

Futurities: Centring Difference and Worldmaking(s)

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Citation

Brown, Wendy. "Neoliberalism's Frankenstein: Authoritarian Freedom in Twenty-First Century 'Democracies.'" *Critical Times* 1(1), 2018. 60-79.

<https://doi.org/10.1215/26410478-1.1.60>

Thesis of the article/chapter

This article argues that neoliberalism has attacked the social and political in the name of freedom and has replaced it with the private and that this has resulted in the current state of right-wing movements' turn to economic privatization, family values, anti-immigrant sentiment and authoritarianism.

Method and Outline of Main Findings (provide page numbers for quotes and paraphrasing)

What is the method of the author(s)? What are the main findings? How are they organized? How do they connect to each other? How do they connect to the thesis of the text? What examples are used to illustrate the main findings?

The author uses the theories of Hayek, Nietzsche, and Marcuse to understand the original intent of neoliberalism, and how this has changed resulting in the current systems seen in countries such as the US, UK and France. Each of the theorists is given a section, their theories explained, and then connected to the modern political situation. Particular focus is placed on neoliberalism in terms of how it transformed from a primarily economic policy to one that prioritizes white hetero-patriarchal Christian familialism. Examples are provided by using speeches and statements given by political leaders in western democracies, such as Trump and Le Pen. These examples demonstrate how supporters of right-wing politics have become nihilistic, exclusionary, and authoritarian. Particularly through examples of their anti-immigration ideas, viewing the state as a family or a piece of property that they need to protect from outsiders who do not fit into their hegemonic ideals. This then explains the current rise in authoritarianism and fascist ideas.

Key Terms/Concepts (Define them, providing page numbers from the source)

1. white backlash against "savage globalization" - white working and middle-class people experiencing declining purchasing power politically rebel against elites for expanding immigration, something they see as the root of their suffering (61)
2. Neoliberal rationality - a way of thinking that sees every aspect of human existence as something that can be productive and economized (62)
3. Freedom in the neoliberal perspective - freedom is the lack of government control, freedom is negative, exists where the government is absent (62)
4. Hayek's main argument - political life and politics compromise individual liberty and market competition's productivity and progress

5. Nietzsche's main argument - resentment becomes moralizing when suffering and humiliation are routed through it, allows for people to resent others for their own situation in life
6. Marcuse's main argument - capitalist society turns art into a commodity (repressive desublimation) and creates a growing middle-class culture based on commodities and pleasure gained from purchases

Response (What is your response to the article/chapter? How does the source relate to your research question/thesis or themes? How does it fit into the themes thus far? What is the perspective of the author(s)? How well does the author support his/her/their argument? Are you persuaded? When/where/how can their ideas be used, thinking of a specific project? How or why is the source important? Which authors resonate? Are in tension? What resonates? What does not resonate?)

This can be connected to the idea raised last week that right-wing supporters or conservatives have an urge to maintain the status quo, and their stable identities. This paper would argue that the faults of neoliberalism has made their identities unstable. Where previously they could experience stability in their race and economic status, the failure of neoliberalism meant that there was a dismantling of livable incomes, job security, retirement provisions, public education, services and other social goods (68). This would have jeopardized both their economic stability, but also their identities, as Marcuse suggests that there is a commodity culture for the middle class (72). If they lost this purchasing power, they would also lose a sense of identity. This loss of identity would therefore motivate the "white rancour" Brown discusses, and would encourage this turn to anti-immigrant ideas.

While this can be seen to connect with the ideas raised in class last week, I believe that it is only moderately convincing. This article focuses on three aspects of right-wing movements, economic privatization, family values, and anti-immigrant sentiment. The turn to and support of the private is well supported theoretically. However, Brown fails to define what the right-wing views as family values, and fails to convince that this turn to family values marks a difference from previous values of the social. Additionally, the category of anti-immigrant sentiment is disappointingly narrow. Anti-immigration is one policy pillar of right-wing politics, and it is given similar weight to their entire economic policies. This seems unbalanced, and it meant an opportunity was missed to expand to larger ideas of fear of others, such as xenophobia or transphobia.

