite all evidence to the contrary? Why do we think what is lacking is democracy and consequently demand "more information, more participation, more deliberation" (Dean 2009, 93)?

The answer is ideology, especially as it is informed by fantasy. "Fantasy is precisely the way the antagonistic fissure is masked. In other words, fantasy is a means for an ideology to take its own failure into account in advance" (Žižek 2008, 142). It is not that we "really believe" in our fantasies of democracy (or whatever else) as in a standard ideology-as-false-consciousness argument, but that we know and acknowledge our disbelief in the fantasy and yet let it function in reality. As in Marx's commodity fetishism, we allow the commodity to structure our desires even though we know it is in fact a social relation.

The fundamental problem is that such a position treats ideology, and its organization of fantasy, as fundamentally too socially functionalist, and its alternative too lucid. I want to be clear: I am not suggesting that the problem is that there is not enough "agency" in the structure of ideology. Instead, I think it is twofold: first, a problem of presentation, the frustration of convincing others of what you know to be true and effective (and thus a tendency to fall into the very "University discourse" in analysis). And second, that the populist subject is not riven with anxiety about her social position.

The formalist or ontological argument contains little *internal* strife or conflict, but only an exterior, social one – objective class antagonism. To the extent that the antagonism of the subject *is* connected to that of the political, it repeats or reflects rather than elaborating and individuating it.

Take Mann and Wainwright's example of the "red line" protest at Paris. They argue that "in that situation, the left protester becomes, if reluctantly or ironically, a cheerleader for elite institutions: less 'Shut it Down!' than 'Make a Deal!'…Those of us at the protests were in fact also vigorously endorsing the very same elite politics" (Mann and Wainwright 2018, 164). It seems to me there is more ambivalence wrapped up in such events of subject formation than is here admitted. While such a protest can seem to function only as an appeal to elite institutions if examined from the vantage point of the whole, from within that particular moment, space, and collectivity, the material processes that compose and remake those subjects' desires are not exhausted. Undoubtedly many felt (like Mann and Wainwright) conflicted by the lack of options and frustrated by their enclosure. Yet also, it is the "charge, atmosphere, pressure, expectation, excitement: the affective sensibility of the collective [which] becomes desirable in itself, the shared sense of the power of numbers" (Dean 2016, 120). It is this spatial and collective situation, its inflection with ambivalent desires, and its political organization that Spinoza helps us analyze.

Populism's political ambivalences

"The people no longer exist, or not yet…*the people are missing*" (Deleuze 1989, 216). Would it be possible to understand ideology, insofar as it forms the people, as neither a mere reflection of material circumstances, nor totally unmoored from their economic circumstances, but instead as a coagulation of the bleeding edge of the social? "A people" who would then contain both the utopian form of political organization and in its historical context also call upon regressive and reactionary motifs? One might have to return to Althusser's concise and cogent – and altogether Spinozist – definition: that the ideology of the people is "the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence" (Althusser 1971, 162). What a Spinozist-Marxism could provide would be an analysis and reflection on a) the tensions involved in the genesis of such an ideology of the people (without eviscerating it through ruthless critique), b) the desires which animate the bodies that correspond to the ideology, and c) the spaces, practices, lands, and territories which give that ideology active content (without ever fully materializing its hopes or fears).

Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari begin to create precisely this Marxist mode of investigating the problems of political ideology, and contemporary scholarship examining political subjectivity – especially that of Étienne Balibar, Lauren Berlant, Laura Grattan, and Jason Read – offers an attentive political understanding of the composition of "the people." These authors do not close the problem of the people, but instead provide conceptual tools to rethink the entanglement of desire, ideology, and political-economic violence through which it emerges. This section first offers an explication of the role of desire in the socius and the manner in which it relates the economic and the political.

Then, I examine some of the ways in which political theorists have used such an account of affect and desire to understand contemporary political subjectivity. Finally, I examine the necessity and specificity of race to such an analysis.

For Spinoza, "Desire is man's very essence" (EIII DOAI). Desire is defined as *conatus*, a striving to persevere, which requires the increase in one's power (*potentia*) or capacity. We increase our power when a body joins with other bodies to increase its collective power *and* consciously reflects upon this combinatory action. The joy or sadness that results from the "idea" of another body joining with ours is the imagination. The imagination is the "first type of knowledge" and is the necessary condition of all politics. But we do not understand the *causes* of this affect; they are confused. So, we often strive instead for actions that decrease our power or the power of others. Although we can develop adequate concepts to help us out of this quandary, there is no position completely outside the imagination from which the "misled masses" could be judged. Spinoza provides no teleological path from misrecognition to recognition or illusion to rationality; "the same necessity" is present in both adequate and inadequate ideas (EII P36). Consequently, the idea of the people formed in the imagination is that idea which corresponds, however fleetingly and confusedly, to our consciousness of the increased power we have when we join with others.

The primary failures of Laclau's argument were an underdeveloped account of desire and affect, an emphasis on form to the detriment of content and matter, and an unconvincing account of exploitation and dispossession as rendered effective by racial capitalism and settler colonialism. But replacing Laclau's argument with recourse towards ideology still poses a problem, for it forces one to declare a causal or

determining relation between the objective or economic base and the subjective, cultural, or ideological superstructure of any given mode of production.[11] If some distinction between base and superstructure is to be retained, the content of such terms need to be completely rethought. We know enough of culture and ideology to know that they are not the mere irrational residue or rational reflection of economic machinations. But neither are they totally unmoored from a mode of production. The problem is not to "scrap the entire problematic of the mode of production in favour of an analysis of ideology" but to examine "the way in which ideology functions within the mode of production itself, as well as the way in which mode of production functions in ideology" (Read 2017, 91). How could ideology and political economy be related in a non-reductive manner to explain the changing social relations (rather than formations) we call populism?

Accurately noting the aforementioned problem of ideological deception that plagued many Marxist analyses of the 1960s, Deleuze and Guattari frankly say that "the concept of ideology is an execrable concept that hides the real problems, which are always of an organizational nature" (Deleuze and Guattari 1983, 344). Spinoza's political question – why do people fight for their servitude as much as their salvation – is primarily answered here with reference to desire, affect, and power. By contrast, Freudo-Marxists like Wilhelm Reich and Herbert Marcuse were "content to answer [Spinoza's problem] by invoking the ideological, the subjective, the irrational, the negative, and the inhibited" (345). Think again of how populism is dismissed in each of these same ways as the irrational face of economic and democratic rationality. Instead, Deleuze and Guattari argue that "desire is in the infrastructure" (104), meaning desire is part of the social production process or "base" itself. Libidinal economy and political economy both

invest in subject formation “below all ideology” (345). But they do so in different ways, and in a manner that can be conflicting and is worth exploring in detail for its controversial status.

First, an *unconscious libidinal investment of desire* bears upon “the full body as socius, the formation of sovereignty, or the form of power for itself” (345). Desire is invested into social relations (of any given kind), both in the way a social field is organized or structured (produced) and the way it leaks (its anti-production, or production of excess which must be absorbed). Who rules, who is ruled, who decides? Why? It is only with this investment in place that the *preconscious investment of class or interest* takes hold. The preconscious investment of class or interest is more familiar to Marxists as that which compels members of a class, abstracted from all sorts of histories, to behave rationally in a determinate manner.

Deleuze and Guattari do not deny that class interest exists, but just that due to its secondary character, it is not always dominant. “The class from the standpoint of praxis is infinitely less numerous or less extensive than the class taken in its theoretical determination” (344). Although most of their analysis on this point is of the conflict between revolutionaries with unconscious reactionary desires and working classes invested by desires consistent with capitalism, they importantly note that the bourgeoisie is afflicted by this split as well. After all, “primitive accumulation can take place only for the benefit of a restricted fraction of the whole of the dominant class” (344). The fissure between classes is expanded to one within classes as well.

Several consequences can be drawn for the analysis of the formation of a people. First, because the unconscious, the nonrational, and the unproductive mediate the

libidinal and political economy, they are not mere residual effects of the positive economy, nor effects of the negative. These are generated by and from the social field itself, for the social – as the site of desire under determinate conditions – can never satisfy desire itself. This observation, consistent in important ways with Bataille's analysis of expenditure in the "general economy,"[12] allows the conception of the immanence of difference or social heterogeneity to emerge from any seemingly ordered or seemingly homogenous social field. The precise way in which any social field whatsoever (but capitalism in particular) deals with this expenditure or excess goes a long way towards explaining why surplus desire must be rerouted as much as possible back through the capitalist axiomatic itself. The bottom line is that the social can then be taken as a field of *organization of desires* and not just a secondary, formal locus of signification later substantialized.

Deleuze and Guattari argue that in the capitalist mode of production, state sovereignty is charged with managing such leakages or surpluses. The State treats the flows unleashed by capital by recognizing, interpreting and "recapacitating" their potential (Puar 2017, 63–65). This kind of management is premised on an exercise of direct or indirect violence. Deleuze and Guattari interpret the process in their most Hegelian moment: excess is not an escape, but *posited and presupposed* to be captured. But State violence always "presents itself as pre-accomplished" (1987, 447), which is to say secondary and reactive to a) a primary or primordial violence, the constitutive violence that founded the State, or b) a threatening future violence which the State attempts to pre-empt.

Second, like Marxists and psychoanalysts before them, Deleuze and Guattari view the social field as essentially split or fractured along the outlines above. But this split is not confined to the economic domain (even if it is first realized there); the split manifests itself in *some* way in every institution, every group, every individual, every ideology. There is no *de facto* purity of either a fully reactionary position nor a true revolutionary or messianic moment. Deleuze and Guattari differ from the standard dialectical position insofar as the split is generalized or ontologized and thus can never be totally repaired; they differ from the Lacanian psychoanalytic position insofar as the split is not a manifestation of negation, but an affirmation of this irreparability.[13]

Third, Deleuze and Guattari contribute to a rearticulation of base and superstructure. The location of the "unconscious investments of desire" in the base contributes to a destruction of the Marxist myth that the base is objective and the superstructure subjective. Instead, investments of desire occur at the level of flows and cuts, of libidinal-political economy; it is only *afterward* that ideology attempts to repair these cuts and offer the subject a socially significant vision of the whole (Jameson 1982).

Affective investments can produce attachments to either a mythic wholeness or partial objects. But because the focus is on the *actualization* of these investments, the partial objects of attachment themselves must be explicated with their specificity or singularity. While Laclau is perfectly content to analyze empty or floating signifiers on a formal level without reference to a specific social field, for Deleuze and Guattari, the partial objects which individualize desire must be viewed through the structure of the singular and overlapping social fields in which they are articulated (namely the contemporary mode of production as articulated in racial capitalism and settler

colonialism). As Guillaume Sibertin-Blanc puts it, “The concepts of politics…are only worthwhile at whatever level we approach them (legally, philosophically, ideologically, strategically, or politically) *in determined spaces*, in function of specific territorializations that they contribute to schematizing” (Sibertin-Blanc 2016, 118). If “settler colonialism is a project of desire” (Jafri 2013, 78) insofar as it is “is integral to the construction of settler subjectivities, to settler narratives, and to the project of erasure underlying the indigenizing efforts of settler projects” (79), then we could not take leave of it as a structuring force.

Affective infrastructures of racial capitalism and settler colonialism

Influenced by a broadly Spinozist-Deleuzian framework, a number of analyses of populism have emerged which understand it as emergent from the ambivalent play of the transindividual affective field of politics. In this formulation, populism’s affects – both aspirational and cruel - indicate a meaningful if faltering desire for the political or for political transformation even as that transformation returns to the social tense and form of liberal politics. In this analysis, populism persists and insists as a process of constructing the people or political belonging anew as an open set. I call this position *populism as political ambivalence*.

Lauren Berlant has developed the most compelling account of contemporary political affect and subjectivity. Her analysis foregrounds the affective sphere that undergirds the emergence of political subjects; consequently, she argues (in a manner which many analysts have missed) that “affect theory is another phase in the history of

ideology theory" (Berlant 2011a, 53). Berlant argues for an attentiveness to the moments of rupture and recuperation that structure the ordinary, which "people make their ways through…at once tipped over awkwardly, half-conscious, and confident about common sense" (53). Such analysis is meaningful for it gives us a different mode and method of apprehending *the present*. Rather than understand it "as a scene in which duped or epistemologically limited subjects grope their ways towards survival, except in exceptional moments" (67), the ordinary, the everyday, and the present are re-imagined as scenes of precarity that congeal through the affective worlds that create subjects.

Berlant's most enduring concept is that of *cruel optimism*, the "condition of maintaining an attachment to a significantly problematic object…even though its presence threatens their well-being" (Berlant 2011a, 24). Cruel optimism operates not quite *in* politics, but amongst those partial subjects who hover on the edge of the political. The diagnosis she offers is that, at least in part, such an affective atmosphere is generative of "the new embrace of populist potentiality in the stretched-out historical present" in which "Europe and the United States (not identically, not at the same time) have been forced to adjust emotionally to the process of living with the political depression produced by brutal relations of ownership, control, security, and their fantastmatic justifications in liberal political economies" (261). Such a populism, then, re-animates attachments to "the good life" even as it is those very fantasies that are attached to the structures of contemporary exploitation.

Oil plays an important role in creating the scenes of fantasy that structure such desires. As Matt Huber (2013) has demonstrated, the fantasy of the American way of life is intimately attached to modes of oil consumption; the "fall from security" affectively

engendered in contemporary American populisms (reactionary, consumptive, or even left) is thus precisely cruel in this manner. Huber contrasts the neoliberal austerity measures which induce a petro-populism through "pain at the pump" with the possibility of a "low-carbon populism" (Huber 2017). Thea Riofrancos (2017a, 2017b, forthcoming) also examines populism's performances in an oil-saturated state – Ecuador. She demonstrates how populism is contested, captured, and reimagined through the distribution of oil wealth and ecological futures of the people, variously imagined with national, global, indigenous, or reactionary tendencies. In both of these examples, the oil economy generates spectral fantasies taken up by populists, who hang their political hopes or opposition on that same substance.

Laura Grattan (2016) argues that populism's "cruel aspirations" can be endemic to the populist political affect. Yet like Riofrancos and Huber, she also rehabilitates a sense of populism's "rebellious aspirations" – its performative regeneration of a "dangerous excess…to animate the aspirations of ordinary people to exert a degree of power over their everyday lives and their collective fate" (40). Grattan sees such rebellious populisms in experiments with "grassroots, participatory forms of collective decision-making and action" (44) rather than in the symbolic policing of the boundaries of the people seen in Laclauian analyses. These collectives connect everyday experiences of resentment to active politics that reimagines popular sovereignty and "facilitates efforts by unlikely actors to engage each other across differences in their social identities, spaces, and times" (47). Although Grattan is somewhat more optimistic in her assessment of populism's power, she presents this optimism as firmly within an "ambivalence about

democracy" (7). Much like populism's oscillation between reactionary and radical power, there are no guarantees.

Indeed, it is this fundamental ambivalence which characterizes Spinozan analysis of desire at its core (Balibar 1998, 111). Affects fundamentally modify our experience of desire, insofar as they increase or decrease our power. "Affects constitute collectivities, objects, and individualities, but they do so ambivalently, defining the common terrain that constantly divides between love and hatred, agreement and conflict" (Read 2017, 31). In a Spinozan sense then, any collectivity – such as "the people" – has no stable identity, but is in a process of identification. Collectives are at once tied together and yet unraveled by the object cause of individuals' desires, which can cause both joy and sadness. For this reason, "we do many things we afterwards repent, and that often we see the better and follow the worse (viz. when we are torn by contrary affects)" (Spinoza EIII P2S).

But we are not fundamentally lost in this maelstrom; thought *does* exist, it *can* uncover through investigation the causes of our desires. "Sometimes, the cruelty of an optimistic attachment is more easily perceived by an analyst who observes the cost of someone's or some group's attachment to x, since often persons and communities focus on some aspects of their relation to an object/world while disregarding others" (Berlant 2011a, 24). This is of course both retroactive and reductive analysis (and a description of psychotherapy); nonetheless, whatever cause we uncover has the power to (re)modify our affects. That is why one of the fundamental tasks of analysis is distinguishing between "unconscious libidinal investment of group or desire, and the preconscious investment of class or interest" (Deleuze and Guattari 1983, 343).

Figure 3: Defender of the Good Life

I propose that this X or "whatever cause" that is uncovered by affective analysis might be understood as *infrastructure*, in the multiple valences of that word. On the one hand, when Deleuze and Guattari argue that "desire is in the infrastructure," they are deploying the French translation of the German / Marxist concept of "base." On the other hand, infrastructure names a certain kind of affective *relation* (P. Harvey 2012; Larkin 2013), one which we might define as "that which binds us to the world in movement and keeps the world practically bound to itself" (Berlant 2016, 394). An investigation into this kind of binding attachment – whether we characterize it as cruel or not – at the very least promises less certainty about determination and sovereignty, but instead a social theory of "scenes of ambivalence, which is to say, the scenes of attachment that are intimate, defined by desire, and overwhelming" (Berlant 2016, 395). Despite the fact that

populism dramatizes basic paradoxes of democracy and the political itself (in its constitution of an "us versus them," for example), what this approach offers is an exploration of the edges and preconditions of that melodramatic scene or stage of the political.

I find myself drawn most closely to the method and concepts outlined in this approach. It seems to me that there is not enough investigation in literatures on populism into feelings of tension and ambivalence that, in my case, anti-pipeline populists feel between their desires for transformation on the one hand and their attachments to status quo social worlds on the other. Sometimes, as in the case of democracy, a single concept describes both feelings. Pipeline opponents feel oriented or even drawn towards something new but are held back and can't quite imagine themselves breaking or letting go of the relations they are in. They desire something new, which they can envision, but some kind of suction or torsion keeps them from fully devoting themselves due to the affective attachments to the status quo in which they are embedded. This is specifically a relation embedded in liberalism and liberal subjects (and is obliquely, ultimately, and intimately wrapped up in a politics of sex and sexuality, even when sex and sexuality are not its direct or even proximate objects). This sense I am calling *the tension of populist willing*, between its fidelity to utopian transformation and its drag towards the pragmatics of politics.

At the same time, I am unable to give up on the power of the melodramatic scene of or desire for the political that Marxist thought engenders. Cruel optimism describes a condition "in domains proximate to contemporary politics" (Berlant 2011a, 259). By contrast, the tension of populist willing is *on the edge of the political*. It inhabits the

inbetweenness that a kind of left populism engenders, the stuckness, inertia, or impasse. This is in part because such a politics emerges from a "cramped space" wherein "politics arises among those who lack and refuse coherent identity, in their encounter with the impasses, limits, or impossibilities of individual and collective subjectivity" (Thoburn 2016, 367). But this refusal is not all that clear to me. Subjects thrown into the cramped space of oppositional politics, frequently for the first time, still *desire* a retrieval of that coherent identity.[14]

As one interlocutor remarked to me, such a situation further simply sounds like a condition intractably tied to the white settler subject position. Indeed, it is the anxiety and uncertainty engendered in and by "possessive individualism" in a settler colony (Macpherson 1964; Bhandar 2014, 2016, 2018; Mackey 2016; Moreton-Robinson 2015).

Figure 4: the infrastructure of populist subjects

Populism *necessarily* operates within a spatial sphere that it draws and elaborates. Politics and territory combine and unravel in and through the somewhat conscious understanding of this wider, more-than-experiential sphere. It is as if "thinking takes place in the relationship of territory and the Earth" (Deleuze and Guattari 1994, 85)

between the immanence of being and its determinations in particular spaces. What makes this perspective unique compared to other studies of populism is the refusal to privilege history or temporality over spatiality (Massey 2005). For most of poststructuralism, it is time and history which allow an escape from the essentialism of spatiality. To refuse to fully separate abstract space from actual material infrastructures of land and territory, and the ideologies, affects, and subjects they engender, makes Deleuze and Guattari's political thought especially important for an analysis of populism.

Why is territory so important for Deleuze and Guattari, and how does the concept function in their thought? Movements of territory – or rather, territorializations and deterritorializations - are unique insofar as they connect the State, the political, and the economic as well as their limit points and excesses.[15] Importantly, as Arun Saldanha demonstrates, any such construction of a territory (e.g., property, place, nation) has to be "continuous maintained by repeating [signifying] marks and is therefore porous, unstable, and contested" (2017, 114). Three overlapping "abstract machines" can exemplify the transversal nature of territory and its connection to "a people": primitive accumulation, nationalism, and settler colonialism.

Primitive accumulation offers the pre-eminent example of an "apparatus of capture": that moment of enclosure and exclusion which contributes directly to or presupposes that which is excluded. The act of appropriation only *appears* primordial (Marx 1976, 875), but as Deleuze and Guattari argue, "primitive accumulation is not produced just once at the dawn of capitalism, but is continually reproducing itself" (Deleuze and Guattari 1983, 231). The concept of primitive accumulation is thus relieved of its historicism and any finality or teleological closure. All accumulation presupposes

its own exclusions and remainders, which are either violently or politically excluded or exploited.

Two aspects of their formulation of primitive accumulation set Deleuze and Guattari apart from autonomist thinkers with whom they are often lumped. First is their refusal to ascribe to this excess an absolute position outside of capital and thus retaining political purity.[16] The common is no limit, but instead presupposed by capital.[17] Second, rather importantly, territory plays an important role in mediating the relationship between, on the one hand, the state and its legal apparatuses charged with administration, and on the other hand, the economic and its drive for colonial and settler colonial dispossession of the land which could back the stock of capital.

> "For Schmitt and for Deleuze, territoriality, spatial configurations of occupying land, the production of space, of differentiation of lands by frontier delimitations, allow a dual renewal: from abstract prescriptions to spatial configurations of division and differentiated separation that concretely support the position, predetermine its meaning, and condition its normative effectiveness; but also from these separations themselves to an act of first investment of the land, an act of power that must be said to be 'constituent' because it is first 'self-objective,' it produces the spatial objectivity in which this power is constituted and manifested" (Sibertin-Blanc 2016, 106).

For Schmitt, appropriation of land *founds* politics, while for Deleuze and Guattari it is instead that political struggle (as *nomos*) un-founds or un-grounds existing spatial divisions and appropriations of land.

Political struggle emerges then between the foundational and the ungrounding force of spatial organization. Grounding and maintaining the nation in and as territory is thus of preeminent importance to the state. For Deleuze and Guattari, "the constituents of the nation are a land and a people: the 'natal,' which is not necessarily innate, and the 'popular,' which is not necessarily pregiven" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 456). Instead

of existing in any kind of simple manner, the land and the people must be continually reinvented. The modern nation is established through a similar operation as that of primitive accumulation, through a contingent encounter between "the flow of naked labor that makes the people [and] the flow of Capital that makes the land" (1987, 456). The nation has no *necessary* relationship with capitalism, and indeed Deleuze and Guattari use an antihistoricist method[18] to argue that essential to understanding this link is the central function of *myth* in politics and political philosophy, going back to the Greeks.[19]

Mythos (along with *logos*) defines the state's approach to defining spatiality, which operates on the one hand as a seemingly magically or spectral production of transcendence, on the other hand as a complete denial of this through the unflappable calculability of liberal administration. Thus a land and a people are affectively (re)connected with each other through a myth of autochthony[20] – that the people is born of the earth, takes root in the soil, founded in the land, and is altogether identified with the mother country. This identification is an affective and psychic operation in which the nation (and later, the race) comes to be *equated* with the land itself, lived through property and possession.

Such an operation is particularly self-evident in various aspects of European settler colonialism in North America (as well as Israel/Palestine, Australia, and South Africa, etc): through the doctrines of *terra nullius* and manifest destiny, the nation's territory is reconnected with its supposedly proper political community. Importantly, this "proper" form of nationalism cannot be easily separated from property. Threats to property re-emerge as threats to the race and nation (Bhandar 2018). As Goenpul scholar Aileen Moreton-Robinson argues, possession of landed property and nationhood are

"constituted symbiotically": affectively, discursively, and materially (Moreton-Robinson 2015, 20). The ideological function of organizing national desires goes hand in hand with the economic operation of primitive accumulation.

The operation of extermination is necessarily incomplete, due primarily to the centuries-long resistance, persistence, and survivance of Native Nations. Kahnawake anthropologist Audra Simpson argues that "the desire for land produces 'the problem' of the Indigenous life that is already living on that land" (Simpson 2014, 19), an operation Eva Mackey calls "settler anxiety" (2016, 35). In an attempt to "solve" this problem – and the anxious affects it produces – colonial subjects must physically and symbolically empty the land of its indigenous inhabitants. In an interview with Palestinian theorist Elias Sanbar, Deleuze puts it this way: "A territory is emptied of its people…The history of Zionism, the history of Israel, and the history of the United States have all gone that route: how does one create a vacuum, how does one empty out a territory?" (Deleuze and Sanbar 2006, 196).

This "logic of extermination" (Wolfe 2006), which must be acknowledged as genocidal, operates in order to produce not just physical extermination of Native peoples but also an ideological disappearance as well. Ojibwe historian Jean O'Brien shows how the supposed extinction of indigenous people in the Northeastern United States was repetitively narrated by settlers throughout the 1800s (2010). Settlers had to convince themselves that the land was no longer inhabited by Native nations in order to try to dispel the anxiety of settlement. The anxiety of land ownership continues well after the first moments of dispossession because possession of property and nationhood is *always under threat*.

The myth of the nation and its destiny to find a land disguises the fact that the people are missing (*manqué* – failed, lacking). There is no self-same group, population, or community which could exist because every group, population, or community is fractured (internally) and bleeds (externally). It is the colonizer who first invents the existence of the self-same, coherent indigenous people or culture in order to erase it (Deleuze 1989, 217), turning "the indigenous" into signifiers of the very emptiness of the land of which they are merely a part (da Silva 2007, 206). And in this sense, the "emptiness" of North American land becomes productive of liberalism's politics of race, both in that race which is "made in the targeting" (Wolfe 2006) and in that race whose self-consciousness is an unaffectable or "transparent" freedom, precisely that its destiny is *not* to vanish into the land itself (da Silva 2007, 207).

"The people are missing…" thus serves as a political injunction towards invention in anti- and decolonial politics, and as an analytic or symptomatic injunction for an analysis of populism. The operation of populism is an attempt by political ideology to call forth and name a people as a reaction to the (absent) cause of colonial land appropriation, dispossession, and partitioning – as "a collective ideological refusal" (Spivak 1988, 82) – that is at once spatial, political, and economic. The problem of colonialism is "the expressed" which exists in-between its pure past and the people it calls into being. This is not an expressionism in the Leibnizian paradigm critiqued by Althusser and Deleuze (Althusser et al. 2016, 342; Deleuze 1994, 186); nor does it suggest "race" is expressed by the economy (S. Hall 1996). Instead, populism is the effect of racial capitalism as a "short circuit" between politics and the economy (Balibar 2002, 11).[21] Populism, the invention of the people, is generated by the spectral excesses

of the racial partition and dispossession by way of land as property. It is thus *more* than simply an attempt at resolving the liberal-democratic paradox (Mouffe 2000; Grattan 2016), but also the settler colonial one. Why else would it be so compulsively obsessed, as I examine in Chapter 5, with the Declaration of Independence and its phrase "We the People"?

How then might we understand this in the context not just of the nation, but also of race? In *Toward a Global Idea of Race*, Denise Ferreira da Silva argues that to take race as a site-specific historical product occludes the widespread consolidation of racial science and history. This includes the global slave trade and franchise or settler colonialism, of course, but also finance and extractive capitalism, the disciplines of philosophy, science, history, and geography, global climate change, and the drive to institute and justify landed private property regimes across the entire planet (see also Lowe, 2015). That racial science and history also *produced* globality as an effect, Silva argues, suggests that viewing racial projects as disconnected historical events with contingent interior historical identities reinforces the absent-presence of this globality (da Silva 2007, 29). This is not to say that racial formations should be viewed instead as homogeneous, necessary, or self-same. Instead, it is to show that the concepts of racial formation, racialization, culture, and history are also capable of carrying with them what Silva calls a hidden "transparency thesis" which she takes as foundational to the production of racial difference.

To summarize, Silva suggests that the production of the "transparent" European subject in both scientific and historical discourses is dependent upon the simultaneous rendering of all racial others as "affectable." By affectability, it is meant that unlike the

Euro-American subject's understanding of itself as free and undetermined, racialized others are subjects that appear determined by their interior development or by their exterior material relationships. To be affectable is, in one of its guises, to be open to relations with one's natural or social environment. Affectability is produced in contrast to the supposed non-affectability or "transparency" of European subjects, who take themselves as capable of transcending both their histories and material environments. Although Silva is not drawing on a Spinozan understanding of affect *per se*, we can easily understand a broad definition of affect (e.g., not confined to emotion) and a Spinozan method of investigating causes as possibly allied with this framework.[22]

Silva argues that when social scientists maintain that race is produced through the particularity of cultural or historical difference they reproduce this post-Enlightenment structure. This is accomplished in two ways. First, the separable position of the social scientist who supposedly stands outside history and the material determinations they study reproduces themselves as fully self-conscious and thus capable of liberating themselves from this very determination.[23] Second, by attempting to ameliorate this difference by importing racial subjects into the transparent subject position, social scientists can trivialize or forget those very relationships of openness to affectability. In the context of North American settler colonialism, this allows dispossession to turn into a mobile metaphor available to appropriation by white subjects who in refiguring themselves as innocent retain the assumption that they can (re)escape determination (Tuck and Yang 2012).

In contrast to an assured cultural analysis, Silva suggests that Marxist approaches offers at the very least some "promises [of] uneasiness" (2007, 192). Silva is notably

critical of Marxism for its reliance on visions of liberation that reproduce transparency. Nonetheless, Silva argues that because Marx and Engels take into account that "consciousness [is] an effect of material production," they center "actual conditions [and thus] open up the possibility of a critical analysis of the social in which spatiality – where "being and meaning" emerge in exteriority-affectability – became the privileged moment of signification" (2007, 192). This requires some unpacking. What Silva is indicating is that historical materialism offers the possibility of a quasi-scientific method which "refuses to presuppose transparency" (2007, 193) in the social subjects it studies by investigating spatiality as the material conditions of their production. This method allows one to examine this subject as racially produced through the very disavowal of race as a condition of its production. Although racial capitalism is by no means the only route through which the transparent subject is produced, this subject is absolutely necessary for capital's functioning. Marxist analysis could refuse to posit a self-conscious subject by placing the liberal, white subject of transparency back into the mediated social world of land, labor, and exchange that conditions its interests and desires.

This rejoinder with historical materialism suggests an affinity with Cedric Robinson's conceptualization of racial capitalism (see also Chakravartty and da Silva, 2012). The concept of racial capitalism designates not a zone or attribute of capitalism, but that raciality cannot be extricated from capitalism's conditions. Property is not the only mechanism through which political ecologists could bring an analysis of racial capitalism into their field, but it is one of the more solidified mechanisms that connects economic logics with the production in Euro-American and settler subjects. The upshot of a concept of racial capitalism is that race cannot appear as a predicate or expression of

some underlying material or not-necessarily-racial economic, cultural, or national system, but instead as part of the structural conditions of capital's reproduction. "The development, organization, and expansion of capitalist society pursued *essentially* racial directions [and] racialism would *inevitably* permeate the social structures emergent from capitalism," Robinson argues (emphasis added). Racial capitalism as a concept refers to "this development and to the subsequent structure as a historical agency" (1983, 2).

This does not mean that capitalism is responsible for all appearances of race or racism in a simplistic fashion, but that racial differentiation is part of the core of capitalism's very being. While specific articulations of racial differentiation with historic political economic systems might be understood as a matter of contingent spatial and historical encounters, the production of white European difference is a *necessary* condition of world-historical capital accumulation. As Laura Pulido contends, "racial capitalism illuminates not only the inevitability of environmental injustice [under capitalism], but the structural challenges facing activists" (2017, 528). We might understand the production of the transparent subject of whiteness as one of these structural challenges to environmentalism, insofar as Jodi Melamed argues it "repels accountability to ongoing settler colonialism" (2015, 84). In order to understand environmental political activism, then, we must understand racial capitalism as a structural condition facing and producing its subjects.

Materialist analysis of affect and desire (as they are performed in populist politics) are not just one lens through which race and racism could be examined, but more fundamentally could be central to abolishing the conditions of the racial subject as that which (is imagined to be he who) escapes determination or spatiality.

Conclusion

To see populist ideology as somehow structurally closed in on itself would be to accept its story of peoplehood at face value: the people exists, ideology functions to keep everyone fighting for their individual interests in land, it is wholly consistent, there would be no possibility of escape. But in fact, a social formation does not work like this, it is always bleeding outward. The edges of any particular social formation consist in "causing runoffs, as when you drill a hole in a pipe; there is no social system that does not leak from all directions" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 204). Thus the ideological position that the social does not leak is consistent with a material organization of a plot of land with clear borders, a science that knows and decides, a democracy that works. The fear that populism strikes in the heart of this liberal politics demonstrates that it is doing *something* else.

But that something else has no guarantees. As the next chapter's investigation of history and historiography of populism demonstrates, the populist form and its interpretation are sites of immense struggle. The stakes of these movements, and our understanding of them, are not simply whether we are dismissive of populism's form. They also include understanding how populism might transform itself into something else: demagoguery, party politics, individualism, decolonization, or socialism.

Chapter 3. Farmers, ranchers, and environmental justice: A history of environmental populism in South Dakota

"Under God, the people rule" – State Motto of South Dakota

Introduction

For many progressives in South Dakota today, no single political movement holds more cultural power than the rise of the People's (or Populist) Party in the late 1800s. Coinciding with South Dakota's statehood and the mythic closing of the frontier, the Party and its democratic political culture were effects of an agrarian revolt against exploitation by banks, corporations, and outsiders. Populism represents for many of us the possibility that even in a deeply conservative state, Left politics might still develop a strategy to win. This vision of populism is important, in part, for the manner in which it challenges the idea that rurality and agrarian politics is bereft of radical politics (Van Sant and Bosworth 2017). Prominent politicians running on the Democratic Party ticket in South Dakota thrive on this image of "prairie populism," from George McGovern to Tom Daschle. But beneath the discourse itself, a true "rural radicalism" has long been - however consciously – passed down from generation to generation. It is through fomenting the sense of popular sovereignty – that the people *should* rule – that environmental populists in South Dakota have maintained fidelity to the quasi-socialist roots in the original Farmer's Alliance and People's Party, from the anti-Minutemen missile movement to the Black Hills Survival Gathering to the Keystone XL and DAPL blockades.

Consistent with the theoretical argument laid in Chapter 2, these movements frequently have had ambivalent relationships with their complicity in settler colonialism and its perpetuation of nationalism. Their analysis of exploitation was not incorrect, but in resting on the subject of "the people," other forms of national and international violence, domination, and resistance could be occluded or overshadowed. Even when foregrounding broad concerns of justice for Black, Native, and non-American peoples in North America or abroad, forging solidarities often proved elusive in the expansive western Plains. So too in each case were concerns about subsumption by national or international concerns frequently borne out. I make these comments not to chide rural and small-town radicals like myself for failing to do enough or to do politics properly, but to stage "the problematic field" that progressive populists respond and adhere to. Populists do not solve or exhaust the problem (of left organizing in a reactionary context while neither being subsumed by general interests) because the problem "insists and persists in these solutions" (Deleuze 1994, 163). Consequently, demonstrating the excess of the problem viz the solution opens up a gap in which future political movements might lodge themselves.

This chapter examines three slices of South Dakota's populist history. First, I examine populist and left organizing by settlers in Dakota Territory and in the larger context of the national organizing campaign of the Farmer's Alliance and the People's Party; second, I examine the emergence of environmental populism in the 1970s and 1980s, especially organizing against uranium mining and militarism and for the protection of the Black Hills; third, that of pipeline populism against the Keystone XL

and DAPL. I take a non-teleological approach to reading these moments as different instantiations of the populist political form.[24]

Populist organizing in 1880s South Dakota

For settlers living in South Dakota in the 1890s, it must have felt like the end of one era and the beginning of a new one. Gone was the lawlessness of Dakota Territory; with statehood finally achieved in 1889, law and order would finally reign supreme. Gone were the prolonged "Indian Wars," with the Lakota seemingly subjugated after the massacre at Wounded Knee. The Black Hills Gold Rush was over, and the newly-minted state seemed positioned to capitalize instead on its agrarian potential. But while some Dakotans bought into the vision of the new era promised hope and free land, far more were mired in their own destitution, racked by debt and financial hardship and exploited by banks, grain elevators, and railroads. These conditions produced three simultaneous political movements in Dakota Territory during the period leading up to 1889: the drive to official statehood, the drive to confine the Lakota people to smaller reservations and redistribute their lands for settlement by white men, and the creation of a radical agrarian political culture of reform and revolution that would eventually culminate in the Populist Party. This narrative is important not as a substantial historical determinant of contemporary populism, nor as an expression of an easy causal determination in times of economic and environmental crisis. It is notable instead because it continues to be cited as meaningful by pipeline populists today. In this sense this analysis serves an apprehension of a political unconscious, of history as an absent cause in the narration of

contemporary struggles. The existence and interaction of these three elements in South Dakotan history – statehood, exclusion, and radical populism – provides insight into how both scholars and South Dakotans understand the power and pitfalls of populism.

Histories of this period of South Dakota can be broadly divided into three groups. First, critical accounts of settler colonialism (Deloria 1969; P. S. Hall 1991; Ostler 2011) and "New West History" (Cronon 2009, 1992; Limerick 1988; Worster 1992; Knobloch 1996), examine the social and economic forces that underpinned frontier violence and dispossession. These histories are often critical of a second, ongoing tradition: triumphant histories of western US-American exceptionalism, from either a conservative (Lauck 2010) or broadly liberal (Lee 2011) perspective. The conservative viewpoint has tended to view settlement and statehood as triumphant achievements – Lauck, an adviser to arch-conservative South Dakotan US Senator John Thune, goes so far to revive Fredrick Jackson Turner's frontier thesis, claiming that the New West History doesn't pay proper attention to the benefits of the republican, democratic, and Christian hegemony among settlers. The liberal interpretation has emphasized the state's fundamental role in populist organizing, from the Farmer Alliance and its innovative cooperative ventures of the 1880s to the Initiative & Referendum laws passed in the late 1890s. Both conservative and liberal interpretations imply that there is something distinctive about South Dakota that made it different from (rather than exemplary of) the forces that were shaping the rest of the region and country.

Finally, broad regional and national histories of populist organizing emphasize its class composition and ideological character (Pollack 1976) or its role as a movement for radical democracy (Goodwyn 1978). Populist histories emphasize that South Dakota was

a *part* of a regional history, but they tend to downplay contemporary events happening at the same time in the state. I expand upon these histories of South Dakota populism by emphasizing a seemingly contradictory thesis: that agrarian populists were far more radical than South Dakotans tend to give them credit *and* that they participated wholeheartedly in the projects of statehood and settler colonialism. This can be explained through the Farmer Alliance's relationship to land and ideologies of property, for while they struggled against the consolidation of capital in the hands of bankers and corporations, their primary means for developing a political culture of reform and revolution was tied to their identities as producers and landowners.

Dakota Territory experienced one of the most massive population movements in American history, as homesteaders and settlers, financed by credit from Chicago and the east, were armed with dreams of Dakota as the "land of plenty" (P. S. Hall 1991, 7) and the backing of post-war military units. The non-Native population of the state was increasing at astonishing rates: the 350,000 living in the state in 1890 was 3.5 times more than the population 10 years earlier, and 35 times the population in 1870. Railroads began piercing the eastern part of the region, where good soil provided decent growing conditions for homesteaders. Boosters painted pictures of the fertility of Dakota Territory's lands, enticing the poor and landless to the west. But the boom was short lived, as many farmers were unprepared for drought and harsh weather conditions, while deflation and overproduction resulted in decades of falling profits. Racked by debt and with few local options to sell, railroads extorted massive amounts of money from settlers, while banks offered only high-interest loans. These conditions led many in Dakota Territory to create cooperative farming ventures, to join the Farmer's Alliance and

eventually the Populist Party to cooperatively organize against their extortion by financial institutions.

For over a decade, farmers on the Great Plains were compelled to greater production in order to combat falling prices due to the country's financial situation. Greenbacks printed during the Civil War had created a surplus of circulating money relative to the gold which backed the currency. The government's method of correcting this imbalance was to stop printing money until the situation self-corrected: contraction. But contraction drove down the price of commodities in an absolute manner. For example: the price of a bushel of wheat in 1870 was over $1, it fell to 80 cents in 1885 and 60 cents by the 1890s. These average end of year prices do not reflect the actual prices many farmers received in Dakota Territory, which hovered closer to 35 cents per bushel in the 1880s (Goodwyn 1978, 69). Contraction also had a secondary effect for debtors (the vast majority of farmers), for interest rates rose as currency was devalued.

At the same time as these economic forces compelled a search for new, productive lands, boosterism and the hope of speculation fueled the thirst for what settlers saw as unused lands of the American West beyond Dakota Territory, and eventually of the Great Sioux Reservation within its borders. The reservation had been initially established in the 1851 Treaty of Fort Laramie and revised in a second 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie. As 'the supreme law of the land,' treaties are accords between sovereign nations and thus constituted recognition by the federal government of Lakota sovereignty. These two treaties were signed by the Lakota and other tribes in the area as agreements that would secure their land rights from settlers and the US military. In exchange for the recognition of their land rights, the Lakota granted that they would refrain from engaging

settlers passing through their territory to the Pacific Northwest and allow the US government to establish military and trading forts in the region.