Questions/Points for Discussion

1. Brown discusses a very limited number of countries, including the UK, France and the US. This is a very small sample for making statements about right-wing movements. Do you think that the arguments proposed are convincing for other countries or is this an argumentative weakness?
2. There is some discussion that people like Trump and Le Pen are flukes rather than examples of true right-wing trends as they did not have continued or growing electoral success. This article would argue that rather they are vocal and clear examples of this trend, but is this convincing knowing what we know in the last five years since this article was published?

3. The Athanasiov reading argues that critical theories and utopian theories can present alternatives to neoliberalism. Despite these theories existing for many years, why do you think neoliberalism persists, and has so many supporters despite the harm it is causing?

Reading Notes

1. Trump mobilized class resentment, and white rancour about lost pride of place in the context of neoliberalism and globalization (60)
2. neoliberalism has been more devastating to the Black-American working class (60)
 - a. hit by rising unemployment, defunding of schools and welfare, and sentencing mandates (60)
3. white backlash against “savage globalization” where white working and middle-class inhabitants facing declining access to incomes have a political rebellion against cosmopolitans and elites for opening their nations (61)
4. right-wing reaction is anti-political, libertarian, and authoritarian at the same time (61)
5. Looks at Hayek, Nietzsche, and Marcuse (61)
6. neoliberal rationality is productive and world-making, economizing every sphere and human endeavour (62)
7. freedom is submitted to market meanings (62)
8. freedom is negative and exists where politics and government are absent (62)
9. for Thatcher, Hayek, and neoliberals society does not exist (62)
10. Friedman - politics threatens freedom as it concentrates power, making markets disperse and coerce while markets emphasize force
 - a. while some degree of politics is necessary for stable societies and the health of markets, every political act is a subtraction from individual freedom (63)
11. Hayek - political life compromises individual liberty and the progress it generates by competition (63)
 - a. this focus is on the state and economy (63)
 - b. says the “dangerous superstition of social justice” is on a continuum with fascism and totalitarianism (63)
 - c. liberty/freedom prevails when there is no human coercion (64)
 - i. hostile to other meanings of liberty/freedom (64)
 - d. theory of inherent social ignorance - state planning is oppressive and error-ridden (64)
 - i. liberty generates secular intelligent design (64)
 - e. interested in expanding the reach of the personal sphere and decreasing the reach of the social (65)
 - i. this is used in the US SC to increase the power of corporations with the language of freedom and choice (65)
12. expanding the personal sphere is also a way of ushering “family values into public spaces (65)
13. creation of a new national ethos which replaces public, pluralistic, secular democracy with private, homogenous, familial one (66)
 - a. it is exclusionary, unified, hierarchical and may even be authoritarian (66)
14. neoliberal economic privatization is subversive of democracy and generates inequality, private ownership and a dimmed democratic imagination (66)

15. second-order or privatization subverts democracy with anti-democratic moral or family values (66)
16. personal sphere is empowered it requires robust statism and turns to authoritarianism (66)
17. right-wing uses the language of rights but the forces behind them are actually hetero-patriarchal Christian familialism and rights are deployed from things like corporations, and whiteness (66)
18. equality is the language of envy - nobody owes anyone anything or has the right to restrict anything (67)
19. expansion of the private for persons and corporations is part of an expansion of neoliberal reason which contributes to the attacks on immigrants (67)
20. "Justice is reformatted as the titrated hospitality of a private household" (68)
21. walls, gates, security systems and no trespassing signs become freedoms signifiers (68)
22. left and right-wing politics today are responses to the neoliberal dismantling of livable incomes, job security, retirement provisions, public education, services and other social goods (68)
23. mistake to see white working-class and middle-class men as uniquely injured (69)
24. Nietzsche - when suffering and humiliation when routed through resentment become a moralizing condemnation (69)
 - a. resentment, rancour, victimization and other reactions are the energy of right-wing populism (70)
25. Sluga - Trumpism is crucial to freedom's anti-social qualities (70)
26. festivals of freedom at the burning down of civilization is a nihilistic disintegration of ethical values (71)
27. Marcuse - repressive desublimation occurs when technology reduces the demands of necessity and there is a growing commodity culture for the middle class (72)
 - a. pleasure and sexuality are incorporated into capitalist culture and pleasure is used to generate submission (72)
 - b. autonomy declines when comprehension declines which is when they are steeped in capitalism (72)
 - c. this means that they are easily manipulated (72)
28. Neoliberal reason's attack on the social and political (73)
 - a. indicts the social as a fiction through which equality is pursued at the expense of the order generated by markets (74)
 - b. Political is therefore pretending to be knowledgeable and making use of coercion (74)
 - c. the neoliberal dream has inverted into its own nightmare with authoritarian political culture supported by angry myth-mongering masses (74)
 - d. it is nihilistic and sees itself as a victim (75)

Full and Proper Citation of article/chapter/book etc. (APA or Chicago style suggested: Chicago includes the full first name. I often use APA (because APA is most used for me in scholarly publication) and adapt it by adding the first name in my annotations.)

Marx, Karl. "For a Ruthless Criticism of Everything Existing." *The Marx-Engels Reader* Edited by Robert C. Tucker, 2nd edition, 12–15. New York: Norton 1978.

Thesis of the article/chapter

This article argues that political philosophers need to critique the entire world, or everything existing in order to improve society.

Method and Outline of Main Findings (provide page numbers for quotes and paraphrasing)

What is the method of the author(s)? What are the main findings? How are they organized? How do they connect to each other? How do they connect to the thesis of the text? What examples are used to illustrate the main findings?

1. due to repression, they need to find a new gathering point where they can freely think (12)
2. do not try to prefigure the future but rather criticize the current state so that they can find new possibilities (13)
3. do not be afraid of the criticisms or the conflicts these will cause (13)
4. state proposes that reason has been realized (14)
5. develop new principles out of pre-existing ones (14)
6. to have sins forgiven they need to find out what they are (15)

Key Terms/Concepts (Define them, providing page numbers from the source)

1. prefigure the future - make plans for and outlining what the future should look like and working to obtain this future (13)
2. ruthless criticism of everything existing - criticizing all aspects of society without fear of the conclusions, or their conflict with power (13)
3. political state - a catalogue of practical struggles, and a place where people can develop social truths (14)
4. critical philosophy - what this journal aims to provide, criticize everything in the world in order to understand and be forgiven for mankind's "sins" or errors (15)

Response (What is your response to the article/chapter? How does the source relate to your research question/thesis or themes? How does it fit into the themes thus far? What is the perspective of the author(s)? How well does the author support his/her/their argument? Are you persuaded? When/where/how can their ideas be used, thinking of a specific project? How or why is the source important? Which authors resonate? Are in tension? What resonates? What does not resonate?)

So far in class we have looked primarily at a progressive left critique of liberalism, neoliberalism, and conservatism. Marx in this article argues for a critique of everything, including progressive left ideas such as socialism and communism. This complete and ruthless criticism of the world goes beyond what has been looked at so far in the work, but Marx argues that through critiquing everything, new possibilities for the future can emerge out of the ideas of the past. This is very persuasive, as it does not try to prefigure the future, but rather focuses on the issues in the present for him such as authoritarianism, and ideological repression in Germany.

Questions/Points for Discussion

1. A common critique of these methods is that there is “no point” in critiquing a structure unless you have a better option to suggest. Do you think that this is a valid argument, or is Marx valid in believing that there is value in critiquing without an endpoint or alternative in mind?
2. Why do you think there was a switch-up in his perspective on utopian ideas? What factors in history or other theorists may have contributed to this change?
3. He speaks of a “ruthless criticism of everything existing” (13). Why is ruthlessness appealing, and does it appeal to you? How may it be inaccessible?

Citation

Fraser, Nancy. “Feminism, Capitalism, and the Cunning of History.” *HAL Open Science*. August 2012. 1-14.

Thesis of the article/chapter

This article argues that feminism has gone through three acts, a challenge to the androcentrism of state capitalism, the supplantation of a new spirit of neoliberal capitalism, and the current moment of emancipation; all acts are and have been tied to the history and development of capitalism.

Method and Outline of Main Findings (provide page numbers for quotes and paraphrasing)

What is the method of the author(s)? What are the main findings? How are they organized? How do they connect to each other? How do they connect to the thesis of the text? What examples are used to illustrate the main findings?