The federal government was initially more than happy to let the Lakota have what they perceived to be a wasteland, a section of what was generally referred to as the Great American Desert. Yet all this changed with the discovery of gold in the Black Hills on the western edge of Dakota Territory during the 1874 Custer Expedition, which whipped illegal settlement of Lakota lands into overdrive. Settlers and the military alike disrupted the migration patterns of buffalo herds in the area and eventually began to shoot the docile beasts in mass numbers for sport. These factors eventually sparked the Great Sioux War of 1876-77, an intricate and drawn out series of battles between the US army and some resisting Lakota and Cheyenne bands. As the war seethed, white politicians, companies, and citizens all sought to legally and morally justify the seizure of the Black Hills by demonstrating that, in Custer's words, the "Black Hills region is not occupied by the Indians and is seldom visited by them" (quoted in Ostler 2011, 88). Although the Lakota defeated Custer in what they call the Battle of the Greasy Grass (and what American history would call the Battle of Little Bighorn) in 1876, Congress was able to extract from some 230 Lakota leaders consent to sell the Black Hills in violation of the 1868 treaty. The reasons for fighting the US government and eventually conceding to its demands even after a major victory were complex and political. Some Lakota thought that white settlers would never obey the law and could only be resisted with force, while others believed that if agreements were not signed the Lakota would lose everything. The series of events would almost immediately be interpreted and mythologized for the public in the eastern US as 'the closure of the frontier.'

This result of the Agreement of 1877 produced an irritating situation for settlers. On the one hand, it seemed to create the peace necessary for further settlement of Dakota Territory west of the Missouri River. On the other hand, the Great Sioux Reservation effectively bisected Dakota Territory, lying directly in between the Black Hills to the west and the largely non-Native east. So, no sooner had the ink dried on the Agreement were settlers clamoring for a road to provide safe passage between the western and eastern half of the state and for the land around it. As historian Philip S. Hall characterized the period, "hardly a week went by that some western newspaper did not print an editorial that, in the spirit of Locke's philosophy, called upon the government to open up the Great Sioux Reservation to white settlement" (P. S. Hall 1991, 6). John Stanley's position was characteristic of the late 1800s:

> "[The government should] open up the entire region so long dedicated to the sloth and sterility of Indian worthlessness, and break down the barriers which have barred industry and civilization. It would hasten the inevitable day when the Indian shall be driven utterly from the rich heritage [of the land] which he neither uses or improves himself, nor allows others better than him to use" (P. S. Hall 1991, 7)

The experience of the Great Dakota Boom and subsequent bust in the late 1880s led many would-be settlers to desire a *particular form* of landed private property: small, independently owned plots. The Great Dakota Boom had heavily featured speculators and land monopolists attempting to capitalize on the newfound thirst for land in the region, especially through large bonanza farms. The bust that followed would evacuate Dakota of a great portion of its smallholder population, and those who stayed were largely the poorest immigrants, remaining on farms too worthless to be repossessed. In this period of extreme destitution in the late 1880s, the Farmer's Alliance began what would become a

decades-long period of incredible success sowing the seeds of the populism. Joining the Alliance was basically a method for smallholders to collectivize their economic and political power. The Farmer's Alliance was able to offer purchasing cooperatives, insurance, connections with the labor movement, access to grain elevators, and debt refinancing relief to farmers. Although the Farmer's Alliance started as a non-political support organization, it would eventually rescind this commitment and develop as a fully-fledged party apparatus.

Nationally, the Farmer's Alliance largely grew out of frustration with the crop-lien system in the southern U.S., a method of providing small-scale loans that entrenched farmers in debt by monopolizing the sale of their crops through debt service. In order to combat this vampiric system, the Farmer's Alliance, first organized in 1984, began to offer cooperative bulking services that offered higher price points. In many ways, the Alliance followed from the failed efforts of the Grange and the Knights of Labor. Each of these groups was involved in what Goodwyn calls "a cultural struggle to redefine the form and meaning of life and politics in America" (1978, 33). The cooperative aspects of the Farmer's Alliance had an economic basis, no doubt, but they were organized and presented in a manner that sought to alleviate the crushing moral weight of debt by returning dignity to farmers. This ideological culture of the movement will be as important to agrarian populism as its economic institutions.

Farmers in the western plains faced different problems, however. The wide open and undeveloped spaces of land made transportation of crops difficult, and privately-owned grain elevators and railroads gouged prices for small-scale independent farmers. The Grange and the Knights of Labor were both active in the state, but their political

activities were often limited to information gathering on price gouging. For example, these organized groups found the invention of different grain standards (e.g., Grade A – Grade C) often allowed elevators to purchase wheat at Grade C prices and sell it (often abroad) at Grade A prices. This led to a series of laws passed in many Midwestern states, known as the Granger laws, that sought to regulate the practices of corporations (Lee 2011, 16).

However, not having achieved statehood, Dakota farmers were forced to take matters into their own hands. To this, two Dakota farmers, Henry (H.L.) Loucks and Alonzo Wardall, would mark the political culture of South Dakota for decades. Loucks, a farmer with a sense for community organizing, and Wardall, a former soldier, Granger, and Knight of Labor, were united by their view that the economic situation in Dakota Territory could only be resolved through political ends. Throughout the early 1880s, a number of small, cooperative farmer's meetings had begun to pop up in eastern Dakota focused largely on skill sharing and community building. Loucks and Wardell had founded the groups in Deuel and Grant counties, respectively. But with the worsening economic and environmental conditions in 1884 and '85, these meetings had become increasingly political. While the national Farmer's Alliance was beginning at the same time, Dakotans convened a territorial meeting of all the local sub-alliances that had formed and founded the Dakota Territorial Farmers' Alliance with the stated goal of opposition to "organized monopoly" (quoted in Lee 2011, 19). By 1886, Loucks would be the president of the alliance, leading it to become one of the strongest Alliance organizations in the country. Much as they would across the country, sub-alliances in Dakota Territory served as nodes of social, political, and economic organization. In the

process, the Alliance developed a *collective perspective* on the forces that were rendering farmers' lives particularly untenable: monopoly capitalism and political corruption. The sub-alliances brought together isolated settlers to hear orators from across the country and to plan their political actions. Alliance meetings also included shared food and music, although less-often drink in Dakota, where many were prohibitionists. News of meetings, political happenings, and economic fluctuations traveled through the *Dakota Ruralist*, an increasingly radical newspaper that claimed to be the largest in circulation in South Dakota. Sometimes by its critics and other times by its own editors, the *Dakota Ruralist* was known as a socialist newspaper.

The Dakotans' first venture into cooperative economics was the development of a collective elevator, purchase, and sales program led by Loucks. By pooling the sale of their grain, the farmers hoped that they could receive a fairer price from grain purchasers. By incorporating the Alliance as a cooperative, they also could purchase farm equipment at wholesale prices. This, of course, annoyed distributors, manufacturers, and purchasers alike, and while many eventually relented, the problems in implementing the cooperative seemed to encourage Loucks to increasingly consider political action more than many of his populist peers across the country. As his views began to shift, so too did his prominence in the Farmers Alliance – he would travel to Minnesota to establish cooperatives there, and would soon thereafter become president of the national Farmers Alliance.

While Loucks' star was rising, it was Wardell who would develop and popularize one of South Dakota's most innovative contributions to populist economics – a collective crop insurance plan. Instead of buying private insurance from profit-seeking companies,

the Alliance would develop its own insurance that sought only to alleviate loss from hail damage. The Alliance insurance policy prided itself not on profits, but on how *little* it made at the end of the year. Its rates were some 200% lower than private insurance rates (Goodwyn 1978, 104; Lee 2011, 36). These cooperative ventures shaped both the material affordances available to farmers in Dakota Territory as well as their values and perspectives on land and monopoly capitalism. However, market pressures would eventually result in the collapse of both experiments in the mid-1890s.

Another innovation that would have more success in South Dakota than elsewhere was the proposal for initiative and referendum laws. I&R, as it was widely known, was a proposal for a more direct form of democracy, allowing citizens the right to propose legislation and sending all citizen-proposed legislation to a statewide vote. Father Robert E. Haire, a heretical Catholic priest who would eventually be dismissed for his radicalism, was a champion of I&R in the state and had a unique claim to innovation on the idea (other Populist parties from around the US would import it from the Swiss). So too was Walter E. Kidd, a state representative and publisher of the *Dakota Ruralist*. Both men were avid socialists who, together, ensured that initiative and referendum was on the legislative ballot throughout the 1890s, eventually passing in 1897. Haire described the political situation in South Dakota as a "plutocracy, given over to fleecing the values that labor produces." Yet the government was "afraid of the people," and I&R would recognize that "the people are capable of feeling for, giving form to, and finally decreeing their own laws" (quoted in Gallagher 2009). South Dakota was the first state to pass an I&R law. Although it was not used much in the early 20th century, it re-emerged as an important part of the state's political culture in the 1980s.

If self-governance was to be achieved, then farmers would have to learn about politics, economics, and power. Contrary to the most damning portraits of the Farmers Alliance as an anti-progressive, anti-technological movement, it waged one of the most massive grassroots educational campaigns conceivable. As the historian Charles Postel has recently put it, “Few political or social movements brought so many men and women into lecture halls, classrooms, camp meetings, and seminars or produced such an array of inexpensive literature” (Postel 2009, 2). The movement cultivated not the gossipy rags of anti-modern conspiracy theorists as critics like Richard Hofstadter would have it, but a broad interest in economics among regular people. It included prominent newspapers and orators, traveling lending libraries and independent publishing houses. Populists were in favor of college funding and agricultural schools to harness science and technology for the service of farmers and laborers, rather than seeing them as tools of enslavement. Among modern subcultures, the populist self-educational style more closely resembled the zine culture of punk and hardcore than the conspiratorial message boards of UFO fanatics.

This “movement culture,” as Goodwyn has famously called it, created the conditions for its political evolution into party politics and was “in the most fundamental meaning of the word, ‘ideological’.” (Goodwyn 1978, 178). As farmers grew confident in their opposition to economic practices that concentrated power in the hands of a few individuals, so too did many of them begin to view politics in the same manner. Political power in Dakota Territory was concentrated almost exclusively in a cadre of Republican politicians located in Yankton, in the southeastern part of the state, who controlled all patronage in the territory. At first, Loucks and the Alliance took the position of a non-

partisan advocacy organization, soliciting from both parties and all politicians support for farmers' policies often ignored by the Republican elite. But the strength of the Republican party and the weakness of the Democrats led to pandering by both but action by neither. Loucks was increasingly convinced that both parties were controlled by financial elites, and would exaggerate any demands from the farmers. Additionally, the Alliance was increasingly demanding policies that required government action, especially nationalization of infrastructure and outlawing of property ownership by non-residents. The traditional political parties continued to act as if "the farmers want the Earth." To which Loucks would reply, "Well, as we are the only class who till it, is there any reason why we should not have it?" (quoted in Lee 2011, 55).

The formation of the People's Party out of the Farmers Alliance, on a state and national scale, was a complex process marked by sharp and fascinating organizational disagreements. The party's main message, that American democracy needed to be returned to the ordinary people or the productive millions, remained relatively constant and inspiring during the Gilded Age era. The Alliance had positioned itself against "centralized capital [which is] allied to irresponsible corporate power" (quoted in Goodwyn 1978, 114) on behalf of "the plain people," often qualified as the laboring or producing class. This language often approached a messianic tenor, promising a redemptive role for the people in remaking political sovereignty. The preamble to the Omaha Platform of 1892, written by renowned Minnesotan orator Ignatius Donnelly, provides an exceptional example. It begins with a classic fall, as the people are downtrodden and demoralized, their land stolen and their resistance beaten back. But this had not stopped the will of the people. "Assembled on the anniversary of the birthday of

the nation, and filled with the spirit of the grand general and chief who established our independence, we seek to restore the government of the Republic to the hands of "the plain people," with which class it originated." The restoration would be completed, in one populist's words, "realizing and incarnating in the lives of the common people the fullness of the divinity of humanity" (quoted in Pollack 1976, 13).

Although the focus on "the plain people" was broad enough to include the Alliance's new alignment with the Knights of Labor and other non-agrarian populations, the Party still centralized the people's right to land. By 1892, the Omaha Platform would put it clearly (in language that strongly resembled the Ocala Demands of 1890):

> "LAND.—The land, including all the natural sources of wealth, is the heritage of the people, and should not be monopolized for speculative purposes, and alien ownership of land should be prohibited. All land now held by railroads and other corporations in excess of their actual needs, and all lands now owned by aliens should be reclaimed by the government and held for actual settlers only."

Many of the Populist Party's claims were incredibly radical, yet they still largely relied upon a reformist version of liberalism, democracy, and private property. As Grattan has argued, even on the issue of land, some populists argued for government ownership. Most producerist arguments relied on Lockean individualist understandings of private property (2016, 61) even if this relationship was occasionally referred to as "private property for all" rather than only for monopoly. The concerns about land monopolization are largely economic, but the fear of alien land ownership directed at immigrants was an unfounded exclusionary principle that few scholars of populism have remarked upon. Some claim that the clause is primarily directed toward Scottish and English cattle companies, but the language bears much similarity to that of Alien land

laws passed by state governments that explicitly targeted East Asian immigrants (on a similar structure, see Day 2016). Was this opposition to globalized capital robbing farmers of the value they produced, or more symptomatic of racialized nationalism? Although it is easy to dismiss as merely a symptom of the time, the decision to base the land platform on nationalist sentiments and exclude or marginalize immigrants, Jews, and people of color is a recurring feature that haunts populist politics. “The people” is never as self-evident as it might appear.

The elasticity of the borders of “the plain people” in populism’s rhetoric led to problems when it tried to expand into a national movement. Goodwyn famously argued that this led to a “shadow movement” of populists, who were ideologically aligned with the party to greater or lesser degrees, but had not come to populism through the practical experience of grassroots organizing against economic hardship. It was one thing to come to populism organically through the Farmers Alliance and quite another to see it as simply part of political machinations. This story is compelling, but also belies two facts about populist political organizing. First, seasoned populists like Loucks who had been a part of the cooperative movement made political decisions that made the movement vulnerable to exploitation. Messianic and redemptive language that compelled emotional investment in promised change led to burnout and resentment among the movement’s base, who increasingly saw their leaders betray their principles. Second, the scalar change from grassroots to party politics required a certain kind of ideological plasticity. Populists could not achieve their goals without organizing at scales beyond the local and outside of the agrarian. Early populists in the Farmers Alliance recognized this when they realized that aligning with the labor movement and black farmers in the South would be necessary

if any gains were to be made, while members of the Populist Party often took strategic coalition so far that their ideals began to be muddled. It is difficult, as anyone involved in movement politics knows, to find the appropriate balance between concession and betrayal, but the purity of principles will be doomed to failure.

In South Dakota, the Populist Party had success in part because the Democrats were so weak that they were quickly subsumed within the Populist Party. This allowed a pooling of resources and a much larger electoral base. This led to some of the most successful electoral campaigns in the country, including electing a Populist governor, US Senator, and two US representatives. But the popularization of the Populist Party and its 'fusion' with the Democrats resulted in some uncomfortable alliances. Following the career of Richard F. Pettigrew can serve as a useful example of the way in which 'unlikely alliances' can be quite unhelpful.

Throughout the 1880s, Pettigrew was a staunch Republican and member of various parts of the territorial government of Dakota. Elected as the first US Senator, Pettigrew combined aggressive pursuit of capitalist enterprise with a staunch boosterism of Dakota identity and the patronage system. The latter was most significant as patronage had previously been controlled by national Democratic politicians and mostly consisted of jobs supervising, educating, and policing the Lakota and other native peoples. The historian Phillip S. Hall attributes Pettigrew's brazen replacement of all federal jobs on reservations with loyal Republicans with little care for the positions often previously held by native people, as one of the primary decisions that led to the Wounded Knee Massacre in 1890 (P. S. Hall 1991). Pettigrew, for his part, would continue to press his ruthless quest for power against Loucks, who although they corresponded frequently, was

something of a mortal enemy. Yet by 1895, Pettigrew saw the popular tide turning towards the Populists and exited the Republican convention over the question of silver. Despite having no experience in the Farmers Alliance, few values aligned with the Populist planks, and a ruthless political style that placed loyalty and patronage before principles, Pettigrew increasingly held sway over the Populist Party in South Dakota. Strangely, for all his Manichean colonial operations in Dakota Territory, Pettigrew would have a brief afterlife in the early 1900s as an anti-imperialist writer.

Predictably, principles such as those aligned with private property and taking nearly all government officials as inherently corrupt have led conservative South Dakota historians to interpret its populist history as closely aligned with the tradition of agrarian republicanism, and the conservative values of the dominant Republican Party more generally (Lauck 2010). They often claim that while other populists were anticapitalist, those in South Dakota were fully invested in capitalist organization of private property. Lauck goes so far as to argue that there was an "absence of any significant radical or socialist element in Dakota Territory" (Lauck 2010, 134). The fact that many of the major populist leaders in the state would join the Socialist Party of America in the early 1900s (and often referred to themselves explicitly as socialists much earlier) seems to run entirely counter to claims that populism was merely an extension of the regional values of a frontier religious settler community. At the height of populist fervor, the *Dakota Ruralist* would praise the Omaha Platform as espousing "the demands of socialism" and even that "South Dakota populists have followed the socialists beyond the Omaha platform" (Tweton 1993, 340). The enthusiasm of Father Haire and Kidd left its mark on South Dakota Populism – Kidd, for example, would take every opportunity to sneak

socialist ideas into populist meetings, surreptitiously hanging a banner that read “Down with Capitalism; Up with the Industrial Republic” at one populist meeting (Lee 2011, 122). Although for complicated reasons Loucks would join the Republicans in the late 1800s before running as an Independent, he was among those who most openly advocated for socialist reforms during the height of the populist boom in the state. Socialists of the period and in the decades after the Populist movement would analyze with fervor the benefits of this movement of mass democracy, as well as its shortcomings and failures.

At the same time, even the most attentive interpreters of what Grattan (2016) calls populism’s “radical democratic aspirations” have failed to comment on its general acquiescence in settler colonialism. Although many histories of the American West use Wounded Knee as an all-too-comfortable bookend between periods a la Fredrick Jackson Turner, the period between the 1890s and 1910s saw continued and escalating calls for dispossession and privatization of Native lands in South Dakota and across almost all reservations in the US through the Dawes Act. The Lockean ‘producer’ rhetoric that imbued agrarian populism contributed directly to the efforts to both on the one hand directly dispossess Native peoples from their land because they were not productive and on the other hand to individualize Native peoples into producers through landed private property (Biolsi 1995).

Lakota historian Nick Estes has argued, these twin actions also had two recursive effects on settler understandings of property, for they “simultaneously legitimize settler status through the protection of property rights within liberal democratic institutions of law and politics” *and* provide the wealth that comprises the “roots of capital as a

formulaic enterprise of Native territorial dispossession" (Estes 2013, 192). Although it is likely that Loucks, Wardell, Kidd, Haire, and other South Dakota populists and socialists commented on relations with Native Nations, their party and political activities were structurally premised on the marginalization, exploitation, and extermination of Native peoples and lands.

This section has sought to show that the populism of the late 1800s in South Dakota and nationally was thus filled with contradictory, surprising, and sometimes radical ideological elements and yet was baldly consistent with the US-American project of exploitation and settler colonialism. Populism was a rebellion of the disenfranchised within American society, where the *within* was tacitly already decided upon. This section has provided two main contributions to my broader argument. I have drawn out some structural features and problems that often face populist movements and will re-appear throughout this work: education and expertise as self-governance, landed property and producerism as core values, the role of direct democracy and democratic participation, redemptive and messianic narratives, tendencies towards both socialism and settler colonialism. The history of populism provides mythological grist for contemporary rebellious projects in the region.

Environmental populism and environmental justice activism in 1980s South Dakota

The early high point of populist political activism in the late 1800s was superseded in South Dakota by a new hegemony of one the most regressive, capital-centric and ongoing settler colonial projects in the United States. By the 1980s, Winona

LaDuke and Ward Churchill would frequently refer to the state – and especially its Native American reservations – as a "national sacrifice area" for "radioactive colonialism" (LaDuke and Churchill 1985). Privatization of public lands, resource extraction, and the use of public land for military experiments combined to produce a debilitating landscape for those living in western South Dakota. Lakota, Dakota, and other Native people living in the area vehemently resisted the land privatization plans, the dams on the Missouri River reservations, coal, uranium, and gold mining in the Black Hills, termination of their tribal status, and the attritional and ongoing state violence of settler colonialism and racialized capitalism more generally. Although underrepresented in public consciousness, Native and non-native historians, journalists, and activists have documented struggles for environmental justice and sovereignty extensively (Biolsi 1992; Cobb and Fowler 2007; Deloria 1969; Halder 2002; Matthiessen 1992; Ostler 2011; Smith and Warrior 1996).

While the political activism of the Oceti Ŝakowiŋ Oyate is consistently and appropriately described in political terms as resistance to settler colonialism, exploitation, and the state, by contrast liberal and left grassroots political action by settlers in South Dakota is more confusing. The state's political culture is predominantly Christian conservative with some amount of libertarianism. Yet at times, the prairie populism of its past was seen to be resurrected. Individual politicians like George McGovern and Tom Daschle referred to themselves as populists, seeking in some ways to capitalize on social movements against uranium mining, militarization, railroads, and highways. To this end, the mythos of prairie populism drives a reinterpretation of the state's cultural and political history, and in turn provides some ground for contemporary environmental

populists. The struggle against uranium mining and nuclear waste in the 1970s and 80s formed the basis of environmental activism in the region, and was the opening that inspired many of the same individuals and groups that took part in pipeline opposition.

Uranium was discovered in the southern Black Hills region in the 1950s and quickly boomed as prices rose dramatically with the advent of nuclear power. Much of the arid land in this region was public land, and prospectors could lodge mineral claims and drill test boreholes with little investment. As more uranium was found in the region, Edgemont, SD was chosen for a uranium processing mill, promising jobs and wealth to local residents. Little regard was given to the lives of miners and uranium workers, or to those surrounding the operations. Tailings piles were left uncovered and grew to heights of 50 feet or more. In addition to the daily erosion from wind and sometimes rain and the communication of water between aquifers allowed by abandoned boreholes and smaller mines, a number of particular events would impact the region's future toxicity. In 1962, 200 tons of tailings broke through an earthen dam and washed into Cottonwood Creek and subsequently the Cheyenne and Missouri Rivers, which provided drinking water for thousands of people downstream, including the Cheyenne River reservation. But when the uranium boom was booming, these events were not treated with any particular notice.

It wasn't until the 1970s that the health effects of uranium mining began to be noticed by people in the region. A South Dakota Department of Health study in 1976 found elevated cancer rates around Edgemont. Working with the group Women of All Red Nations (WARN), Madonna Thunder Hawk described the effects of uranium mining in the 1980s:

> "[I] had noticed that people were not really feeling well. It seemed like everyone was always sick with various ailments… Our report showed that in one month in 1979, 38 percent of pregnancies reported to the Public Health Service Hospital in Pine Ridge resulted in spontaneous abortions and excessive bleeding. Of the children born, 60 to 70 percent suffered breathing complications as a result of underdeveloped lungs and/or jaundice. Children were born with cleft palates, club feet - diseases uncommon to the Lakota and Dakota people" (Thunder Hawk 2007, 103–4)

As uranium prices began to tailspin with the end of the energy crisis and the Three Mile Island incident, the company operating the Edgemont mill went through a series of mergers, eventually being dissolved by its parent company. It left behind 4 million tons of radioactive waste as well as the thousands of exploratory boreholes in the region. The federal government funded the massive cleanup effort in the 1980s and 90s, while the Tennessee Valley Authority handled the decommissioning of the mill. A gigantic hole was created in the ground into which all the equipment, buildings, and tailings were buried.

In addition to uranium mining, the energy crisis had created dreams of a new coal rush in the Powder River basin. A South Dakota energy plan called the North Central Power Study produced in 1971 accelerated the worries of many citizens. It described a massive buildout of coal and uranium mines in the Black Hills area. In particular, rumors at the time emphasized that the use of eminent domain could be forthcoming for securing mining resources. Lakota organizers attempting to gather support from non-Native communities used this to their advantage, arguing that their treaty rights could help protect land adjacent to private property. Thunder Hawk describes the situation: "[The white landowners] realized how helpless they were in the face of eminent domain. But

Indian people had treaty rights – they could stop things!" (quoted in Grossman 2017, 156).

Many South Dakotans were outraged by the ravishing of the Black Hills and South Dakota's water and natural resources. Farming and ranching economies were both busting in the late 70s and early 80s, as a drought combined with low commodity prices to shave already thin profits. In 1979, the Black Hills Alliance was formed as a coalition of "Lakota, grassroots environmentalists, Black Hills residents, and about twenty to thirty off-reservation ranchers and farmers opposed to corporate plans for the region" (Grossman 2017, 154). It was one of a number of progressive organizations in the region formed to fight resource extraction and militarism in the Great Plains region that still exist today, among them the Western Organization of Resource Councils, High Country News, and the South Dakota Peace and Justice Center (which only recently disbanded) (Ferguson 2015; Heefner 2012). Later in the 1980s, the Cowboy and Indian Alliance (CIA) formed to oppose munitions testing in western South Dakota – although disbanded in the mid-1990s, its name and imagery would resurface decades later in the fight against pipelines.

The Black Hills Alliance found widespread success in spreading its message about protecting land and water rights in a populist manner. They produced a quarterly journal with a broad circulation and an aim at educating citizens about threats to land and water resources. The coalition was unique for several reasons. It was one of the first environmental justice advocacy organizations in the country, explicitly arguing that environmental catastrophes in South Dakota were targeted at Native communities. The journal contained numerous pro-feminist articles written by both Native and non-Native

women. It contained prescient analyses of the links between land grabs, corporate capitalism, and environmental degradation. The journal also linked the genocide of Native peoples to the extinction of the small-scale "family farm." Along with the South Dakota Peace and Justice Center and Nukewatch, the BHA argued that the arms race, from uranium extraction to the Minutemen missile silos that peppered the plains with nuclear weapons, was diverting millions of dollars and decent ranchland that could be used to support agriculture.

Grossman has argued that these movements should been seen as part of a continent-wide tradition of "unlikely alliances" between Native activists and rural white people (Grossman 2002, 2005, 2017). He convincingly argues that stereotypes about Native American and rural white people as "archtypical enemies" (2005, 21) often preclude research on their collaborations in the face of resource extraction. Although Grossman recognizes that these alliances are often limited and can dissolve into tensions, over the course of decades he sees an "evolution of Native/non-Native relations from conflict to cooperation" (2002, 473). While this long view is convincingly argued, we should be wary of the presentation of the cyclical or even dialectical relationship between cooperation and conflict between Native and non-Native groups in a progressive teleological manner. The "two steps forward, one step back process" (2002, 293) in which coalitions form, dissolve, and then recombine into new coalitions can easily seem from a different perspective to be insufficient. Nonetheless, Grossman's analysis helps us understand the upside of populist alliances in both preventing material damage to Native peoples and opposing bigoted racism of white settlers.

The popularity of the opposition movement peaked in 1979 and 1980. In 1979, the Black Hills National Gathering of the People drew several thousand activists to western South Dakota. Just a year later in 1980, at the height of fears of nuclear meltdown, the BHA and W.A.R.N. organized the Black Hills International Survival Gathering, which brought an estimated 12,000 people to camp on the private land of Marvin Kammerer, oft-described "cowboy populist" in the southern Black Hills. The basic issue of the Survival Gathering as one activist told me, was "land and the control of land." But the event was incredibly multi-issue, featuring the full array of anti-war, environmental, feminist, Native, and back-to-the-land and renewable energy activists. The Survival Gathering was a game-changing event for many of its participants, forever altering the course of their life's work. Indeed, it was not surprising during the course of interviews with anti-pipeline activists to discover halfway through an interview that *of course* they were at the Survival Gathering.

As with any gathering of 12,000 people, deep divisions simmered underneath the surface of an event premised on unity. Relationships between Native and non-Native people, local or from elsewhere, were strained by different understandings of feminism and respect for land. In particular, the "naivete and insensitivity of American leftists" was often mentioned by Native organizers in documents about the gathering (S. Johnson and Hutchins 1980). Workshops and issues were supposed to focus only on "non-controversial" and "uniting" issues, leading to the fracturing of the Gathering between white and Native feminists. But it seems that for most participants the central focus on land did unite what might appear like deep divisions in land rights that existed between landowners, non-landowners, public, private, and Native trust land.

Another prominent divide occurred in whether and to what degree Native resistance to colonialism could be understood within the theoretical frameworks of Marxism, as represented by the Trotskyist Revolutionary Communist Party. The Marxists obstinately opposed the invocation of Native spirituality and ridiculed the idea of traditional lifeways invoked by Russel Means, whom they compared to Proudhon and described as "idealist and childish" (The Revolutionary Communist Party 1983, 46). Means had proactively given a speech railing against Marxism as "as alien to my culture as capitalism and Christianity" (1983, 33). The conflict was upsetting then as it is to read about in hindsight; as Churchill put it, it seems like "the mere potential for even a partial dissolution of the US landbase should be a high priority consideration for *anyone* concerned with destabilizing the status quo." Yet, he continued, "The left in this country is in the process of missing a critical and unique opportunity to forge a truly *American* radicalism based first on those conditions which are most peculiar to America, one with a chance of cutting the US power structure deeply" (Churchill 1983, 202).

Unlike the RCP, the coalitional opposition to extractive industry seemed to be far more sympathetic with the treaty rights position. In a rather radical manifesto, a joint "Declaration of Dependence on the Land" read on the last day of the Survival Gathering called for the "end to abuse and appropriation of the land" and "land justice for Native Peoples: recognition of their sovereignty and traditional forms of government, with the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty as the starting point for the just resolution of differences and the model for honoring all other treaties" (Black Hills Alliance 1980, 12). The Declaration suggested that white settlers would be allowed to stay on their land as leasees from the local indigenous peoples.

More vaguely, the Declaration also called that “the right of the people to determine how eminent domain is to be used” (1980, 12), the only mention of “the people” in its language. Nonetheless, there seemed to be something of a more complex relationship to property rights than it might be assumed. Included in their demands was also “the expropriation of transnational corporations' agricultural holdings, and their redistribution to indigenous and agricultural people” (1980, 12) in part because “the land has been desecrated because it has been treated as a commodity” (1980, 1). Kammerer, as one of the authors of the statement, would later reflect on his views thus: “I look on the land as a resource, not a commodity…It is a responsibility. It’s crazy to me that you have to own something, when it’s a gift from the Creator. It’s not property, it’s sacred…We [settlers] are immigrants as far as I am concerned. We are squatters, and we are still squatting” (quoted in LaDuke 1999, 157). Importantly, then, it was by *not* upholding the secular position that some of the mid-80s coalitions were able to persist. And while the mass opposition of the 1970s and early 80s eventually seemed to dissipate, opposition to uranium mining and exploitation of resources in western South Dakota has sustained through to the present (Bosworth 2017).

In what sense could such an organization or social movement be understood as populist? Surely demands for treaty rights were not widespread among non-Native groups, and farmers like Kammerer were frequently at pains to demonstrate they were Republicans, not environmentalists. Still, the BHA, along with other progressive environmental organizations in western South Dakota like the United Family Farmers and South Dakota Resource Council followed “in the tradition of South Dakota populism” (Husmann 2011, 250) insofar as they used a discourse of “the people” and

espoused popular sovereignty stolen from them by elites, outsiders, or corporations. Environmental organizations worried about interlopers and corporations trampling on the "will of the people" and sought instead a form of anti-government grassroots activism or even direct democracy to challenge both the state and capital. And the language of "the people" as a possibly unifying subject position was common among non-Native activists. As one put it, "Isn't it also a question of selling a natural resource, a birthright if you will, to a private company, rather than using this scarce resource for the benefit of the people?" (quoted in Husmann 2011, 256).

The BHA was in some ways a victim of its own success, as the Black Hills were indeed protected (temporarily) from resource extraction. Former members of the BHA and other groups like the Cowboy-Indian Alliance (CIA) would sporadically appear throughout the 1990s against a proposed gunnery range and a number of rail lines. Yet the newly globalized and lower prices of uranium and coal as well as the rise of somewhat distanced neoliberal forms of governance meant that South Dakota's resource economy faltered through the turn of the century. The state was overall taken by the post-Reagan rise of religious conservatism, and through the 2000s, its federal and state lawmakers led some of the more reactionary policies in the country.

The emergence and tension of pipeline populism

By 2010, the climate movement in the United States was at a crossroads. Focusing on climate policy at a national level seemed like a losing battle and to reach a final death knell with the failure of the American Clean Energy and Security Act in 2009.

On the international stage, the Copenhagen Summit was deemed a disappointment and many of us felt it had no chance to make an impact on the world's worst polluter. At the same time, on the Great Plains of the upper Midwest, a new and different environmental movement was forming. Anti-pipeline sentiment had been bubbling in the Dakotas and Nebraska, where farmers, ranchers, Native Nations, conservationists, users of public parks, and drinkers of water were increasingly disgruntled by the sudden appearance of TransCanada in their rural communities. As these emerging anti-pipeline sentiments coalesced into organized opposition to the Keystone XL pipeline, their strategy of coalition building across difference appealed to many of us organizing in the climate movement. While media exposure and financial support were funneled from the Big Greens to some of the anti-pipeline groups, it was their strategy and discourse of populist opposition that would have a transformational effect on American environmentalism.

The Keystone pipeline system is a series of proposed and partially completed pipelines that would bring diluted bitumen over 2,000 miles from the Canadian tar sands near Hardisty, Alberta across the continental U.S. to refineries near Port Arthur, TX and Patoka and Wood River, IL. The route of its first phase, Keystone I, was proposed from Hardisty to Illinois via Steele City, NE in 2007 and completed in 2010 with minimal local opposition. Another leg, the Cushing Extension, traveled from Steele City to storage facilities in Cushing, OK and was completed in 2011. The Keystone XL phase of the system was formally proposed in 2008, and included another route from Hardisty to Steele City, but instead traversing a shorter route through Montana, South Dakota and Nebraska in order to connect to the Bakken field in Montana and North Dakota. (A second part of the Keystone system, from Cushing to Port Arthur, TX was originally part

of the XL project, but later severed into an altogether different project after State Department delays of the international portion of the pipeline. The Gulf Coast Extension was completed in 2014).

As the name suggests, the Keystone XL would have been a larger pipeline at 36 inches in diameter, and designed to transport around 830,000 barrels per day of oil (of which 100,000 bpd would be from the Bakken formation). While oil, natural gas, and other pipelines crisscross most parts of North America, Keystone XL would be the first to cross the sparsely-populated stretches of western South Dakota. Keystone XL's route deftly avoided the administrative boundaries of South Dakota's nine Native American reservations. As TransCanada would quickly discover however, the Lakota, Dakota, and Nakota – collectively known as the Oceti Ŝakowiŋ Oyate - have legally contested entire portion of western South Dakota stretching back to the Treaties of Fort Laramie signed in 1851 and 1868. In 1980, the US Supreme Court ruled that the taking was unjustly compensated, but the Oceti Ŝakowiŋ Oyate have refused to accept the financial settlement (Ostler 2011).

The groundwork for the Keystone XL announcement began in 2008, as TransCanada's contractors worked its way from Montana to Nebraska talking to landowners and collecting easements. Residents recall that TransCanada quickly and quietly worked to secure easements, seemingly to prevent communication and organization among property owners. Many landowners first heard of the pipeline from the appearance of contractors surveying their land from public roadsides. It seemed to them that there was little choice in signing easements, and a majority of landowners did not object to their financial compensation package. TransCanada presented those signing

voluntary easements with bonuses, while holdouts were promised a legal challenge through condemnation of property by eminent domain.

In South Dakota, most landowners signed easements in 2008 and 2009. A group of landowners formed Protect South Dakota Resources, an LLC which successfully negotiated more beneficial easement agreements for landowners. Although the terms of the negotiation cannot be disclosed, the entirety of the group had collectively signed easements by 2014. In Nebraska, by contrast, rumors of the pipeline's arrival preceded the land agents who were traveling the route of the pipeline from the north to the south. This, some organizers suggested to me, allowed Nebraska landowners extra time to organize in advance, and many refused to sign the proposed easements. In Nebraska, 16% of property owners along the pipeline's route refused to sign easements and engaged in litigation with TransCanada. Furthermore, the Nebraska portion of the route passed through the Sandhills region, a sensitive and unique ecological region characterized by grassy sand dunes, a high water table that flows through permeable soil, and unique wetland flora and fauna. The Sandhills are also the northernmost portion of the massive Ogallala Aquifer, which stretches geographically south to Texas and provides drinking and irrigation water to millions of people.

Following the official announcement of the pipeline proposal, TransCanada filed for permits with the US State Department, the South Dakota PUC and the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) in 2008. In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the State Department (as lead federal agency) hired Cardno Entrix to produce an environmental impact statement (EIS). The State Department began the review process in 2009, holding 20 scoping meetings along the

pipeline's route in order to determine the criterion that should be assessed. Upon completion of a draft EIS, the State Department was required by NEPA to solicit and respond to public comments from affected institutions and individuals on the proposed project and the DEIS. 19 public comment sessions were held in spring of 2010 along the pipeline's route. In response to the overwhelming number of comments received, the State Department was forced to extend the public comment period and add two more public solicitation meetings in Texas and Washington, D.C. The FEIS was released in August 2011, to which corresponded another open public comment period and public meetings in the state capitals of each of the states through which the pipeline passed.

Through responding to environmental review, the State Department determined that the pipeline route should not pass through the Nebraska Sandhills region. Additionally, the DEIS was plagued by reports that Cardno Entrix had conflicts of interest with TransCanada and other pipeline companies, resulting in a federal audit by the Office of Inspector General. An alternative route was proposed, which resulted in a draft supplemental EIS (SEIS) produced by Environmental Resources Management (ERM) in 2012, yet another consulting agency specializing in greenlighting pipelines (see Barry 2013 for another example of ERM's work). At this point, the southern part of the pipeline was approved by the State Department and despite fierce resistance across Texas and Oklahoma, was completed shortly thereafter. Public comments on the northern section were again held, and another public meeting was held in Grand Island, NE. The final SEIS was completed in 2014 and ultimately rejected by the State Department in November of 2015. In a statement, President Obama lamented that the pipeline had become "a symbol too often used as a campaign cudgel by both parties rather than a

serious policy matter" ("Statement by the President on the Keystone XL Pipeline" 2015). As with so many of his administration's policies, this was a cry against the politicization of what should have been a rationally-adjudicated process. The Keystone XL pipeline was revived again by President Trump, who – recognizing its symbolic importance – made its approval in 2017 his first act as executive officer.

Concurrent to the federal review process, state environmental and permitting review was also held over this period, and served as an important node in political organizing against Keystone XL. In South Dakota, the PUC managed the state review process for a right of way permit. The PUC public engagement process was divided into two different parts – an informal solicitation of public comments, and a more formal evidentiary hearing in front of the commissioners. The PUC held four public hearings in 2009, at which a total of 83 individuals offered their comments and 326 people attended. In 2010, the PUC approved the permit for four years. With the pipeline delayed at the federal level, the permit expired after four years and this process began again in 2014. Another public hearing was held in July 2015, followed by an evidentiary hearing later that month. Due to the sheer amount of evidence and number of intervenors, the evidentiary hearing was extended multiple times to a full nine days. Despite the State Department's rejection of Keystone XL a few weeks prior, in December 2015 the SD PUC decided to approve the permit anyway. In 2017, the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, the Yankton Sioux Tribe, and Dakota Rural Action appealed the PUC permit. The Sixth Circuit court upheld the certification and the case was appealed to the SD Supreme Court in 2018. In a twisted series of events, the Supreme Court discovered a procedural snafu that suggested the 2015 public hearing was completely unnecessary.

By 2010, organizing against the pipeline began accelerate on the Great Plains. A member-based progressive organization, Dakota Rural Action had initially been organizing for better deals for landowners whose land was crossed by the pipeline. But by this period, the group increasingly began to veer towards full opposition to Keystone. It joined in coalitions with Native Nations to form the NoKXL Dakota coalition. In Nebraska, a new organization called Bold Nebraska began to organize a prominent campaign based on contesting the use of eminent domain for private gain. Chapters of national conservation organizations such as the Audubon Society and Sierra Club began to make statements against the pipeline, especially its threat to the Sandhills. EJ groups like Plains Justice, Honor the Earth, and the Indigenous Environmental Network had been organizing against Keystone I, and continued legal, financial, and administrative support against Keystone XL.

This organizing against the pipeline was only later (and somewhat reluctantly) picked up on by national environmental groups. In particular, James Hansen, the head of NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies, began to prominently and repeatedly suggest that any infrastructure that would facilitate the combustion of the tar sands would be "game over" for the global climate (Hansen 2012; Romm 2011). Hansen, a native of Iowa, would sometimes describe his approach to stopping climate change as populist, (for example, at the 2017 American Association of Geographers annual meeting). The leadership of Native Nations against the pipeline flew largely under the radar of both environmental organizations and the press. The latter would continually reframe Keystone XL as another "jobs versus the environment" issue.

Figure 5: The Keystone XL Pipeline awaits approval in southwestern North Dakota (2013)

By 2012, the Keystone campaign had become the highest profile environmental struggle in the US. Pipeline opposition represented a fundamental change in model and strategy for organizations focused on climate change. The shift in strategy might be seen as a return to the principles of negation that underwrote the deep ecology and monkeywrenching movements of the 1970s and 80s. Such an assessment would not be entirely accurate, because the embrace of civil disobedience by even some of the most staunch Big Green organizations like the Sierra Club was coupled with an articulation of environmental populism and a call for mass mobilization. I'll return to populism in a moment, but before that it is worth documenting the character of the transformation. "In the mid- to late 2000s, the US climate movement was flailing and fractured, and had not unified around common opponents," a number of 350.org activists remember (Russell et

al. 2014, 167). Many of us within the climate movement felt that focusing on climate policy at a national and international level was alienating and a losing battle, for it was technical and did not connect to people's experiences or values. On the other hand, models derived from environmental justice organizing "seemed more capable of keeping carbon in the ground than lobbying efforts" (168). Additionally, climate organizers correctly saw that what was inspiring about such coalitional organizations was that they catalyzed mobilization through action rather than trying to create complete agreement of principles.

This series of realizations was drawn from extended mass civil disobedience on the White House lawn in 2011, in which 1,250 people were arrested over a two week period. This was not a classic direct action blocking a flow of goods, but instead a kind of symbolic form of civil disobedience. The event featured many celebrities, climate scientists, Native people, and students. It seemed to give the Keystone XL pipeline fight a broad prominence as the most prominent climate battle of the 2010s, as the struggle over the pipeline finally began to receive more complicated attention in the press. It also differed from past actions by targeting the Obama Administration's decision making power rather than only the corporations involved. As McKibben reflected, "every banner was a quotation from President Obama, every chant a hopeful call for him to act" (McKibben 2013, 63).

Figure 6: People Power (St. Paul, MN 2015)

The broad-based "unlikely alliances" model served as a framework for the Reject & Protect protest that brought the Cowboy-Indian Alliance to Washington, D.C., and the People's Climate March in New York City, both in 2014. The People's Climate March featured around its periphery more radical offshoots, including the ecosocialist coalition System Change not Climate Change (SNNCC) and Flood Wall Street. But by this point, the populist successes of Keystone XL-style organizing began to bump up against real limits. The march spatially organized groups into identity blocs, several of which were at real odds with each other – such as green capitalism and anti-corporate campaigns, or more prominently, the inclusion of Green Zionist and Free Palestine organizations. This led many to the conclusion that the PCM was, in short, merely "a PR campaign" (Gupta 2014). While a number of environmental justice organizations participated, they also did so with a number of critical lenses to the funding and messaging of the march (Rising Tide North America 2014).

Other radicals, such as the Gramscian Jonathan Smucker, argued that the People's Climate March was a somewhat distended populist mobilization available for both popularization and radicalization (Smucker and Premo 2014). As I wrote at the time with some comrades, "The 'people' of the People's Climate Movement are still missing…The greatest opportunity of the PCM might be its vast potential for desubjectivication of climate activists away from UNFCCC, 350.org, and similar institutions attempting to recuperate the mobilization, and towards liberatory, inventive, and collectively anti-capitalist social formations" (Out of the Woods (collective) 2014).

I have shown that the strategies of the left wing of the Big Greens was, in part, drawn from the actions, rhetoric, and concrete relationships with anti-pipeline organizers in the Great Plains. But how did the emergent strategies of prominent environmental organizations change the operation of political organizing on "the frontlines" of the pipeline's route? That Big Greens were now claiming to be doing "grassroots" political organizing a la environmental justice and rural community organizing frustrated many. The benefits of such a shift in focus were unequally distributed to different organizations who were actually organizing on the Great Plains. 350.org in particular made important (political and financial) connections with Bold Nebraska that amplified the re-emergence of the Cowboys & Indians Alliance against the pipeline. Organizations in South Dakota were annoyed that Bold Nebraska received all the fame (and fortune) from the CIA, and rumors swirled about to whom this money was traveling. In the most cynical analysis I heard, some even claimed that Bold Nebraska was now being funded by railroad companies afraid that pipeline construction would damage their earnings.

But most folks, in the classic rural Midwest manner, made a more roundabout critique of Bold Nebraska for their glitz and glamour while, as Sheila put it, "we did the real, tough work of organizing." When asked about 350.org, farmers and ranchers told me that they followed what was happening but felt that it was "a bit fake." One rancher in particular told me that the only real benefit of the national attention was that "I might get a chance to meet Darryl Hannah." Nonetheless, all were heartened by the tantalizingly close victory of the campaign against Keystone, and adoption of populism as a signifier of the strategy began to grow. In South Dakota, Rick Weiland (unsuccessfully) ran for the US Senate on a campaign that largely hinged on his "aggressive opposition" to the Keystone XL pipeline. Weiland would argue that outsiders "just don't get our state…It's more of a populist state than a red state" (Sargent 2014). Bold Nebraska leader Jane Kleeb would reflect in an article titled "Middle America Wants Less Establishment, More Populism" that "A movement of We the People, in the Heartland of America, still exists and is one of the big reasons we stopped a pipeline" (Kleeb 2016).

Importantly, then, populism became not just a political form but also itself a signifier and identity of those fighting for property rights and against elites and the establishment. But it had two not-always-complimentary sides which claimed the mantle of "grassroots" populism. First, one side emphasized the building of coalitions of unlikely alliances, including among Native and non-Native, rural and urban, left and right. Although this was strategic in scope, it also created a kind of pluralistic anti-politics that tried to build as broad of a base as possible and appeal to *everyone*. Although political transformation was possible, what united pipeline opponents was a common unity against the pipeline. I associate this side of environmental populism with the feeling of being

dragged back into the muck of pragmatic politics. If we were to defeat the pipeline, we needed as many people as possible and thus to avoid offending or marginalizing anyone. The other side also tried to build a mass movement through coalition building, but it was not necessarily premised on "unlikely alliances" as a strategic end in itself. Instead, it worked through a principled fidelity to (environmental) justice and thus to incrementally transforming the political terrain. I associate this side of environmental populism its *utopian fidelity* towards political transformation.

To be entirely clear: not all pipeline opposition is populist in character. Yet many progressive citizens groups fighting the pipelines were decidedly populist, and I think there is good reason to identify them as such. First, they broadly used the language of "the people" pitted against a corrupt elite, corporations, or the state. Protest signs and public testimony frequently displayed slogans such as "people power," "people > pipelines," and "we the people…" as grounds for opposition. Second, due to the political culture of the upper Midwest, populist political formation holds some important territory in public discourse. Finally, although I had already been swayed while doing fieldwork in 2013 that populism was perhaps the best concept to characterize this movement, I was later shocked when individuals and groups, in interviews or in their own campaign materials, would explicitly and affirmatively *identify themselves as populists*. While I traversed some of the disagreements in the literature in Chapter 2, it is almost universally agreed that populism itself is not an identity, and rarely something affirmed. And yet here were folks who readily called themselves populists. Although this alone would not be enough in itself to confirm my argument, I do think it is extremely valuable information. An examination of the opposition to another pipeline can help confirm this.

Standing Rock, NoDAPL, and left-populism's internal tension

As the Keystone XL victory seemed more and more likely in the fall of 2015, this tension would continue to play out in the contestation of another pipeline, the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL). Proposed by Houston-based Energy Transfer Partners (ETP), DAPL was a 1,172 mile long pipeline designed to bring Bakken crude from western North Dakota across South Dakota and Iowa to southern Illinois. Because DAPL did not cross any international borders and its environmental impact deemed to be lesser, its permitting process was much less stringent. Whether for financial or national reasons, ETP also took a completely different strategy than TransCanada with regards to permitting and public relations. TransCanada adhered to the global industry standards of corporate social responsibility, which try to give the appearance of transparency, responsible infrastructure governance, community relations, indigenous and community consultation, and democratic decisionmaking. ETP by contrast did not seem to care much about community relations or PR strategy. Its goal was to get the pipeline in the ground as quickly as possible.

ETP helped fund the Midwest Alliance for Infrastructure Now (MAIN) coalition, an association of oil, gas, infrastructure, and building and trade unions associated with DAPL, MAIN ran a vicious and divisive campaign attempting to drive wedges in opposition coalitions and discrediting protestors as paid outside agitators. At public hearings in Iowa, for example, the room was packed with construction union members who had been bussed in from all over the state (as well as, it was rumored, from

neighboring states). The Iowa Utilities Board allowed pro- and anti-pipeline speakers to alternate public comments, giving the appearance of a balanced opposition between both groups. Due to its well-funded and seemingly reasonable positions, the MAIN Coalition was able to seize prime syndicated ideological space in local and state newspapers in the Dakotas and Iowa to spew blatant mistruths about the pipeline and protestors, to the endless frustration of left community organizations whose "opinions" were relegated to letters to the editor.[25]

The arrival of this petro-PR machine on the scene around 2015 and 2016 intensified, at times, disagreement about the direction that populist strategy might take, for appearing unified in message and strategy appeared tantamount. This was most visible in Iowa, where pipeline populism was more intensely split between on the one hand, top-down community organizations and on the other hand, small-scale grassroots organizers, many of whom were younger, more attuned to social justice, and had worked on the Bernie Sanders campaign. Both types of groups were loosely organized into the No Bakken Coalition, which included some twenty organizations with varying levels of involvement in organizing pipeline opposition. In an interview, one organizer further described the split as coinciding with gender as well. "It just seems like the men really like giving stump speeches behind the mic without actually listening to what people are saying on the ground." The appearance of MAIN and its attempts to discredit grassroots organizers as fraudulent and anti-democratic made it difficult to resolve the real and important political disagreements in the group, which in part stem from the populist paradox itself.

In contrast to Iowa, in South Dakota I found little collective organizing against DAPL. Although some of the same organizations and individuals from the Keystone XL battle opposed DAPL in South Dakota, the organizational infrastructure wasn't quite as strong due to lack of funding and some discord within some of these organizations. Consequently, I was astonished in talking to many landowners how much completely siloed and individualized research they had undertaken – one woman said she spent over ten hours a week for the last six months and had "a whole room full" of boxes of printed documents and news articles. I interviewed two neighboring farmers who had attended a public meeting together and later took separate paths. One hired a lawyer and negotiated a better deal, the other frequently posted on facebook about his misgivings but never joined an organized oppositional group. Although folks from various Native Nations opposed the pipeline yet again, its path through the eastern part of the state (along with neglect of consultation processes by ETP) seemed to make their involvement more difficult. In Summer 2016, I speculated that the lack of opposition might be, in part, because the pipeline crossed through eastern South Dakota, largely farmland instead of ranchland and with a slightly different political culture than the fiercely independent and libertarian western part of the state. I expected to write a postmortem about the failure of populism to sustain itself, flaming out in opposing Keystone XL and building no capacity for the future.

This thesis couldn't have been more wrong. In April 2016, a DAPL opposition camp popped up on the corner of the Standing Rock reservation in North Dakota, within a mile or so of the pipeline's Missouri River crossing near the South Dakota border. Over the next few months, organizing would expand and then explode. Thousands of

individuals and groups from around the world – among them, representatives from hundreds of Native Nations – streamed in to North Dakota. The message of *mni wiconi* (water is life) and the reframing of protestors as "water protectors" became game changers for the future of decolonial environmental justice movements, anti-extraction movements globally, and perhaps even the climate justice movement. Thankfully, the events and impact of the DAPL blockades have been told numerous times in books, movies, and blog posts that center Lakota and Dakota history, politics, land, language, and experiences (Estes 2016; NYC Stands with Standing Rock Collective 2016), and will be expanded by many more in the coming years.

Figure 7: An early No DAPL protest. Only around 20 of us showed up in Bismarck, ND, July 2016. Just a few weeks later, hundreds and then thousands would join us.

My contribution to this conversation is not to add another big picture perspective. Nor do I have any interest whatsoever in giving an account of my own participation in this struggle, which I immediately decided was outside the scope of this research project,

for both my own political reasons and those of the movement. Instead, I want to again follow how the Standing Rock blockade and NoDAPL movement was received by the environmental populists in Iowa. I do not want to give the impression that the blockade was primarily or most importantly about transforming non-Native people. Instead, I want to show how the blockade exposes something important about populist environmentalism.

The leadership of the Oceti Ŝakowiŋ Oyate at Standing Rock forced pipeline populists in Iowa to contend with the history and present of settler colonialism and the spatial and political relationship between their primarily white settler organizations and a radical decolonial movement. While many individuals and groups had been working in coalitions with Native Nations, as I argue in Chapter 3 they often saw themselves as analogues of Native people by way of a common experience of dispossession. By flipping the discourse from land to water, and by centering Native histories and experiences of survivance against colonialism, the previous "common experience" approach to pipeline populism could no longer hold.

This provoked two completely different reactions among pipeline opponents in Iowa. On the one hand, many settlers dramatically transformed the *utopian fidelity* of their opposition by reading about or traveling to Standing Rock. This shift precipitated both tactical and ideological changes. Tactically, some opposition groups in Iowa began to support encampments and blockades on pipeline river crossings, which had mostly been started by anarchist or otherwise radical groups. Others immediately recognized that the Standing Rock struggle was not "in" North Dakota, but in fact everywhere on the continent. They began to work more closely with the Meskwaki and other Native folks in

Iowa. And they began to enact their opposition through direct action and even sabotage. Ideologically, they began to center the environmental justice effects of fossil fuel extraction and shift their opposition almost completely to center water.

On the other hand, some instead instrumentalized Standing Rock to re-center white settler experiences of pipeline opposition; they felt a *drag or gravity* back into a redemptive settler position due to an imagined limit to politics. In what I take to be either tactless or simply unaware acts, stump speeches and social media posts often took an upsettingly chiding tone in reminding readers and participants in these movements that "we have been resisting this pipeline for years too!" As one Iowan community organizer put it at a protest in September 2016, "we're standing here today with the farmers, landowners, and our tribal allies to stop this assault on our water, land, and property rights…There's a lot of media attention up in North Dakota, but [we should] recognize [it's been] the landowners who have been the most important down here in Iowa." Water quality – let alone Native sovereignty – was seen as too touchy of a discourse in a region dominated by industrial agriculture-caused pollution. So instead of understanding that water was under threat everywhere, they doubled down on eminent domain and private property violations.

Again, both of these responses can be understood as following from populist organizing and revealing the underlying tension of populist willing between utopian fidelity to transformation and the drag back into the muck of politics. The former attempted to adapt and transform pipeline populism by dissolving its own past ideological stances and political strategies into the Native-led struggle against the pipelines. The latter attempted instead accepted the challenge of transforming the Native-led struggle

into its own ideological and political positions. That *both* can be understood as emergent from populist responses affirms an understanding of populism as not so much a consolidation of unity, but a staging and eventual dissolution of "the people." Out of populism leak new and different ideologies, including some quite radical possibilities. How any populism resolves these leakages can determine its relative openness to transformation or inertia – one of the most salient political questions for the left today.

Populism's edges: socialism, anarchism, decolonization

Before concluding, I want to briefly contrast populist pipeline opposition with three other loose, overlapping political forms: socialism, anarchism, and decolonization. These other forms precede, and run alongside pipeline populism. They sometimes emerge into direct contradiction with it; at other times, they adapt populism's affective infrastructure and political language to their more radical formations and ends. In the process, they transform populism into something else. However limited, I ultimately see pipeline populism as an important condition of the growing power of left political formations in the Great Plains. By relating to and learning from populism, activists found that other political opportunities became visible and actionable.

Democratic socialists

The unlikely presidential campaign of independent democratic socialist Bernie Sanders which began in 2016 reopened the question of socialism in a manner *verboten* in the United States since the mid-1950s red scare. As discussed earlier in this chapter, the eventual failure of the populist party in the Dakotas left in its wake active if marginalized

socialist movements in the early 1900s. Yet these had fizzled out by the 1920s economic boom. The Sanders campaign re-opened the language and meaning of social democracy, radically shifting the political horizon in a hegemonically conservative region.

A number of conditions made democratic socialism palatable in the Great Plains pipeline opposition movements. First, unlike his opponent Senator Hillary Clinton, Sanders had long opposed the Keystone XL pipeline. His broadly populist discourse calling out corporate power for trampling on everyday people was not mere rhetoric, but was backed up by the proactive investigative stance his office took with regards to the charges of corruption leveraged against Cardno Entrix and later ERM, the firms charged with producing the Keystone XL EIS. Second, Sanders' "outsider" style of campaigning resonated with a deep skepticism of beltway politicians in the Great Plains. His rejection of the dominant liberal discourse on gun control, for example, resonated with rural hunters, while gestures towards funding small-town infrastructure - especially roads and water infrastructure systems - were astonishingly effective in enrolling even conservative cash-strapped rural administrators. Sanders also hired prominent Native American organizers and advisors as part of his campaign and developed the most comprehensive (if still insufficient) plan to "Empower Tribal Nations" of any presidential candidate in recent years.

Finally and most importantly, the Sanders' campaign was built through a kind of federalism of organization. His talk of giving power back to the people was not mere rhetoric, but was enacted prior in the form of the campaign itself. Building in some ways on the Obama campaign's 2008 organizing strategy, the Sanders campaign sought to create chapters of community organizing for local strategy. And, not surprisingly, this led

some to feel empowered to seize and push what he dubbed "Our Revolution" in different directions. These situations made the campaign into something much more than the election of an individual kowtowing to the people. Nor did Sanders simply create a proper political position waging opposition to the forces of capital. Rather, the campaign *itself* became a site of struggle.

Due to its status as the first state to hold a Democratic Party primary, political campaigning in Iowa is a massive ritual. One might think that just an hours' drive away in South Dakota, a marginal state for the Democratic Party and a deeply conservative place altogether, that the discourse of socialism might be less operable. Yet nothing irks South Dakotans more than abandoning them as if they are marginal, something the Democratic Party has done since the 1980s, and the Sanders campaign's approach to the state differed from previous experiences.

At this time in the United States, the broad discourse of populism was reaching a new volume, and it resonated quite clearly with South Dakota's political history. In June 2016, former South Dakota senator James Abourezk noted that "I do believe [Sanders] can win [South Dakota] because of his populism...That's one of the things that can even win over Republicans is if you have a populist policy." The Sanders campaign's "50 state strategy" meant that unlike almost every other Democratic presidential candidate, he actually had a campaign office and traveled through the state, visiting Pine Ridge, Rapid City, and Sioux Falls. Even this small act had the effect of raising his profile in the state.

But many of the community leaders working against Keystone XL also opposed this "politicization" of the pipeline opposition movement. One community organizer in Iowa told me that the split among opposition groups was largely between "Bernie

supporters and organizers" on the one hand and "those who didn't want to rock the boat too much" on the other. In Nebraska, by contrast, the populist political opposition eventually and full-heartedly endorsed Sanders, and Bold Nebraska's leader Jane Kleeb became a part of the Nebraska DNC by in part riding the wave of Sanders support in that state.

Although Sanders won Montana, Wyoming, North Dakota, and parts of Iowa and Nebraska, he did not win the state of South Dakota nor the presidential primary. Nonetheless, the geography of the state's vote is interesting. The state was completely split between its eastern and western halves, commonly referred to as "east river" and "west river." The east is seen as more classically liberal, to the extent that such an assessment can be made in a deeply conservative state. The region west of the Missouri River has historically been more conservative and libertarian, but also more populist in its political ideology. And, most notably, the West River region, through which Keystone XL traveled, has the history of contestation via the 1851 and 1868 Treaties of Fort Laramie. West river counties voted almost entirely for Sanders, while the east voted for Clinton. Although I cannot stretch to make any causal claims about this relationship, I do think it demonstrates the possibility for populist political candidacy as a site of struggle in rural and small town communities in the western US.

This drastic transformation of the horizon of the possible in a place as supposedly devoid of radical left politics as South Dakota is the most important remnant of the Sanders campaign. Sanders *did* use both populist rhetoric and political formations as a part of his campaign, and these were not incidental to his success. But fidelity to the the name "socialism" belies commitments that go above and beyond the power to the people.

As Not An Alternative argued, “Just as Occupy was never about one group, so is the Sanders’ campaign not about him. It’s about changing the conditions of political possibility” (Not An Alternative 2016).

Anarchists

Unlike democratic socialism, anarchist politics (of various kinds) have been prevalent and long-standing, if totally marginal, aspects of contemporary left politics in the United States. Even in places like Rapid City and Sioux Falls, South Dakota, it doesn’t take long to find anarchist zines, infoshops, bookstores, and the like. Admittedly I had been involved in some quasi-anarchist institutions like Food Not Bombs since a young age. The broad appeal of anarchism in the US West can, in part, be tied to a regional and historic opposition to interference and control from the federal government. Unlike in some parts of the US, this is frequently not simply framed as “states’ rights,” but an active opposition to both federal and state governance. It is not an entirely awkward jump to arrive at a version of anarchism from such a basis.

Most important to the pipeline movement were anarchist tactics of blockading. Although Standing Rock brought blockade and direct action tactics to the mainstream, small groups had been conducting tree sits, lockdowns on construction equipment, individual acts of sabotage, and other actions all along Keystone XL’s route, especially in the southern leg in Oklahoma and Texas. The Tar Sands Blockade, Great Plains Tar Sands Resistance, and some of the larger climate justice groups like Rising Tide North America frequently held direct action trainings and began to radicalize many of the local populist activists. Native and decolonial anarchists were a part of or allied with many

autonomist anarchist groups, who (at least from some perspectives) often times had a much clearer and respectful understanding of respectful solidarity with Native Nations in opposition to settler colonial domination.

But this long-standing anarchist pipeline opposition has flown under the radar a bit because - for good reason - they frequently had to keep a low profile. This was in part out of necessity because anarchists and other radicals were subject to far more surveillance and policing than other pipeline opponents. Although the actions taken against the DAPL water protectors have received much more attention, local law enforcement officers and the FBI had been working with TransCanada since 2012 to coordinate their surveillance of these individuals and groups. They had surreptitiously infiltrated a number of pipeline opposition events, and were performing a kind of proto-ethnography of the movement, dividing the movement into eco-activists, Occupy members, Native American activists, anarchists, and local Oklahomans (Federman 2013). This strategy follows in the footsteps of the early- and mid-2000s "green scare," which sought to redefine environmental activism as "eco-terrorism" and thus extend the auspices of post-9/11 counterterrorism to domestic individuals and groups. Such actions have a chilling effect that extends beyond radical environmentalism to Leftist dissent of any kind.

While anarchist organizing in the wake of Occupy Wall Street can sometimes espouse the subject of the people and the idea of popular sovereignty in action (Gerbaudo 2017), it seems to me that most anarchist groups fighting Keystone XL did not necessarily see themselves building a mass movement of the people. The principles of direct action, while laudable in many ways, are often times premised on foregoing

symbolic or ideological struggle. Messaging, campaigning, and press releases are seen to be nonprofit PR tactics and wastes of time. This, it seems to me, is a mistake. In foregoing symbolic struggle, we cede the *images* of direct action to others, and it is these frames which frequently determine how pipeline opposition can be rendered in the public eye.

Such a situation runs up against difficulties when anarchist and populist organizations come into contact. For many populists, the anarchist is imagined to be an unruly disruptor and troublemaker rather than a redeemer of democracy. Take this example from 2017: the organization Bold Nebraska organized a "March to Give Keystone XL the Boot!" in conjunction with the Nebraska Public Service Commission permitting meetings for the revived Keystone XL. Working with the Sierra Club and 350.org, they also held a Pipeline Activist Summit seeking to train individuals from across the Midwest. In response, an anonymous call was posted on the website It's Going Down for an "anti-colonial, anti-capitalist, anti-fascist bloc" to participate in the march. This flourishing document persuasively suggested it was "time to embrace a deeper critique and sharper tactics to stop [Keystone XL] once and for all." The author goes on to argue that "In this moment it should be clear that this fight is not over one pipeline, but against a complex web of systems. While we wish to see this pipeline project stopped, confronting a broader history of colonialism and genocide cannot be shoved under the rug." The call suggests that individuals and groups wear masks and generally anonymize themselves, but make their presence known at the march.

The call was completely intolerable to Bold Nebraska, which began a media outcry, posting that they "do not support or welcome anarchists or others wearing masks

to the march." Anonymity and confrontation were against the supposedly celebratory spirit of the march, and for whatever reason, the organizers thought that the call suggested "instigators or disruptors" leading to violent action that would threaten or scare families, children, and Native allies. The presupposition, as one anarchist friend told me, was that families, children, or Native people cannot be anarchists. Furthermore, it was as if masks were not incredibly important on the frontlines at Standing Rock. Another suggested it was quite clearly a play by "white activist culture" to take ownership of a movement that was not theirs to own, suggesting the organization "situated itself with every other peace-policing liberal organization that refuses to resist and instead sits comfortably within its almost entirely white-led, privileged, petition-signing, police-sanctioned/celebratory march status-quo."

What most surprised me about this situation was not that pipeline populists in 2016 were threatened by any kind of disruption that might not appeal to lowest common denominator politics. This "won't somebody think of the children"-ism is all too common in nonprofit culture. Nor was the leveraging of "Tribal allies" difficult to understand, even in the wake of Standing Rock. It was quite clear, as I argue in Chapter 4, that many populist pipeline opponents would double down on themselves as "good allies" for the sake of the image. Instead, it was that so many of my friends from the lilly-livered mid-2000s youth climate movement had become transformed by its failure and by the Keystone XL and DAPL struggles against the tactics and language in which we initially participated. Anecdotally, this seems to suggest that climate activists like me had learned something from our attempts to build what we called at the time "people power," becoming radicalized as we attended to the limitations of our frame. We had to fail better.

This process hurts, but it was necessary in part in order to truly understand the stakes and strategy of the field of pipeline opposition.

Decolonization

Scholars and activists alike have begun to tell the stories of Lakota and Dakota mobilization against the pipelines and situating Keystone XL and DAPL opposition with a long history of anti-colonial political action for sovereignty and survival (Estes 2013, 2014, 2016; Grossman 2017; Whyte 2017). In a scholarly world where "decolonization" has come to seem heady, abstract, or metaphorical (Tuck and Yang 2012; Esson et al. 2017), it is important to foreground the fact that anti-colonial or decolonial activities increasingly oriented left political struggle in and beyond the Dakotas. These included opening conversation between Native and non-Native activists, building trust and reconciliation, challenging the leadership roles and hierarchies of pipeline opponent groups, collectively blockading the transport of pipeline and oil extraction infrastructure on reservation highways, and transferring, seizing, or re-appropriating/ex-appropriating landed private property and federal or state lands. As I have framed this project, I intentionally refuse an analysis of these fragile and generative spaces.

In Chapter 4, I will contrast decolonial activities with the maintenance of attachments to private property in pipeline populism. Before this more critical analysis, I want to demonstrate how the most interesting of the populist political groups approached the difficult problem of decolonization. While conducting exploratory fieldwork in the summer of 2012, I met with Sheila, one of the most keen and strategic non-Native community organizers involved in building coalitions against the pipeline. Sheila gave

me the most complete ‘lay of the land’ in terms of pipeline opponents and some of the “juiciest dirt” in her words about internal disagreements amongst organizations and within the movement.

Most importantly, however, she said that her organization of farmers, ranchers, and rural and small town folks (along with some of its partners) was beginning to think about more explicitly foregrounding decolonial activities amongst its non-Native base. “It’s not only about getting along or something. What I think joining together [with Native allies] against Keystone has taught us is that we have a lot of work to do. And we’ve been pushed, in a friendly but firm way by the tribal folks. So, we’re going to try to do that.” Sheila’s organizing strategy was pushed well outside of her training and expectations. “They always tell us we need to be decolonizing, to be taking care of our own people.”

Just a few years later, this organization had gone through an internal split, which included funding turmoil and division in the direction it would take. Sheila moved away from South Dakota, following the path of many rural community organizers forced to follow temporary jobs across the west. But the work she did had radicalized many of the farmers and ranchers who remained in opposition to the pipeline. I was shocked to see them on the frontlines and behind the scenes of the DAPL blockade, foregrounding whenever possible (as some of them had for years) decolonial strategies for building power.

Conclusion

These slices of history are meant to provide both an adequate background into the events and social groups that compose environmental populism on the Great Plains as well as provide evidence towards an understanding of the specificity of the populist form of environmental organizing. First, I demonstrated how the organizing of the Farmer's Alliance and the People's Party in South Dakota were premised in many ways on a kind of environmental politics, contesting the boundaries and consolidations of land, political participation, and expertise through the figure of "the people." Second, I argued that this "prairie populism" can be extended not through the political discourse of Democratic Party politicians, but rather through environmental justice and treaty rights movements of the 1980s. Finally, I gave an account of pipeline opposition that emphasized its populist aspects, both on a regional and national scale. I argued that populism can be characterized as actualizing a tension in its willing between its *utopian fidelity* to transformation and its *drag* into the muck of politics.

The implications of this chapter, more than any other, are with regards to climate activism and politics. I do not wish to chide or judge from the outside, but instead to sharpen and clarify a tension that has, in some way, been a part of every political movement of which I've been a part. In taking a distance from some pipeline opposition movements myself, the stakes of political struggle have become much clearer. The specific arena in which this is most visible is with regards to the politics of property rights in the context of race and settler colonialism in the US.

Chapter 4. “They're Treating Us Like Indians!”: property and racial capitalism in North American pipeline populism

“Whiteness is the ownership of the earth, forever and ever, Amen!”
W. E. B. Du Bois

Introduction

On a scorching late summer afternoon in September 2014, a gigantic crowd of pipeline opponents gathered in the remnants of a harvested corn field excited to hear the protest music of Willie Nelson and Neil Young. We had congregated in the direct path of the proposed 2,000 mile-long Keystone XL pipeline planned by TransCanada to bring tar sands oil from Alberta, Canada to Gulf Coast refineries in the US. The thousands gathered in the baking sun were there for many reasons: to oppose local environmental destruction wrought by the pipeline and the global effects of tar sands mining and combustion, the exploitation of migrant workers from Alberta to the Gulf Coast, the theft and exploitation of Native lands, the use of eminent domain to cross landowner property, and more affirmatively, the solidarity that appears through art, music, and celebration, the opportunities of local food, clean energy, and community organizing. We were cowboys, ranchers, hippies, activists, elders, t-shirt hawkers, non-profit overlords, hemp growers, party leaders, corn and soybean farmers, and children, all seemingly united in opposition to the pipeline.

Donning a t-shirt referencing the First Nations movement Idle No More, Young began a rousing rendition of the classic left protest song “This Land is Your Land” with lyrics modified to be about the Keystone XL struggle. The proposition of anti-pipeline organizations gathered here was that what united our different identities as a political

movement was our desire to protect the land. But given ongoing indigenous resurgence in North America, the large crowd of mostly (but not only) white people singing of a desire for a restoration of their inalienable right to private property was troubling.[26] Although some of these same political organizations would help stall Keystone XL and DAPL, moments like this rendition of "This Land is Your Land" demonstrated to me how pipeline opposition could also renew settler desires for the defense of landed private property. These desires are constitutive of social demands and identities that become organized in populist politics. Through populist politics defending property, I argue, environmentalism is put in service of maintaining the status quo of racial capitalism.

Theorization of property and race in Marxist political ecology has been unable to account for the centrality of race to capitalism without reducing it to class or culture. This can be rectified if instead we understand private property as not merely a cultural relation with the environment, but structurally racial to its core. This article seeks to advance this claim through analysis of how the defense of private property by white settlers conditions a populist environmentalism. In my argument, *property immanently produces anxieties and desires that are constitutive of social demands and identities that become organized in populist politics*. In the first section, I examine political ecologies of property and race. I draw on Cedric Robinson to account for the fundamental specificity of whiteness to the maintenance of private property as an element of racial capitalism. From Denise Ferreira da Silva I further borrow the insight that the historical method and ontology that underwrites cultural analysis of race maintains the main bisecting structure of racial subjectivity: the production of a seemingly free or "transparent" subject of whiteness

which is produced in contrast to an "affectable" racialized population subjected to nature or history.

I then use this framework to show how the ongoing defense of private property reactivates the desires of white subjects participating in populist politics of pipeline opposition in South Dakota, Nebraska, and Iowa. Settler landowners felt that by dispossessing them of their private property rights, pipeline companies were "treating them like Indians." This phrase is revealing as a strained attempt at understanding primitive accumulation transformed into a grievance for the liberal rights and privileges seemingly slipping out of the fingers of white property owners.

What political operations make this assemblage of interests and desires that link property and race coherent and iterative, and to whom? How might we understand the affective pull settlers feel towards property as a functional part of what Elizabeth Povinelli calls "settler late liberalism" (2016), that is, as an attempt to fix indigenous relational ontologies as merely a part of the recognition and multicultural governance of difference? Can it help us understand "what white people want" (Povinelli 2017) in the broader contemporary context of reactionary white supremacy? The analogy might have helped construct a "common interest" among settlers and Native Nations in defending the land against the pipeline. Yet I argue this lowest-common-denominator politics reinscribes the transparent subject of whiteness, which re-emerges in the position of the white landowner resentful of his or her loss of autonomy and freedom to enjoy their private property. I conclude by examining how political ecology might attend to the displaced (but not erased) possibilities for divesting from property and the transparent subject of whiteness.

Political ecologies of property and race

Political ecologists have devoted extensive thought to privatization, enclosure, primitive accumulation, and the origins and global spread of private property (Heynen et al. 2007; Mansfield 2009; Peet and Watts 1996, 2004). Yet when examining resource conflict in North America, many Marxist political ecologists treat the production of private property as bereft of racial consequences or having only contingently racialized effects. On the other hand, political ecologies of race have principally examined governance of nature and the environment through the cultural politics that naturalize racial formations (D. S. Moore, Kosek, and Pandian 2003). However, because this framework accepts that race is primarily discursively, historically, or culturally constructed, racial inequalities can sometimes appear as a secondary expression of 'more real' material or economic relationships. The consequence is that race is completely absent from many political ecological analyses of property and privatization, or that it appears only as a secondary predicate to gender or class difference (Mollett and Faria 2013).

In the spirit of sympathetic critique, I argue that Marxist approaches in political ecology have not attended to the specifically racial implications of private property under settler colonialism and racial capitalism. I undertake this argument with the understanding that political ecology is a plural and diverse interdisciplinary subfield. Cognate approaches from critical environmental justice studies, critical indigenous theory, and the new political ecologies of race undertaken by many of my peers also have the power to "generate debate and dissent over [political ecology's] approach, its internal consistency, its conceptual apparatuses and its ability to wrestle with the problems

thrown up by history" (Peet and Watts 2004, 17). My contribution to this dialogue is informed by Cedric Robinson's concept of racial capitalism and Denise Ferreira da Silva's analysis of the transparent subject of whiteness. Through this analysis, I offer explanatory power for understanding how settler colonial attachments to property maintain white supremacy and, more broadly, how private property produces racial subjects.

Shifting property and land-tenure regimes have been a foundational object of analysis for political ecology. As Prudham argues, "Concern with the interconnections among property rights, commodification…and conjoined dynamics of social and environmental change is one of the core features of the political ecology tradition" (2015, 430). Political ecologists have demonstrated that transformations from common or customary property regimes to private or exclusive orders are frequently accomplished through appropriation and accumulation by capitalist organizations enmeshed in colonial and post-colonial power relationships. Privatization of land has a constitutive role in producing "free" laborers, famine, and environmental degradation (Peet and Watts 2004) and remakes and mediates understandings of the relationship between the natural and social world (Mansfield 2009). Recent examinations have broadened views of property to examine primitive accumulation and land grabbing as not only accumulation and commodification, but also variously about social control, access, and investment (T. M. Li 2014; Peluso and Lund 2012). Suffice to say that political ecology research and theory is well-steeped in examination of property.

Yet for the most part, Marxist-inspired political ecologies of property have not centrally featured an analytics of race. By contrast, those working within an approach we

might call the cultural politics of race and nature seek to understand "how both 'race' and 'nature' as social, historical, and cultural constructs…are materially consequential" (D. S. Moore, Kosek, and Pandian 2003, 47). Drawing on poststructuralism and the British cultural studies tradition, the innovative and synthetic work of Moore, Kosek, and Pandian critiqued political ecology for its structuralism and inattention to the racial meanings that saturate nature (2003, 16). From this perspective, cultural politics was repositioned as one of many forces determining how race and nature are intertwined, known, and contested (2003, 2). Through cultural attachments to place and environments, subjects come to know themselves and others as racialized. The authors powerfully argue that race and nature ought to be explained with reference to their *historical articulation* (2003, 3) – that is, the way they are enunciated and linked in certain instances through a laborious process of meaning-making. Race and nature, they argue, are constructed out of both material and symbolic elements. Through practices and discourses, cultural identities and differences are interwoven, and it is within this sphere which the seeds of resistance and struggle can also be found.

In this approach, historical yet contingent cultural politics territorialize or spatialize race. Donald Moore argues that "conquest *racialized* rights to rule and to land" (D. S. Moore 2005, 71), demonstrating that the way in which technologies of land and property administration sustained racial hegemony even through (ostensible) decolonization. He argues that the efficacy of articulated material assemblages "hinges on contingent cultural politics" of this kind (D. S. Moore 2005, 25). A similar line of argumentation has been important in first world political ecologies. James McCarthy's opening work in this regard argues that "tradition, custom, or rights linked to ethnic or

racial identities are still regularly invoked in environmental disputes in the United States" (McCarthy 2002, 1292). Jake Kosek's exploration of the administration and contestation of forests and land in northern New Mexico further demonstrates how property ownership was "bound…to blood, both as a bodily material and as a marker of difference" (Kosek 2006, 38). In this argument, race and land are articulated in a historical manner, and as Kosek argues, "northern New Mexican forest politics are a direct result of these histories" (Kosek 2006, 21). Thus, the distilled argument is that race was historically fashioned through culture, resulting in present inequalities. Because culture and history are not "natural," exposing meanings attached to nature as sites of political struggle defines this approach.

These literatures have done much to expose the importance of ongoing processes of racialization that partition spaces in order to make life survivable for white people and debilitating, exhausting, or exterminable for racialized others. Political ecologists have critically exposed the powerful work that concepts of nature do in building attachments to place and understandings of race. Yet in part because of theoretic divergences between Marxist political ecology and poststructuralist approaches, the specific relations that exist among race and capitalism are unclear. On the one hand, it is uncertain whether capitalism *does* anything to race and racial discourses if cultural politics is understood as a relatively floating or contingent play of ideology and discourse. On the other hand, when capitalism is taken as the foundational base counterposed to the historical or ideological construction of race, the economic all too easily assumes the position of the subject which *expresses* itself as racial inequality. Although he was arguing against precisely such an expressionist position, Hall's oft-cited statement that "race is the

modality through which class is lived" (S. Hall 1996, 55) is frequently reduced to such a position. Despite the fact that the racial is centered in analyses of the cultural politics of nature, race thus often appears "only as an unbecoming aid to (economic) class subjection" (da Silva 2007, xxvii), or as an effect of culture or nation in social scientific inquiry (da Silva, 2007:xxxv).

In *Toward a Global Idea of Race*, Denise Ferreira da Silva argues that to take race as a site-specific historical product occludes the widespread consolidation of racial science and history. This includes the global slave trade and franchise or settler colonialism, of course, but also finance and extractive capitalism, the disciplines of philosophy, science, history, and geography, global climate change, and the drive to institute and justify landed private property regimes across the entire planet (Lowe 2015). That racial science and history also *produced* globality as an effect, da Silva argues, suggests that viewing racial projects as disconnected historical events with contingent interior historical identities reinforces the absent-presence of this globality (da Silva 2007, 29). This is not to say that racial formations should be viewed instead as homogeneous, necessary, or self-same. Instead, it is to show that the concepts of racial formation, racialization, culture, and history are also capable of carrying with them what Silva calls a hidden "transparency thesis" which she takes as foundational to the production of racial difference.

To summarize, Silva suggests that the production of the "transparent" European subject in both scientific and historical discourses is dependent upon the simultaneous rendering of all racial others as "affectable." By affectability, it is meant that unlike the Euro-American subject's understanding of itself as free and undetermined, racialized

others are subjects that appear determined by their interior development or by their exterior material relationships. To be affectable is, in one of its guises, to be open to relations with one's natural or social environment. Affectability is produced in contrast to the supposed non-affectability or "transparency" of European subjects, who take themselves as capable of transcending both their interior histories and exterior material environments.

Silva argues that when social scientists maintain that race is produced through the particularity of cultural or historical difference they reproduce this post-Enlightenment structure. This is accomplished in two ways. First, the chauvinistic position of the social scientist who supposedly stands outside history and the material determinations they study reproduces themselves as fully self-conscious and thus capable of liberating themselves from this very determination. Second, by attempting to ameliorate this difference by importing racial subjects into the transparent subject position, social scientists can trivialize or forget those very relationships of openness to affectability. In the context of North American settler colonialism, this allows dispossession to turn into a mobile metaphor available to appropriation by white subjects who in refiguring themselves as innocent retain the assumption that they can (re)escape determination (Tuck and Yang 2012).

In contrast to an assured cultural analysis, Silva suggests that Marxist approaches offer at the very least some "promises [of] uneasiness" (2007:192). Silva is notably critical of Marxism for its reliance on visions of liberation that reproduce transparency. Nonetheless, Silva argues that because Marx and Engels take into account that "consciousness [is] an effect of material production," they center "actual conditions [and

thus] open up the possibility of a critical analysis of the social in which spatiality – where 'being and meaning' emerge in exteriority-affectability – became the privileged moment of signification" (da Silva 2007, 192). This requires some unpacking. What Silva is indicating is that historical materialism offers the possibility of a quasi-scientific method which "refuses to presuppose transparency" (2007, 193) in the social subjects it studies by investigating spatiality as the material conditions of their production. This method allows the examination of the subject as racially produced *through* its very disavowal of race as a condition of its production. Although racial capitalism is by no means the only route through which the transparent subject of whiteness is produced, it is absolutely necessary for capital's functioning. Marxist analysis could thus refuse to posit a self-conscious subject by placing the liberal, white subject of transparency back into the mediated social world of land, labor, and exchange that conditions its interests and desires.

This rejoinder with historical materialism suggests an affinity with Cedric Robinson's conceptualization of racial capitalism (Chakravartty and da Silva 2012). The concept of racial capitalism designates not a zone or attribute of capitalism, but that raciality cannot be extricated from capitalism's conditions. Property is not the only mechanism through which political ecologists could bring an analysis of racial capitalism into their field, but it is one of the more solidified mechanisms that connects economic logics with the production of Euro-American and settler subjects. The upshot of a concept of racial capitalism is that race cannot appear as a predicate or expression of some underlying material or not-necessarily-racial economic, cultural, or national system, but instead as part of the structural conditions of capital's reproduction. "The development,

organization, and expansion of capitalist society pursued *essentially* racial directions [and] racialism would *inevitably* permeate the social structures emergent from capitalism," Robinson argues (emphasis added). Racial capitalism as a concept refers to "this development and to the subsequent structure as a historical agency" (1983, 2).

This does not mean that capitalism is responsible for all appearances of race or racism in a simplistic fashion, but that racial differentiation is part of the core of capitalism's very being. While specific articulations of racial differentiation with historic political economic systems might be understood as a matter of contingent spatial and historical encounters, the production of white European difference is a *necessary* condition of world-historical capital accumulation. As Pulido contends, "racial capitalism illuminates not only the inevitability of environmental injustice [under capitalism], but the structural challenges facing activists" (2017, 528). We might understand the production of the transparent subject of whiteness as one of these structural challenges to environmentalism. As Jodi Melamed argues, such a structure "repels accountability to ongoing settler colonialism" (2015, 84). In order to understand environmental political activism, then, we must understand racial capitalism as a structural condition facing its subjects.