Fraser tries to create a historical account of second wave feminism, tying each of the acts to a different aspect of capitalism. She argues that in act one there is an interest in exposing the androcentrism of capitalism, and viewing the personal as political (4). In act two there is a shift from economic critiques to cultural critiques (4). Finally, we are currently in act three, and there is still a question of where feminism will go from here. However, Fraser argues that critical feminism may be revived and emancipatory ideas may become more prominent (4). She argues for each of these acts through providing an analysis of the types of feminist activism that occurred in each act, and tying this to what was happening more broadly in capitalism at the same time. For example, in act one it was the time of the Keynesian welfare state and widespread criticism of colonialism (7). This explains why feminism at this time was offering a far more economic critique of the world, and offering ideas on how the economy could be restructured in a more equal manner. In act two there was a broader movement to identity politics, explaining why feminism in this wave shifted to cultural critiques (9). Finally, in act three neoliberalism is in crisis (11). She believes that this crisis provides the motivation for feminists liberating themselves from neoliberalism and re-creating radical energy (12). Within this third act she believes that feminists should reinvigorate their alliance with social protections, and anticapitalism (13). Through this analysis Fraser explains how feminism shifts with a shifting economic system, and demonstrates how feminism and capitalism are intricately connected.

Key Terms/Concepts (Define them, providing page numbers from the source)

1. act one - insistence that the personal is political, exposing androcentrism of capitalism

2. act two - shifted attention to cultural politics (4)
3. act three - the current act, still a question of where it is going to go but discussion around critical feminism being revived and turned emancipatory (4)
4. impact of neoliberalism - defused the more radical currents (4)
5. critical theorists - analyze emancipatory potentials of feminism (4)
6. politics of recognition - redefine gender justice as recognizing difference (5)
7. Habermas - sought to scrutinize the Keynesian welfare state (7)
8. universal breadwinner - facilitating women's wage earning above all and creating structures that allow women to go to work and "free" them from care duties (8)
9. universal caregiver model - pay people for the care work that they do in order to induce men to become more like women (8)

Response (What is your response to the article/chapter? How does the source relate to your research question/thesis or themes? How does it fit into the themes thus far? What is the perspective of the author(s)? How well does the author support his/her/their argument? Are you persuaded? When/where/how can their ideas be used, thinking of a specific project? How or why is the source important? Which authors resonate? Are in tension? What resonates? What does not resonate?)

This article very much views feminism as being changed as a direct response to the economic system. While this is an interesting argument, it neglects to take into account the importance of cultural shifts, and individuals. It at no point discusses major feminist thinkers, or how they would have potentially influenced the direction of the movement. It also does not engage with other cultural shifts that were occurring at this time, such as civil rights and gay rights movements, both of which would have affected the cultural climate, and potentially affected the way that feminism was presented.

So far in this class we have each week read an article offering a critique of neoliberalism but from different perspectives. Brown's article in particular defines neoliberalism as a very broad system, expanding into the cultural, and historical memories and lived experiences of citizens. This article however takes a much more narrow approach to neoliberalism, and views it more as an economic system, similar to Keynesianism. While both a broad and narrow definition can likely be true at the same time, a lack of definition of terms weakens Fraser's argument.

Additionally, she takes a very linear approach to history, outlining it as something that occurs in successive acts, with relatively defined start and end points, and separate economic systems for each; Keynesianism, neoliberalism, and the fall of neoliberalism. This approach ignores transitional periods, and is not a globally applicable approach, as it ignores countries not in the west who experimented in recent history with things like socialism. However Fraser once again fails to define what her argumentative scope is, and what groups she is providing these definitions for, or what limitations may exist with this broad approach to history.

While this article was interesting, it was overall unconvincing as it lacked clear definitions, stated limitations, and takes an excessively broad approach to history which ignores non-economic actors, and countries who did not follow the same historical path.

Questions/Points for Discussion

1. What is Foucault's struggle over needs and how does this relate to feminism? *This is a genuine question, I did not understand this point*

2. Historians will harshly critique any theory that proposes that history occurs in several “acts” with defined characteristics of each. Is there value in outlining history in acts, and if so what value does it provide? What limitations are there with this method?
3. Fraser would argue that the main external influence on feminism was the economic system which it takes place in. Is this convincing? What other influential factors does this argument omit?
4. Fraser’s argument does not discuss intersectionality. Is this an omission, or is it simply not within the article’s scope?

Citation

Braidotti, R. “‘We’ Are In This Together, But We Are Not One and the Same.” *Journal of Bioethical Inquiry* 17 (4), 2020: 465–69. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11673-020-10017-8>.

Thesis of the article/chapter

The COVID-19 pandemic emerged from conditions within industrial capitalism, has intensified these conditions, and in order to escape this society needs to move beyond a human-centric view of the world.

Method and Outline of Main Findings (provide page numbers for quotes and paraphrasing)

What is the method of the author(s)? What are the main findings? How are they organized? How do they connect to each other? How do they connect to the thesis of the text? What examples are used to illustrate the main findings?

The author is arguing from a posthumanist perspective of the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Braidotti argues that the category of human is not expanding to everyone and that there are both people and non-humans who are excluded in full or in part from this category. She argues that this distinction of human and non-human emerges from European enlightenment ideas and is thus connected to and reinforced by industrial capitalism. They use the example of the COVID-19 pandemic and argue that the pandemic is a product of these structures and that it works to reproduce industrial capitalist structures. The pandemic is thus an example of the inequalities that can be created by denying some people human hood. The author draws on feminist and post and de colonial indigenous theories in order to form their conception of posthumanism.

Key Terms/Concepts (Define them, providing page numbers from the source)

1. Post-human convergence - suffering alternating with hope, fear with resilience, and border into vulnerability (265)
2. Covid is an anthropogenic disease - originates in human activity, and it reproduces structures of discrimination (266)
3. binary divisions between humans and non-humans are foundational for European thought and are not the belief everywhere (266)
4. must mobilize for the creation of forms of action and solidarity (268)

5. appeals to the human are discriminatory and create structural distinctions and inequalities among different categories of humans (266)

Response (What is your response to the article/chapter? How does the source relate to your research question/thesis or themes? How does it fit into the themes thus far? What is the perspective of the author(s)? How well does the author support his/her/their argument? Are you persuaded? When/where/how can their ideas be used, thinking of a specific project? How or why is the source important? Which authors resonate? Are in tension? What resonates? What does not resonate?)

This reading fits nicely into the ideas discussed in the past weeks of who does and who does not get to be included in conceptions of personhood. For example, in the feminism week, we discussed how women were not previously considered people, and thus could be excluded from having certain rights. Additionally, in the de-colonialism week, we discussed how non-white individuals were excluded from personhood through white supremacy. This idea of being excluded from personhood is similar to the idea of being excluded from the category of human discussed by Braidotti. This conception of human and personhood is interesting, and a convincing perspective on the world.

However, the extension of this to COVID-19 has some historical and biological argumentative holes. While the idea of the category of human hood determining the effects that individuals experienced from the pandemic is convincing, the origins of the disease being human-made are not convincing. Particularly as it argues that this emerges out of a European enlightenment conception. Diseases frequently cross the species border, and the fact that COVID-19 did so is not surprising, and thus the argument that this was caused by humans is abnormal and not argument sufficiently to be convincing. While this is a small part of the argument presented, it is used as the main example by Braidotti. Thus, by it being non-convincing the argument is weakened.

Questions/Points for Discussion

1. How can the theory of exclusion from the category of humans be connected to concepts of white supremacy from last week?
2. A brief mention is given of the concept of intersectionality. Is intersectionality applicable to the concept of humans? Can someone be partially within the category of human?
3. What does this article say about our responsibility to animals during pandemics? If you believe the assumption that COVID-19 was a man-made creation, what is our responsibility to non-human beings?
4. Can you see it being problematic placing sexualized and racialized people in the same category as naturalized others?

Citation

Coulthard, Glen and Leanne Betasamosake Simpson. "Grounded Normativity/Place-Based Solidarity." *American Quarterly*, Vol 68, No 2 2016: 249-255.
<https://doi.org/10.1353/aq.2016.0038>.