The necessity of a concept of racial capitalism is further evident when examining the capitalist enactment of private property alongside Marxist critiques of property which fail to include race. For example, within political ecology a rich tradition has examined "so-called primitive accumulation" (Marx 1976, 871) – those moments of violent enclosure, theft, accumulation by dispossession, or accumulation by extra-economic means (Prudham 2015). But absent in such literatures is reference to the burgeoning

analysis that demonstrates primitive accumulation is conditioned through its structurally racial character (Chakravartty and da Silva 2012; Federici 2004; McIntyre and Nast 2011; Singh 2016).

Silva's analysis demonstrates how private property is further racial in operation and in ideology. In operation, the necessity of private property begets colonial and settler colonial dispossession of the land and resources of non-European peoples, dispossession of a relationship with land that is not analogous to property ownership (Estes 2013; Nichols 2018). Landed private property also sustains the partition of wealth accumulated in these moments. This occurs through the inheritance, indebtedness, and governance of property access (Bhandar and Toscano 2015; Chakravartty and da Silva 2012), the ontological production of black bodies as object or property (Bhandar 2014; Harris 1993; Sexton 2011), and the ongoing attempts at dispossession of Native Nations, Latinx, and Black land and livelihoods that geographers have argued are a structural element of the racial logic of global capitalism and the US settler state (Inwood and Bonds 2017; Safransky 2014). Finally, to re-emphasize Pulido's argument above, racial capitalism helps demonstrate the related and structural production of oppressive ecologies around the world, rather than understanding these as containing an interior history.

The ideology of property that emerges through these material relationships attempts to confirm that dispossession is *proper*. This is accomplished by connecting ownership with the civilizational moral superiority and patriarchal possessive individualism of the Euro-American subject, who is contrasted with a supposedly wasteful, degraded version of indigenous land use. Law serves as a link that connects and secures property's operation and ideology, and state violence inaugurates and maintains

the law-of/as-property (Blomley 2003; da Silva 2009), but so too do extra-economic desires that constitute settler subjectivities (Jafri 2013). White ownership, possession, and desire is thus recognized and ensconced in and as landed property itself (Harris 1993; Moreton-Robinson 2015). While it is important to understand precisely that "the primary motive for elimination [of Native peoples] is not race (or religion, ethnicity, grade of civilization, etc.) but access to territory" (Wolfe 2006, 388), such a position "evacuates the proprietorial nature of whiteness" (Day 2015, 107). Understandings of, access to, and rule over land, territory, and property are irreducibly tied to the production of a transparent and wealthy European subject.

Property is not eternal, and the anxieties and desires it produces frequently come under conflict because, as Blomley puts it, "property provides both a rationale for dispossession and a ground for its opposition" (Blomley 2016, 594). This is further due in no small part to the contradictions of the settler state and the survivance of Native Nations through their "deeply anti-capitalist self-determination struggles" (Estes 2013, 190). In the North American West, the production of property's racial subjects helps clarify the source of resentments congealed in reactionary white nationalist movements (Inwood and Bonds 2017) and the protection of settler colonial regimes of resource extraction (Bosworth Forthcoming; Dafnos 2013; Hoogeveen 2015; Pasternak and Dafnos Forthcoming). Although the whiteness and settler coloniality of environmental social movements is frequently noted by environmental justice scholars and activists (Black et al. 2014), linking the ongoing production of race with liberal property rights can help further explain the persistence of liberal strategies of exclusion in environmentalism. By examining the desire for land and consequent populist politics produced among white

landowners when property is threatened, the structural stakes of challenging racial capitalism and settler colonialism in North American environmentalism can be better clarified.

The anxieties of property

In the wake of blockades against the Dakota Access pipeline, many scholars and activists correctly view the contestation of pipeline infrastructures in North America as led by Native Nations (NYC Stands with Standing Rock Collective 2016). By contrast, the picture painted by the mainstream media in the early 2010s largely fitted this struggle not into the long history of the survivance of Native Nations and US settler colonialism, but rather into traditional narratives of US American environmental politics: the economy versus the environment (Kojola 2017). Opponents to the pipeline were generally portrayed to be elite, white environmentalists concerned about pristine nature, most notably in the case of Keystone XL, the Nebraska Sandhills region. The latter frame frequently overwrote the former. For example, despite showing an image of Native activists holding signs calling for upholding their treaty rights, a New York Times article from 2011 interprets the primary divide between “jobs versus the environment” and makes no mention of Native Nations (K. Johnson and Frosch 2011).

Many of the pipeline opponents in South Dakota and Nebraska would not have appeared to fit either narrative particularly well. Alongside environmentalists and Native Nations, a bloc of white farmers and ranchers opposed the pipeline primarily because their property rights were being usurped through the use of eminent domain.

Vociferously outspoken and regularly reminding that are “not bunny huggers,” it is with this latter group of rural non-Native landowners, community organizers, and concerned citizens that I conducted fieldwork in 2013-2016. Using interviews, participant observation at protests, community gatherings, and permitting hearings, and coding public comments, I sought to analyze the implications of pipeline populism, a new movement seizing American environmentalism from technocrats and policy wonks and returning it to “the people.”

“It all happened so fast,” Rick remembered. TransCanada’s land agents (likely contractors) he told me began traveling the pipeline’s route attempting to secure easements in 2008, well before the pipeline had even been announced. An earlier pipeline running through eastern South Dakota, the Keystone I, was recently completed, and although a few grumblings emerged, organized resistance was too late to mount a sustained challenge to the pipeline. The proposed Keystone XL pipeline was bigger, longer, and traveled through the arid western plains of South Dakota, a sparsely populated region bereft of pipeline infrastructure but with no shortage of ardently individualist and conservative landowners. Keystone XL skirted the boundaries of South Dakota’s nine Native American reservations, but the entirety of this land base was appropriated without concession from the Oceti Ŝakowiŋ Oyate, the Seven Council Fires of the Great Sioux Nation (Estes 2013; Ostler 2011; Ostler and Estes 2017).

Landowners like Rick were less concerned with this history than the sudden appearance of the pipeline through their land. Most were notified for the first time when contractors, surveyors, or land agents knocked on their door, papers in hand. The agents offered lucrative contracts in order to secure an easement to dig a pipeline through their

land in return for which they offered payment. Agents often suggested that delaying a contract agreement would result in far less money and some threatened the use of eminent domain, the legal seizure of property rights by the state for the common interest of vital infrastructure. These economic and legal pressures resulted in widespread - if sometimes reluctant - support for the Keystone XL project from most white farmers and ranchers along the pipeline's route.

Yet other landowners were not satisfied, spurred to action by what they saw as unlawful, unconstitutional, or undemocratic incursions on their land and property rights. In 2009, Stan first spoke with land agents who visited his property. He was reluctant to sign a lease immediately, and told the agents that he preferred to think about it for a while. After attending hearings, doing his own research, and talking to his neighbors, Stan felt more uncertain. He felt the price that TransCanada had offered for the easement was too little. Additionally, he didn't like that they made it seem like the pipeline was inevitable and that he had no say in the matter, noting that "This is supposed to be a democracy, after all." But it wasn't until he found land agents "snooping around" his property without his permission that he decided that he finally began to oppose the pipeline in earnest. "They were unlawfully trespassing before I had signed anything. It was the kind of thing that put a bad taste in your mouth." Other landowners were immediately turned off by the threat of eminent domain by a large foreign corporation seemingly bullying "the little guy." As one particularly outspoken South Dakotan rancher put it, "Negotiating with TransCanada having right of eminent domain is like having somebody trying to rob you at gunpoint and arguing for your billfold when there's nothing in it" (quoted in Mufson 2012).

Many landowners viewed the pipeline as an affront on what they previously thought were rights sanctioned by the government. The use of eminent domain for private gain seemed to be a complete betrayal of their conservative values. Landowners often noted that "the Republican Party sold us out." They were not wrong; despite an occasional independent populist streak, the electoral politics of the state of South Dakota had long been dominated by arch-conservative and libertarian political discourse on both social and economic issues wrapped in a veneer of agrarian mythology (Lauck, Miller, and Simmons, 2011). Faced with shrinking budgets due to ongoing tax cuts and somewhat jealous of the revenue being sapped from the Bakken oil boom in North Dakota, the wealth of oil transportation taxes presented the State of South Dakota with a unique opportunity to solicit private economic investment with little to no consequence. The dominant Republican Party position was that offering massive tax rebates to energy companies would transform South Dakota into an "energy corridor," with economic benefits trickling down to local businesses and producers.

Other landowners felt it was a betrayal of not just core Republican values, but of the foundations of the United States itself. In part, this was to be expected as the US State Department's permitting role in determining whether the pipeline was in the "national interest." But pipeline opponents brought the nation into their analysis in diverse ways. Heavily underlining a pre-written comment on her notepad, Betty explained to me that "it felt like the British were coming, the British were coming! And we had to defend our land."

Private property did not only arise in a swift, single moment and expand incrementally through privatization from thence onward. Property is taken as a social

given. Property also produces an ongoing libidinal and material investment *through* its territory inscribed materially, that is, through bodies, spaces, and subjects. This production is ongoing and both a site of struggle itself and the assumed grounds for other partisan struggles over the privileges afforded by race. The concept of "territorialization" seeks to demonstrate that *property takes ongoing work*. Nicolas Blomley (2007, 2014, 2016b) and Andrea Brighenti (2006, 2010b) elaborate the thesis that "territories are regarded not [just] as spaces but as *acts*, acts of subsequent and embedded territorialisations and deterritorialisations" (Brighenti 2010a, 225). It is not just that property must be made or constructed, but that it is also must be *performed*: iterated repeatedly and drawing on past iterations in order to stabilize (Blomley 2013). Hedges, fences, and signs signify and stabilize property boundaries. But all property boundaries are susceptible to leakage and contestation.

Borders often require tending, *re*inscription, or reinvention when threatened. One could even say that the property boundary *presupposes* its own failure, decay, or leakage. A similar model might then to the desires and anxieties created by the territories of property and the subjects they produce. As Balibar argues, in the common Lockean perspective, "property…constitutes the generic essence of the proprietor, his internal capacity to act" (2014, 75). This is an argument for *constituent property*, which spurs us to demonstrate "how the individual (what we will then call the subject) can identify himself with this property that he is, or recognize his identity in his movement of appropriation and acquisition" (2014, 75). If property constitutes the liberal subject, and property itself is permeable, then the subject's anxieties can in part be explained by his bodily identification with the threat of border crossings.

This can be especially demonstrated by ranchers' well-founded obsession of fences. A common yard sign read "Good Neighbors Mend Fences, They Don't Dig Trenches! *Stop Keystone XL!*" This was no mere metaphor. As one landowner put it in their testimony, "How about crossing fences? They must cross me four or five times. Are those fences going to be repaired to their original condition? Because I'm very, very -- you can ask my neighbors. I'm really tough on fences, and I want those fences right" (The Public Utilities Commission of South Dakota 2009b, 12). A desire to *prevent* leaks or boundary crossings is produced and in some senses "hijacks the inherent paranoia of the body and diverts it for its own purposes" (Schuster 2016, 172). The constant anxiety of property resonates in and through the insoluble problem of attempting to resolve the psychic and corporeal boundaries of the subject itself. To mend fences rather than dig trenches is to tend not only to the real borders of property but also the imagined borders of ones' self, family, and rights.

Many landowners began narrating their eventual pipeline opposition with property's border crossings. Surveyors or land agents frequently crossed unexpectedly onto private property. And, of course, landowners were infuriated that the pipeline would cross their land and that they had little say in the matter if push comes to shove due to eminent domain. But the more I talked to landowners, the more they mentioned what seemed to me like excessively inconsequential perforations of their individual piece of land as cause for their massive investments of time and energy in opposing the pipeline. Pipeline construction would temporarily cross a fence that would prevent cattle from getting to a water source. Pipeline construction would run close to a well that is used for livestock drinking. Pipeline surveyors trespassed on property without notice. Pipeline

workers failed to close a gate on their way out. Pipeline construction severed an irrigation tile line and it wasn't immediately repaired. One landowner in the path of DAPL was worried about a shelterbelt on their property; eventually, ETP agreed to drill under the shelterbelt rather than disturb it.

These anxieties also exposed the three-dimensional lack of boundedness or closure in property as it extends beneath the surface of the earth. Farmers and ranchers voiced concern about a pipeline leak contaminating either the high surface water table in northern Nebraska and south central South Dakota, or the deeper Ogallala Aquifer, which provides irrigation and livestock water for millions of people from South Dakota to north Texas. The argument from many pipeline opponents was that a possible oil spill has the potential to contaminate the aquifer, a gigantic *public* resource, on which so many *private* landowners depend. Private property appeared to be bounded on the surface, but the farther below the earth one traveled, the more permeable and it appeared. Yet this concern with the leakage of a public resource did not extend to the problem of the collective use and management of subsurface aquifers.

The thickening of anxieties into populist social demands

As landowner animosity grew, rural organizers began to suggest that farmers and ranchers along the pipeline form a landowner association in order to negotiate better contracts with TransCanada. In February of 2009, around fifty landowners along the Keystone XL route formed Protect South Dakota Resources, a landowner association that would negotiate better easement benefits with TransCanada. These landowners eventually settled with TransCanada and are unable to discuss the exact terms of this

settlement. In Nebraska, however, many landowners found themselves unable to stomach any negotiation or compromise. The well-funded nonprofit Bold Nebraska served as a node for landowner discontent, as did the Nebraska Easement Action Team. Bold Nebraska was an outspoken advocate of "no eminent domain for private gain," which would soon appear on roadside signs around the region. In their political discourse, the problem the pipeline represented was the use of eminent domain in support of a large, private, and foreign corporation that would transport Canadian oil to the US only to be exported to East Asian markets at the expense of the American farmer and rancher and, to use the official Nebraskan slogan, "The Good Life."

Bold Nebraska and other community organizations followed contemporary nonprofit political strategies for building what they described as "unlikely alliances" among people who are rural and urban, Democrat and Republican, and especially among landowners and Native peoples fighting the Keystone XL pipeline. Bold Nebraska's savvy media team spread the stories and images of their impressive organizing efforts effectively through national media sources and soon had built relationships with 350.org and well-read environmentalist and progressive platforms across the country. When the initial permit for Keystone XL was rejected by President Obama's State Department in 2015, Bold Nebraska had already used their success to expand into pipeline fights in other states. Although it had not yet achieved the broader national recognition, fierce opposition to DAPL in Iowa grew due in part to Bold Iowa's defense of property rights. During DAPL public hearings in fall of 2015, Iowan landowners repeatedly emphasized that their state constitution enshrined "possessing and protecting property." One

landowner called eminent domain “the most unconscionable thing of all.” Another argued that “private property rights are as dear to us as our right to life.”

Out of these disgruntled anxieties and economic interests an increasingly populist contestation of pipelines began to form. Populism is a political form that constructs “the people” as the privileged subject of politics, formed in opposition to corrupt elites. By challenging the historic elitism and technocratic governance of the Big Greens as well as the grip of petrocapitalism on the US state, environmental populism has gained prominence in North American environmentalism through coalitions and mass movements such as the People’s Climate March (Meyer 2008; Swyngedouw 2010). For anti-pipeline organizers, anyone opposed to pipelines could become part of the unlikely alliances that constitute “the people.” Community organizers enthusiastically represented their work as bringing together farmers, ranchers, Native Nations, environmentalists, and concerned citizens; Republicans and Democrats; the Tea Party and Bernie Sanders types; urban and rural; in order to present a united front of the people versus the pipeline.

What allowed the populist coalition to maintain a minimum coalescence was the fungibility of the discourse of land. Land could *appear* as something everyone should protect. For environmentalists, land recalled the land ethic of Aldo Leopold, the preservation of ecological systems, and recreation in public lands. For the Lakota, Dakota, Ponca, and other Native Nations, relations with land encompassed a wider domain of politics, religion, and resistance to dispossession and protection and reclamation of the relationships and obligations violently eroded over the last several hundred years.[27] For most landowners I spoke with, defending the land meant a return to their prior untrammeled relationship with their own property and thus involved no

concession to Native Nations. The populist coalition formed against the pipelines blended these meanings of land in a sometimes uncomfortable way, as in the rendition of "This Land is Our Land" I described above. Generally, however, it seemed to remain vague enough to allow enough people to feel more or less satisfied with the coalition. But because a critique of racial capitalism and settler colonialism was actively occluded by such a vague reference to land, populist resistance remained liberal and multicultural in character. One of the consequences of this was a settler identification with indigenous dispossession.

"They're treating us like Indians": Identification with dispossession

The reappearance of the Cowboy and Indian Alliance, an historic organization with roots in anti-extraction struggles in the 1970s, might be read as the construction of a strategic collectivity in the face of state and corporate power. But when populist movements against pipelines fought for the protection of property rights, their diagnosis frequently rested on understanding eminent domain as analogous to the dispossession of land from Native Nations, as productive of an identity or resemblance. With the federal government authorizing a taking of their land in a manner they saw as against its own laws or the constitution itself, the refrain many landowners repeated was that "they're treating us like Indians."

This sentiment was first relayed to me in 2013 by Sheila, a rural community organizer working with both landowners and Native opponents. Sheila used the phrase to describe how difficult it was to get everyone "on the same page," a frustration at trying to

find common ground. In historical research, I found that the analogy was neither uncommon, nor new. In an ethnography of Bennett County in southern South Dakota, Wagoner notes that experiencing resentment for loss due to eminent domain used to establish a contiguous wildlife refuge, one non-Native person remarked “they treated us just like Indians. They just came and pushed us off our land” (Wagoner 2002, 53). In the 1980s populist fights against the use of eminent domain for powerlines and resource extraction in Minnesota and South Dakota frequently mobilized the sentiment to alert farmers that, in the words of one Native activist, “‘now you know what it feels like’ to be dispossessed of land” (Grossman 2002, 285). Grossman argues while “it is highly doubtful that rural whites have become “new Indians”…many are being forced to rethink their relations with Native neighbors when they are both ‘slapped in the face’ by white outsiders” (2017, 26).

Wagoner notes that when experiencing land, loss, and resentment for loss due to eminent domain used to establish a contiguous wildlife refuge, yet another non-Native person remarked “they treated us just like Indians. They just came and pushed us off our land” (2002, 53). Unlike Grossman, Wagoner takes “they’re treating us like Indians” at face value in an anthropological lens. The ethnographic exploration of race relations, land, and blood presented is one where regional and ultra-local identity means the crude social categories of “fullbloods, mixedbloods, and whites” (which it is argued have “nonracial connotations”) are all “contingent upon their social, legal, and historical contexts” (2002, 57). This explanation allows the conclusion that “It’s not pretty, but sometimes people just ‘settle’ [their differences]. And that is how it is in West River South Dakota, whether or not it offends some outsiders’ sensibilities” (2002, 93).

I disagree. The analogic sentiment functioned in order to suture the ongoing problem white people face when confronted with the reality of historic and contemporary settler colonialism – the problem of recognizing that their land and wealth are produced not through their superior or special individual internal historical development or labor but through a series of external determinations that afford them capacities through the exploitation of others. Coalition politics required a reworking of the symbolics of possession and land beyond merely relegating it to history in order to recuperate the superiority of a transparent and interior white subject. The subject position that settlers occupy required this suturing so that populist politics could appear to function without internal conflict at the level of collective subjectivity, but in the process relegated Native American politics to a diminished racial position determined by their historic encounter with Euro-American colonialism. Thus in no way are their differences "settled," as Wagoner suggests. They are displaced.

It is important to recognize immense amounts of organizing work went into rebuilding and sustaining the Cowboy-Indian Alliance and the other "unlikely alliances" of anti-pipeline populism that challenge the assumed complete disjuncture between Native Nations and rural white communities. Grossman argues that in many cases such coalitions can "redirect [the] anger" of rural whites "toward state and corporate structures" (Grossman 2017, 28). Such a possibility could result in "disengaging from the ongoing project of colonization and engaging them in solidarity with decolonization" (2017, 30). On the other hand, as Markwell puts it, "the terms through which [Cowboy-Indian Alliance] organizing has taken place articulate a subjectivity of solidarity that coheres around affective investments with troubling limitations" (2016). In particular, the

thickness and difficulty of building the political relationships Grossman discusses was often immediately flattened in representations by settlers and movement institutions. For example, Sheila resented that the name and image of the Cowboy-Indian Alliance was being used to drum up funds for national non-profits while the actual grassroots organizers were "doing the difficult and thankless work on the ground."

While this grassroots organizing work against Keystone XL was frequently cited by organizers as creating conditions for the #NoDAPL blockades at Standing Rock, the blockade also presented a problem for the populist approach that sought to maintain the equivalence drawn between Native and settler dispossession. Activists, landowners, and community organizations responded in one of two ways. Some sought to re-center Native voices and resistance at other points along the pipeline and to engage not only with the struggle for sovereignty and land by the Oceti Ŝakowiŋ, but also the other Native Nations whose historic land bases were dispossessed by the state and private property. Understanding the struggle for justice at Standing Rock as part of a much longer resistance movement was "humbling" as one landowner put it, and some individuals and groups began to interrogate their own complicity in settler colonialism. The seeming success of radical direct action also pushed many beyond the tactics of liberal resistance. While most kept to symbolic acts of non-violent civil disobedience, others began to use direct action, blockades, and sabotage of pipeline construction equipment.

On the other hand, other populist resistance groups doubled down on their attempt to reclaim and re-analogize their resistance to eminent domain under the "water protectors" identity popularized at the Standing Rock blockade. It was not uncommon to hear the presumption of allyship, as in one rally speech in September 2016. This

organizer claimed that “we’re standing with the farmers, landowners and our tribal allies to stop this assault on our water, climate and property rights...There’s been a lot of media attention up in North Dakota but [we should] recognize the landowners who have been most important down here in Iowa.” Months later, as President Trump signed an executive order approving Keystone XL in January of 2017, other groups would prepare again for the fight by claiming that the best strategy for defeating Keystone XL a second time would be “focusing on the landowners…We are going to focus on property rights” (Bleifuss 2017).

Figure 8: Algonquin Chief Powhatan's 1609 speech, as recorded by John Smith, is enrolled to defend private property rights. The text above his visage reads "Why will you take by force what you may share quickly [or quietly] with LOVE?" Iowa, 2016.

What were landowners fighting for when they fought for "property rights" in the face of their "unconscionable" seizure? Undoubtedly, economic standing and class self-interest were absolutely central to the landowners who organized against the pipeline. When the value of easements and compensation for loss did not match the expectation of the value of land and its use, individuals balked. Many felt like they could be unjustly compensated for a spill or damage to their property, and that the risk of such an event was distributed to them from TransCanada. Some initially skeptical landowners who individually negotiated higher benefits later found themselves more or less satisfied with the process, suggesting that concerns could be ameliorated with better compensation. In all of these ways, landowner pipeline opposition appeared to be an internal struggle between landed and circulating capital, to borrow Mazen Labban's characterization of crises that emerge within oil markets (2008). Landowners were, in short, concerned about whether a pipeline would affect their ability to continue to extract capital from their farming or ranching labor. This relationship we might call *interest-in-land,* which describes how landowners are compelled to extract value from their property.

But this economic conflict played out in a manner that cannot be explained without reference to the layers of affective attachments to landed private property that render its privileged occupation and use by white people in North America consistent with both capitalism and settler colonialism. Many ranchers and farmers told me they sought *respect* – that their land and property be rightfully recognized by the state as properly belonging to them. The recognition of respect was not simply for the legal rights of property, but also the recognition of their long-standing ties to the land and its "unbroken" nature, a response that surprised me given the impossibility of walking far in

the western plains without running into a barbed wire fence. But this is also desire for recognition of themselves as proper owners of their land.

Landowners described these unbroken relationships in not simply spatial, but also temporal terms by citing their family history on that property, often playing up homespun sympathies in public hearings and comment sessions. They described their relationship to the land with reference to "South Dakotan values" or "Nebraskan values" or "American values" in comparison to those of a foreign company or with reference to authoritarian or communist governments that seize land at will. They referenced the Declaration of Independence and the ideas of the United States' founding fathers, arguing that they saw the taking of private property as a "sacred act." Even proper stewardship of the land – the combination of a Christian value ethic with environmentalism – was framed as an outcome best supported by enshrining private property rights.

These various attachments to place and property might be called *desires-in-land*. Desires are formed out of memories, labor, familial relationships, technologies of knowledge and control, and natural spaces. As Jafri argues, "settler colonialism is a project of desire" (2013, 78). Desire "is integral to the construction of settler subjectivities, to settler narratives, and to the project of erasure underlying the indigenizing efforts of settler projects" (79). Desires-in-land are not merely an ideological supplement to more-real economic interests perceived to be at stake in pipeline struggles, but instead "desire is part of the [economic] infrastructure" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983, p. 104). It is desire not just for the land itself, but for *recognition* of property ownership, and it is through seeking this recognition of prior property rights in the present tense that populism participates in and augments settler late liberalism (Povinelli 2016). In

Povinelli's formulation, "the best way of conceiving these circuits of identity, accumulation, and circulation—circuits that are simultaneously dependent on and independent of the nation-state—are tubular, or better, pneumonic. They are forms of suction in which extraction and flight are part of the same process" (Povinelli 2017). The pipeline is thus both the conceptual and material figure of opposition from which white national resentment in the US distinguishes itself.

The maintenance of attachments to private property demonstrates the difficulty in prying settler subjects away from that which is taken to promise transparency or freedom. Private property produces subjects invested in the economic *interest* that their property grants them and the *desire* for recognition of exclusive ownership by their peers and the state. When this sense of proprietary ownership was demonstrated to be more tenuous than anticipated, resentment pooled as landowners felt themselves thrown into the realm of affectability. Landowners resent being determined by some force larger than oneself and of the loss of rights at the hands of foreign forces. While the threat of dispossession could create the opportunity to reflect on the limits of property as grounds for opposition to dispossession, for many white settlers and political organizers it congealed instead into a populist demand for the recognition of exclusive possession. Such a demand constitutively relies upon displacing the dispossession of Native Nations as only a particular historic act, not an ongoing structure of violence inherent to racial capitalism.

Conclusion

One of the reasons it is important to maintain an active opposition to private property is because it continues to be used to perpetuate settler colonialism in pipeline struggles. Property rights discourse contributed to the federal government's ability to produce a violent response to anti-colonial pipeline resistance at Standing Rock. Early blockades against Keystone XL and later DAPL were on land adjacent to the pipeline's path. But in October 2016, water protectors established a Frontline Camp directly in the path of the pipeline. In the process, they "ex-appropriated" (Balibar 2014, 87; Derrida 2012, 112) private property that Energy Transfer Partners had purchased from a landowner after the beginning of the occupation. Citing the land as unceded territory of the Oceti Šakowiŋ Oyate under the 1851 Ft. Laramie Treaty, with a wry humor the water protectors claimed to be using the power of eminent domain.

Although day-to-day police violence and criminal trespass arrests had been ongoing at the camp for months, the establishment of the Frontline Camp appeared particularly intolerable to law enforcement for not just violating the sanctity of private property, but for recognizing land as something other than property. The response by the police force three days later was excessive. Water protectors were evicted from the Frontline Camp in a raid by hundreds of riot police using Mine-Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles, Long Range Acoustic Device (LRAD) sound cannons, armored vehicles, mace, and beanbag cannons. At least 140 water protectors were arrested that day, but not before hours of nonviolent struggle, prayer, and ceremony. The Frontline Camp – itself containing numerous sacred objects – was bulldozed, and its contents haphazardly returned to the adjacent camp.

Morton County, North Dakota police chief Kyle Kirchmeier said in a statement afterward that “individuals trespassing on private property can’t claim eminent domain to justify their criminal actions” (Grueskin 2016). He would go on to describe trespassing on private property as a “public safety issue.” In a targeted and ongoing slew of opinion to propaganda pieces, MAIN would repeatedly make two arguments. First, that the pipeline doesn’t cross any land “owned” by the Standing Rock Sioux people and to suggest otherwise would, in the words of North Dakota congressman Kevin Cramer, “turn America’s property rights upside down” (Cramer 2016). Second, they argued that blockades are a “dangerous occupation of property” that threatens lives (Wiederstein 2016). These statements further demonstrate the centrality of anxious interests and desires that maintain private property, both as a form of white subjectivity and as a dispossession central to settler colonial resource extraction. Altogether, the violent response to the courageous actions of water protectors by the state and private security forces demonstrate the stakes of defeating private property.

The conceptual and methodological toolbox of political ecology is useful for clarifying the ecological impacts of privatization of landed property. Furthermore, political ecology’s attention to the situated historical specificity of struggles over resources, ecological governance, and coloniality positions it well to add to ongoing research on racial capitalism. By examining the manner in which struggles over private property reinforce subjects of whiteness in the context of ongoing settler colonialism, this paper demonstrates how the material and affective investment in property rights was at stake for settlers opposing the pipeline. The reinforcement of the racial desire for the maintenance of the possession and stewardship of land was one - although not the only -

outcome of populist pipeline opposition. Desire-for-land and for the freedom to enjoy it is an integral aspect of how property structures white subjectivity, and threatening property is taken to be among most egregious crimes imaginable.

Letting go of that desire appears to be an impossible ask for many settler pipeline opponents. But radical politics is always a demand for the impossible, and alongside the fading of populist strategies centered on property rights is a resurgence in anti-colonial resistance that takes the protection of water to be incompatible with the dominant property regimes that maintain settler colonialism and produce the transparent subjects of whiteness. A political ecology of racial capitalism opens up our ability to see the production of many of our own positions as affectable, open to alterity rather than transparently free. It offers a way to conceptualize the production of race in correspondence with broad and interlocking processes of capital accumulation, slavery, settler colonialism, and state violence. It is only through understanding the mechanisms through which the transparent Euro-American subject that bears these relations is reproduced that we can attempt to dismantle and abolish it.

Chapter 5. “Keystone XL hearing nearly irrelevant”: Populism and the resigned pragmatism of institutionalized public participation

Introduction

In addition to the protection of private property rights, pipeline opposition was grounded in a vast array of overlapping social demands: for the protection of water and natural resources, the return of a stable climate, and the undue influence of oil on politics. Yet the specifically populist response was also characterized by a grievance towards the loss of citizen rights through corrupt representation and a redemptive desire for radical democracy as popular sovereignty. As Naomi Klein argues, this is characteristic of the anti-extractive movement globally, which “perhaps…shouldn’t be referred to as an environmental movement at all, since it is primarily driven by a desire for a deeper form of democracy” (Klein 2014, 295). The inability to stop oil pipelines through existing channels, it is argued, stems from a deficit of democracy itself.

Central to this assessment is the perceived impotence of public participation in democratic decision-making. Liberals are skeptical of populism’s real interest in deliberative decision-making, seeing in “the people” an irrational distrust of institutionalized norms of governance. Marxists take populism’s desire for democracy as an idealist fantasy, structuring its capture by liberal politics. For those analysts of populism’s ambivalent desires, it dramatizes a basic paradox of liberal democracy – that the people are “at once a constituent and a constituted power” (Frank 2009, 7). Like populists themselves, critical geographers and planners have been skeptical of institutionalized means of eliciting participation, and have had much more faith in the

expression of “real democracy” in extra-institutional collective decision-making processes. But while populists and critical geographers see public participation meetings as illegitimate facsimiles or attempts at pacification, they also desire *more* participation. The solution to the paradox of democracy seems to be *more democracy*.

With this situation in mind, this chapter asks: Why do people keep organizing through public comments and participation meetings even though everyone recognizes that they are, in the words of one parody-like South Dakota headline, “nearly irrelevant”? What relation might the desire for participation have to the populist form of politics? In order to answer these question, I examine the results of a series of public participation meetings at the federal (NEPA) and state (Public Utilities Council) level. Behind the oft-expressed desire that ‘We the People…” must decide our collective futures, I find a different scene.

Exhausted organizers, opponents, and activists approach public meetings not with the spirit of resurgent radical democracy seen in protest movements worldwide, but instead with what I call a *resigned pragmatism*. Participants are *resigned* to public participation, which is to say they have accepted it as something unpleasant that they cannot do anything about. Contra to the received wisdom of democratic environmentalism and without the full cynicism of radical critique, resigned pragmatism embodies the Beckettesque feeling that one “can’t go on but must go on.” This is a “groping in the dark” of everyday politics (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 461), wherein one must vigilantly remain active, but for no particular thing (Deleuze 1997, 153). Anti-pipeline organizers are resigned to public participation, attempting to use any channel possible to stop the pipeline. But they also took participation not as an end in itself, but a

means to an end: an attempt to produce an understanding among the people that real democracy is unlikely to happen within the legitimated institutional routes.

Populism's desires for participation

Academic literatures frequently suggest that public participation in technoscientific review, public consultation, and popular protest should be valorized as a sign of a healthy democracy (Fischer 2000; Klein 2014; Marres 2012; Whatmore 2009). The public deserves to be a part of the decisions that might affect their lives – even if they involve complex scientific or technical problems. This stance is also repeated in the context of climate change. If *global* climate change is a contemporary problem, then *local* deliberation, participation, and activism should be given the power to produce the proper response. The EPA itself, for example, argues that public capacity is enhanced from such encounters, as they emerge better educated about the complexity of scientific matters and better prepared to face future scientific controversies that might arise from climate change. Accounting for more actors in the democratic field should result in better decisions, thus reducing public harm and leading to a more equitable society. Further, as I noted in Chapter 3, public participation is highly valued in South Dakota's political culture, stemming in part from the legacy of the Farmer's Alliance and the People's Party's initiative and referendum legislation.

Contemporary public participation in environmental review in the US can be traced back to the legislative efforts of the 1930s, when public participation was seen as a possible check on governmental power. Many trace the ideas of participation in

environmental review to John Dewey and his seminal *The Public and Its Problems* (1927). Dewey argued that the changing impacts of industrialism and trade create an increasing distance between citizens and the decisions over the processes that affect their lives. Those "indirectly and seriously affected" by industrial economic activity deserve to be recognized by a name and as a subject: the public. Dewey argued that the public was not some abstract pre-existing group, but instead that material problems create their own various interested publics. He thought that if these publics could have some say in the manner in which they are affected, then democracy could be salvaged from its contemporary crisis. Dewey was himself a staunch believer in liberal democracy and opponent of communism (Kuznick 1987). But he also sought to reshape the role of public intellectuals not as unseen engineers, but advocates for freedom and circulation of information.

Although Dewey's ideas were extremely influential at the time of writing, they were more clearly realized in action through the environmental legislation of the 1960s and 70s, beginning with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). This legislation was among the first to require that the environmental review process conduct public hearings prior to any decision. But even then, it was fraught with political problems. Dryzek et. al. go so far as to suggest that participatory aspects of the legislation were in part the result of strategic aims by the Nixon Administration to regain legitimacy and public license with environmentalists, "the least radical and threatening aspect of the counter-culture" (2003, 59). Since that time, the EPA has tweaked its procedures and recommendations depending largely on the goals of each political administration. For example, during the Clinton administration and its institutionalization of environmental

justice, “fair and meaningful participation” was upheld as one route to remaking the institutional structure of the executive branch (Foreman 2011; Holifield 2004). But the institutional approach was primarily consultative, rather than substantive.

From the outside of the state, environmental justice scholars and activists began to more frequently call for participatory rather than simply distributive justice (e.g., Schlosberg 1999, 2009). The scholarly EJ focus on exclusionary processes of democracy with reference to marginalized groups demonstrated clearly the lack of local control over the health and environmental impacts of industrial extraction and production. Yet the best of such approaches (e.g., I. M. Young 2011, 2001) recognized the same problems of delineating what exactly fair and meaningful participation were supposed to mean. Clinton’s environmental justice executive order (EO 12898) could only result in limited recognition-based fixes to the problem. The EPA thus explicitly avoided the central democratic paradox over the spatial boundaries of the public.

Despite faith in the ideal of meaningful public participation in environmental review, existing participatory techniques of involving publics in issues of science and technology are widely recognized as fundamentally broken. Criticism has emerged globally and in the US and from Marxists and radical democrats alike (Cooke and Kothari 2001). Skepticism in public participation techniques is certainly not at all new (Arnstein 1969), and of course not confined to the left. Participation activities are critiqued for their strategic role in trying to derive consent from skeptical publics of the safety, lack of risk, or social good that a project or technique will provide. In Wynne’s perspective, the best of this critique has demonstrated how “entrenched powerful constructions of actors’ capacities, agency, interests, concerns, rights, and identities, are

silently reproduced, perversely through participatory processes which are supposed to be challenging those implicitly assumed categories in accountable ways" (2007, 100–101). Such scholarship frequently attends to practices of resistance, refusal, and protest – again, both within the US EIS process (Hébert 2016; Hébert and Brock 2017; Phadke 2010, 2011) and in environmentally controversial projects around the world (Barry 2013; F. Li 2009; Welker 2012).

These critiques of public participation broadly align, and are sometimes in conversation with, a robust theoretical criticism of contemporary democracy. Although democratic governance is supposed to be the panacea for our contemporary ecological situation, it rarely seems to produce the outcomes we desire. Swyngedouw has argued that the vast majority of what passes as "democratic politics" has in effect a chilling effect on political antagonism and forecloses transformation of the political field towards justice (Swyngedouw 2010). The technocratic nature of Habermasian-style participatory governance explicitly seeks to neutralize dissent, antagonism, and divisive politics more generally and produce outcomes of consensus or at least legitimacy. This is also particularly notable within extractive industries, in which "environmental governance initiatives frame the politics of extraction as questions of inclusion and participation, rather than justice, rights and distribution" (Bridge and Perreault 2015, 482).

In liberal assessments, such critiques of public participation mechanisms and desires for real participation are always a pretense. For Müller, "[Populists] do not want people to participate continuously in politics. A referendum isn't meant to start an open-ended process of deliberation among actual citizens to generate a range of well-considered popular judgments; rather, the referendum serves to ratify what the populist

leader has already discerned to be the genuine popular interest as a matter of identity…Populism without participation is an entirely coherent proposition" (Müller 2016, 29). For liberals, the populist annoyance at Habermasian deliberative democracy and its rational program for pluralistic, overlapping consensus betrays its illiberal roots. Democracy is proper procedure. As long as it is followed, then democracy is working.

For Swyngedouw and Dean, by contrast, the desire for public participation and democratic mobilization is symptomatic of the deep seated populism of mainstream climate politics, which seeks to appeal to an excessively wide base of left, right, corporate, activist, (and so on) people in order to defeat and eradicate excessive carbon from the atmosphere. As Dean puts it, "participation and deliberation, immanence and inclusion" (2009, 75–76) are further democratic fantasies which structure political activism to support the very processes it ostensibly aims to critique. Addressing the master's discourse (that of the empty space of the sovereign) through a counter-discourse claiming that democratic participation is lacking only serves to further entrench the power of the sovereign to make that decision.

I find myself of two minds about these critical positions. Yes, public participation in environmental review is broken, and the discourse of democracy is actively harmful to building political justice. But I don't think it adequately explains the range of desires and ambivalences subjects feel with regards to public participation spaces. Critical social scientists seem most interested in either a) a critique of the State's solicitation of consent, or b) resistance, refusal, and counter-projects. But between these two positions a whole range of organizing occurs, and these experiences ground populist desire and dissent. Why do people participate, given they find the process so unproductive and exhausting?

What do they get out of it? Do their experiences and actions confirm that public participation meetings are a political sidetrack, or do they reveal political excesses in the institutional structure of soliciting public input? While complaints about "not being heard" ring in the participation forums, most pipeline opponents – both consciously or less so – treat such spaces instrumentally. My research demonstrates that public participation forums are used to demonstrate the state's impotence or incompetence, to help organize feelings of resentment into collectives and alliances, and to broaden rather than close down the political field.

Tracing the circulatory affect of public testimony

Following the official announcement of the pipeline proposal, TransCanada filed for permits with the US State Department, the South Dakota PUC and the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) in 2008. In accordance with NEPA, the State Department (as lead federal agency) hired the consultant Cardno Entrix to produce an EIS. The State Department began the review process in 2009, holding 20 scoping meetings along the pipeline's route in order to determine the criterion that should be assessed. Upon completion of a draft EIS, the State Department is required to solicit and respond to public comments from affected institutions and individuals on the proposed project and the DEIS. 19 public comment sessions were held in spring of 2010 along the pipeline's route. In response to the overwhelming number of comments received, the State Department decided to extend the public comment period and add two more public solicitation meetings in 2011 in Texas and Washington, D.C.

The FEIS was released in August 2011, which corresponded to another open public comment period and public meetings in the state capitals of each of the states through which the pipeline passed. Cardno Entrix's independent review came under heavy criticism for its close relationship with both TransCanada and the State Department, and aspects of the EIS were seen as shoddy and incomplete by many. Even other federal agencies, including the EPA and Departments of the Interior and Energy decried the EIS as inadequate. Through responding to these criticisms and to public comments, the State Department determined that the pipeline should not pass through the Nebraska Sandhills region. An alternative route was proposed, which resulted in a draft SEIS produced by Environmental Resources Management instead of Cardno Entrix in 2012. (At this point, TransCanada separated the southern part of the pipeline system from the northern international portion and the former was approved by the State Department as a different project).

The final SEIS was completed in 2014 and yet another round of public comments solicited, as well as yet another public meeting held in Grand Island, NE. The permit for the pipeline was finally rejected by the State Department in fall of 2015, effectively killing the project after, by my count, some 1.5 million public comments (somewhere between 5,000-10,000 unique submissions) and almost 50 public meetings. Through this process, the State Department solicited several million in-person and online public comments. Although most of those were form letters provided by non-governmental organizations, I surveyed around 3,500 unique submissions to the 2012 DEIS and 2014 SEIS for keywords concerning people, the people, the public, participation, and expertise; these comments provide insight into the grounds of opposition of pipeline opponents.

Concurrent to the federal review process, state review was also held over this period. In South Dakota, the PUC managed the state review process for a right of way permit. The PUC public engagement process is divided into two different parts – an informal solicitation of public comments, and a more formal evidentiary hearing in front of the commissioners. The SD PUC held four public hearings in 2009, at which a total of 83 individuals offered their comments and 326 people attended. In 2010, the SD PUC approved the permit for four years. With the pipeline delayed at the federal level, the permit was allowed to expire and this process began again in 2014. A second public hearing was held in 2015 concurrent with the request to reapprove a permit, followed by an evidentiary hearing later that month. Due to the sheer amount of evidence and number of intervenors, the evidentiary hearing was extended multiple times to a full nine days. Even with extensions, not all of the witnesses were called to testify. In December 2015, the SD PUC approved the permit. The vast majority of public comments at both the federal and SD PUC level were against the pipeline.

Three of the initial 20 public input or scoping meetings were hosted by TransCanada and the SD PUC in 2009. These meetings were primarily informational and serve to solicit possible concerns that would be addressed in the EIS. Even then, the meetings were described by one attendee as “a dog and pony show” and “very skillful in presenting a good propaganda package” (Wiken 2009). In the area around Winner, SD where I conducted preliminary fieldwork in 2013, a few people I spoke with remembered the meeting as particularly tense. “None of us really knew what we were in for…it’s not often that you get fifty people in a room together around here, so it was a bit exciting.”

In rural and small town South Dakota, public meetings usually concerned issues of local impact rather than the broad politics of climate change or environmental justice. The effect of the pipeline on property tax revenue and possible depreciation of property valuation elicited questions at many public meetings. Small towners worried about "outsiders" bringing immoral activity to their rural communities, and the effects of construction equipment on rural roads. Eminent domain concerns were immediately present, as were questions about rural water supplies. But so too were emergent reflections about public participation forums themselves. As one rancher told me, "The first meeting I went to, we already could tell that they were taking us through a spin cycle." In order to understand this sentiment, we first have to understand the generic form of a public comment session.

The generic meeting is held in the only public spaces big enough in rural South Dakota – a high school auditorium, a gymnasium, a community theater, or an austere hotel desperately in need of a remodel. As you filter in, a sign-up sheet is posted at the front of the room, asking for names, e-mail addresses, and phone numbers. There might be handouts or pamphlets from TransCanada or the PUC. A bland room is set up with rows of chairs, and a board of officials from the governing body at hand sits at the front. Rarely do these rooms have windows, and you're lucky if they feature a water cooler. Sometimes, the hearing is preceded by a brief description of the regulatory framework, as well as past permitting and meeting activities.

Scoping meetings are supposed to be informational. They begin with a PowerPoint presentation from TransCanada. As this is frequently the first in-depth presentation of the pipeline plan, this can be a longer presentation of up to 45 minutes.

The presentation will meticulously document the pipeline construction process, presenting images of past pipeline construction and describing remediation. The officials instruct the crowd as to the rules of public comment, usually limiting comments to two minutes, or as much as five minutes. Then, comments or questions can be asked, which are followed by responses from the PUC or TransCanada. “Public comments today, any written comments that we receive, those will all go into the file and are instructive to the Commissioners as they make their deliberations” (The Public Utilities Commission of South Dakota 2009a, 4) Things start out cordial enough. Questions are innocuous, probing for possible weak links. Who will pay for electricity line upgrades? What about damage to roads? How are your stocks doing? What happens if there is a spill?

Answers from TransCanada are disarming. They will cite statistics that make themselves out to be a responsible, experienced company. They demonstrate the recognition of their safety and environmental record and the economic health of the company. And, they are sure to emphasize the local benefits to rural communities starved for financial resources. “In every county in South Dakota that the pipeline crosses real property taxes will be reduced to all of the other landowners. If you want an example of that…real property taxes in Harding County will go down by half as a result of the construction of the pipeline. In other words, the pipeline company will pay over half of the cost of education and government in Harding County” (The Public Utilities Commission of South Dakota 2009a, 34).

In November 2009 at SD PUC evidentiary hearings, a SD PUC staffperson would look back on the public input hearings positively. As a back-and-forth, PUC Chairman

Johnson and the staff member reflect on the benefit of public input to their process (The Public Utilities Commission of South Dakota 2009c, 229–32).

> CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: You mentioned [the public input hearings] were well attended. Did you have an opportunity to speak with any landowners at those meetings?
>
> THE WITNESS: Yeah. I don't remember specific names, but definitely part of what we do as staff is we go out and try to get a feel at these meetings what the concerns are, what the issues, what the general sentiment of the landowners.
>
> CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: What was the general sentiment?
>
> THE WITNESS: I honestly was surprised how little opposition we heard at these hearings. I suspected a lot more people being upset with TransCanada just because of my own limited experience in other siting cases where landowners aren't always that satisfied with the way they've been treated. I didn't hear from any landowners at those meetings personally that I spoke with that were upset with the way they've been treated.
>
> CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: There were certainly some that raised their voices during the formal portion of that public input hearing.
>
> THE WITNESS: Yes.
>
> CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: So you heard their concerns. Did those concerns that were raised during that process, were those internalized in any way to staff?...What I'm asking is did those [public concerns] guide how you proceeded with regard to how you dealt with your witnesses, the Interrogatories you submitted to the Applicant?
>
> THE WITNESS: Definitely. I think you'll see throughout the witnesses that we have coming today after the experts that are actually going to testify to all of this, these input hearings give us an opportunity to form a lot of our questions you see in those data requests. So while in our data request it might not say specifically this landowner or this individual asked this question, but what you'll see is all of those issues brought up are addressed through either our witness testimony or through staff data requests as well too. With the caveat if they're applicable to our codified laws or Administrative Rules that are actually jurisdictional in this case.
>
> CHAIRMAN JOHNSON: So would you say… that the vast majority of the beneficial impact that landowners and other interested citizens have as a part of this process comes through their involvement with these public input hearings?

> THE WITNESS: Definitely. It's very helpful that we get as much input that as we can, and we got a lot of input, yes.

Here, the process of public input is laid bare as a listening exercise in gauging "general sentiment." The general tone and tenor of the earlier input sessions is described as friendly, not oppositional. It is reiterated that the concerns of the public are in fact heard and do in fact shape the manner in which the PUC approaches regulating the pipeline. I am less concerned with the role of public input for the state here than I am in how the performance and acknowledgement of the benefits of public input to both participants and the state will ground further resentment in that very process. The idea that such participation has a "beneficial impact" on "interested citizens," we will see, is clearly not shared by pipeline opponents.

Unlike the scoping meetings, which are meant to answer questions, assuage fears, and build legitimacy and consent, the official public comment sessions – held several months later – feature no such activities meant to convince, and sometimes little dialogue at all. A session might begin with a five to fifteen minute presentation about the project from the company. Officials from the PUC, State Department, EPA, or whatever agency is tasked with making a decision sit at the front of the room. Then, for the next two to four hours, they are almost completely silent, barring the occasional notification of "time's up." They listen stoically, taking notes occasionally, as the comments pile up. They rarely nod, and only occasionally pipe up to ask for repetition or clarification of a comment.

In the audience, emotions run high among opponents lodging their concerns, comments, and outrage. The seeming crossover genre of courtroom / science drama

elicits self-identification as experts and attempts to produce credible scientific evidence (see Chapter 5). Landowners do not simply identify themselves as ranchers, they cite their years of experience in the area. “I live 10 miles straight north of Okaton, South Dakota up on Dry Creek. My parents and grandparents have been there 100 years. My wife's family, the Iversen family, has been in Jones County over 100 years. We're good stewards of the land. We always have been and try to be. And I have some real concerns about TransCanada” (The Public Utilities Commission of South Dakota 2009b, 10).

One by one, courageous individuals step up to the microphones and identify themselves. This is the first public speaking experience for a lot of people, and even if you have a decent amount of experience, the event can be harrowing. During my first public comment, I stumbled over my credentials, spoke too fast, made several completely incomplete sentences. I felt woozy before, sweaty during, and disappointed afterward. Speakers spill their souls over the perceived harms of the project at hand. Why are you doing this? What gives you the right to make the decisions? Won’t you think of future generations? I know you are a good person, look into your heart. Or: You shouldn’t even have the power to make these decisions. Won’t somebody listen to the people?

You sit back down to applause, smiles, thumbs up, and comforting looks from your allies. “Good job!” “You’re completely right.” And so on. The comments of your allies don’t always make sense, though. Someone starts talking about healing crystals, chemtrails, or population control. But this *is* politics as melodrama. You go with it. Sometimes a comment begins like all the others, yet features a massive “BUT…” in the middle, followed by “This is why I’m in favor of the pipeline.” Hisses and even boos emerge. Someone yells “shame on you” as they sit down. Sometimes a protest chant, or

even a song happens. Agitated heckles from those in the back grow increasingly frequent, directed mostly at the officials. Hand-drawn signs wave after every speech. “I hadn't even intended to comment here.”

Anyone with a shred of humanity will tear up at the beautiful manner in which untrained people narrate their lives and their intelligent grasp of the politics of a complex situation, all to be churned up by a regulatory apparatus that appears to already have all the answers. During bathroom breaks, you might share a few words with your comrades. “I liked your speech.” “Do you think we’re winning?” “What a waste of time.” During a lunch break, people share snacks or – if you’re lucky – organizers have coordinated to provide meals. A whole edifice of social reproductive care work sustains hundreds of two to five minute speeches. You go home, exhausted. Sometimes, you wake up the next day and do it again. If you’re lucky, there’s a protest or march before the event. People stand around smoking cigarettes or drinking low-quality coffee. Later in the process – 2015 – the PUC created designated “free speech zones,” which became something of a joke amongst commenters.

These meetings are more frustrating. The comments, as the day wears on, are especially negative. “This meeting is a sham!” “What corruption. The government has been bought and paid for by foreign corporations.” We begin to recall meetings not as exceptional events but iterative series. “When you guys came to my hometown of Buffalo, the Secretary of State's office held their scoping meeting there. In fact, it was in the same place, the rec center. And I asked…at that meeting about the financial condition and if we as landowners end up with NSF checks or a white elephant and she said that's not my department, that's your State Commission. They are approving this permit” (The

Public Utilities Commission of South Dakota 2009b, 57). How can you take private property? Water is a common resource! We the people are supposed to have the power!

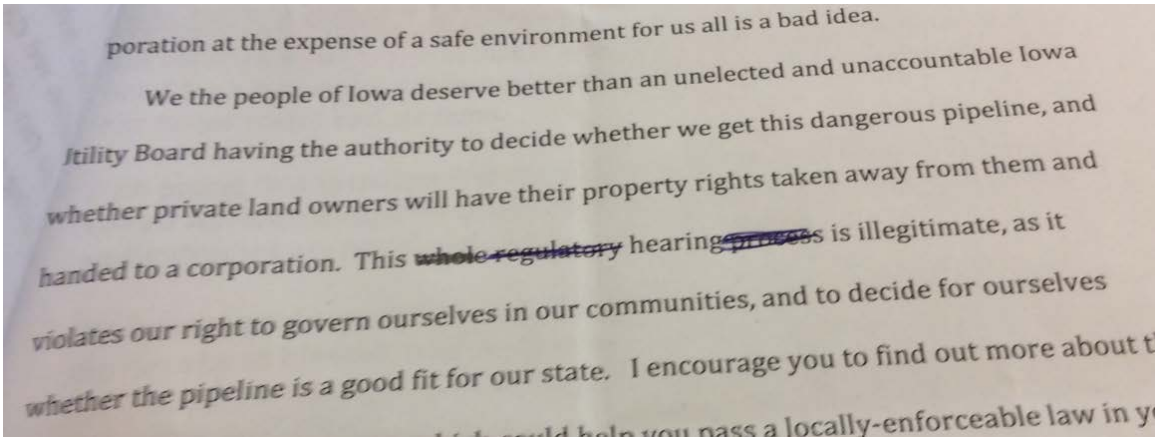
'We the people': *Vox populi* as collective identity formation

At early public comment and input sessions, landowners and other pipeline opponents were not particularly organized. Opposition was collective and spontaneous and could be characterized in the Deweyian sense as the formation of an ephemeral public. But as meetings were iterated, a subject began to cohere through the organization of individuals and groups opposing the pipeline. We started to think of ourselves not as an assortment of individuals, but as a people. As *the* people. The most common expression of this subject position was through reference to the American democratic tradition – phrases such as "We the People" from the Declaration of Independence or Abraham Lincoln's government "of the people, by the people, for the people." Others preferred to cite invocations of the people closer to home – South Dakota's motto "Under God, the People Rule." Or, speakers cited the opening stanzas of the Iowa Constitution which begins "We the people of Iowa…" and further claims that "all political power is inherent in the people." In drawing on the popular mythologies of the United States, these acts unravel and reperform the mystical foundations of authority. In demonstrating the insufficiency of these authorizing documents to adequately measure the will of the people, they "undo the purity of this origin" in these particular documents and the revolutionary power through which they were founded (Frank 2009, 9).

Some of the comments certainly fall into the category of pleas for intersubjective recognition and a return to purity of administration. In doing so, these comments reproduce the impotence of the people, the submission to the discourse of the master. In continually calling on President Obama, Secretary of State John Kerry (and later Hillary Clinton), or the State Department at large to "make the right decision," we performed from a place of lack. Many agreed with the sentiment emphatically expressed by this commenter on the EIS: "PLEASE LISTEN TO THE PEOPLE, ALL OF THE PEOPLE, NOT JUST A SELECT FEW THAT HAVE THE MONEY AND MEANS TO GET THEIR MESSAGE ACROSS LOUDER THAN THOSE OF US WHO DO NOT WANT THE PIPELINE" (US Department of State 2013b)

Others, however, understood the people not as *subjects of* proper representation but instead as the constituent power *from which* representation was derived. Thus, their mode of articulation was not an appeal or demand for representation, but something more akin to a threat. "We, The People will not just lose trust, we will RESIST and mistrust all your words, your programs, your very core and the values we believe you stand/stood for... It will then become our initial instinct and even perhaps our mission to fight your efforts every step of the way" (US Department of State 2013b, 163). This language continued and intensified in the years after Occupy Wall Street and especially during the early part of the opposition to DAPL. Such speakers sought to portray the constituted decisionmaking process of the SD PUC or the IUB as illegitimate. Some of this language concerning "the people's right of self-government", especially in Iowa, is derived from the emergent "community rights movement." This strategy, developed by the Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund (CELDF), is premised on local control, and grew out

of rural anti-coal mining organizing in Pennsylvania in the late 1990s (Campbell and Linzey 2016).


poration at the expense of a safe environment for us all is a bad idea.

We the people of Iowa deserve better than an unelected and unaccountable Iowa Utility Board having the authority to decide whether we get this dangerous pipeline, and whether private land owners will have their property rights taken away from them and handed to a corporation. This ~~whole regulatory~~ hearing ~~process~~ is illegitimate, as it violates our right to govern ourselves in our communities, and to decide for ourselves whether the pipeline is a good fit for our state. I encourage you to find out more about t

could help you pass a locally-enforceable law in y

Figure 9: This hearing is illegitimate

Although such comments demonstrate the subject-in-formation, they in no way fully capture or exhaust it. As if paraphrasing Dean, another Keystone commenter asked the State Department to "Tell us the truth: Democracy in the US is a fantasy" (US Department of State 2013d, 1344).

As Jason Frank argues, this distinctly American sense of the people as a sovereign power has specific roots in American political rhetoric and theory. He calls such fleeting sites where the paradox of representation is exposed by the people "constituent moments." These "Constituent moments enact their claims wholly on the democratic authority of the people themselves: out of these enactments a new democratic subject emerges" (Frank 2009, 8). Such moments are "felicitous," he claims, in part because they explicitly break with the liberal republican procedure for recognizing or authorizing public democracy. The people cannot pre-exist such enunciations or signatures, and in

composing itself as a subject through such acts, it both exposes the democratic deficit at the heart of representational democracy and re-authorizes itself (as the people) as a potential instance of claimsmaking practice (see also Derrida 2002). This form of *vox populi* takes on what Canovan calls a redemptive form of populism (Canovan 1999, 10). "The time is now for WE THE PEOPLE to be put back into this Democracy" (US Department of State 2013c, 126).

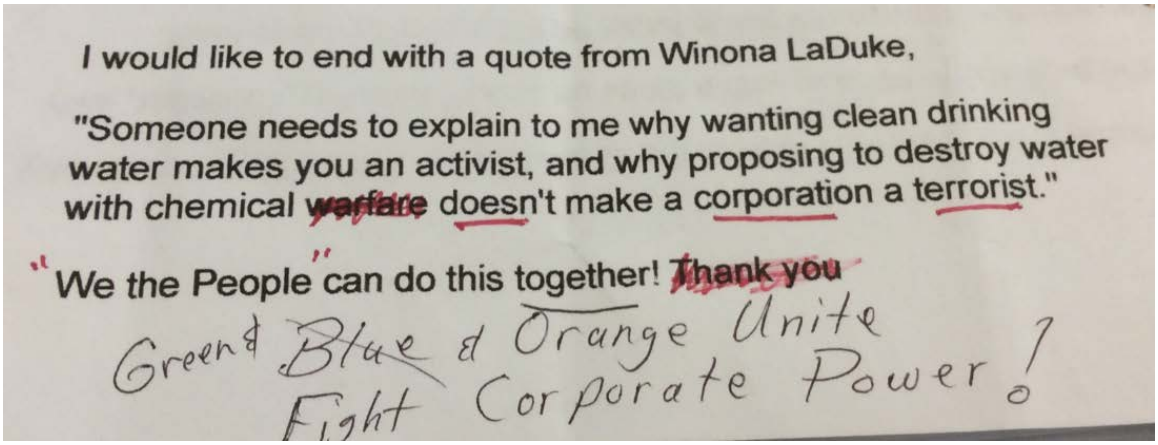


Figure 10: "We the People" can do this together!

The redemptive form of "We the People" is directed at state representatives who are seen as having been corrupted by money, specifically from the oil industry. As if paraphrasing Matt Huber, oil companies were seen to be "squeezing the lifeblood out of democracy" (US Department of State 2013d, 1381). Such discourses of a corrupt or fallen democracy are central to the redemptive moral power of the people. So too are spatial comparisons with fallen or lost democracies in Russia, Canada, or China. The seizure of land, as analyzed in Chapter 3, was particularly seen as endemic of a fall towards authoritarianism or communism.

> "I have heard that there is an attempt to block public opinion in the Keystone pipeline case. Whatever their opinion is, they have a right to express it. Please allow them to be heard. Just let them speak. If they are wrong, then nothing will come of it. There are many countries in the world that do not listen to public opinion. For example, in Myanmar, pipelines are built without public approval. Is that the kind of moral behaviour we want in South Dakota? Public opinion. Listen to it" (Busklein 2015).

Building the redemptive subject of the people requires a certain amount of confidence expressed through public participation and testimony. Although behind-the-scenes meetings, Facebook posts, and email blasts could explain the emergence of the people, these internet worlds are individualizing, less "spheres" than "archipeligos" (Dean 2013, 38). It is only through the *spaces* of public participation that a truly collective identity could cohere, through the circulatory affect of the crowd. It is only through the affects of being together that these sensibilities can cohere. On the one hand, the "feeling of being persecuted, a peculiar angry sensitiveness and irritability directed against those [the crowd] has once and forever nominated as enemies" (Canetti 1962, 22). On the other hand, "all demands for justice and all theories of equality ultimately derive their energy from the actual experience of equality familiar to anyone who has been part of a crowd" (Canetti 1962, 29).

Participation fatigue and the exodus strategy

By 2015, the iterative performance of public input and comment on the pipeline was starting to wear people down. It became clearer and clearer to the people that their voice was not being actively listened to, and moreover, that such participation events had become as one rancher told me "a circus." Prior to a SD PUC hearing on a renewal for a

right of way permit for the Keystone XL pipeline in 2015, a Rapid City Journal / Associated Press news article provided the astute and entirely serious headline “Hearing on Keystone pipeline plan nearly irrelevant” (Associated Press 2015). That summer, a pre-evidentiary hearing was held in order that the PUC could better “formulate questions” at the (presumably more relevant) evidentiary hearing planned for later that month. The public input, testimony, and participation at the pre-evidentiary hearing would not be used in any decision to be made about the permit for the pipeline. Nonetheless, the meeting turned out sixty public participants, who were shocked to learn that their democratic participation was procedurally empty. The Keystone XL pipeline was now entering its second round of SD PUC hearings after the original four-year permit to construct had expired. In South Dakota, the totality of this public input might as well have been as irrelevant as the pre-evidentiary hearing in question. With a detached and dry tone that could almost be mistaken for humor, the AP wrote that “by rule, while any comments made Monday might affect a commissioner’s private thoughts, nothing said at the public input session is supposed to matter” (Associated Press 2015).

Officials do not respond to the ardent criticisms emerging from the audience with more than a nod of acknowledgment. Instead, several months later, a document is posted on the regulatory body’s website that responds to the comments of the public. Each individual comment is transcribed and divided into its constituent parts. Then the criticisms are grouped under different themes (e.g., “socioeconomics”, “risk”, “alternatives”). If you are intrepid, you can even find your name. Next to a quote from your comment, there appears a code word, like RISK 25, CLIM 13, or PN 09. Page to the end of the document, and you’ll find your response summarized. “Inaccurate

characterization of lifecycle GHG emissions." "Lack of consideration of Keystone's safety record and safety culture." "Economic "ripple effects" of the proposed Project." You then scroll down even further to find a response. "As discussed in section 13.9…" "Regulatory oversight is detailed in Section 4.13.6.1…" "Section 4.14, Greenhouse Gases and Climate Change, discusses the impacts of bitumen extraction in Canada on global climate change."

Such acts of procedure exhaust the affective power of the crowd. Even demands for *more* public participation meetings (such as those from the Sierra Club) are transformed into illegitimate grievances. But the sense that these are *responses* is misleading. For example, the State Department summarizes all grievances related to "Process" in fewer than seven "themes", and responds to these themes in a mere four pages. In those pages, it only once even argues that the process as it stands was sufficient. Otherwise, the "responses" merely describe activities undertaken.

In a legal review of the public participation process of Keystone XL, Elizabeth Brown concludes that "all indications are that the outcome of this project has been politically predetermined" (Brown 2012, 505). Many commenters agreed; as one put it, "I respectfully ask the SD PUC deny the KXL application in whole - in spite of the fact I know it's a done deal and this 'public input' session is merely for show." To the extent that the public was involved, its participation was not meaningful from within the NEPA process, but from outside it. Although I ultimately agree, I do not think things were as predetermined as many commenters claim. Some evidence suggests it was not conspiracy but incompetence in managing an interagency review on the part of the State Department that led to the regulatory snafus that Brown documents (Hersh 2011, 2012). Nonetheless,

the public experience of meetings, open comment periods, and the immense amount of technical expertise involved in EIS review paints a remarkably cynical picture of the democratic process. Participants felt like "we weren't being heard," "our comments didn't matter," and that the entire participation system itself was in the pockets of the oil companies.

What is important to note about this quasi-exhaustion of desires in democracy is that in their disorganization, desires spill far beyond the interests of the bourgeoisie per se, and the liberal, bureaucratic state organizers of public participation meetings in particular. Many former participants expressed to me some variation on the refrain that they "just wanted the meetings to end." For others, giving public testimony reified their position against the pipeline and brought them into contact with political organizing that they had never experienced before. As one participant put it to me, "I have never considered myself a political person. But now, I feel like I have to take a position on everything." This is merely an inchoate political sentiment, but it's also one that exceeds the codifications of the public participation process even as it is produced in relation to it.

It is often concluded that public participation – as a form of deliberative democracy – directly depoliticizes. Insofar as participatory mechanisms encourage discussion and debate as paths to consensus outcomes, they seem to obscure actual political decisions. Everyone participates in the public meeting, but at the end of the day, the decision is generally made by some authoritative figure outside of this field. Populism is either a direct contributor to this depoliticization (insofar as populism often reinforces the status quo), or is a shadowy reactionary product of depoliticization (as if populism is an irrational rebellion against the cold reduction to number). To me, it seems that the

relation between populism and participatory democracy is one of mutual entanglement. When viewed from the point of view of participatory processes themselves, populist discourse can *appear* as "the inherent shadowy double of institutionalized postpolitics" (Žižek 2006, 567). But this assessment merely reproduces the structural position of liberal administration. From the position of movements for popular sovereignty, an experience of what might be called "non-political participation" leads to activity outside, or at the margins of, institutionalized democracy. Thus, we need not conclude that in appealing to the established decision-making procedures and to the idea of democracy more broadly, public participation reinforces the empty master position of the official governance mechanisms of liberalism (Dean 2009, 84–85). Rather, through the (incredibly poorly constructed) affective structures and spaces of public participation, the people cohere as a possible identity position. They do not precede their emergence, and they are non-coincidental with themselves and their enunciative acts.

However, it is clear that the public participation process *itself* failed to organize and synthesize desires in a productive manner. Or it might be better said that participation lived on through its own failure, through the experience of a *lack* of functioning democracy. As one organizer told me, "Of course we try to win [in the hearings], but mostly they are an avenue for getting people involved elsewhere." The iterative and Kafkaesque nature of public participation forums created and reinforced for many participants the feeling of a profound lack of anything approaching, in another interviewee's terms, "real democracy." The more people who showed up and expressed their rejection of the pipeline, the more the participation process appeared to be lacking in democracy, the greater both the desire for "real democracy" and the frustration at its lack.

This seemingly self-perpetuating desire to retain a lost object (which produces its own harm) might be akin to what Lauren Berlant has termed cruel optimism (Berlant 2011a). Democracy is generally experienced through its loss, when from the perspective of liberalism it in fact it is not actually lost *per se*, but really functional and in place. There is little doubt from opinion polls that most of the country fully supports Keystone XL, and support for the pipeline is generally hegemonic in South Dakota as well. Consequently, it is my contention that the pipeline's (at least temporary) denial by President Obama was particularly underwhelming for public participants. Although we told ourselves it was due to our activism that the pipeline was defeated, one cannot come away from this many public meetings feeling like the institutionalized democratic system "worked" by any stretch of the imagination.

But cruel optimism cannot explain the continual participation of the people even though many activists *knew* democratic participation was a fantasy. The concept that seems adequate to the experience to me is one of *resigned pragmatism*. Pipeline opponents took public participation events as a pragmatic site of organizing other kinds of political activities, and there were many reasons for doing so. The events were sites of convergence of pipeline opponents, they strengthened opponents' resolve, and they served to highlight the democratic deficit. But as the evidence above strongly shows, individuals, organizers, and groups approached the internal organization of such events with resignation. They have accepted it as something unpleasant in which they must participate and which they cannot do anything about.

To the extent that participation was a cruel aspiration, it was only fleetingly so. In the longer run of pipeline opposition, resigned pragmatism was far more persistent.

Perhaps this can in part explain why in South Dakota there was much *less* contentious political participation within the SD PUC review of DAPL permitting compared to Keystone XL. Although several explanations have been suggested to me by community organizers, it seems that the exhaustion in the official process led in part to an exodus towards contentious politics *outside* the official process. A handful of prominent non-Native Keystone XL opponents, organizers, and landowners were active early on in the DAPL resistance and blockade movement at Standing Rock, well before the international prominence of the movement. It is not well acknowledged in the popular pipeline literature, for example, that four long-term prayer camps / blockades along the Keystone XL route were established as early as 2014. Some of these organizers and activists have suggested that the experience of fighting Keystone XL was crucial to the blockade movement that later emerged; one of those lessons might be the limits of public participation.

Participate you must! The consequences of non-participation

The exodus strategy also had consequences for opponents that must be acknowledged as well, especially because the background discourse to official public participation was the suggestion that other forms of political activity were illegitimate. From the perspective of TransCanada, ETP, and state and federal government officials and politicians, traveling through the process for public participation grants legitimate status to construct the pipelines. This means that *non*-participation is seen as a legitimate threat to democratic procedure. It is important to highlight both grievances from pipeline

opponents and responses from officials in order to demonstrate the manner in which public participation is legitimated and contested.

Throughout the Keystone XL and DAPL permitting process, the Oceti Ŝakowiŋ Oyate more broadly contested the very authority of the PUC and the federal government to derive a ruling through public participation processes. At most public meetings, individuals – either part of tribal governments or not – repeated the claim that the pipelines violated the sovereignty of the Lakota and other Native peoples. Although the pipelines did not cross reservation boundaries, most Lakota, Nakota, and Dakota people contend that these are not legitimate boundaries, due to the violation of the 1851 and 1868 Treaties of Fort Laramie. These treaties – as supreme laws of the land – developed in sovereign nation-to-nation meetings an understanding that western South Dakota was, and remains today, stolen land (Deloria and Lytle 1984; Deloria and Wilkins 1999; Ostler 2011; Ostler and Estes 2017).

Tribal governments thus frequently express the necessity of *government-to-government consultation* on development projects including pipelines. They request to meet face to face with United States political leaders, not sundry administrative officials. Consultation processes in both Keystone XL and DAPL were thus understood to be incomplete. That the Oyate were only offered "meaningful participation" via public processes rather than nation-to-nation consultation is seen as largely offensive. Jason Cooke, elected leader of the Yankton Sioux tribe, expressed this difficulty well at the 2015 public input session for Keystone XL.

> "I am disappointed to say that this public input session is the only way in which many of [our] concerns can be heard. I am here despite the fact that the commission has provided inadequate opportunities for tribal members to

> participate. And an inadequate process for excluding relevant evidence since the forum is the only forum provided to us to address these issues. This is par for the course unfortunately when it comes to outside government's treatment of indigenous people. And this is something that must change for the PUC's proceedings to provide due process to all South Dakotans…"

Even the Obama Administration acknowledged in 2016 that it was necessary to create "a broader review and consultation as to how, prospectively, Federal decisionmaking on infrastructure projects can better allow for timely and meaningful tribal input" ("Federal Consultation with Tribes Regarding Infrastructure Decision-Making - Framing Paper" 2016). And a long literature exists examining the broader dynamics of Native sovereignty as nested, counter-, or alter-sovereignty (Barker 2005; Deloria and Lytle 1984; Deloria and Wilkins 1999; Bruyneel 2007; A. Simpson 2014; Coulthard 2014). The Treaty Alliance, an international coalition among 150 signatory Indigenous Nations against tar sands extraction and pipelines across North America thus represents a completely different articulation of sovereignty than that performed in public participation processes, as do the seemingly more informal nation-to-nation relationships developed at the DAPL blockade. The grievances raised by the Yankton Sioux Tribe, the Oceti Ŝakowiŋ Oyate more broadly, and hundreds of Native nations would require another dissertation to write. I am not privy to these relationships and they do not ground the aspects of pipeline opposition I study here.

Nonetheless, what I *do* want to highlight here is that there is a difficult contradiction between Native sovereignty and popular sovereignty. As Tuck and Yang write, grounding political opposition in an understanding of abstract population or class dynamics renders Indigenous peoples a mere asterisk in coalition politics. "The "99%" is invoked as a deserving supermajority, in contrast to the unearned wealth of the "1%". It

renders Indigenous peoples (a 0.9% 'super-minority') completely invisible and absorbed, just an asterisk group to be subsumed into the legion of occupiers" (Tuck and Yang 2012, 23). Such a critique thus opens the question of the necessity *not* of popular sovereignty, but of an-other sovereignty in practicing a politics of decolonization.

During his testimony, Cooke cited the importance of usufructuary rights reserved by the 1851 and 1868 treaties, and that the interest in this land did not end with the creation of reservation boundaries. He continued, however, by describing how meaningful participation of all South Dakotans is failed when proper consultation is not undertaken.

> "While we appreciate the opportunity to participate in this proceeding, and that others have been granted the opportunity as well, it now appears that the intervenor status was not granted to enable the public to meaningfully participate, but rather to give this proceeding the appearance of fairness to the public. Many of the commissioners' decisions in the course of this proceeding do not comport with what is required by South Dakota statutes, and this process has become almost unrecognizable as a quasi-judicial proceeding. The public involvement element of this process has been a matter of form rather than substance, which was not what was intended by the statutes, which was intended to protect all South Dakota, the voices of South Dakotans must be considered in a meaningful way."

The open possibility here, it seems to me, is one not of recognition or belittlement, but a radical redistribution of our understanding of where and how constituent power might be derived.

Although the Obama Administration was sympathetic to fixing the broken consultation process, to the broader dynamics of the settler state and subjects, however, such claims or possibilities were not just unintelligible, but dangerous. Nowhere can this be seen better than in the oil industry and its attendant politicians' admonishing of the Standing Rock Sioux and their political allies for not properly participating in

environmental or cultural review. Ed Wiederstein from MAIN wrote in a Bismarck Tribune op-ed that “These groups did not participate in the public hearings held by the North Dakota Public Service Commission, [and] now they seek to push a radical environmental agenda through illegal action” (Wiederstein 2016). The supposed “non-participation” of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe in consultation remained one of the major pro-pipeline talking points. North Dakota governor Jack Dalrymple went further and suggested that the blockade “tramples on a legal and orderly process in favor of mob rule” (Dalrymple 2016).

These sentiments saturated the Keystone XL public participation process as well. At a public meeting in South Dakota in 2011, one of the warrior societies of the Lakota entered the meeting dressed in fatigues and stood silently around the room. The hearing continued and the masked people did not participate. The silent, non-participatory action outraged many local non-Native people. Journalist Bob Mercer suggested they were “dressed as real eco-terrorists” and that their silence contributed to the “already tense atmosphere” (Mercer 2013).

Figure 11: "Real eco-terrorists" (Rapid City Journal)

The racial coding here is thin and obvious; within the broader realm of racial signification, masks and fatigues on a brown person can only signify racial threat and terror, proving an ignorance of long-standing outsized enrolment of Native peoples in the U.S. military (Carroll 2008; LaDuke and Cruz 2013). Mercer would continue to refer to them as eco-terrorists in later writings, and this broad discourse likely helped contribute to the State of South Dakota's good standing financial relationship with the Department of Homeland Security. One of the claims made to secure such funds was "the chance that environmentalists might attack the proposed Dewey-Burdock in situ uranium mine or the Keystone XL pipeline" (O'Sullivan 2014). The broader point is that from the perspective

of the settler, silence and non-participation in democracy are seen as racial threat, whereas, as Kanngeiser and Beuret argue, "the refusal to be counted, to speak…is a means of making silence into a de/colonizing device, one that works through the refusal of representation and incorporation" (2017, 376).

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have provided evidence that populist opposition to the Keystone pipeline works against two commonsense claims in critical geography. First, the idea that more or better participatory mechanisms will produce a better result is, as populists demonstrate, a losing battle. Populists are *resigned* to public participation. I agree with them (and learned *from* them) that the process and outcome is very much rigged, even if the specific connections aren't always convincing. Environmentalism's populist spirit allowed it to connect to the region's verve for grassroots democracy, so when supposedly participatory processes failed to produce this experience, they appeared all the more illegitimate.

Second, the counter-claim from critical geographers that the people are ignorant of the ineffectuality of participation or captured by its process also cannot hold. Participation is fueled by the desire to testify and render visible and affectable a social group's object-attachments, including the fantasy of participatory democracy. But pipeline populists are *pragmatic* insofar as they seem to demonstrate that democracy is a fantasy through such processes. The resigned pragmatism of populism sought, intentionally or not, to exhaust the possibility of public participation. But at the same

time, it also exhausted many of its participants as well. What resigned pragmatism does to populist politics, in the context of revolutionary and anti-colonial politics emerging in the wake of these participation meetings, is thus an open and strategic question I leave to political struggle.

When geographers and environmental justice scholars advocate for *more* participation, or developing *better* structures of democracy, I firmly believe we are advocating for structures to which activists and the public are pragmatically resigned. It is in fact *we scholars* who are caught in our own cruel optimism and settler-colonial desires for a world in which consensus is achievable and the State retains the power to sanction such acts of debility, exhaustion, and extermination directed at Native Nations, indigenous peoples, and people of color worldwide. The experimental creation of new institutional structures of participation by geographers (e.g., Whatmore 2013; Whatmore and Landström 2011; Lane et al. 2011), from this perspective, is an attempt to retain the exclusive authority of academics to augment the *conditions* for the emergence of democracy. As Pulido argues, "the state has developed numerous initiatives in which it goes through the motions, or, 'performs' regulatory activity, especially participation" (2017, 530). The fact that these procedures almost never produce meaningful results demonstrates not a problem with "a lack of knowledge or skill" on the part of opponents "but a lack of political will that must be attributed to racial capitalism" (2017, 530).

While geographers and environmental activists have continued to advocate for increasing democratic participation in scientific review of environmental controversies, few participants in public participation processes believe these sessions to be politically fruitful, enjoyable, or meaningful. They devote countless hours to organizing through

participation even though many experienced these meetings as exhausting. Everyone involved sees the actual mechanism of deliberation as a sham mediated by a corrupt state under the influence of oil, yet they are *compelled* to participate, since participation is used as a wedge by conservatives and fossil fuel PR machine to delegitimize resistance as anti-democratic. So, pipeline populists are caught in a paradox, wherein popular sovereignty is desired, but its technical scenes, stages, spaces, and representations seem to intentionally exhaust it. As I argue in the next chapter, some individuals and organizations pragmatically funnel such experiences into more explicit scenes of counter-expertise. But this could be a pyrrhic victory, insofar as despair and burnout were more common: “I wish these comments made a difference, but much more must be done by We the People to capture that place where your heart is supposed to be” (US Department of State 2013b, 98).

Chapter 6. The people know best: Situating the counter-expertise of populist pipeline opposition movements

Introduction

While recent scholarship largely associates populism with demagoguery, authoritarianism, nativism, and reactionary illiberalism (Mudde and Kaltwasser 2017; Müller 2016; Scoones et al. 2018), this relatively recent conceptual elaboration has been countered by a "persistent counter-refrain" (Grattan 2016, 19) that understands progressive or left-populism as a counter-hegemonic performative construction of "the people" against corrupt elites. Variously understood as "grassroots populism," "everyday populism," or "democratic populism" (Grattan 2016, 33), emergent "environmental, pro-democracy, and anti-corruption mobilisations" (Gerbaudo 2017, 6) are distinguished from right-populisms through their desires to actualize the ideal of *popular sovereignty*. This precise form and ideology of progressive populism that has animated leftist and radical movements in the American Great Plains since the 1890s, to the point that the Marxist historian Norman Pollack in 1962 approvingly claimed that "populism described the results of ideology, and Marx its causation" (Pollack 1976, 72). This history and genre of oppositional, cross-class populism I argue is at work in some aspects of contemporary oil pipeline opposition movements.

Even narrowly defined, a progressive, grassroots social movement populism has been incredibly divisive among the political left. On the one hand, Marxist scholars frequently suggest that "racism is essential" (Rancière 2016, 102) in the creation of the collective subject of populism, so much so that populism could be seen as inherently

proto-fascist. Such a position is shared by the political center and Keynesian liberals, for whom "every populism, right or left, is equally suspect, because each one represents the pathologically unhinged demos that the existing institutional order seeks to moderate, filter, and contain" (Riofrancos 2017a, n.p.; Mann 2017). On the other hand, proponents of "radical democracy" contend that populism "must be conceived as a 'radical reformism' which strives to recover and deepen democracy" (Mouffe 2016, n.p.) and that it is "the royal road to understanding something about the ontological constitution of the political as such" (Laclau 2005, 67). Assessments of populist politics in the global climate justice movement are also deeply split. From The World People's Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth at Cochabamba to the People's Climate March in New York City, scholars and activists disagree whether something like "low-carbon populism" (Huber 2017, n.p.) as "a popular movement for climate justice…is a necessary condition for more radical actions" (Smucker and Premo 2014, n.p.). Others suggest such strategies smack more of a "corporate PR campaign" (Gupta 2014, n.p.) "which, because its demands are amorphous, can be joined by anyone" (Hedges 2014, n.p.).

By contrast, for progressive environmentalists, landowners, and community organizers fighting the Keystone XL and Dakota Access pipelines in the North American Great Plains, environmental populism unfolded precisely through an iterative politics of scientific counter-expertise. To be clear: not all pipeline opposition is populist in character. Struggles for decolonization and Native sovereignty, for example, do not emphasize retrieving a lost US-American democracy of the people by the people for the people. Yet many progressive citizens groups were decidedly populist, and sometimes

explicitly identified themselves as such. Passing through the scientific process of environmental review developed their sense of an identity as *the people*. Environmental review demonstrated that regulatory capture by fossil fuel industries had affected third-party contractors performing environmental review and state agencies adjudicating these reviews, and thus consolidated opposition to these corrupt, elite institutions. Populist resentment emerged from the resentment towards the state and fossil fuel industry, who seemed to ignore the truth of the social and environmental impacts of pipelines. This research suggests that both climate change denialism and technocratic liberalism might be challenged by resituating scientific knowledge production with clear political ends.

Populism's skepticism and its expertise

Populism is a contested concept, but at its most general level is defined as the performative political act that constructs "the people" as a unified, collective body in opposition to a perceived corrupt power of institutionalized elites or outsiders (Canovan 1981; Laclau 2005). As a colloquial signifier and political discourse, "populism" is frequently used to symmetrically equate extreme positions on both the political left and right, with reference to grievances against institutionalized liberalism led by charismatic orators. This recently common use of "populism" has its roots in denunciations of agrarian politics in modernization theory and, most famously, the work of Richard Hofstadter (1960), who understood populism as paranoid, anti-intellectual, and anti-democratic.

This use of populism cannot be upheld when applied to left-populisms, for no symmetry exists in the political discourse or social formation of left- and right-wing populisms and the manner in which they construct "the people" (Sibertin-Blanc 2013). For the political right, the language of "the people" substantializes nationalism, nativism, and reactionary politics more generally. By contrast, a growing body of political theory substantiates the argument that, left populism is distinguished by its real desire to enact *popular sovereignty* against the lip-service it is paid by elites, elected politicians, and the liberal state more generally (Grattan 2016; Gerbaudo 2017). With it has roots in the agrarian and producerist movements of the Farmer's Alliance and the People's Party of the late 1800s, "democratic populism" or "grassroots populism" could seem like a regionally specific US-American phenomenon. Yet conceptually, as Gerbaudo (2017) has shown, this definition of left populism can have broad application to social movements around the world fighting for justice, equality, and a deeper democracy.