Thesis of the article/chapter

This article argues for the use of grounded normativity as a method of solidarity with Indigenous peoples while disputing Marxist ideas of primitive accumulation and the erasure of land-based connections.

Method and Outline of Main Findings (provide page numbers for quotes and paraphrasing)

What is the method of the author(s)? What are the main findings? How are they organized? How do they connect to each other? How do they connect to the thesis of the text? What examples are used to illustrate the main findings?

This article opens and closes with a discussion of the ASA's 2015 conference held in Toronto. They in particular discuss the remarks on solidarity. Solidarity is understood within this article through the theories and critiques of the theories of Marx and Fanon. This article aims to provide a critique of Marx's writing on primitive accumulation through the application of Fanon's decolonial critique of Hegel's master-slave parable (251). These two theorists' writings are then applied to relations with Indigenous people in North America. It argues that there needs to be a recognition of Indigenous connections to the land. This goes beyond the classic Marxist beliefs, which can often be class-reductionist, and view primitive accumulation as a historical event. Coulthard and Betasamosake Simpson view dispossession of the land as an ongoing process which is used to deny indigenous sovereignty and negate the contributions of Indigenous peoples and their presence (249). As part of this, Coulthard's work foregrounds the settler colonial frame within structures of violence and power (249). Coulthard and Betasamosake Simpson argue that the ASA did not include lands or sovereignty of Indigenous peoples beyond symbolic gestures (249). They also argue that concern over Indigenous self-determination and land can often turn into anti-Native sentiment (253). Thus, grounded normativity practices need to be implemented as a form of solidarity with Indigenous peoples. These are ethical frameworks based on the land and informed by Indigenous ways of knowing (254).

Key Terms/Concepts (Define them, providing page numbers from the source)

1. Primitive accumulation - the capitalistic collection of raw materials from a land to propel development. These authors argue that primitive accumulation should not be seen as a historical event but rather as an ongoing practice (251)
2. Normative developmentalism - a belief that primitive accumulation must occur for the development of an ongoing structure of capitalism. They argue that it is not a necessary condition for developing a critical consciousness (251)
3. Marxism can be class-reductionist and result in shallow solidarities that call on Indigenous people to contribute to their own dispossession (252)
4. Targeting Indigenous people's relation to the land is a form of white supremacy and heteropatriarchy, serving as a way to submit lands to capitalist accumulation (254)
5. Grounded normativity - ethical frameworks provided by Indigenous place-based practices and forms of knowledge (254)
 - a. Intimate relationship to place (254)
 - b. Live in relation to other people and non-human life in a non-authoritarian, non-dominating and non-exploitative manner (254)

Response (What is your response to the article/chapter? How does the source relate to your research question/thesis or themes? How does it fit into the themes thus far? What is the perspective of the author(s)? How well does the author support his/her/their

argument? Are you persuaded? When/where/how can their ideas be used, thinking of a specific project? How or why is the source important? Which authors resonate? Are in tension? What resonates? What does not resonate?

This was an interesting article, with good decolonial critiques of Marxism. In particular, the argument that Marxism is class reductionist and can ignore Indigenous connections to the land was persuasive. The authors also proposed what to do about this, by suggesting fostering closer connections to the land and recognizing the importance of land to Indigenous sovereignty. Their critique of symbolic, rather than truly meaningful solidarity within the ASA was also valuable. This can be connected to discussions around land acknowledgements. While land acknowledgements state that Indigenous people have a connection to land, they can be used to freeze Indigenous communities at contact with settlers rather than as an ongoing culture, and they can also be used instead of fostering meaningful relationships and conversations regarding Indigenous sovereignty over the land in question.

This article also offered an interesting perspective on history, which was similar to the Biidaaban discussed by Keanna in her presentation. History in this article is seen as something that is not in the past, but rather is ongoing and continuing into the present. This is particularly shown through the discussions around primitive accumulation. Typical conceptions of this concept view it as something that happened in the past. Some would view this as purely an event in the past, while others would view it as an event in the past that continues to shape the future. Coulthard and Betasamosake Simpson, however, view primitive accumulation as something that is continuing to occur. This is an interesting conception of history, and the effects of Primitive accumulation.