Analyses of left-populist discursive strategy are still fundamentally split. Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe argue that populism is an authentic expression of radical democracy with the flexibility and creativity necessary to counter institutionalized post-politics. By contrast, Marxists uphold the position that "populism places too little emphasis on class" (Dean 2017, s-44). By refusing to name a particular, properly political subject (e.g., the proletariat), populism is too vague a political identity to enact justice (Swyngedouw 2010, 224). Such dismissals hardly explain populism's *persuasive* power (Kazin 1998). Through what processes does left-populism enroll its subjects, and with what effects? It is my contention that, in the arena of environmental politics, disputes over expertise play an important and unacknowledged role.

Following Kazin, Meyer (2008) argues that US-American environmentalist discourse is split between a "paternalistic" and a "populist" persuasion. Paternalistic environmentalism consolidates elite power, environmentalism's whiteness and upper-class orientation, and its distrust or demonization of the poor and marginalized peoples as mindless masses. Although scientific expertise is not the main driver of technocratic liberalism, the important role it can play in depoliticized governance has contributed to further consolidation of such power. In this situation, "politics more and more becomes a struggle between those who have expertise and those who do not" (Fischer 2000, 23). This is evident in the consolidation of power in the United States by "Big Green" non-governmental organizations (Klein 2014) and the manner in which their advocacy retains this exclusive power through expertise.

Environmental populism, like contemporary anti-extraction movements worldwide, "perhaps…shouldn't be referred to as an environmental movement at all, since it is primarily driven by a desire for a deeper form of democracy" (Klein 2014, 295). Yet environmental populism adds a new valence to left populism through its emphasis on "local knowledge rooted in the particularities of place and community" (Meyer 2008, 225). Because many contemporary North American environmentalisms forefront expert knowledge as a site of struggle, they can provide an important case not just of environmental populism, but the understudied but illuminating role of contested expertise in generating populism.

Swyngedouw claims that any sense that "the people know best" is upheld by their investment in evidence emerging from a "scientific technocracy assumed to be neutral." For this reason he argues environmental populism is "inherently non-political and non-

partisan" (2010, 223). This argument runs counter to Meyer's sympathetic views of environmental populism outlined above, which sees the populist persuasion elaborating not a faith in technocracy, but instead in experiential, non-scientific knowledges. In my argument, both of these positions see the role of environmental expertise in environmental populism as too instrumental.[28] Both suggest populism does not actually hinge on practices and processes of scientific knowledge *production*, but only claimsmaking based on contesting scientific *results*. For its critics, environmental populists suspiciously subordinate ecological expertise to the conspiracy theories of the people. For its champions, environmental populists already have all the knowledge they need in their lived experiences, and thus need no supplementary scientific expertise.

What remains scarcely explained by detractors of the contemporary consolidation of expert knowledges is how the development of practices of counter-expertise could condition the emergence of environmental populism. Fischer notes that reactions against expertise can engender "both right- and left-wing populisms, [which] hold out a return to grassroots democracy as the key to revitalizing American society" (2000, 28). Although it is clear that divisions in types of knowledge can engender resentment against elites, I demonstrate how the process of developing counter-expertise can contribute to the populist political form.

With what concepts can we understand the construction of "the people" *through* rather than only *against* expertise? I argue we should take the post-foundationalist stance that there is no essential identity to the people, that "the people are missing" (*manqué* – also failed, lacking) (Deleuze 1989, 216). This position counters the dismissive thesis that populisms are merely reactionary movements concerned with "'THE' Environment and

'THE' People, Humanity as a whole" (Swyngedouw 2010, 221). Contrary to this claim, much of environmental populist discourse is characterized by an intense attention to place-based and open-ended constructions of "the people," especially through "unlikely alliances" (Grossman 2017; Hébert 2016; Iveson 2014). In such formulations, "the people" is not assumed as a given (as a *nation*, in the reactionary form, or a *population*, in the liberal form), but must be carefully and provisionally assembled.

Second, through attempts to mobilize expert knowledge, environmental populisms are frequently constructed through minor sciences that leak from or cut at the edge of elite or major science. A minor science could be understood to be involved in the never-finished, always-processual construction of an oppositional sense or tone that composes "a people" through alliance or affinity (Katz 1996; Barry 2017; Thoburn 2016). Importantly, minor science takes part in "the organization of the social field" which is also immanently "a part of that science itself" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 368–69). Counter-expertise is one form of minor science, insofar as it is an iterative process of scientific contestation and *bricolage*, a "taking up of whatever is at hand" (Secor and Linz 2017, 568) that goes beyond common sense, lay, or experiential knowledge towards developing new, scientific skills among the people. The consequence of seeing counter-expertise as a minor science is that no easy division can be drawn between Elite / Science versus People / Lay Knowledge. *Both* expert and lay knowledges are capable of engendering or being captured by either "paternalistic" or "populist" environmentalisms. Thus, a situation in which counter-expertise congeals a collective subject of "the people" can teach us much about contemporary populism. Indeed, because environmental populism decomposes and recomposes scientific knowledge precisely as if it *weren't*

neutral, it is capable of grounding a distinctly political (rather than depoliticizing) science.

It is worth contrasting such a position with contemporary Gramscian political analyses of both populism and experiential knowledge (Crehan 2016; Hart 2012; Mann 2009), which have much in common with the perspective outlined here (see Featherstone 2011; Keeling 2007). Gramsci also understood the construction of a people through a counter-hegemonic process of unraveling "common sense" pitted against the hegemonic consolidation of knowledge and national identity. Although Gramsci's analysis should not be understood as economically- or class-reductionist, he is undoubtedly drawn towards understanding counter-hegemonic knowledge production as aligned with subalternity, marginality, or class division. By contrast, anti-pipeline populism is not, in my assessment, a pedagogy, knowledge, or category of "the oppressed," although it could eventually lead to a praxis-oriented politics. The open-ended, performative construction of "the people" elaborated in pipeline opposition cut across various class positions, social identities, and spaces.

Second, while Gramsci pays close attention to popular culture and knowledge, he devotes less attention to science and expertise as a field of struggle. Gramsci was critical of the consolidation of scientific expertise in positivism. Gramscian analysis has thus tended to pay more attention to how "experiential, placed-based, and nonscientific knowledge" (Rice, Burke, and Heynen 2015) exceeds and challenges scientific positivism. By contrast, Wainwright and Mercer's (2009) understanding of a Gramscian elaboration of non-objective science as a social process of iterability is closer to the understanding of minor science at work in pipeline populism. The minor for Deleuze

emerges not in outright opposition to the major, but from *within* "a scientific field" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 367). Thus, counter-expertise as minor science does not elaborate an alternative epistemology based in common sense, popular culture, or lay knowledge, but is constructed by augmenting scientific practices. Such a position has further in common with the Harawayian tendency toward a feminist coalitional affinity or "united front politics" (Haraway 1990, 151; see also Bosworth 2017).

This argument further reiterates that left- and right-populisms are not at all symmetrical in form despite the fact that both construct "the people" against "elites." Neoliberal petro-populism and conservative skepticism of climate science are directly opposed (at least ideologically) to institutionalized elites and government interference in the market (Huber 2013) and consequently consolidate the superior normative force of a determinate, substantialized, majoritarian people (namely, white Americans). On the other hand, minor science exposes and unravels the majoritarian people through staging its own performative assembly towards a utopian and not-yet-existent popular sovereignty (Sibertin-Blanc 2013; Butler 2016). There is no reason to be especially romantic about minor science. In the case of pipeline opposition, it was partial, fragmentary, and largely unsuccessful in constructing a durable political subject. Yet importantly, the development of expertise as a minor science and its subsequent conditioning of a populist social movement also created the conditions of possibility for deeper resentment and strategic alliances in other politically radical forms of pipeline opposition.

Knowing land, financing expertise

Initially, many pipeline opponents embraced the opportunity to be heard and they enthusiastically built their case that the pipeline would result in negative impacts to tribal and public land and water, farm and ranchland, and sensitive ecological areas, especially in the case of an oil spill. Testimony served to ground opposition in experience, local knowledge, and long-term heritage and frequently ran up against the relations of land and water described in the EIS. Public input and scoping meetings served as information sessions to transmit knowledge about the Keystone XL project to landowners and the public. At these meetings, landowners frequently raised complex and specific concerns about their own land. To this, TransCanada agents and contractors would respond with specifics about the project, attempting to quell concerns about pipeline spills, interruption of land. This exchange from a public meeting in Winner, SD in 2009 is typical:

> MR. HARTER: My second part of the concern after coming out of the low areas is the soils are highly erodible going through my land and I know south of my land because it's pretty sandy. And when you -- you're talking like within just the pipeline area. But when you start getting say up to 100 foot wide strip in below sand and it starts moving there's nothing that you're going to be able to do about that because Mother Nature's going to take care of that. And then you've got to come back and try to reclaim land to where it will at least hold grass.
>
> MR. SCHMIDT: There is a brochure out front that talks about the whole Sand Hills reclamation process and we started dialogue with university extension services that work with the Department of Agriculture and NRCS. Department of Transportation, they deal with this issue all the time as well. And in there you'll see there's a series of steps we'll go through to identify where those locations are. They'll be working this year to try to do as much routing we can to avoid steep slopes or areas where we're going to have problems trying to establish reclamation (The Public Utilities Commission of South Dakota 2009a, 79–80).
>
> Months later, the same landowner again raised questions about reclamation.
>
> “The land is highly erodible blow sand, and reclamation is a key issue. I don't see how it can be pastured until it is completely sodded back in. I estimate myself that

> this will take a minimum of a two- to five-year time line. And that's because if you run the cattle on the area where the pipeline's been dug in, it's going to break the grass down and cause it to start blowing" (The Public Utilities Commission of South Dakota 2009b, 25).

Presumably, the brochure was less than convincing. But it wasn't just that farmers and ranchers were immediately set in their ways. One skeptical farmer I interviewed eventually came to support the pipeline after he gained some concessions from TransCanada. In this case, the material interest at stake proved to alleviate enough of the perceived risk that the farmer assented to the project.

Others, like Harter, were initially skeptical but grew more firm in their beliefs as they learned more. Central to this transformation were the community organizing and educational activities undertaken by Dakota Rural Action. DRA is a grassroots member-driven organization composed of farmers, ranchers, and rural and small town South Dakotans, who advocate for issues that affect these members. In 2009, they began to get involved in organizing information about landowner rights in relation to Keystone XL. Although not opposed to the pipeline at the time, DRA began distributing legal and scientific information about the pipeline to landowners and organizing the messaging that would take place at evidentiary hearings later that year. As one landowner put it in a public meeting in 2009, "Dakota Rural Action has been a Godsend help for us to keep us focused with information and direction. And I would like to be here every day to visit with people and help you out and get you information, but we've got ranching duties" (The Public Utilities Commission of South Dakota 2009b, 31–32). The time-suck of conducting unpaid research in order to attempt to prove the pipeline's possible harm

(which I will return to below) made collective organization in order to pool their resources incredibly important.

State-level evidentiary hearings put expertise on trial, as landowners, Native Nations, and environmental and community groups honed their arguments while attempting to discredit those of TransCanada. Differences in performance, professionalism, dress, knowledge of the law, and argumentation between paid experts and unpaid lay people augmented perceptions of knowledge and expertise. The first South Dakota Public Utilities Commission (SD PUC) evidentiary hearings were held over three days in November 2009. Much like a legal trial, parties to the case as well as the Commissioners can call witnesses to the stand. These expert witnesses can then be cross-examined by each of the parties involved, including intervenors, who can choose to be represented by lawyers or to represent themselves. In 2009 already, despite little organized opposition, the parade of expert witnesses called by TransCanada took on a near-absurdist quality. One commenter captured this sense particularly well in suggesting that "TransCanada cannot even get their lies straight between their own expert witnesses. They have to bring in an expert witness to refute what other expert witnesses say when it does not fit their agenda" (The Public Utilities Commission of South Dakota 2009b, 27).

It was difficult to come away from evidentiary hearings feeling like a differential in expertise was the cause of permit approval. Just like the various kinds of experiential, lay, and local knowledge laid out against the pipeline, scientific counter-expertise tended also to be subsumed by the environmental review process. Climate change was not allowed to be discussed in the state-level review process in South Dakota, and efforts to call outspoken climate scientist James Hansen to testify were nixed by the PUC in 2015.

When scientific evidence was disputed by expert witnesses not brought by TransCanada, it was often unclear how it was being judged.

A dispute concerning paleontological resources highlights the stakes of this disagreement and the frustration felt by those trying to challenge TransCanada's evidence. Paleontologist and founder of the Black Hills Institute of Geological Research Peter Larson testified that Keystone XL construction could harm fossils in the rich Hell Creek Formation in Northwestern South Dakota. Larson argued in public testimony in Buffalo and in Pierre that fossil resources could be put at risk if professional paleontologists did not accompany construction crews. In his written testimony, Larson further argued that, "The fossil record across the boundary preserves not only the record of the extinction of 70% of the life forms then present on the earth, but also the record of the climate changes that followed the asteroid impact. This record provides a chance to study climate change and extinction as it applies to the effects humans are having on our planet" (Larson 2009). He reiterated this point in public, arguing that "we're still learning a tremendous amount about what effect that had on life forms here on earth, which is very important in our understanding as to what damage we can be doing to the planet today and not even -- not even realizing when you pass thresholds what happens to life" (The Public Utilities Commission of South Dakota 2009b, 65). That is, for Larson, the construction of the pipeline not only threatens to impact climate change today, but also to destroy our ability to know and understand the global climate system.

The PUC Commissioners found the testimony compelling, and made reference to it several times. Yet Larson's testimony was disputed by another PUC witness, who suggested that while they were "not an expert" in paleontology, they didn't expect

paleontological resources to be harmed because “if you go to any museum that has fossils, you’ll see them in pieces” (The Public Utilities Commission of South Dakota 2009c, 259). Instances such as these reinforced the sentiment that even when the differential in expertise seemed to actually favor those against the pipeline’s construction, the actual disagreement about the *stakes* of scientific inquiry was unable to be discussed.

Finding, paying, and calling credible and convincing expert witnesses to the stand is incredibly difficult, especially for community organizing groups in sparse western South Dakota. Environmental contracting is a massive and global industry that has found its role “grooming” pipeline projects for public acceptance, as one UK activist group put it during their tongue-in-cheek “impact assessment” of international consulting firm Environmental Resources Management (ERM), to whom we will return in a moment (Marriott and Minio-Paluello 2013, 203; Barry 2013, 53). “Independent” (that is, private) consultant agencies have close ties to both the industries for whom they prepare environmental assessments and the government agencies to whom they submit these assessments, such as the EPA, the BLM, and the State Department. This is not altogether surprising, for the genre of research and writing environmental assessments is so esoteric that industries, agencies, and contractors are frequently the only ones literate in its exegesis. The overlapping and circulating goals, members, and money among these institutions subsequently result in frequent conflicts of interest and calls of corruption.

TransCanada made an initial recommendation to the State Department of three consultancy firms to prepare the environmental impact statement and other environmental permits, headlined by Cardno Entrix. After consulting with other agencies, the State Department selected Cardno Entrix to complete the EIS, who would be paid by

TransCanada to do so. But because Cardno Entrix counted TransCanada as a "major client," they were subject to calls for conflict of interest in the project, including in a major New York Times expose (Rosenthal and Frosch 2011). A federal Office of Inspector General investigation, called for by Senator Bernie Sanders, revealed that in fact the State Department had "limited technical resources, expertise, and experience" to make such a decision (Hersh 2012). An anonymous federal official described the situation, "The people I worked with at State were good, honest people, and they were very inexperienced and naive about environmental laws…They did not have a senior expert on their environmental impact study, and I've never seen that before" (Hersh 2011). Essentially, the State Department was relying on what looked and sounded like expert knowledge with no reference to whether that knowledge was in fact accurate. Other agencies were highly critical of the EIS, which the EPA called "insufficient" in 2011 and 2013, and which the Department of the Interior labeled as "inaccurate" (McVeigh 2013).

These worries, among others, eventually led to the State Department rejecting the initial EIS. But although the IG found some fault with the initial selection process that led to Cardno Entrix, the State Department engaged in the same process for its selection of a new agency, choosing none other than ERM. ERM had also previously come under heavy fire for numerous aspects of their Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline assessment and almost immediately came under scrutiny for their failure to disclose previous ties to TransCanada. This, however, led to no significant changes in their environmental assessment. As environmental law expert Oliver A. Houck commented, consultants have

a “financial interest in the outcome of the project.” Consequently, “Their primary loyalty is getting this project through, in the way the client wants” (Rosenthal and Frosch 2011).

All this is to say that populist charges of corruption in the financial relationships engendered between state agencies and corporations in order to create expert knowledge had more truth to them than it is frequently recognized. In drawing evidence of financial ties between the companies, pipeline opponents claimed not only that scientific and technical expertise possibly incorrect, but also the conditions of the creation of that knowledge were subject to the market rather than the truth.

These claims were inadmissible in hearings. PUC Commissioner Johnson responded to Harter’s charges that the commission was “crawling in bed with big money oil companies” in a dismissive fashion, claiming that Harter was “insulting” them by “saying people are rich and greedy” (The Public Utilities Commission of South Dakota 2009b, 27, 28). Another farmer echoed Harter’s sentiment later that day. “I read [TransCanada’s] pamphlets. I guess, first of all, all the testimony you hear from them is their experts. They own them. I mean, they’re paying them. It makes me a little bit nervous…They kind of sidestep the issues, and they don’t really tell the truth. They tell you what they think you want to hear” (The Public Utilities Commission of South Dakota 2009b, 60). Commissioner Johnson responded with more clarity, explaining that “Commission staff has called a number of expert witnesses from across the country to testify on this. Those witnesses are paid for by TransCanada…but those experts don't correspond with TransCanada except through the normal legal channels. They are working for staff to really vet and question” (The Public Utilities Commission of South Dakota 2009b, 64).

To the less-well-funded opposition, this difference in financial resources clearly affected the perception of independence or objectivity at stake in the project. DRA frequently acknowledged in testimony that they did not have the financial resources to hire expert witnesses. As Paul Blackburn of DRA wistfully said, “You know, I wish I was an expert in geology pipeline corrosion, and, you know, social economic impacts of pipelines” (The Public Utilities Commission of South Dakota 2009d, 571). Clearly annoyed by the repeated argument about financial resources, Chairman Johnson replied, “There was an expert in paleontology -- maybe the foremost expert in paleontology in this state who on his own dime drove here last night to provide public comment. I would have thought that calling him as a witness wouldn't have cost DRA a whole lot of money. It's not my job to put together the case for you all…It just seems to me -- I mean, ultimately staff witnesses have determined the things -- they don't believe some of the things you're raising are concerns worthy of a far greater fleshing out” (The Public Utilities Commission of South Dakota 2009d, 572).

Minor sciences of pipeline investigation

Outside of evidentiary hearings and relationships with formal state institutions, oppositional groups took investigative matters into their own hands. Realizing that there were often times no available experts to help and that their accumulated knowledge already amounted to expertise in some manner, groups began collecting data and information with which they could possibly contest the pipeline. So too were different kinds of expert practices a central part of non-sanctioned confrontations with pipeline

construction and security forces, including everything from security culture to teargas protection (even if these might not be recognized by our current definitions of expertise). The populist opposition to Keystone XL and DAPL required the sustained development of many of these minor sciences, which emerged from the cramped space of oppositional politics.

Citing their long-term life and labor on the land in question, individuals testified that the high water table in south central South Dakota and northern Nebraska was not adequately considered in the EIS. Increasingly, many argued that a pipeline leak in this area could result in contamination of the Ogalala Aquifer. Lay opponents and scientists both testified that the 'boundaries' of the Sand Hills bioregion mapped by the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ) did not correspond to the actual extent of the bioregion. These concerns would eventually result in a re-routing of Keystone XL around the Sand Hills region, an example of the importance of public testimony from the perspective of the environmental review process. Yet of course, a simple re-routing of the pipeline was deeply unsatisfying to opponents, who argued that a portion of the region would still be crossed. In order to demonstrate that, they began conducting their own research, taking soil samples, and re-mapping the region based on this evidence. The mobilization of expert evidence and the development of counter-expertise only strengthened the resolve of pipeline opponents in Nebraska.

Grievances toward the specific mode of expertise leveraged in federal environmental review also coalesced into the construction of the populist subject position. The connection between scientific expertise and will of the people is perfectly captured by one public comment:

> "The State Department statements regarding the Keystone XL review are incomprehensible and an outrage against the concept of scientifically robust analysis -even American democracy itself. If I am to take reported comments and analysis seriously, there is a dramatically evident disconnect between what State Department looks at on one hand, and what any competent evaluator would look at to judge the long term safety, health, environmental and economic merits of the project. We The People who care about this and related issues devote tremendous time and energy to pursuing fact-based information upon which we rely to make our decisions as "informed citizens"…The State Department must go back to the beginning and do a competent review and report that will withstand the scrutiny of the scientific community and We The People" (US Department of State 2013d, 469).

Knowledge and expertise are both part of the composition and what is at stake in the subject position of 'we the people.' The above commenter demands recognition of both scientific and public authority, which are understood to be complementary. Nonetheless, federal environmental review would respond to such comments (omitting references to 'we the people') by suggesting, instead, that the EIS sufficiently "presents information and analyses regarding indirect cumulative impacts and lifecycle GHG emissions, including the potential impact of further development of the oil sands on climate change" (US Department of State 2013a, 181). While the State Department would eventually reject the permit for Keystone XL in November 2015, one month later the SD PUC would renew their permit for the pipeline. In January 2017, President Trump reversed the former State Department's decision in his first act of office.

At the same time as Keystone XL permitting struggles were waning, pipeline opponents increasingly found that the strategies of public testimony and counter-expertise were failing to prevent DAPL permitting. Consequently, many felt forced to go beyond the established political process. Organized in part through the Science and Environmental Health Network, Indigenous Environmental Network, and Dakota Rural

Action, the ‘Bakken pipeline watchdogs network’ began monitoring the DAPL construction process, using the law to pester and delay construction while legal cases and blockades elsewhere along the pipeline’s route escalated struggle. It is worth reflecting on the manner in which this brief movement activated a different kind of counter-expertise.

The Bakken pipeline watchdogs network was established in the summer of 2016 as the DAPL construction began. Early in June, organizers from DRA, IEN, and the Science and Environmental Health Network held a conference call to discuss the legal recourse we had to delaying the pipeline. Construction was outsourced to contractors, and like all contracting agencies in late capitalism, regulatory corners tend to be cut. Holding contractors accountable meant observing construction on a daily basis, taking pictures of activity that was breaking regulations, calling regulatory agencies to report the violation and (hopefully) order a work stoppage. Many would also post pictures and a narrative of the construction on a Facebook group and send updates on construction progress to be mapped. As Carolyn Raffensperger of the Science and Environmental Health Network wrote in a pocket guide, “It is an experiment! As far as we know, nobody has ever created a pipeline watchdog team. So we are relying on your creativity and observation skills.”

This strategy required not only that opponents understood environmental regulation, but also that they cultivated the skills to *see* improper construction. Two regulations we found could be particularly effective. First, construction crews were not supposed to operate after rainfall when any standing water was present. Requiring little skill, finding construction that was occurring after rain was incredibly easy. The

construction of Keystone I had produced several instances of improper construction, a major grievance that reappeared in South Dakota's PUC hearings for Keystone XL and DAPL. Second, we learned how to recognize improper erosion into nearby waterways (especially important at river crossings) and improper separation of soil horizons (topsoil from groundsoil). The pipeline watchdogs held trainings that helped attune themselves to violations of the law as well as basic surveillance skills and the fortitude to drive around watching construction crews. Counter-mapping was a crucial aspect of monitoring, as pipeline watchdogs frequently updated a public map that displayed active work sites and completed portions of the pipeline. For around a month, the construction watchdogs shared images of legal violations and the general destruction involved in digging a 1,200 mile long trench in the ground.

It would be easy to dismiss the Bakken pipeline watchdogs as an appeal to state power, a passive intervention if an intervention at all. But such an assessment would refuse to follow three collateral and strategic consequences of such an activity. First, the watchdogs were almost entirely rural and small-town women surveilling the activity of largely non-local male construction crews. The watchdog group thus provided a new avenue of *explicitly* feminist political intervention into the pipeline's construction (Kruzic and Carter 2016). Second, the knowledge produced by this activity was crucial for a whole host of other political activities. These included legal cases against pipeline construction, scouting for possible sites for direct actions, blockades, and sabotage, and publicizing information of code violations. Finally, watchdog activity activated political resistance at the scale of the pipeline rather than only at points of intervention. As a political activity, then, surveillance built power and identity among non-traditional

activists who were intervening in the conditions of possibility for other political actions at a scale not yet activated in pipeline resistance.

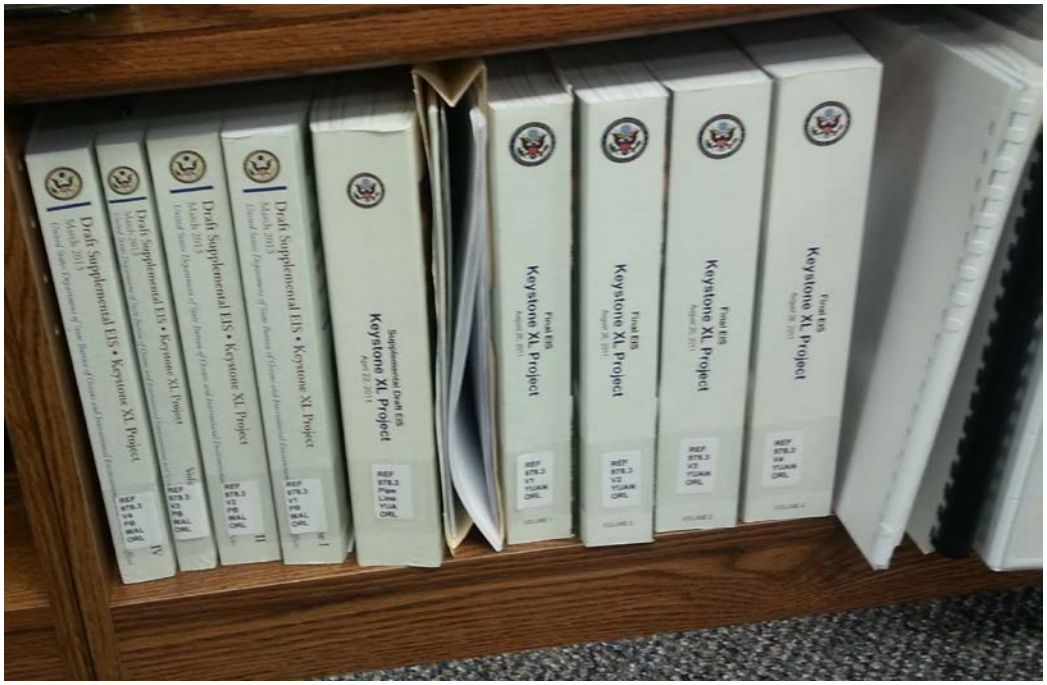
Frustratingly, the utility of this group and tactic was not long lived. As the blockade at Standing Rock escalated, construction crews were rerouted and instructed to finish construction as quickly as possible. It takes an astonishingly short amount of time to lay a pipeline. The prominence of the blockade also led to the end of the internet as a useful medium of exchange, as every Facebook group started with a limited scope (like our watchdog group) was flooded with postings of news stories, frequently by those not associated with the actual watchdog group. Nonetheless, some of the knowledge does seem helpful. In addition to these actions that still took place within the rule of law, several pipeline opponents began to cultivate their knowledge of how to sabotage construction equipment. In 2017, two women associated with the Des Moines Catholic Worker stepped forward to claim responsibility for the actions. Crucial to their sabotage were also range of scientific and technical knowledges, but departing from populism, the goal of these skills was not to circulate in public.

Information overload and the consolidation of populist subjects

The SD PUC granted the right of way permit in 2010, but four years later, the pipeline had still not been built and the permit had expired. This set the stage for another round of public comments and evidentiary hearings in 2015. Even more than the initial hearing, the first five days of testimony were marked by considerable controversy and disruption of the perceived expertise of witnesses. The protracted debates about

credibility and expertise resulted in the hearing being extended for another four days, and even at that point, many of TransCanada's expert witnesses reportedly had not given testimony. In addition to the consolidated intervenors representing individual landowners as well as DRA, several tribal governments were parties to the evidentiary hearing. Native and non-Native activists marched and rode on horses into Pierre, SD for the hearings and many sat in the crowd to listen to the discussion. This turned the hearing into an even more performative event, making its debates and affects more visible.

Figure 12: Keystone XL EIS and SEIS hard copy at the Rapid City, SD public library. Physical copies of the EIS are distributed to dozens of libraries along the pipeline's route.



By this point, and in the following months with the advent of DAPL, many of the individuals I talked with were starting to feel a real fatigue directed toward the environmental review hearings. "Nothing we say will ever be good enough," one landowner told me. As one individual involved in the evidentiary hearings described to

me how TransCanada "continually called people as experts, senior company people who knew virtually nothing about any of the things that were going on ostensibly under their direction." When these candidates were less-than-convincing, TransCanada simply "tried to distance themselves as far as possible from anything that could have given them a fault." With increasing press coverage and attention, pipeline opponents increasingly languished in what one described to me as "information overload." This was due not only to the attempts to sift through the scientific and technical information, but also through the proliferation of disinformation promoted by fossil fuel public relations firms on social and print media.

We might initially think that the failure of acts of counter-expertise to adequately contest pipeline construction provides a classic example of the depoliticizing effect of technocratic politics. But I was surprised to find that many pipeline opponents, reflecting on their participation in practices of counter-expertise, disagreed with this sentiment for two primary reasons. First, the belief that 'the people know best' grounded their opposition well beyond whatever form of expertise the state recognized. Opponents frequently complained that they lacked not knowledge, but comparable financial resources as TransCanada to hire experts to testify in evidentiary review. Second, opponents found that the performance of their expertise and the repetition of the lack of legitimation by permitting agencies reinforced the grounds of their opposition. The disheartening experience of going through the environmental review process and losing despite the obvious truth of their position actually reinforced the identities of resistance that they found important in the composition of populist politics. One community

organizer attested to both of these sentiments while also taking a characteristic trust of the people and skepticism towards elite environmentalists.

> "You know TransCanada didn't have any problem paying for its so-called experts and all the PUC with our money. And we… could not call or it was very difficult to call [upon experts] because you know just trying to raise resources to do that…What's pointed out to me is that the so-called 'Big Greens' are so caught up with their multimillion dollar projects and, and, just trying to play nice, um, and they had no time let alone any willingness to invest resources - a fraction of what they're using on their full page ads in the Washington Post or whatever - to help us with experts or anything like that. It's a little bit disconcerting but it's all educational it's...we know that ultimately any protection of our water resources is gonna come from the people here and that's the only place it'll come from… Right, I mean if we could get 350.org [to] give us 1% of their public relations budget we could downright pay the lawyers and pay the experts…Sometimes you have to push some of these agencies to do their jobs and if you get them to do it, great, that's what we want them to do, and if you can't, hopefully people will learn that you need to try something else."

While the position of pipeline opponents was increasingly cynical about the role of counter-expertise in environmental review, they did believe that the process of engaging and self-educating each other was central. Through such acts, they come to exhaust the political potential of contesting the pipeline in official channels. When the organizer above notes that 'it's all educational,' they are suggesting that the people are learning how to contest through expertise *and* how to do politics beyond that very venue. The failure of minor science to actually contest pipeline review was mirrored by its success in calling forth a political subject increasingly capable of moving beyond that sphere to do 'something else' – organize, blockade, or even sabotage.

The people against the public

In *Material Politics: Disputes Along the Pipelines*, Andrew Barry examines the manner in which the BTC pipeline controversy involved selectively raising materials and the boundaries of the "political situation" to the level of political controversy. Central to his argument is the claim that our attention to materials and materiality is inextricably bound up with the politics of information. Knowledge is rendered selectively transparent and obscure by the oil industry, which seeks to account for uncertainty by making certain risks visible and calculable while rendering others invisible. This oscillation between knowledge and non-knowledge is further tied to shifting and uncertain boundaries over which things, people, or situations are acknowledged as political and which are taken to be fact and thus beyond dispute. In order to make particular infrastructure controversies actionable, political actors try to make them seem emblematic of larger processes through a "logic of abduction" in which the specific or singular inductively stands in for the general or abstract. For example: the ability to hire expert witnesses who attempt to dispel public concern is taken to stand in for the broader corruption of financial interests and the oil industry. As a part of this process, Barry argues that "experts as well as non-experts can be viewed as minor political irritants, disrupting the certainties of what is conventionally understood to be the terrain of public debate by making visible problems and reanimating controversies that might otherwise be ignored or lie dormant" (Barry 2013, 8).

Barry's work is emblematic of a common approach in science and technology studies that takes "publics" as primary political actors in a world beset by technological and environmental uncertainty. As John Dewey defined it, the public is the name for "all

those who are affected by the indirect consequences of [private] transactions to such an extent that it is deemed necessary to have those consequences systematically cared for" (Dewey 1927, 15–16). The public is an ephemeral political subject; it emerges as the *consequence* of a problem, rather than instigating a caesura in the political field itself. At several points, Dewey mentions the infrastructure and transportation of materials and energy as emblematic of the kinds of problems that gather publics into being (e.g., 30, 107, 126). Furthermore, these kinds of projects demonstrate that publics are "called upon to address…problems, issues or objects that transcend national or regional boundaries" (Barry 2013, 97). Consequently, Dewey argued that our understanding of democracy must change to take into account the fact that the public has a stake in decision-making about infrastructure projects.

In Chapter 5, I demonstrated some of the problems with participatory mechanisms of accounting for the concerns of the public gathered by environmental review. Barry too shows how stakeholder forums and participatory democracy came under criticism during the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline controversy (2013, 99), and that in fact multiple genres of public making were at stake in pipeline opposition. But what is less frequently discussed by STS scholars is the transformation of an interested public into a political *subject*. This is demonstrated by the fact that the public is something which is *named* (by commentators, state officials, and academics) rather than that which invents a name for itself. Yet the minor science of pipeline opposition above shows is that, at least in some situations, 'the people' is in fact actively invented as a political subject out of the pipeline public's experience and opposition to the pipeline. Without a conception of political

subjectivity beyond the ephemeral public, we are left with a story of contestation without implications.

Following Deleuze, we might understand that "the people is missing" from public knowledge controversies. As liberal notions of the public, the citizen, and civil society have gradually replaced subject positions based on national identity in decision-making, disputes can seem increasingly ephemeral rather than historical or political. Consequently, the people must be re-invented if these disputes are to emerge as durable sites through which they can connect to other grievances through a logic of abduction. As Isabelle Stengers argues "The Deweyan public is not as such part of a creation process [because] it asks the state to answer, to provide the solution" (2005, 160). By contrast, 'the people' is at the very least a gesture towards a collective, open-ended, and consequently fragmentary subject position. 'The people,' I have argued, is also performed in part through the creation and testing of counter-expertise. Like the public, this 'people' also demands something of the state: recognition. But in the failure of the state to recognize their truth claims, 'the people' finds that the state is the exteriorization of the very right of sovereignty that the people claims to have held.

Historic studies of populism have done better to recognize this process, but their stories frequently end at this point. As in Laclau's analysis (2005), populism then either wins by becoming more universal or dissolves by losing the faith of the very people that compose it. What is less common is the recognition that perhaps populism is part of a *tendency* of oppositional politics. Populism could then feed into different kinds of alliances, like those of the "objecting minorities" (Stengers 2005, 160) to the point we could recognize environmental justice movements as populist in character (Meyer 2008).

But the important difference would be that in becoming minor, populism would then subject itself to a standard of knowledge, justice, and politics that diverges from the liberal tradition of inclusion and relativity. Stengers calls this "being in debt…a debt which needs to be openly, self-jeopardizingly, cultivated" (2005, 164). Similarly, Nicholas Thoburn argues that the sense that 'the people is missing' indicates "it is precisely in the *loss* of autonomy that one arrives at a concept and experience of politics that is truly adequate to the complexities of contemporary social life" (Thoburn 2016, 371). In its failure, counter-expertise in pipeline politics became one part of fabulating this story of another way of living and of forming the obligations of social life that departs radically the liberal version of freedom and autonomy.

Conclusion

It is important to attest to the wide range of expert knowledges that were contested by pipeline opponents. Not mentioned above are disputes about aquifer boundaries and communication, diluent chemical composition, cultural resource surveys, flow rates of heavy crude in water systems, the economic impact of pipeline construction and oil export, and several other micro- to macro-antagonisms surrounding the supposed "national interest" in constructing new oil pipelines. Through this engagement with struggles over and within expertise, pipeline opponents came to understand a fundamental split – not between elite knowledge and local or lay experience, but between a science in the interests of the state and capital and a minor science - what we might call

a science for the people. This understanding led to disaffection with traditional routes of political contestation and eventually, a path more open to radical politics.

Since initial rounds of public review, the state of pipeline politics has become even more polarized. Fossil-fuel funded public relations firms attempt to dispel any counter-expertise through "transparent fact-checking" websites. In response to this proliferation of "fake news," many analysts have doubled-down on the liberal distrust of the masses. Others on the political left believe that in forming their identities as an alternative to elites, populists are doomed to subordinate proper politics to unprincipled argumentation with experts. These uncharitable views, I have argued, miss the ways in which populism processually constructs itself out of a minor science and thus contains the conditions of possibility of a break from the status quo. It does so by maintaining a ground in practices of scientific counter-expertise that were precisely *interested* rather than objective. Pipeline opposition further demonstrates that common people are keen at picking up expertise in a wide range of knowledges, including the art of politics. Given that no collective is born with a ready-made critique of the state and capital in hand, working through the political field via minor science offers a glimpse at the cultivation oppositional identities without recourse to a messianic event.

One final consequence of this argument is that climate denialism and post-political governance might be more effectively challenged if we take the perspective that scientific and expert practices are not objective modes of depoliticization built in opposition to local experience, but instead can be leveraged to split the hold of the fossil fuel industry on the scientific field by proliferating constructions of a people. In itself, this strategy offered by pipeline populism offers no guarantees. The risk of even left

populism activating nationalism or other reactionary or authoritarian sentiments is very real, and the deeply US-American understanding of popular sovereignty rests on frequent exclusions based on race, settler colonialism, and social difference. Nonetheless, ceding scientific expertise as a fundamentally depoliticizing aspect of populism runs counter to the experiences and testimony of the struggle against Keystone XL and DAPL in the Great Plains of North America. If a mass mobilization of some kind is indeed necessary for any chance at climate justice, we will have to learn from activists and organizers that perhaps belief in the rule of expertise could lead affirmatively to an activation of the people.

Chapter 7. Conclusion

Summary of argument

Contemporary pipeline struggles in North America have dramatically transformed environmental and climate politics. Although both mainstream liberal and right-wing media sources continue to paint such struggles in a classic "jobs versus the environment" frame, pipeline opposition has moved well beyond such reductions towards a complex and not always coherent foregrounding of indigenous peoples rights, transnational and coalitional politics of environmental justice, and liberal anti-corruption and pro-democracy movements. Although not always explicit, these groups stage the fundamental political problem raised by the climate crisis: Who decides the future?

I have argued that populists answer that problem with "the people." But environmental populism does not exhaust the problem, but renders it visible and contestable. I argue that this "problem" emerges as a tension of populist willing, as left-populist subjects are caught between a utopian fidelity towards political and social transformation and a drag back towards the frustrating muck of everyday political organizing. Ideology shapes the form and content of this relation. In fact, the constant questioning of who "the people" consists of and what grounds they have for claims of justice fractured many populist coalitions against the pipelines, especially in the wake of the NoDAPL blockades at the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation. The coherence and disaffection of "the people" writ large was not nearly as effective as the claims for sovereignty and authority raised by the Oceti Ŝakowiŋ Oyate. Consequently, by the

summer of 2016, populism's quasi-hegemonic status in Great Plains pipeline opposition began to be more visibly challenged or transformed into other forms of politics.

Contemporary environmental and climate justice social movements face head-on some fundamental political problems in their delineations of "the people" as a political subject. While "the people" can at first appear self-evident, current formulations of left-populism also immediately raise problems about the sites and scales of representation through which the people ought to be based. In this dissertation, I have argued that populism has transformed contemporary environmental politics from a focus on liberal technocratic policy fixes towards a mass movement of the people. I have demonstrated how this shift emerged from populist responses to major oil pipelines in South Dakota and the Great Plains region and transformed the climate justice movement. The way that subjects collectively attempt to resolve the problem of populist willing augments their consciousness and affinity towards different political possibilities. Populism thus transforms the form and character of oppositional politics in the context of extractive racial capitalism and violent settler colonialism.

Understanding the fundamental political paradox that populism poses for liberal democracy requires examining the history of the people as a figure in political theory. My own position is that the people are an ambivalent figure produced by experiencing or seeing the material exploitation and insecurity of contemporary racial capitalism and settler colonialism. Populism is a salve in some ways, promising both utopian redemption and pragmatic coalition building. In chapter 2, I contrasted my position with contemporary understandings of populism in political theory. These included liberalism's concern that populism is a danger or threat to democracy; radical democracy's claim that

populism is fundamentally political; and psychoanalytic and Marxist diagnoses that take populism only as a symptom of liberalism's depoliticizing insufficiencies. These approaches are crucial in understanding populism as a contested concept, and Chapter 2 contributes to these debates in political theory and geography a unique theoretical approach in part derived from the Spinozist tradition which clarifies the stakes of the groundless grounds of populist politics.

Contemporary populism in the Midwest is deeply influenced by the history and political culture of "prairie populism." Yet the populist movement of the late 1800s is not often understood in the context of either environmentalism or settler colonialism. Chapter 3 provides three non-teleological slices of environmental populism's history in Dakota Territory and the State of South Dakota. I examined the Farmer's Alliance, the Populist Party, and the turn towards socialist organizing in the Dakotas in the 1890s, the Black Hills Alliance and treaty rights organizing in the 1980s, and the movement against the pipelines in the 2010s. This juxtaposition demonstrates the broad political, economic, and environmental problems to which populism responds and its limitations in creating durable mass movements. The movement against the pipelines in particular demonstrates a fundamental tension within populist political organizing between its radical aspirations and the sense that a mass movement of the people built through "unlikely alliances" pragmatically requires avoiding radical positions.

The shortcomings of the latter political strategy are most clearly evidenced by pipeline populism's investment in making private property rights a central plank of its demands. Property rights are not a social demand like any other that can be built into a series of equivalences; property itself is a necessary component of capital accumulation

and landed private property a constituent aspect of racial capitalism and the production of settler subjects and desires. Chapter 4 untangles the persistence of property rights in environmental populism. I demonstrate how the anxieties of property and dispossession reinforce the Euro-American settler subject. In an attempt to produce "common ground," landowners and organizers present the image of eminent domain as analogous to being "treated like Indians." In generating the desires-for-land that coalesce into populist politics, pipeline opposition collaterally reinscribes a racial settler subject in the heart of its politics. However unintentionally, this subject and politics reinforced the desires for security in property that allow excessive state violence at the blockades at Standing Rock. There, we can glimpse an alternative vision which centralizes not private property rights and their Euro-American subject, but ex-appropriation of colonial landholdings.

As with like property rights, pipeline populism also demanded a restitution of democracy which seemed to have been lost. Yet this demand seems contradictory in the context of an overwhelming amount of official political participation events associated with Keystone XL permitting, such as scoping meetings, town halls, and public hearings. Scholars have noted populism as the "shadowy double of institutional postpolitics," but such an argument fails to take into account the affective infrastructure of the scene of participation itself. In Chapter 5, I examine this very scene as it emerged repeatedly over the course of Keystone XL and DAPL public participation processes. I demonstrate how public participation produces a circulatory affect of collective experiences of testimony. Yet this energy is drawn out and exhausted by the process of public participation; it is through traversing and exceeding these supposedly democratic spaces that populism coheres around constituent moments of "we the people." Because this marks a

transformation from individual, passive subjects to active group-subjects, there is nothing "shadowy" about populism's relationship to institutional democracy. Yet the resigned pragmatism of participatory spaces pulls subjects back in to spaces of political exhaustion and to the fantasy of uncorrupt, pure democracy.

Wresting the collective populist subject from the grips of an institutional process perceived to be corrupt was, in fact, a conscious problem for many rural community organizers. But it might be surprising to many critical geographers to find that it was through attempts to produce evidence and demonstrate scientific and technical expertise that many learned that the institutional process was bankrupt. In Chapter 6, I analyzed the manner in which practices of minor science consolidated the populist subject of oppositional pipeline politics. We educated each other about hydrogeology, pipeline welding, and paleontology in attempts to disprove evidence supplied by oil companies. These attempts, in themselves, completely failed to stop the pipeline from being permitted. But in the process, they re-invigorated our faith and fidelity to a scientific and political truth. I suggest that this relationship which contests scientific knowledges and practices from within its margins (rather than from a fundamentally different epistemological activity, for example) has a specifically important power to contest fossil fuel funded disinformation campaigns.

On their own, these chapters each stage particular interventions in literatures in political theory, political ecology, and interdisciplinary studies of populism, science, and infrastructure. Altogether, they inform major interventions into contemporary literatures of environmental politics and analyses of left-populism in the 2000s. Here, I would like to reiterate two major interventions that this research and my argument make visible.

Who is the subject of climate justice?

The contemporary political field of North American environmentalism is largely understood by scholars to be split between a mainstream, liberal orientation and a radical, horizontal politics of environmental justice. Although green anarchism, ecosocialism, reactionary ecology, and ecofascism might round out a traditional political analysis, I contend that we cannot understand the contemporary field of environmentalism without taking into account environmental populism. This social formation and political discourse is defined by an open-ended commitment to "the people" in contrast to the consolidated political power of elites and institutions corrupted by the fossil fuel industry.

Joel Wainwright and Geoff Mann's *Climate Leviathan* is simply the best of contemporary analysis of climate politics informed by political theory. Yet despite their sound basis in the liberal political tradition, especially Hobbes, the category of "the people" and contemporary forms of environmental populism are absent in their analysis. Little space in their otherwise exemplary work takes the collective identity of the people (or lack thereof) as a problem or speculative possibility within climate justice politics. As I have shown in this dissertation, "the people" is a contested terrain and a terrain that includes significant parts of Left politics. Furthermore, the identity of the people is categorically important for the construction of the political in the version of Hobbes and Schmitt the authors construct. Finally, it is not only the problem of political collectivity that Hobbes opens, but also the necessary *psycho-social* formation of any such collectivity (Gilbert 2013, 49–50). Because "the people" is such a powerful and contested category of political thought, it simply cannot be left out of such analyses.

An analysis of environmental populism further helps to demonstrate the torsion of the politics of race and racism in planetary climate change politics. One might ask of populism: isn't this just the whiteness or white supremacy in environmentalism that we've always known, but with a different name? It certainly appears continuous with forms of white environmentalism in a lot of different ways. But unlike the paternalistic whiteness of environmental movements of the past, environmental populism is formed around a different form of the transparent subject of whiteness. This subject, as I've described it most clearly in Chapter 4, is dissolved in the specific images and procedures of property, democracy, and the collection of evidence or performance of expertise. I could have chosen other (somewhat obvious) sites of investigation of whiteness: images of nature and stewardship of the natural world; the imagination of "the good life"; the imagined allyship with Native Nations at Standing Rock. I have argued that the structural problem of race runs just as deeply in the core attachments to liberal democracy (and, for that matter, many genres of historical materialism). Some matter of pipeline populism was consistent, then, with environmentalisms of the past insofar is it elevated Native peoples "onto the stage of ecopolitics, but at the same time narrowly circumscribed the terms in which their appearance could be understood" (Braun 2002, 71).

In the context of racial capitalism and settler colonialism, then, I think should be particularly interested in the manner in which environmental populism might revive a Euro-American subject even (or especially) through the figuring of commitments to indigenous justice and/or decolonization. If this is of particular concern to those creating and contesting the subject of "the people," it is because the form of collectivity and identification announced by the latter cannot be abandoned.

The people, beyond and against reactionary populism

What then does this thesis tell us about the ultimate character of populism, especially during a time when it has become near synonymous with white nationalism and the figure of Donald Trump? How does this description of an oppositional movement against pipelines in the context of climate chaos change our conception of populism itself?

The rise of the reactionary right in Europe and North America has been premised on an attempt to harness and serve as a conduit for *vox populi*. Trump, along with other reactionary political candidates and the "anti-globalists" of Brexit, speak a language of the people. This is not to say they are "populists," but that they feed off the affective resonance of populism. Furthermore, Trump in particular has used the Keystone XL pipeline as a conduit for connecting everyday concerns to the *nation*. In making the approval of Keystone XL and DAPL his first act as executive officer, Trump connected the pipeline to long-standing discourses of American jobs and foreign oil. But he also added a clause requiring American materials as well as American workers. "If we're going to build pipelines in the United States, the pipelines should be built in the United States. We're going to put a lot of workers, a lot of steelworkers back to work. We will build our own pipeline. We will build our own pipes...like we used to in the old days."

Trump understands that the symbolic power of those who feel like they're *the* people – the forgotten white American people – and thus vocalizes or speaks to these concerns, even if its quite clear that these are empty signifiers. By contrast, even in rejecting the Keystone XL pipeline, Obama could not but decry that "the Keystone Pipeline…became a symbol too often used as a campaign cudgel by both parties rather

than a serious policy matter. And all of this obscured the fact that this pipeline would neither be a silver bullet for the economy, as was promised by some, nor the express lane to climate disaster proclaimed by others" (Obama 2015). This is a stance premised on shearing the political, rendered as administration, of any emotional relevance. It's shockingly ineffective for a speaker whose earlier career was premised on serving as a conduit for a very similar kind of emotional populism (Berlant 2011b).

While I have little to say about Trump himself, what I think this brief example demonstrates is the void created when "the people" is abandoned as a political – even revolutionary – subject of politics. It seems like climate change gives us an imperative: the people must be invented *against the nation-state*. But despite some important radical overtures towards "the people of the world" or "the people's climate movement," it appears that environmental populism might veer back towards the nation-state. The call for private property rights, the hardening of border-walls, and the fear of resource wars increasingly work in and through the reactionary right, through liberal administration, and even in some versions of left climate politics.

Paul Kingsnorth, the former anti-globalization activist turned nihilist poet somehow enunciates all three visions in his denunciation of "Green globalism" in favor of "benevolent green nationalism" (Kingsnorth 2017). Kingsnorth, I think, provides the most coherent and thus most terrifying vision of a future climate politics. He asks what he takes to be a "primal question: what does it mean to belong to a place, to a people, to nature, in a time in which belonging is everywhere under attack? Does it mean anything? Why should it matter?" For Kingsnorth, a romantic English writer, a deep knowledge of the local (and thus national) landscape coincides with his political desire to protect it

from outsiders. This includes corporations, of course, but also (more surreptitiously) foreigners and migrants more generally. Kingsnorth speaks the people almost perfectly in nostalgically remembering the anti-globalization movement in a manner that borders on what Doreen Massey famously called a "reactionary sense of place" (D. Massey 1994):

> "Somewhere that people loved or felt attached to was being threatened by outside forces, whether they be trade treaties, buccaneering corporations or oppressive governments, and people were fighting to defend what they knew and what they were." (Kingsnorth 2017)

Kingsnorth sees himself in "the new populists...the likes of Stephen Bannon and Marine Le Pen" who supposedly "understand the destructive energy of global capitalism as well as the left does" but see this as a cultural rather than economic split. He is quite fond of "a new nationalism [which] can harness people's deep, old attachment to tribe, place and identity." Kingsnorth decries the fact that "environmentalists are a privileged elite" calling instead for environmentalists to "protect and nurture your homeland." And most disgustingly, his primary example of such rootedness is in the DAPL blockade: "where the Standing Rock Sioux and thousands of supporters continue to resist the construction of an oil pipeline across Native American land, we perhaps see some indication of what this fusing of human and non-human belonging could look like today; a defence of both territory and culture, in the name of nature, rooted in love" (Kingsnorth 2017).

I've dwelled on this example because it most clearly demonstrates both the risk and the stakes of populism as a site of struggle in the era of the resurgent right. A vaguely-constructed people quickly evokes nationalism. But if we abandon the concept of the people, we cede the ideological struggle. Perhaps we need a kind of double

movement. As Lukács put it in his study of Lenin and the Russian revolution, “The vague and abstract concept of ‘the people’ had to be rejected, but only so that a revolutionary, discriminating, concept of ‘the people’ – the revolutionary alliance of the oppressed – could develop from a concrete understanding of the conditions of the proletarian revolution” (quoted in Dean 2012, 70). It seems ridiculous to suggest that such a transnational revolutionary alliance could emerge in that unlikeliest of places, the Great Plains of the North American Midwest. And yet, 30 years ago, precisely such an alliance existed.

Declaration of Dependence on the Land

In 1980 at the Black Hills Survival Gathering, an extraordinary document called The Declaration of Dependence on the Land was produced. The document describes the “abuse” and “appropriation” of land which have resulted from the fact that land “has been treated as a commodity” (Black Hills Alliance 1980, 1). Created by a group “from 23 Indian nations and 36 other nations of the world,” the document describes 21 principles for repairing this fractured relationship. These included a call for the end of abuse and appropriation of land through a repair that was not at all the recreation of an image of the past or return to a status quo.

Instead, most innovatively, the document calls for a program for “land justice for Native peoples” based on the international recognition of the 1868 Treaty of Ft. Laramie, the “return of federal and state lands in treaty areas to the jurisdiction of Native Peoples” and the “expropriation of transnational corporations’ agricultural holdings.” In their

place, the Declaration creates a system by which settlers can still "exercise stewardship over family-sized holdings in treaty areas restored to Indian control, as long as they respect and care for these lands, through long term, renewable guarantees" (12). The premise of some pipeline populists in the 2010s was that unity and alliance could only be based on a common experience of dispossession. To oppose private property and procedural democracy was to threaten the pragmatics of coalition politics themselves. What the Declaration of Dependence on the Land shows to me is that this anxiety might not be founded. Alliance and solidarity across difference can shift the horizons of the possible.

The Declaration has broad and connective content, which brought together the land concerns of the Native Nations, the Global South, farmers and ranchers, peace activists and environmentalists. I admire its grand and relentless universalism, as well as its bold calls "for the establishment of a solidarity network with other people engaged in the international struggle for justice on the land" (12). I expect that hashing out the details was incredibly difficult, and these likely disagreements about the document are not included in its declarative form. Its universalism still feels like a document of and from the contested landscape I live, know, and study, one which is too often dismissed as void or incapable of radical politics (Van Sant and Bosworth 2017). I can think of no better words for guidance for the future than its closing stanzas (Black Hills Alliance 1980, 12).

> "We are people of the land. We believe that the land is not to be owned, but to be shared. We believe that we are the guardians of the land. The future of our children, and of all generations to come, will depend on our efforts today to prevent corporate seizure and abuse of the land. We challenge our concerned sisters and brothers throughout the world to unite with us in the struggle to liberate the land and all peoples from the economic and political domination of the transnational corporations and the governments that serve them.

The Great Spirit will guide our thoughts and strengthen us as we work to be faithful to our sacred trust and restore harmony among all peoples, all living creatures, and Mother Earth.

The struggle will be long and difficult. So let us begin."

Endnotes

[1] I use the standard Spinoza citation practice throughout this work. Translations are Edwin Curley's from *The Collected Works of Spinoza*, Vol 1(1985) and Vol 2 (2016).

[2] "Infrastructure" is the French analogue to what is frequently translated as the "base" in English-translated texts of Marx and Marxism.

[3] It might strike one that "ideology" is both a poor name and bad concept through which one could read the political philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari. In *Anti-Oedipus*, they say that "the concept of ideology is an execrable concept that hides the real problems, which are always of an organizational nature" (1983, 344). In *Thousand Plateaus*, they say "there is no ideology and never has been" (1987, 4). Much like Foucault, they are avoiding the idealist conjuncture in which ideology was increasingly thought: ideology as a system of beliefs that determined the course of history and consequently ideological critique as a Marxist science that would somehow be positioned outside of ideology. They're also responding to the problem that determinist tendencies in Marxism had to make ideology a mere reflection or expression of some 'more real' economic activity. But especially in *Anti-Oedipus*, their principal political concern is precisely the Spinozist problem that the concept of ideology was supposed to address: "why does it seem like the masses fight for their own servitude instead of their freedom?"

Instead of just replacing ideology with some other system, Deleuze and Guattari warp it into other forms. They avoid the Althusserian ideas that philosophy is a kind of science of ideology, or class struggle in ideological form and instead show that ideology follows political struggle. They argue that desire and affect are in the infrastructure, the economic base, the series of flows and cuts that are organized by racial capitalism; but they also don't entirely collapse base and superstructure together (despite what Deleuze would later say in interviews). Base and superstructure just become rendered in different ways: as Body Without Organs (filter or sorting mechanism), content and expression, as the axes of material assemblages of desire and collective assemblages of enunciation, as territory and sense. This, I think, is why Berlant can argue that affect theory is the inheritor of ideology critique. These concepts are supposed to lead us towards a better way of thinking how non-coercive social reproduction occurs (as an outcome of struggle).

In doing so, it seems to me that Deleuze and Guattari provide us a much richer way of thinking about the field and importance of "the political" in racial capitalism than the post-structural formations dominant in geography today, which tend towards either a Foucauldian concept of the discursive and the nondiscursive, or words and things, or the various Schmittian and Gramscian conceptions of decision, culture, and signification.

It's an open question how much of Marx remains in this formulation; nonetheless, I retain the name "ideology" to indicate some fidelity to Marxist debates. Deleuze and Guattari argue that what needs explanation is the perversity of desire and its incitements and circulations, which no doubt respond to both economics (we are 'compelled' to act in accordance with our survival) as well as the affective-political link (ideology constitutes subjective lacks, cuts, wounds, or pores. Ideology creates the pull towards or away from collective action, the resentment towards foreigners, women, racialized others, etc). Without the organization of fears and desires *as* a part of the 'infrastructure' - the libidinal economy - we get either a) a detached poststructuralism with reference only to rationality, modernity, life, etc but never to the racial economy of violence, the material-economic relations in which these are inscribed, or b) some version of a theory of 'false consciousness.' For Deleuze and Guattari, as for Spinoza, we are very much conscious of our desires, but not *of their causes* - which is the meeting point of ideology and capital.

[4] On social reproduction, see (Althusser 2014, 140–47; Bhattacharya 2017; Federici 2004; Jameson 1982; J. W. Moore 2015).

[5] It is an open question the extent to which such a position might be characterized as "structuralist." On structure and genesis, see Deleuze's essay "How do we recognize structuralism?" (Deleuze 2004, especially p180). Importantly, it is at such a point (and with reference to desire) that a Spinozist and Hegelian critique might productively touch (Read 2017, 55).

[6]The fear of popular sovereignty among liberal thinkers is not new. Contrary to the way it is often depicted, liberal theories tend to be founded on both an acceptance of the nation-state as an arbitrary and constructed feature of governance. Think, for example, of how Hobbes theorizes the coherence of the republic as derived from individual men's mutual fear of each other. The violent state of nature arises because "many want the same thing at the same time, without being able to enjoy it in common or to divide it" (de Cive 1.6). Living together as a multitude under a commonwealth provides the opportunity for individuals to live without (as much) fear, for the commonwealth secures men from each other by way of penalties.

Early liberal political thinkers only rarely thought the relationship between different nations across space; more often they thought of the difference between nations as differences in temporal development. As Locke famously wrote, "in the beginning All the World was America" (.49). It is not any inherent characteristic of their people, but how each relatively autonomous collective constructs its people artificially on the path to democracy. For liberalism today, a reversion to populism must be equated with a developmental wrong turn – the people are misled back to what is often denounced as a 'tribal' mode of politics. This denunciation of naturalist modes of politics continues to frame liberal analyses of populism. Urbinati, for example, argues that populist attempts to found more direct forms of democracy parallel their naturalism and fear of artificial politics. Historically, "the People's Party claimed the emancipation from 'money power' (artificial) in the name of property (natural)" (Urbinati 1998, 111). Contra Lockean sensibilities then, populism hides its artificial foundations by claiming a purity of origin.

[7] This evaluation of Marxism, it seems to me, stemmed from untangling several central questions for Marxism to which Althusser offered incomplete answers: what is the relationship between the economic base or mode of production and the cultural or political superstructure overlayed on top of it? What is the role or function of ideology in rearranging or justifying economic relations? Is ideology determined or overdetermined by the mode of production and/or other arenas? What is philosophy's role in evaluating or participating in ideological and political struggle? In particular, the experience of fascism in WWII and nationalism and decolonization in the postwar period seemed to run counter to both traditional and structural Marxist explanations, and both the strong (causal base) and weak (in the last instance) determinist positions left little room for understanding the political organizing that didn't take class or work as its sphere of intervention, but the home, public space, the environment, etc. How could these movements be explained?

[8] Desire is a risky word to use, and deserves a brief explanation. I am using it here in the sense where desire is produced not by lack but a productive excess. Although not entirely isomorphic, Deleuze's concept of desire is similar to the psychoanalytic concept of *drive*, which goes some way towards resolving the incongruity between psychoanalysis and schizoanalysis (Schuster 2016, 161–66). On the other hand, my use of desire here indicates a fundamental break with Michel Foucault and Foucault-inspired readings of biopolitics, race, history, Deleuze, nature, and so on. This break is underemphasized in Deleuze due to dominant anti-structuralist readings, but seems especially important to emphasize given Deleuze's letter to Foucault published as "Desire and Pleasure" (Deleuze 2006).

[9] As Žižek puts it, "the distinction [between proletariat and lumpenproletariat] is not one between an objective social group and a non-group, a remainder-excess with no proper place within the social edifice, but a distinction between two modes of this remainder-excess which generate two different subjective positions" (2017, 285).

[10] For Laclau, equivalences-across-differences must be forged in any political coalition; indeed, they are the very character of the political as such. What populism in particular exposes is the difficult balance between creating a generalized chain of equivalences among different social demands and evacuating the latter of their particularity. For Laclau, populist politics is aspirational insofar as it produces a will to totality or universalization that might be called democratic. But populism operates without ever evacuating particular demands of their differences and without suturing over the antagonistic fissure in the social itself. What Laclauian analyses too frequently accept at face value that social demands are equivalent in their character as demands. This pursuit of general equivalence mirrors that of multiculturalism insofar as it takes political relationships as only historically and contingently produced.

It is unsurprising then that Laclau erodes any difference that racial capitalism would produce by generalizing the (Bataillan) excess through the figure of the *lumpenproletariat* as an aspect of all "underdog" politics (152). Such a position completely obscures the real problem that the figure of the lumpenproletariat poses for Marxism, insofar as its seeming "lack of proper place" in political struggle cannot be easily reduced into the political field (Gidwani and Maringanti 2016). The evocation of Fanon seems further inappropriate, and like Wilderson (2003), I cannot but wonder whether Laclau's neo-Gramscian position that all struggles can be fitted into counterhegemony is structured on a similarly foundational antiblackness. Laclau sees the economic relations that participate in sedimenting racial difference as simply the background on which political struggle takes place (154). Although Laclau must retain the incompleteness of "the people" due to the necessarily fractured nature of the symbolic, he offers little explanation for how racial capitalism structures this gap.

[11] To the extent that Žižek escapes this problem, it is through a somewhat surprisingly Deleuzian analysis of economic determination (2017, 314)

[12] "Bataille's insights are so important that, had he not existed, schizoanalysis would have had to invent them" (Holland 1999, 62).

[13] This form of split immanence (or the immanence of difference) is a radicalization of Spinoza's statement that "truth is the standard both of itself and falsity" (E II P43).

[14] In my field notes, I narrated such a process like this:

> 1. status quo. things are hunky dory because you are a well-adjusted liberal subject. inertia, etc.
>
> 2. event happens that kicks you out of the status quo
>
> 3. you are In The Event! feeling that "Things are Happening." event muddles conceptual borders. it really seems like you're going to Win. enthusiasm!
>
> 4. repetition. lots of repetition. Meetings. things slow down and get boring. it increasingly feels like The Event is ending. Things seem sour.
>
> *******5. tension! You feel sick. You just wish The Event would End and Things would Go Back to Normal. it seems like some really important Things were changed by the Event. but you are exhausted. you feel a *suction* back into your old life, as XXXX said, a kind of yearning to be back in some other, grounded state rather than this here-ish, now-ish, event-ish (povinelli) in-between space. a *tension* between your desire for Another Thing or for The Thing to have been Changed by The Event on the one hand, and a return to your other relations, Nice Things, etc on the other hand*********
>
> 6. The Impasse (berlant). A decision must be made. the threshold is crossed. several options can happen at this point.
>
> 7. sad affects and/or nostalgia and eventual grumbling return to status quo of hunky-dory, well-adjusted subjecthood
>
> 8.1. what I have been calling "pragmatic resignation" - the kind of attitude of organizers who have been organizing for a long time and are a bit jaded and only by being a bit resigned to their tasks can they keep going on - the beckett "can't go on, must go on" feeling
>
> 8.2. Then, it flips. "resigned pragmatism" - that The Event was too event-y, it didn't change things, it did it all wrong. we need everyday organizing, not just event organizing??
>
> 9. so, you either find/create another event, or drop out and do something else

[15] Primitive accumulation is referred to by Marx (by way of Adam Smith) as the accumulation of resources in the hands of capitalists prior to any division of labor. But unlike Smith, Marx shows that primitive accumulation has a double aim: not just to accumulate stock (as money-capital) through enclosure of land as private property, but also to dispossess the people from their means of reproduction – namely, their land

– and thus set them free (*vogelfrei* – literally, free as a bird) (Marx 1976, 874–75). This is why David Harvey, among others, has preferred to refer to the process as "accumulation by dispossession" (D. Harvey 2005). The latter framework, I worry, generalizes a moral position against dispossession and thus *for* a vague primary possession (of what? Land, labor, personhood? See Nichols 2018). Importantly, the twofold action of primitive accumulation – the enclosure of land as private property and the setting free of the people or proletarianization – can only be accomplished by use of violence, which the State retains as its own right and power. This dual movement of enclosure-liberation requires the seal of the State to begin (and it never fully completes) even if the State is not its primary actor. But what is particularly galling is that this violence can never be acknowledged, "it is a violence that posits itself as preaccomplished, even though it is reactivated every day" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 447).

[16] The concept of apparatus of capture has long been misinterpreted as generally aligned with the autonomist position that workers / the multitude are exterior to and precede the State and Capital, and thus the latter social formations are dependent upon a body that is at least relatively exterior to themselves. In the literature on primitive accumulation, this position can be exemplified both by the work of Hardt and Negri, and has been recently expanded upon in the edited volume *Anomie of the Earth* (Luisetti, Pickles, and Kaiser 2015), a creative but ultimately unsuccessful attempt to merge autonomist thinking with a decolonial response to a Schmittian *nomos*. The broad argument there is that the autonomy of the common/life viz capital/technology can also be understood as the autonomy of indigenous resistance viz (settler) coloniality. It is possible that the concept of 'apparatus of capture' is too marked by the English connotations of apparatus (*dispositif*) as a technology that captures and saps the vital force of life, like a bear trap in the woods. Yet this is not how the concept should be understood at all. Deleuze and Guattari argue quite clearly (following Marx, who is following Hegel) that "the mechanism of capture *contributes from the outset to the constitution* of the aggregate upon which the capture is effectuated" (1987, 446). The apparatus of capture presupposes and produces that which exceeds it (surplus labor, ground rent, etc.). Private property presupposes the common, technology presupposes life. It is as if the bear trap created the bear which would be trapped – this is why the apparatus is sometimes referred to as "magical capture." Thus it is only a false exteriority, a transcendental illusion, that surplus is somehow outside and prior to its capture. Somewhat shockingly, Žižek seems to understand this better than most autonomists (Žižek 2017, 314)

[17] It is worth mentioning a resonant position with that of Kalyan Sanyal, who argues that "pre-capital" or "non-capital" is not a temporal or historical space from which capital hypostasizes through forced underdevelopment, benefits through accumulation and exploitation, and then transitions (a teleological and developmental perspective symptomatic of Marxism a la Harvey to this day). Instead, pre-capital is a *presupposition* of capital and given that capital never fully "becomes," its presuppositions are carried with it (Sanyal 2007, 48). Hence, part of the reason that both scramble historical narratives by borrowing Frank's "development of underdevelopment" thesis, or in Deleuze and Guattari's terms, the "archaism with a contemporary purpose." The political effect of this position is that "A meaningful oppositional politics…should look for its radical subjects not in an originary, pristine 'outside', but in those cracks and fissures, in the interstices of the hegemonic order woven by development" (Sanyal 2007, 93).

[18] Compare, for example, to Foucault's historicist account of nation and race in '*Society Must Be Defended'* (Foucault 2003) and a very similar anti-historicist account from Balibar (Balibar and Wallerstein 1991). Sibertin-Blanc describes the anti-historicism of the return to mythology as "not so much to return to the myths themselves as to draw out an intellectual structure in the myths that is perfectly contemporary in the social and political sciences" (2016, 71).

[19] Again, their strategy is reminiscent of that of Schmitt (see especially the opening pages of *Nomos of the Earth* (Schmitt 2006, 38–42), but instead of examining 'the earth' and 'the people' as Christian remnants of God, they trace it through Greek mythology.

[20] Here I follow Nicole Loraux's understanding of the link of myth and politics in ancient Greece, the necessity of *authochthony* to establishing the myth of the Greek city. Methodologically, she parodies Levi-Strauss: "nothing resembles ideology more than myth when it becomes political" (2000, 38).

[21] "The Marxian short-circuit thus appears as the prototype for a more general schema: the pattern of referring back to the material conditions of politics, which is in turn required for the internal political transformation of those conditions" (Balibar 2002, 11). See also "The Reversal of Possessive Individualism" in *Equaliberty* (Balibar 2014).

[22] Silva argues that freedom or transparency grounds the Euro-American subject. Spinoza argues very early in *Ethics* that "men think themselves free, because they are conscious of their volitions and their appetite, and do not think, even in their dreams, of the causes by which they are disposed to wanting and willing, because they are ignorant" (EI Appendix).

[24] What kind of historical analysis is necessary for understanding contemporary pipeline populism? Two major diachronic readings might exist. First, there is history as the progressive unfolding of an interior spirit or essence. Whether organized into teleologically-contained stages or in a continuous line of progress or decay, in this model the present unfolds in the manner in which it does because of events in the past. The present is in some sense determined by these events. Colonial institutions are forever marked by what they used to be; liberatory potential is inscribed in the resurrection of past forms of resistance and struggle until they achieve dominance or fail. Second, history might be defined through circumstances, conditions, or exterior determinations. Historical forms here would emerge not through the whims of the past, but the relations of the present – to environments, regions, spaces, natural resources, wealth, or power relations, each of which could be consolidated or lost. Persuasive in its attention to connection, versions of the materialist approach still can too easily dissolve into post-hoc explanations or billiard ball metaphysics, and can struggle to locate its subjects and proper scales.

A third option, not entirely diachronic, might be a kind of meta-history, the deconstruction of the way that historical understanding is conditioned by that which we represent for ourselves in history. This approach is excellent at revealing discontinuities and absences within historical narratives, but is often dependent upon the first two types of history for the content of its critique. While it is necessary to recognize the structural nature of aporia in history, it also . In their most thick and nuanced versions, each of these (admittedly simplified) approaches are all worthy points of entry into history, but what they often fail to explain is both the emergence of new combinations or assemblages, ways of thinking, or events, and the return or repetition of synchronic elements or structures.

The approach I take in this chapter examines populism as a political structure that is realized in contingent moments by combining with, on the one hand, the hopes, dreams, and ideologies of environmentalism, and on the other hand, the political-libidinal economies of settler colonialism and capitalism. I examine three moments of environmental populism as selected slices of history, accumulative in how they are lodged in the cultural politics of the Dakotas and the memories of many of my research interlocutors. To the extent these moments build upon each other, it is only through the persistence of matter and memory. Within the dominant historical discourse, however, they are frequently subsumed, either through decay, forgetting, or outright. To the extent that the history of populism in South Dakota has been rendered durable, it is in part through the desirable capacities it carries with them. Notably, then, this approach has affinities with the structuralist anti-historicism of psychoanalytic-interpretive approaches (Copjec 2015; Jameson 1982), while refusing to eschew a materialist analysis of desire.

25 Both of these tactics are historic products of the PR-fossil fuel alliance. Blaming outside agitators stems from the Ludlow Massacre in Colorado, in which John Rockefeller of Standard Oil hired Ivy Lee, the founder of public relations, to reframe the slaughter of some two dozen striking coal miners by the Colorado National Guard. Lee distributed a series of pamphlets that blurred the truth of the massacre, arguing first that the deaths were the result of a camp stove explosion, and later that the strikers were not in fact coal miners, but "well-paid agitators sent out by the union" (Ewen 1996, 78). The tactic of making two asymmetrical viewpoints seem like legitimate and balanced opposition was, of course, the favorite PR

tactic of both the fossil fuel industry and the tobacco industry, from the 1950s through to today (Oreskes and Conway 2011).

26 Guthrie's anthem has long contained a stanza that implicitly critiques the concept of private property, but which has largely fallen out of popular knowledge (Jackson 2002). Nonetheless, even the original, more radical version promotes a settler colonial understanding of land - collectivized and universalized instead of privatized (Ross 2016).

27 This is not an anthropological account of Native relationships with land, nor an account that seeks to equate land and identity among Native and settler peoples in a symmetrical or isomorphic fashion. Nor do I suggest that there is merely a 'cultural difference' between Native and non-Native relationships with the land. Indigenous scholars and activists have repeatedly made this point to Euro-American scholars, who erroneously interpret relationships of kinship, obligation, and grounded normativity as reminiscent of European nationalisms. A full review of this literature is outside the scope of this essay. For me, what is important is to understand the structure of settler desire that produces the belief that Native Nations and non-Native property owners had a common interest in the land.

[28] A similar bifurcation has structured historians' assessments of the Farmer's Alliance and the People's Party. As Postel writes, "historians have tended to cast academic experts in the role of modernizers battling to overcome the inertia of 'reluctant farmers,' who were mired in tradition and unconvinced of the value of education" (Postel 2009, 47). Postel challenges this thesis through evidence of a massive campaign of counter-expertise that fought not against the modernizing ideals of agricultural science, but against the method and ends to which they were used.

Bibliography

Agamben, Giorgio. 2000. *Means without End: Notes on Politics*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Althusser, Louis. 1969. *For Marx*. London: Verso.

———. 1971. *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*. Translated by Ben Brewster. New York: Monthly Review Press.

———. 1997. "The Only Materialist Tradition, Part I: Spinoza." In *The New Spinoza*, edited by Warren Montag and Ted Stolze, 11:3–19. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

———. 2014. *On the Reproduction of Capitalism: Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses*. Translated by G. M Goshgarian. London: Verso.

———. 2017. "Marxism as a Finite Theory." Viewpoint Magazine. December 14, 2017. https://www.viewpointmag.com/2017/12/14/marxism-finite-theory-1978/.

Althusser, Louis, Étienne Balibar, Roger Establet, Pierre Macherey, and Jacques Rancière. 2016. *Reading Capital: The Complete Edition*. London: Verso Books.

Anonymous. 2017. "Call for Anti-Colonial Bloc Against Keystone XL, August 6th in Lincoln, NE." *It's Going Down* (blog). July 17, 2017. https://itsgoingdown.org/call-anti-colonial-bloc-keystone-xl-august-6th-lincoln-ne/.

Arnstein, Sherry R. 1969. "A Ladder of Citizen Participation." *Journal of the American Institute of Planners* 35 (4): 216–224.

Associated Press. 2015. "Hearing on Keystone Pipeline Plan Nearly Irrelevant." Rapid City Journal. July 7, 2015. http://rapidcityjournal.com/news/local/hearing-on-keystone-pipeline-plan-nearly-irrelevant/article_7071ca1c-be32-53c3-890d-a51714d50077.html.

Badiou, Alain. 2012. *Metapolitics*. Reprint edition. London; New York: Verso.

———. 2013. *Logics of Worlds*. London; New York: Continuum.

Badiou, Alain, Judith Butler, Georges Didi-Huberman, Sadri Khiari, Jacques Rancière, Pierre Bourdieu, Bruno Bosteels, and Kevin Olson. 2016. *What Is a People?* Translated by Jody Gladding. New York: Columbia University Press.

Balibar, Étienne. 1998. *Spinoza and Politics*. London: Verso.

———. 2002. *Politics and the Other Scene*. London: Verso.

———. 2014. *Equaliberty: Political Essays*. Translated by James Ingram. Durham: Duke University Press Books.

Balibar, Étienne, and Immanuel Maurice Wallerstein. 1991. *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities*. London: Verso.

Barker, Joanne. 2005. *Sovereignty Matters: Locations of Contestation and Possibility in Indigenous Struggles for Self-Determination*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Barry, Andrew. 2013. *Material Politics: Disputes Along the Pipeline*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

———. 2017. "Minor Political Geographies." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 35 (4): 589–592.

Bataille, Georges. 1985. *Visions of Excess: Selected Writings 1927-1939*. Translated by Alan Stoekl. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Berlant, Lauren. 2011a. *Cruel Optimism*. Durham: Duke University Press.
———. 2011b. "Opulism." *South Atlantic Quarterly* 110 (1): 235–42.
———. 2016. "The Commons: Infrastructures for Troubling Times*." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 34 (3): 393–419.
Bhandar, Brenna. 2014. "Property, Law, and Race: Modes of Abstraction." *UC Irvine Law Review* 4 (1): 203–18.
———. 2016. "Possession, Occupation and Registration: Recombinant Ownership in the Settler Colony." *Settler Colonial Studies* 6 (2): 119–32. https://doi.org/10.1080/2201473X.2015.1024366.
———. 2018. "Possessive Nationalism: Race, Class and the Lifeworlds of Property." Viewpoint Magazine. February 1, 2018. https://www.viewpointmag.com/2018/02/01/possessive-nationalism-race-class-lifeworlds-property/.
Bhandar, Brenna, and Alberto Toscano. 2015. "Race, Real Estate and Real Abstraction." *Radical Philosophy*, no. 194. https://www.radicalphilosophy.com/article/race-real-estate-and-real-abstraction.
Bhattacharya, Tithi, ed. 2017. *Social Reproduction Theory: Remapping Class, Recentring Oppression*. London: Pluto Press.
Biolsi, Thomas. 1992. *Organizing the Lakota: The Political Economy of the New Deal on the Pine Ridge and Rosebud Reservations*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press.
———. 1995. "The Birth of the Reservation: Making the Modern Individual Among the Lakota." *American Ethnologist : The Journal of the American Ethnological Society*.
Black Hills Alliance. 1980. "Declaration of Dependence on the Land." *Black Hills Paha Sapa Report* II (1): 1, 12.
Black, Toban, Stephen D'Arcy, Tony Weis, and Joshua Kahn Russell, eds. 2014. *A Line in the Tar Sands: Struggles for Environmental Justice*. Oakland: PM Press.
Bleifuss, Joel. 2017. "The Political Revolution Is Alive and Well in Nebraska." *In These Times*, June 14, 2017. http://inthesetimes.com/article/20214/lighting-a-fire-on-the-prairie-kleeb-nebraska-mello-keystone-xl.
Blomley, Nicholas. 2003. "Law, Property, and the Geography of Violence: The Frontier, the Survey, and the Grid." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 93 (1): 121–141.
———. 2007. "Making Private Property: Enclosure, Common Right and the Work of Hedges." *Rural History* 18 (01): 1–21.
———. 2013. "Performing Property: Making The World." *Canadian Journal of Law & Jurisprudence* 26 (01): 23–48.
———. 2014. "Making Space for Property." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 104 (6): 1291–1306.
———. 2016a. "The Territory of Property." *Progress in Human Geography* 40 (5): 593–609.
———. 2016b. "The Boundaries of Property: Complexity, Relationality, and Spatiality." *Law & Society Review* 50 (1): 224–55.
Bosworth, Kai. Forthcoming. "The Dakota Access Pipeline Struggle: Vulnerability, Security and Settler Colonialism in the Oil Assemblage." In *Settling the Bakken Boom*, edited by Bruce Braun, Mat Coleman, and Mary Thomas. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

———. 2017. "Thinking Permeable Matter through Feminist Geophilosophy: Environmental Knowledge Controversy and the Materiality of Hydrogeologic Processes." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 35 (1): 21–37.

Braun, Bruce. 2002. *The Intemperate Rainforest: Nature, Culture, and Power on Canada's West Coast*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Bridge, Gavin, and Tom Perreault. 2015. "Environmental Governance." In *The Routledge Handbook of Political Ecology*, edited by Tom Perreault, Gavin Bridge, and James McCarthy, 475–97. Abingdon, Oxon ; New York, NY: Routledge.

Brighenti, Andrea Mubi. 2006. "On Territory as Relationship and Law as Territory." *Canadian Journal of Law and Society* 21 (2): 65–86.

———. 2010a. "Lines, Barred Lines: Movement, Territory and the Law." *International Journal of Law in Context* 6 (03): 217–227.

———. 2010b. "On Territorology: Towards a General Science of Territory." *Theory, Culture & Society* 27 (1): 52–72. https://doi.org/10.1177/0263276409350357.

Brown, Elizabeth M. 2012. "The Rights to Public Participation and Access to Information: The Keystone XL Oil Sands Pipeline and Global Climate Change under the National Environmental Policy Act." *Journal of Environmental Law and Litigation* 27: 499–538.

Bruyneel, Kevin. 2007. *The Third Space of Sovereignty: The Postcolonial Politics of U.s.-Indigenous Relations*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Butler, Judith. 2016. "'We, the People': Thoughts on Freedom of Assembly." In *What Is a People?*, edited by Alain Badiou, Judith Butler, Georges Didi-Huberman, Sadri Khiari, Jacques Rancière, Pierre Bourdieu, Bruno Bosteels, and Kevin Olson, translated by Jody Gladding, 49–64. New York: Columbia University Press.

Campbell, Anneke, and Thomas Linzey. 2016. *We the People: Stories from the Community Rights Movement in the United States*. Oakland, CA: PM Press.

Canetti, Elias. 1962. *Crowds and Power*. New York: Seabury.

Canovan, Margaret. 1981. *Populism*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

———. 1999. "Trust the People! Populism and the Two Faces of Democracy." *Political Studies* 47 (1): 2–16.

Carroll, Al. 2008. *Medicine Bags and Dog Tags: American Indian Veterans from Colonial Times to the Second Iraq War*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Chakravartty, Paula, and Denise Ferreira da Silva. 2012. "Accumulation, Dispossession, and Debt: The Racial Logic of Global Capitalism—An Introduction." *American Quarterly* 64 (3): 361–85.

Churchill, Ward. 1983. "Marxism and the Native American." In *Marxism and Native Americans*, edited by Ward Churchill, 183–203. Boston, Mass.: South End Press.

Ciplet, David, Mizanur Rahman Khan, J. Timmons Roberts, and Earth System Governance. 2015. *Power in a Warming World: The New Global Politics of Climate Change and the Remaking of Environmental Inequality*. London, England: MIT Press.

Cobb, Daniel M, and Loretta Fowler. 2007. *Beyond Red Power: American Indian Politics and Activism Since 1900*. Santa Fe, N.M.: School for Advanced Research.

Cooke, Bill, and Uma Kothari, eds. 2001. *Participation: The New Tyranny?* London ; New York: Zed Books.

Copjec, Joan. 2015. *Read My Desire: Lacan Against the Historicists*. London: Verso.

Coulthard, Glen Sean. 2014. *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Cramer, Kevin. 2016. "What the Dakota Access Pipeline Is Really About." *Wall Street Journal*, December 7, 2016, sec. Opinion. http://www.wsj.com/articles/what-the-dakota-access-pipeline-is-really-about-1481071218.

Crehan, Kate. 2016. *Gramsci's Common Sense: Inequality and Its Narratives*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Crépon, Marc, Barbara Cassin, and Claudia Moatti. 2014. "People/Race/Nation." In *Dictionary of Untranslatables: A Philosophical Lexicon*, edited by Barbara Cassin, Emily Apter, Jacques Lezra, and Michael Wood, 751–63. Princeton University Press.

Cronon, William. 1992. "A Place for Stories: Nature, History, and Narrative." *The Journal of American History*, 1347–1376.