One area which was lacking in this article was a fuller discussion of Fanon's theories in relation to Hegel. Both Marx and Fanon were introduced in the opening paragraphs, but after this point, there is no discussion of Fanon's theories which state his or Hegel's name explicitly, nor was his critique of the master-slave parable explained. This article may have been strengthened by a more balanced presentation of these theorists, and a more in-depth explanation of Fanon's theory, as this was provided for Marx and his theories. This would have allowed this article to be more accessible, and for the thesis provided to be more accurate to the content discussed.

Questions/Points for Discussion

1. This article is critical of Marxism. Is there a way in which Marxism can be understood in a post-colonial way, valuing both land and a critique of capitalism or is it one or the other?
2. This article offers a critique of purely symbolic statements and argues that instead there should be a focus on grounded normativity. What are the ways in which you see symbolic statements occurring regarding Indigenous people in your life, and how can these be replaced with a form of solidarity based on grounded normativity?
3. So far in class most of our readings on Canadian Indigenous peoples have come from the two authors Coulthard and Betasamosake Simpson. What does this say about the current state of scholarship, and what authors would you recommend your classmates to read to further their understanding of Indigenous political philosophy?

Citation

Turner, Jack. "Audre Lorde's Anti-Imperial Consciousness." *Political Theory* 49, 2, (2021): 243–271. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0090591720959858>.

Thesis of the article/chapter

The article argues that Audre Lorde's writings form an anti-imperial consciousness and instructs US citizens to build transnational solidarity and hold themselves responsible for American imperialism.

Method and Outline of Main Findings (provide page numbers for quotes and paraphrasing)

What is the method of the author(s)? What are the main findings? How are they organized? How do they connect to each other? How do they connect to the thesis of the text? What examples are used to illustrate the main findings?

This article examines several of the main works by Audre Lorde and reads them for themes of anti-imperialism, and her suggestions for the future. It argues that her writings can serve as a critique of imperial consciousness and that in response Americans should build transnational solidarity and take responsibility for American imperialism (244). The article is structured based on each of the writings by Lorde. It starts each analysis with an examination of the political context in which Lorde produced the documents. This includes histories of Grenada, Equal Opportunity, and Alvarado, a person Lorde interacted with. It then moves to an examination of the text of Lorde's writing. Finally, it discusses the theoretical implications of this writing, demonstrating to the reader connections to other political theorists, and what Lorde proposes that they do in response. Each of Lorde's writing examined speak to anti-imperialism, and offer a critique of US imperialism and empire. In addition, the writings each suggest a form of individual responsibility, and solidarity building that can be done (262). These all contribute to the overall thesis of the article. The article concludes by arguing that Lorde's intellectual work and theories can be used today to address ongoing imperialism and to build responsibility and solidarity in the current political context.

Key Terms/Concepts (Define them, providing page numbers from the source)

1. The focus of the article is on women of colour in the US and affected by American imperialism, with the word men frequently put in brackets
2. American imperialism - an American economic, political, and military policy of extending their influence over other countries, with specific reference in this article to Grenada (245)
3. Equal opportunity policies - a policy by the Regan government wherein Americans were granted de jure equality, but de facto white supremacy and male domination continued
4. solidarity - something that should be built between complicit americans and women of colour harmed by American imperialism (264)
5. individual responsibility - American individuals should be held accountable for US imperialism, the more power a person has, the more responsible they are for this (263)

Response (What is your response to the article/chapter? How does the source relate to your research question/thesis or themes? How does it fit into the themes thus far? What is the perspective of the author(s)? How well does the author support his/her/their argument? Are you persuaded? When/where/how can their ideas be used, thinking of a

specific project? How or why is the source important? Which authors resonate? Are in tension? What resonates? What does not resonate?