———. 2009. *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West*. WW Norton & Company.

Dafnos, Tia. 2013. "Pacification and Indigenous Struggles in Canada." *Socialist Studies/Études Socialistes* 9 (2).

Dalrymple, Jack. 2016. "Dakota Access Pipeline: Mob Rule Triumphed over Law and Common Sense." Star Tribune. December 15, 2016. http://www.startribune.com/dakota-access-pipeline-mob-rule-triumphed-over-law-and-common-sense/406939436/.

Day, Iyko. 2015. "Being or Nothingness: Indigeneity, Antiblackness, and Settler Colonial Critique." *Critical Ethnic Studies* 1 (2): 102–121.

———. 2016. *Alien Capital: Asian Racialization and the Logic of Settler Colonial Capitalism*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Dean, Jodi. 2009. *Democracy and Other Neoliberal Fantasies: Communicative Capitalism and Left Politics*. Durham: Duke University Press.

———. 2010. *Blog Theory: Feedback and Capture in the Circuits of Drive*. Cambridge, UK; Malden, MA: Polity.

———. 2012. *The Communist Horizon*. London: Verso Books.

———. 2016. *Crowds and Party*. London: Verso.

———. 2017. "Not Him, Us (and we aren't populists)." *Theory & Event* 20 (1): 38–44.

Deleuze, Gilles. 1983. *Nietzsche and Philosophy*. Translated by Hugh Tomlinson. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

———. 1989. *Cinema 2: The Time Image*. Translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

———. 1990. *The Logic of Sense*. New York: Columbia University Press.

———. 1994. *Difference and Repetition*. Translated by Paul Patton. New York: Columbia University Press.

———. 1997. *Essays Critical and Clinical*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

———. 2004. "How Do We Recognize Structuralism?" In *Desert Islands and Other Texts, 1953-1974*, translated by David Lapoujade and Michael Taormina, 170–92. Semiotext(e) Foreign Agents Series. Los Angeles, CA : Cambridge, Mass.: Semiotexte ; Distributed by MIT Press.

———. 2006. "Desire and Pleasure." In *Two regimes of madness: texts and interviews 1975-1995*, translated by David Lapoujade, 122–34. Los Angeles, CA; Cambridge, Mass.: Semiotext(e).

Deleuze, Gilles, and Félix Guattari. 1983. *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Translated by Robert Hurley, Mark Seem, and Helen Lane. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

———. 1987. *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Translated by Brian Massumi. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

———. 1994. *What Is Philosophy?* Translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell. New York: Columbia University Press.

Deleuze, Gilles, and Elias Sanbar. 2006. "The Indians of Palestine." In *Two regimes of madness: texts and interviews 1975-1995*, translated by David Lapoujade, 194–200. Los Angeles, CA; Cambridge, Mass.: Semiotext(e).

Deloria, Vine. 1969. *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto*. New York: Macmillan.

Deloria, Vine, and Clifford M Lytle. 1984. *The Nations Within: The Past and Future of American Indian Sovereignty*. New York: Pantheon Books.

Deloria, Vine, and David E Wilkins. 1999. *Tribes, Treaties, and Constitutional Tribulations*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Derrida, Jacques. 2002. "Declarations of Independence." In *Negotiations: Interventions and Interviews, 1971-2001*, edited by Elizabeth Rottenberg, 46–54. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

———. 2012. *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International*. Routledge.

Dewey, John. 1927. *The Public and Its Problems*. 1 edition. Athens: Swallow Press.

Dryzek, John S., David Downes, Christian Hunold, David Schlosberg, and Hans-Kristian Hernes. 2003. *Green States and Social Movements: Environmentalism in the United States, United Kingdom, Germany, and Norway*. Oxford University Press.

Dunbar-Ortiz, Roxanne Amanda. 2016. "The Relationship between Marxism and Indigenous Struggles and Implications of the Theoretical Framework for International Indigenous Struggles." *Historical Materialism* 24 (3): 76–91.

Esson, James, Patricia Noxolo, Richard Baxter, Patricia Daley, and Margaret Byron. 2017. "The 2017 RGS-IBG Chair's Theme: Decolonising Geographical Knowledges, or Reproducing Coloniality?" *Area* 49 (3): 384–388.

Estes, Nick. 2013. "Wounded Knee: Settler Colonial Property Regimes and Indigenous Liberation." *Capitalism Nature Socialism* 24 (3): 190–202.

———. 2014. "The Keystone XL Pipeline: Coming to Terms and Demanding the Impossible." *La Jicarita* (blog). March 13, 2014. https://lajicarita.wordpress.com/2014/03/13/the-keystone-xl-pipeline-coming-to-terms-and-demanding-the-impossible/.

———. 2016. "Fighting for Our Lives: #NoDAPL in Historical Context." *The Red Nation* (blog). September 18, 2016. https://therednation.org/2016/09/18/fighting-for-our-lives-nodapl-in-context/.

Featherstone, David. 2011. "On Assemblage and Articulation." *Area* 43 (2): 139–142.

"Federal Consultation with Tribes Regarding Infrastructure Decision-Making - Framing Paper." 2016. https://www.bia.gov/sites/bia.gov/files/assets/as-ia/raca/pdf/idc2-049011.pdf.

Federici, Silvia. 2004. *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation*. New York; London: Autonomedia.

Federman, Adam. 2013. "Undercover Agents Infiltrated Tar Sands Resistance Camp to Break up Planned Protest." *Earth Island Journal*, August 12, 2013. http://www.earthisland.org/journal/index.php/elist/eListRead/undercover_agents_infiltrated_tar_sands_resistance_camp_to_break_up_planned/.

Ferguson, Cody. 2015. *This Is Our Land: Grassroots Environmentalism in the Late Twentieth Century*. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press.

Fischer, Frank. 2000. *Citizens, Experts, and the Environment: The Politics of Local Knowledge*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Foreman, Christopher H. 2011. *The Promise and Peril of Environmental Justice*. Brookings Institution Press.

Foucault, Michel. 1980. *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*. Edited by Colin Gordon. Translated by Colin Gordon, Leo Marshall, John Mepham, and Kate Soper. New York: Pantheon Books.

———. 2003. *"Society Must Be Defended": Lectures at the Collège De France, 1975-76*. Edited by Mauro Bertani and Alessandro Fontana. Translated by David Macey. New York: Picador.

Frank, Jason. 2009. *Constituent Moments: Enacting the People in Postrevolutionary America*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Gallagher, Patrick. 2009. "Faith in the Voters." South Dakota Magazine. 2009. http://www.southdakotamagazine.com/faith-in-the-voters.

Gerbaudo, Paolo. 2017. *The Mask and the Flag: Populism, Citizenism, and Global Protest*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press.

Gidwani, Vinay. 2008. *Capital, Interrupted: Agrarian Development and the Politics of Work in India*. Minneapolis, Minn.: University of Minnesota Press.

Gidwani, Vinay, and Anant Maringanti. 2016. "The Waste-Value Dialectic: Lumpen Urbanization in Contemporary India." *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 36 (1): 112–33.

Gilbert, Jeremy. 2013. *Common Ground: Democracy and Collectivity in an Age of Individualism*. London: Pluto Press.

Goodwyn, Lawrence. 1978. *The Populist Moment: A Short History of the Agrarian Revolt in America*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press.

Grattan, Laura. 2016. *Populism's Power: Radical Grassroots Democracy in America*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Grossman, Zoltán. 2002. "Unlikely Alliances: Treaty Conflicts and Environmental Cooperation Between Native American and Rural White Communities." Ph.D., Madison: The University of Wisconsin.

———. 2005. "Unlikely Alliances: Treaty Conflicts and Environmental Cooperation Between Native American and Rural White Communities." *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 29 (4): 21–43.

———. 2017. *Unlikely Alliances: Native Nations and White Communities Join to Defend Rural Lands*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Grueskin, Caroline. 2016. "Protesters Move Camp to Dakota Access Property, Claiming It as Treaty Land." Bismarck Tribune. October 23, 2016. http://bismarcktribune.com/news/state-and-regional/protesters-move-camp-to-dakota-access-property-claiming-it-as/article_bc3a5f6a-b2fe-5e77-8d49-cbcee49c5878.html.

Gupta, Arun. 2014. "How the People's Climate March Became a Corporate PR Campaign." Counterpunch. September 19, 2014. http://www.counterpunch.org/2014/09/19/how-the-peoples-climate-march-became-a-corporate-pr-campaign/.

Halder, Bornali. 2002. "Mitaku'oyasin: An Anthropological Exploration of Lakota Sioux Environmental Activism." Ph.D., Oxford: University of Oxford.

Hall, Philip S. 1991. *To Have This Land: The Nature of Indian/White Relations: South Dakota: 1888-1891*. Vermillion, SD: University of South Dakota Press.

Hall, Stuart. 1996. "Race, Articulation, and Societies Structured in Dominance." *Black British Cultural Studies: A Reader*, 16–60.

Hansen, James. 2012. "Game Over for the Climate." *The New York Times*, May 9, 2012. http://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/10/opinion/game-over-for-the-climate.html.

Haraway, Donna. 1990. *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*. New York: Routledge.

Harris, Cheryl I. 1993. "Whiteness as Property." *Harvard Law Review*, 1707–1791.

Hart, Gillian. 2012. "Gramsci, Geography, and the Languages of Populism." In *Gramsci: Space, Nature, Politics*, edited by Ekers Michael, Hart Gillian, Kipfer Stefan, and Loftus Alex, 301–320.

Harvey, David. 2005. *The New Imperialism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Harvey, Penelope. 2012. "The Topological Quality of Infrastructural Relation: An Ethnographic Approach." *Theory, Culture & Society* 29 (4–5): 76–92.

Hébert, Karen. 2016. "Chronicle of a Disaster Foretold: Scientific Risk Assessment, Public Participation, and the Politics of Imperilment in Bristol Bay, Alaska." *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 22 (S1): 108–126.

Hébert, Karen, and Samara Brock. 2017. "Counting and Counter-Mapping: Contests over the Making of a Mining District in Bristol Bay, Alaska." *Science as Culture* 26 (1): 56–87.

Hedges, Chris. 2014. "The Last Gasp of Climate Change Liberals." Truthdig. September 1, 2014. https://www.truthdig.com/articles/the-last-gasp-of-climate-change-liberals/.

Heefner, Gretchen. 2012. *The Missile Next Door: The Minuteman in the American Heartland*. Sew edition. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.

Hersh, Joshua. 2011. "Keystone XL: Haste And Inexperience Hampered State Department's Environmental Review." *Huffington Post*, November 3, 2011, sec. Green. https://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/11/03/keystone-xl-haste-and-ine_n_1074010.html.

———. 2012. "Keystone XL Pipeline Review Lacked 'Expertise And Experience,' State Department IG Finds." *Huffington Post*, February 9, 2012, sec. Green. https://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/02/09/keystone-xl-state-dept-ig_n_1266041.html.

Heynen, Nik, James McCarthy, Scott Prudham, and Paul Robbins. 2007. *Neoliberal Environments: False Promises and Unnatural Consequences*. 1 edition. London ; New York: Routledge.

Hofstadter, Richard. 1960. *The Age of Reform*. New York: Vintage.

Holifield, Ryan. 2004. "Neoliberalism and Environmental Justice in the United States Environmental Protection Agency: Translating Policy into Managerial Practice in Hazardous Waste Remediation." *Geoforum* 35 (3): 285–297.

Holland, Eugene W. 1999. *Deleuze and Guattari's Anti-Oedipus: Introduction to Schizoanalysis*. London ; New York: Routledge.

Hoogeveen, Dawn. 2015. "Sub-Surface Property, Free-Entry Mineral Staking and Settler Colonialism in Canada." *Antipode* 47 (1): 121–138.

Huber, Matthew T. 2013. *Lifeblood: Oil, Freedom, and the Forces of Capital*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

———. 2017. "A Climate Policy for the People." *The American Prospect*, November 16, 2017. http://prospect.org/article/climate-policy-people.

Husmann, John. 2011. "Environmentalism in South Dakota: A Grassroots Approach." In *The Plains Political Tradition: Essays on South Dakota Political Culture*, edited by Jon K. Lauck, John E. Miller, and Donald C. Simmons, 239–66. Pierre: South Dakota State Historical Society.

Indigenous Peoples Specialty Group (IPSG) of the Association of American Geographers (AAG). 2010. "Declaration of Key Questions about Research Ethics with Indigenous Communities." http://www.indigenousgeography.net/IPSG/pdf/IPSGResearchEthicsFinal.pdf.

Inwood, Joshua F. J., and Anne Bonds. 2017. "Property and Whiteness: The Oregon Standoff and the Contradictions of the U.S. Settler State." *Space and Polity* 21 (3): 253–68. https://doi.org/10.1080/13562576.2017.1373425.

Iveson, Kurt. 2014. "Building a City For 'The People': The Politics of Alliance-Building in the Sydney Green Ban Movement." *Antipode* 46 (4): 992–1013. https://doi.org/10.1111/anti.12047.

Jackson, Mark Allan. 2002. "Is This Song Your Song Anymore?: Revisioning Woody Guthrie's 'This Land Is Your Land.'" *American Music* 20 (3): 249–76.

Jafri, Beenash. 2013. "Desire, Settler Colonialism, and the Racialized Cowboy." *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 37 (2): 73–86.

Jäger, Anton. 2017. "The Semantic Drift: Images of Populism in Post-War American Historiography and Their Relevance for (European) Political Science." *Constellations* 24 (3): 310–23. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8675.12308.

Jameson, Fredric. 1982. *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.

Johnson, Kirk, and Dan Frosch. 2011. "A Pipeline Divides Along Old Lines: Jobs Versus the Environment." *The New York Times*, September 28, 2011, sec. U.S. https://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/29/us/rancor-grows-over-planned-oil-pipeline-from-canada.html.

Johnson, Sandie, and Loraine Hutchins. 1980. "Black Hills Gathering: The Ties That Unite and Divide Us." *Off Our Backs* 10 (9): 4–23.

Kanngieser, Anja, and Nicholas Beuret. 2017. "Refusing the World: Silence, Commoning, and the Anthropocene." *South Atlantic Quarterly* 116 (2): 363–380.

Katz, Cindi. 1996. "Towards Minor Theory." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 14 (4): 487–499.

Kazin, Michael. 1998. *The Populist Persuasion: An American History*. Ithica, NY: Cornell University Press.

Keeling, Kara. 2007. *The Witch's Flight: The Cinematic, the Black Femme, and the Image of Common Sense*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Kingsnorth, Paul. 2017. "The Lie of the Land: Does Environmentalism Have a Future in the Age of Trump?" The Guardian. March 18, 2017. http://www.theguardian.com/books/2017/mar/18/the-new-lie-of-the-land-what-future-for-environmentalism-in-the-age-of-trump.

Kleeb, Jane Fleming. 2016. "Let's Get Rural: Middle America Wants Less Establishment, More Populism." *Medium* (blog). December 12, 2016. https://medium.com/@janekleeb/lets-get-rural-middle-america-wants-less-establishment-more-populism-c182224adca3.

Klein, Naomi. 2014. *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. The Climate*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Knobloch, Frieda. 1996. *The Culture of Wilderness: Agriculture as Colonization in the American West*. Studies in Rural Culture. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Kojola, Erik D. 2017. "(Re)Constructing the Pipeline: Workers, Environmentalists and Ideology in Media Coverage of the Keystone XL Pipeline." *Critical Sociology* 43 (6): 893–917.

Kosek, Jake. 2006. *Understories: The Political Life of Forests in Northern New Mexico*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Kruzic, Ahna, and Angie Carter. 2016. "A Feminist's Guide to Fighting Pipelines." In *Fracture: Essay Poems, and Stories on Fracking in America*, edited by Stefanie Brook Trout and Taylor Brorby, 226–30. North Liberty, Iowa: Ice Cube Press, LLC.

Kuznick, Peter J. 1987. *Beyond the Laboratory: Scientists as Political Activists in 1930's America*. 1 edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Labban, Mazen. 2008. *Space, Oil and Capital*. London: Routledge.

Laclau, Ernesto. 1979. *Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory: Capitalism, Fascism, Populism*. London: Verso.

———. 2005. *On Populist Reason*. London: Verso.

Laclau, Ernesto, and Chantal Mouffe. 1985. *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*. London: Verso.

LaDuke, Winona. 1999. *All Our Relations: Native Struggles for Land and Life*. Cambridge, MA; Minneapolis, MN: South End Press ; Honor the Earth.

LaDuke, Winona, and Ward Churchill. 1985. "Native America: The Political Economy of Radioactive Colonialism." *Journal of Ethnic Studies* 13 (3): 107–32.

LaDuke, Winona, and Sean Aaron Cruz. 2013. *The Militarization of Indian Country*. MSU Press.

Lane, S N, N Odoni, C Landström, S J Whatmore, N Ward, and S Bradley. 2011. "Doing Flood Risk Science Differently: An Experiment in Radical Scientific Method." *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 36 (1): 15–36.

Larkin, Brian. 2013. "The Politics and Poetics of Infrastructure." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 42 (1): 327–43.

Larson, Peter. 2009. "Comment." https://puc.sd.gov/commission/dockets/hydrocarbonpipeline/2009/hp09-001/comments/bhinstitute.pdf.

Latour, Bruno. 2004. "Why Has Critique Run out of Steam? From Matters of Fact to Matters of Concern." *Critical Inquiry* 30 (2): 225–48.
Lauck, Jon K. 2010. *Prairie Republic: The Political Culture of Dakota Territory, 1879-1889*. First Printing. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.
Lauck, Jon K., John E. Miller, and Donald C. Simmons, eds. 2011. *The Plains Political Tradition: Essays on South Dakota Political Culture*. Pierre: South Dakota State Historical Society.
Laugier, Sandra. 2014. "People." In *Dictionary of Untranslatables: A Philosophical Lexicon*, edited by Barbara Cassin, Emily Apter, Jacques Lezra, and Michael Wood, 750–51. Princeton University Press.
Lee, R. Alton. 2011. *Principle over Party: The Farmers' Alliance and Populism in South Dakota, 1880-1900*. Pierre: South Dakota State Historical.
Leitner, Helga, Eric Sheppard, and Kristin M. Sziarto. 2008. "The Spatialities of Contentious Politics." *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 33 (2): 157–172.
LeMenager, Stephanie. 2014. *Living Oil: Petroleum Culture in the American Century*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Li, Fabiana. 2009. "Documenting Accountability: Environmental Impact Assessment in a Peruvian Mining Project." *PoLAR: Political and Legal Anthropology Review* 32 (2): 218–236.
Li, Tania Murray. 2014. "What Is Land? Assembling a Resource for Global Investment." *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 39 (4): 589–602.
Limerick, Patricia Nelson. 1988. *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West*. WW Norton & Company.
Loraux, Nicole. 2000. *Born of the Earth: Myth and Politics in Athens*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
Losurdo, Domenico. 2014. *Liberalism: A Counter-History*. London: Verso Books.
Lowe, Lisa. 2015. *The Intimacies of Four Continents*. Durham: Duke University Press Books.
Luisetti, Federico, John Pickles, and Wilson Kaiser, eds. 2015. *The Anomie of the Earth: Philosophy, Politics, and Autonomy in Europe and the Americas*. Durham ; London: Duke University Press Books.
Mackey, Eva. 2016. *Unsettled Expectations: Uncertainty, Land and Settler Decolonization*. Fernwood Publishing.
Macpherson, Crawford Brough. 1964. *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism: Hobbes to Locke*. Oxford University Press.
Mann, Geoff. 2009. "Should Political Ecology Be Marxist? A Case for Gramsci's Historical Materialism." *Geoforum* 40 (3): 335–344.
———. 2017. *In the Long Run We Are All Dead: Keynesianism, Political Economy, and Revolution*. London: Verso Books.
Mann, Geoff, and Joel Wainwright. 2018. *Climate Leviathan: A Political Theory of Our Planetary Future*. London: Verso Books.
Mansfield, Becky. 2009. *Privatization: Property and the Remaking of Nature-Society Relations*. John Wiley & Sons.
Markwell, Sam. 2016. "Keystone XL and the Affective Infrastructures of the Cowboy and Indian Alliance." presented at the Annual meeting of the American Association of Geographers, San Francisco, March 29.

Marres, Noortje. 2012. *Material Participation: Technology, the Environment and Everyday Publics*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
Marriott, James, and Mika Minio-Paluello. 2013. *The Oil Road: Journeys from the Caspian Sea to the City of London*. London: Verso Books.
Marx, Karl. 1976. *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy, Volume I*. Translated by Ben Fowkes. London: Penguin Classics.
Marx, Karl, and Friedrich Engels. 1970. *German Ideology, Part 1 and Selections from Parts 2 and 3*. Edited by Christopher John Arthur. 1St Edition edition. New York: Intl Pub.
Massey, Doreen. 1994. *Space, Place, and Gender*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
Massey, Doreen B. 2005. *For Space*. London; Thousand Oaks, Calif.: SAGE.
Matthiessen, Peter. 1992. *In the Spirit of Crazy Horse: The Story of Leonard Peltier and the FBI's War on the American Indian Movement*. Penguin.
McCarthy, James. 2002. "First World Political Ecology: Lessons from the Wise Use Movement." *Environment and Planning A* 34 (7): 1281–1302.
McIntyre, Michael, and Heidi J. Nast. 2011. "Bio(Necro)Polis: Marx, Surplus Populations, and the Spatial Dialectics of Reproduction and 'Race.'" *Antipode* 43 (5): 1465–1488.
McKibben, Bill. 2013. *Oil and Honey: The Education of an Unlikely Activist*. New York: Times Books.
McVeigh, Karen. 2013. "US Department of Interior Criticises State over Keystone XL Impact Report." *The Guardian*, August 20, 2013, sec. Environment. http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2013/aug/20/interior-state-keystone-xl-pipeline-impact.
Means, Russel. 1983. "The Same Old Song." In *Marxism and Native Americans*, edited by Ward Churchill, 19–34. Boston, Mass.: South End Press.
Mehta, Uday Singh. 1999. *Liberalism and Empire: A Study in Nineteenth-Century British Liberal Thought*. Chicago: University Of Chicago Press.
Melamed, Jodi. 2015. "Racial Capitalism." *Critical Ethnic Studies* 1 (1): 76–85.
Mercer, Bob. 2013. "Eco-Terrorists, Intimidation and the Keystone Hearing | Pure Pierre Politics." *Pure Pierre Politics* (blog). June 25, 2013. http://my605.com/pierrereview/?p=8806.
Meyer, John M. 2008. "Populism, Paternalism and the State of Environmentalism in the US." *Environmental Politics* 17 (2): 219–236.
Mitchell, Timothy. 2013. *Carbon Democracy: Political Power in the Age of Oil*. 2nd ed. London and New York: Verso Books.
Mollett, Sharlene, and Caroline Faria. 2013. "Messing with Gender in Feminist Political Ecology." *Geoforum* 45: 116–125.
Moore, Donald S. 2005. *Suffering for Territory: Race, Place, and Power in Zimbabwe*. Durham: Duke University Press Books.
Moore, Donald S, Jake Kosek, and Anand Pandian. 2003. "The Cultural Politics of Race and Nature: Terrains of Power and Practice." In *Race, Nature, and the Politics of Difference*, edited by Donald S Moore, Jake Kosek, and Anand Pandian. Durham: Duke University Press.
Moore, Jason W. 2015. *Capitalism in the Web of Life: Ecology and the Accumulation of Capital*. London ; Brooklyn, NY: Verso.

Moreton-Robinson, Aileen. 2015. *The White Possessive: Property, Power, and Indigenous Sovereignty*. Minneapolis: University Of Minnesota Press.

Mouffe, Chantal. 2000. *The Democratic Paradox*. Verso.

———. 2005. *The Return of the Political*. Vol. 8. Verso.

———. 2016. "The Populist Challenge." OpenDemocracy. December 5, 2016. https://www.opendemocracy.net/democraciaabierta/chantal-mouffe/populist-challenge.

Mudde, Cas, and Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser. 2017. *Populism: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press.

Mufson, Steven. 2012. "Keystone XL Pipeline Is Issue of Property Rights for Some Ranchers." *Washington Post*, July 27, 2012. https://www.washingtonpost.com/keystone-xl-pipeline-is-issue-of-property-rights-for-some-ranchers/2012/07/27/gJQAqlQgDX_story.html.

Müller, Jan-Werner. 2016. *What Is Populism?* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Negri, Antonio. 1991. *The Savage Anomaly: The Power of Spinoza's Metaphysics and Politics*. Translated by Michael Hardt. Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press.

Nichols, Robert. 2018. "Theft Is Property! The Recursive Logic of Dispossession." *Political Theory* 46 (1): 3–28.

Not An Alternative. 2016. "Occupy the Party: The Sanders' Campaign as a Site of Struggle." *Public Seminar* (blog). February 18, 2016. http://www.publicseminar.org/2016/02/occupy-the-party-the-sanders-campaign-as-a-site-of-struggle/.

NYC Stands with Standing Rock Collective. 2016. "#StandingRockSyllabus." *NYC Stands with Standing Rock* (blog). October 11, 2016. https://nycstandswithstandingrock.wordpress.com/standingrocksyllabus/.

Obama, Barack. 2015. "Statement by the President on the Keystone XL Pipeline." Whitehouse.Gov. November 6, 2015. https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2015/11/06/statement-president-keystone-xl-pipeline.

O'Brien, Jean M. 2010. *Firsting and Lasting: Writing Indians out of Existence in New England*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Ostler, Jeffrey. 2011. *The Lakotas and the Black Hills: The Struggle for Sacred Ground*. New York: Penguin Books.

Ostler, Jeffrey, and Nick Estes. 2017. "The Supreme Law of the Land." *Public Seminar* (blog). February 3, 2017. http://www.publicseminar.org/2017/02/the-supreme-law-of-the-land/.

O'Sullivan, Joe. 2014. "State Gets Millions in Homeland Security Grants, but Where Does It Go?" *Rapid City Journal*, June 8, 2014. http://rapidcityjournal.com/news/local/state-gets-millions-in-homeland-security-grants-but-where-does/article_1be9acf1-b8e6-5bdb-a01d-5d2e4e2362ca.html.

Out of the Woods (collective). 2014. "Climate Populism and the People's Climate March." Libcom.Org. September 10, 2014. http://libcom.org/blog/climate-populism-people's-climate-march-10092014.

Panizza, Francisco, ed. 2005. *Populism and the Mirror of Democracy*. London: Verso.

Pasternak, Shiri, and Tia Dafnos. Forthcoming. "How Does a Settler State Secure the Circuitry of Capital?" *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*.

Peet, Richard, and Michael Watts, eds. 1996. *Liberation Ecologies: Environment, Development, Social Movements*. London; New York: Routledge.

———. , eds. 2004. *Liberation Ecologies*. 2 edition. London ; New York: Routledge.

Peluso, Nancy Lee, and Christian Lund, eds. 2012. *New Frontiers of Land Control*. Oxfordshire: Routledge.

"People's Agreement of Cochabamba." 2010. *World People's Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth* (blog). April 24, 2010. https://pwccc.wordpress.com/2010/04/24/peoples-agreement/.

Phadke, Roopali. 2010. "Steel Forests or Smoke Stacks: The Politics of Visualisation in the Cape Wind Controversy." *Environmental Politics* 19 (1): 1–20.

———. 2011. "Resisting and Reconciling Big Wind: Middle Landscape Politics in the New American West." *Antipode* 43 (3): 754–776.

Pollack, Norman. 1976. *The Populist Response to Industrial America: Midwestern Populist Thought*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Postel, Charles. 2009. *The Populist Vision*. New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Povinelli, Elizabeth A. 2016. *Geontologies: A Requiem to Late Liberalism*. Duke University Press.

———. 2017. "What Do White People Want?: Interest, Desire, and Affect in Late Liberalism." 2017. https://conversations.e-flux.com/t/elizabeth-a-povinelli-what-do-white-people-want-interest-desire-and-affect-in-late-liberalism/5845.

Prudham, Scott. 2015. "Property and Commodification." In *The Routledge Handbook of Political Ecology*, edited by Tom Perreault, Gavin Bridge, and James McCarthy, 430–45. Routledge.

Puar, Jasbir K. 2017. *The Right to Maim: Debility, Capacity, Disability*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Pulido, Laura. 2000. "Rethinking Environmental Racism: White Privilege and Urban Development in Southern California." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 90 (1): 12–40.

———. 2017. "Geographies of Race and Ethnicity II: Environmental Racism, Racial Capitalism and State-Sanctioned Violence." *Progress in Human Geography* 41 (4): 524–33.

Rancière, Jacques. 2016. "The Populism That Is Not to Be Found." In *What Is a People?*, edited by Alain Badiou, Judith Butler, Georges Didi-Huberman, Sadri Khiari, Jacques Rancière, Pierre Bourdieu, Bruno Bosteels, and Kevin Olson, translated by Jody Gladding, 101–6. New York: Columbia University Press.

Rawls, John. 1999. *A Theory of Justice*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Read, Jason. 2017. *The Politics of Transindividuality*. Chicago: Haymarket Books.

Rice, Jennifer L., Brian J. Burke, and Nik Heynen. 2015. "Knowing Climate Change, Embodying Climate Praxis: Experiential Knowledge in Southern Appalachia." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 105 (2): 253–262.

Riofrancos, Thea. 2017a. "Democracy Without the People." *N+1* (blog). February 6, 2017. https://nplusonemag.com/online-only/online-only/democracy-without-the-people/.

———. 2017b. "Digging Free of Poverty." Jacobin. August 15, 2017. http://jacobinmag.com/2017/08/digging-free-of-poverty/.

Rising Tide North America. 2014. "Growing the Roots to Weather the Storm: Reflections on the Global Movement for Climate Justice." Growing the Roots to Weather the Storm. 2014. http://growingdeeproots.risingtidenorthamerica.org/.

Robinson, Cedric J. 1983. *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition*. London; Totowa, N.J.: Zed ; Biblio Distribution Center.

Romm, Joe. 2011. "James Hansen Slams Keystone XL Canada-U.S. Pipeline: 'Exploitation of Tar Sands Would Make It Implausible to Stabilize Climate and Avoid Disastrous Global Climate Impacts.'" June 3, 2011. https://thinkprogress.org/james-hansen-slams-keystone-xl-canada-u-s-pipeline-exploitation-of-tar-sands-would-make-it-implausib-bce6d044bb93/.

Rosenthal, Elisabeth, and Dan Frosch. 2011. "State Dept. Assigned Keystone XL Review to Company With Ties to TransCanada." *The New York Times*, October 7, 2011, sec. Environment. https://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/08/science/earth/08pipeline.html.

Ross, Gyasi. 2016. "Crazy White People Are the New Native Americans: Woody Guthrie, Ammon Bundy & Donald Trump." *Indian Country Media Network* (blog). January 8, 2016. https://indiancountrymedianetwork.com/culture/thing-about-skins/crazy-white-people-are-the-new-native-americans-woody-guthrie-ammon-bundy-donald-trump/.

Russell, Joshua Kahn, Linda Capato, Matt Leonard, and Rae Breaux. 2014. "'"Lessons from Direct Action at the White House to Stop the Keystone XL Pipeline." In *A Line in the Tar Sands: Struggles for Environmental Justice*, edited by Toban Black, Stephen D'Arcy, Tony Weis, and Joshua Kahn Russell, 167–80. Oakland: PM Press.

Safransky, Sara. 2014. "Greening the Urban Frontier: Race, Property, and Resettlement in Detroit." *Geoforum* 56: 237–248.

Saldanha, Arun. 2017. *Space After Deleuze*. Bloomsbury Publishing.

Sanyal, Kalyan. 2007. *Rethinking Capitalist Development: Primitive Accumulation, Governmentality and Post-Colonial Capitalism*. Routledge.

Sargent, Greg. 2014. "Rick Weiland: Real Populism Can Win in South Dakota." *The Washington Post*, October 10, 2014. https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/plum-line/wp/2014/10/10/rick-weiland-real-populism-can-win-in-south-dakota/?utm_term=.ce48b9c85cff.

Schlosberg, David. 1999. *Environmental Justice and the New Pluralism: The Challenge of Difference for Environmentalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

———. 2009. *Defining Environmental Justice: Theories, Movements, and Nature*. Oxford University Press.

Schmitt, Carl. 2006. *The Nomos of the Earth in the International Law of Jus Publicum Europaeum*. Translated by G. L. Ulmen. New York: Telos Press Publishing.

Schneider-Mayerson, Matthew. 2015. *Peak Oil: Apocalyptic Environmentalism and Libertarian Political Culture*. University of Chicago Press.

Schuster, Aaron. 2016. *The Trouble with Pleasure: Deleuze and Psychoanalysis*. Short Circuits. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Scoones, Ian, Marc Edelman, Saturnino M. Borras Jr, Ruth Hall, Wendy Wolford, and Ben White. 2018. "Emancipatory Rural Politics: Confronting Authoritarian Populism." *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 45 (1): 1–20.

Secor, Anna, and Jess Linz. 2017. "Becoming Minor." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 35 (4): 568–573.

Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. 2003. *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Sexton, Jared. 2011. "The Social Life of Social Death: On Afro-Pessimism and Black Optimism." *InTensions* 5 (1).

Shahid, Waleed. 2016. "America in Populist Times: An Interview With Chantal Mouffe." *The Nation*, December 15, 2016. https://www.thenation.com/article/america-in-populist-times-an-interview-with-chantal-mouffe/.

Sharp, Hasana. 2011. *Spinoza and the Politics of Renaturalization*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Shellenberger, Michael, and Ted Nordhaus. 2007. *Break Through: From the Death of Environmentalism to the Politics of Possibility*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

Sibertin-Blanc, Guillaume. 2013. "From Democratic Simulacrum to the Fabulation of the People: Minority Populism." *Actuel Marx* 54 (2): 71–85.

———. 2016. *State and Politics: Deleuze and Guattari on Marx*. Translated by Ames Hodges. South Pasadena, CA: Semiotext(e).

Silva, Denise Ferreira da. 2007. *Toward a Global Idea of Race*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

———. 2009. "No-Bodies: Law, Raciality and Violence." *Griffith Law Review* 18 (2): 212–236.

Simpson, Audra. 2014. *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life Across the Borders of Settler States*. Durham: Duke University Press Books.

Singh, Nikhil Pal. 2016. "On Race, Violence, and So-Called Primitive Accumulation." *Social Text* 34 (3 128): 27–50.

Smith, Paul Chaat, and Robert Allen Warrior. 1996. *Like a Hurricane: The Indian Movement from Alcatraz to Wounded Knee*. New York: New Press : Distributed by W.W. Norton.

Smucker, Jonathan, and Michael Premo. 2014. "What's Wrong With the Radical Critique of the People's Climate March." *The Nation*, September 30, 2014. https://www.thenation.com/article/whats-wrong-radical-critique-peoples-climate-march/.

Snelgrove, Corey, Rita Dhamoon, and Jeff Corntassel. 2014. "Unsettling Settler Colonialism: The Discourse and Politics of Settlers, and Solidarity with Indigenous Nations." *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 3 (2).

Spinoza, Benedictus de. 1985. *The Collected Works of Spinoza, Volume I*. Translated by Edwin Curley. Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press.

———. 2016. *The Collected Works of Spinoza, Volume II*. Translated by Edwin Curley. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. 1988. "Can the Subaltern Speak?" In *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, edited by Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg, 271–313. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Stengers, Isabelle. 2005. "Deleuze and Guattari's Last Enigmatic Message." *Angelaki* 10 (2): 151–67.

Swyngedouw, Erik. 2010. "Apocalypse Forever? Post-Political Populism and the Spectre of Climate Change." *Theory, Culture & Society* 27 (2–3): 213–232.

———. 2011. "Interrogating Post-Democratization: Reclaiming Egalitarian Political Spaces." *Political Geography* 30 (7): 370–80.
Swyngedouw, Erik, and Japhy Wilson, eds. 2014. *The Post-Political and Its Discontents: Spaces of Depoliticization, Spectres of Radical Politics*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
Szasz, Andrew. 1994. *Ecopopulism: Toxic Waste and the Movement for Environmental Justice*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
The Public Utilities Commission of South Dakota. 2009a. "Transcript of Proceedings April 27, 2009 Winner, South Dakota." https://puc.sd.gov/commission/dockets/hydrocarbonpipeline/2009/hp09-001/transcriptwinner.pdf.
———. 2009b. "Transcript of Public Input Hearing." https://puc.sd.gov/Dockets/HydrocarbonPipeline/2009/input.aspx.
———. 2009c. "Transcript of Public Input Hearing, Vol II." https://puc.sd.gov/Dockets/HydrocarbonPipeline/2009/input.aspx.
———. 2009d. "Transcript of Public Input Hearing, Vol III." https://puc.sd.gov/Dockets/HydrocarbonPipeline/2009/input.aspx.
The Revolutionary Communist Party. 1983. "Searching for a Second Harvest." In *Marxism and Native Americans*, edited by Ward Churchill, 35–58. Boston, Mass.: South End Press.
Thoburn, Nicholas. 2016. "The People Are Missing: Cramped Space, Social Relations, and the Mediators of Politics." *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 29 (4): 367–81.
Thunder Hawk, Madonna. 2007. "Native Organizing before the Nonprofit Industrial Complex." In *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded: Beyond the Non-Profit Industrial Complex*, edited by INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence, 101–106.
Tuck, Eve. 2010. "Breaking up with Deleuze: Desire and Valuing the Irreconcilable." *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* 23 (5): 635–50.
Tuck, Eve, and K. Wayne Yang. 2012. "Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor." *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1 (1): 1–40.
———. 2014a. "R-Words: Refusing Research." *Humanizing Research: Decolonizing Qualitative Inquiry with Youth and Communities*, 223–248.
———. 2014b. "Unbecoming Claims: Pedagogies of Refusal in Qualitative Research." *Qualitative Inquiry* 20 (6): 811–818.
Tweton, D. Jerome. 1993. "Considering Why Populism Succeeded in South Dakota and Failed in North Dakota." *South Dakota History* 22: 330–344.
Urbinati, Nadia. 1998. "Democracy and Populism." *Constellations* 5 (1): 110–24.
US Department of State. 2013a. "Summary of Public Comments and Responses to the Keystone XL Project Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement."
———. 2013b. "Keystone XL Draft Environmental Impact Statement - Public Comment Unique Submissions."
———. 2013c. "Keystone XL Draft Environmental Impact Statement - Public Comment Unique Submissions, Part 02."
———. 2013d. "Keystone XL Draft Environmental Impact Statement - Public Comment Unique Submissions, Part 03."

Van Sant, Levi, and Kai Bosworth. 2017. "Intervention – 'Race, Rurality, and Radical Geography in the US.'" *AntipodeFoundation.Org* (blog). September 14, 2017. https://antipodefoundation.org/2017/09/14/race-rurality-and-radical-geography/.

Vayda, Andrew P., and Bradley B. Walters. 1999. "Against Political Ecology." *Human Ecology* 27 (1): 167–179.

Wagoner, Paula L. 2002. *"They Treated Us Just Like Indians": The Worlds of Bennett County, South Dakota*. Lincoln : Bloomington: Bison Books.

Wainwright, Joel, and Kristin Mercer. 2009. "The Dilemma of Decontamination: A Gramscian Analysis of the Mexican Transgenic Maize Dispute." *Geoforum* 40 (3): 345–354.

Welker, Marina. 2012. "The Green Revolution's Ghost: Unruly Subjects of Participatory Development in Rural Indonesia." *American Ethnologist* 39 (2): 389–406.

Whatmore, Sarah J. 2009. "Mapping Knowledge Controversies: Science, Democracy and the Redistribution of Expertise." *Progress in Human Geography* 33 (5): 587–98.

———. 2013. "Earthly Powers and Affective Environments: An Ontological Politics of Flood Risk." *Theory, Culture & Society* 30 (7–8): 33–50.

Whatmore, Sarah J., and Catharina Landström. 2011. "Flood Apprentices: An Exercise in Making Things Public." *Economy and Society* 40 (4): 582–610.

Whyte, Kyle. 2017. "The Dakota Access Pipeline, Environmental Injustice, and US Colonialism." *Red Ink: An International Journal of Indigenous Literature, Arts, & Humanities* 19 (154–169).

Wiederstein, Ed. 2016. "Pipeline Protest Shifts to Anti-Development Agenda." *Bismarck Tribune*, August 29, 2016. http://bismarcktribune.com/news/opinion/guest/pipeline-protest-shifts-to-anti-development-agenda/article_3d237a83-0ed8-59fb-aa81-a324b939835b.html.

Wiken, Douglas. 2009. "** PUC Meeting in Winner, SD on TransCanada/Phillips XL Pipeline." Dakota Today. April 27, 2009. http://dakotatoday.typepad.com/dakotatoday/2009/04/-puc-meeting-in-winner-sd-on-transcanadaphillips-xl-pipeline.html.

Wilderson III, Frank. 2003. "Gramsci's Black Marx: Whither the Slave in Civil Society?" *Social Identities* 9 (2): 225–240.

Wolfe, Patrick. 2006. "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native." *Journal of Genocide Research* 8 (4): 387–409.

Wood, Ellen Meiksins. 1999. *The Retreat From Class: A New True Socialism*. London: Verso.

Wood, Tony. 2016. "Some Theses on 'Populism,'" 2016. http://www.e-flux.com/journal/76/67530/some-theses-on-populism/.

Worster, Donald. 1992. *Under Western Skies: Nature and History in the American West*. Oxford University Press.

Wynne, Brian. 2007. "Public Participation in Science and Technology: Performing and Obscuring a Political–Conceptual Category Mistake." *East Asian Science, Technology and Society: An International Journal* 1 (1): 99–110.

Young, Iris Marion. 2001. "Activist Challenges to Deliberative Democracy." *Political Theory* 29 (5): 670–690.

———. 2011. *Justice and the Politics of Difference*. Princeton University Press.

Žižek, Slavoj. 2006. "Against the Populist Temptation." *Critical Inquiry* 32 (3): 551–574.

———. 2008. *The Sublime Object of Ideology*. 2nd ed. London; New York: Verso.
———. 2017. *In Defense of Lost Causes*. Reprint edition. London: Verso.