This was an informative and insightful introduction to the writings of Audre Lorde. The structure of providing the background of the situation in which Lorde was writing, and expanding to the theory made this article accessible and easy to understand. Additionally, it proved its thesis. In particular, the argument for individual responsibility was powerful. This section argued that individual people have an accountability for American Imperialism. Additionally, people involved in the military-industrial establishment in particular participate in the oppression and liking of Brown and Black people at home and abroad (261). This argument was interesting as it did not follow typical arguments of individual responsibility which often center on white privilege. As discussed in the Bonds and Inwood article, white privilege can be used for white people to acknowledge their privilege and then move on without discussing the structural changes needed (Bonds and Inwood 716). Additionally, people often discuss white privilege in terms of white people benefiting from the degradation of non-white people. This is completely different from Lorde's conception of individual responsibility, which includes everyone, discussing non-white Americans in particular, and focuses on the structures of imperialism rather than individuals benefiting from the oppression of others. Lorde expands this concept to imperialism being a structure perpetrated by America, which all Americans have a degree of responsibility for, and the level of responsibility is determined by power within the political system (263). This is a fascinating, powerful conception of responsibility that acknowledges that people make up the systems and thus have a responsibility for these systems and their impacts on others.

Questions/Points for Discussion

1. If you accept the statement "the more political power one has, the more answerable one is for US imperialism", what actions should individuals be taking regarding imperialism? Are there similar issues for which you should be held individually responsible?
2. This article moves away from a feminist reading of Lorde's writings. Is this a valuable stance to take on her writings?
3. The focus of this article is on the ongoing structures of imperialism. What responsibility, if any, do individuals have regarding past structures of imperialism?

Citation

Halberstam, Jack. "Trans* - Gender Transitivity and New Configurations of Body, History, Memory and Kinship." *Parallax* 22 (3) 2016: 366–375.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13534645.2016.1201925>.

Thesis of the article/chapter

This article discusses the politics of trans and how perspectives on gender variance have shifted in the last few decades, arguing that there has been a significant shift in the way that gender variant children experience their gender now compared to in recent history.

Method and Outline of Main Findings (provide page numbers for quotes and paraphrasing)

What is the method of the author(s)? What are the main findings? How are they organized? How do they connect to each other? How do they connect to the thesis of the text? What examples are used to illustrate the main findings?

This article can be roughly divided into two sections. The first section focuses on theories on the shifts in the experiences of gender variant individuals. It discusses how perceptions have shifted from a medicalized view of being trans, and a naming of this form of variance as “transsexuality” (366). This shift is propelled by the parents of gender variant children (367). It argues that society has moved into a time where gender variant children are growing up with a different understanding of gender, and potentially society is moving towards a time where children are asked about their identity rather than assigning or assuming it (366). This speaks to hope for the future of gender variant individuals.

The second section looks at representations of gender variance and trans people. This section discusses Sara Davidmann, the TV show *Transparent* and the film *Tangerine*. All of these media sources demonstrate the shifting of trans identifications, representations, and lives. It argues that there has been significant development of the narratives of trans individuals in the last decade and that their bodies are not absorbed into neoliberal models, and they are no longer within a victim-monster binary (374). This is important as these show the development of narratives and portrayal of trans people, thus speaking to the article’s argument that there has been a shift in the experiences of gender variant individuals.

Key Terms/Concepts (Define them, providing page numbers from the source)

1. Trans* - a term that emerges from internet searches, but has been expanded to include the variability of all trans bodies (368)
2. Model of queerness - about different life narratives, being in relation with others and occupying space (369)
3. Identity - the way in which people make connections between bodies (370)
4. Gender variant - individuals who identify outside of the binary gender which they were assigned at birth (367)

Response (What is your response to the article/chapter? How does the source relate to your research question/thesis or themes? How does it fit into the themes thus far? What is the perspective of the author(s)? How well does the author support his/her/their argument? Are you persuaded? When/where/how can their ideas be used, thinking of a specific project? How or why is the source important? Which authors resonate? Are in tension? What resonates? What does not resonate?)

Halberstam provides an optimistic view of the experience and future potential experiences of gender variant individuals, with a particular focus on the experiences of children. The argument presented historical developments within the trans community and its allies. Halberstam is convincing in arguing that a shift has occurred, from a medicalized view of transsexuality with repression to a time where people can experience a gender variant childhood. Halberstam substantiates this through examples of advocacy and media pushing forward trans identities and experiences.

This particular focus on the trans experience and identity as being part of a model of queerness can be connected to Puar’s understanding of queerness as “dissenting, resistant,

and alternative” (122). Both of these theorists understand transness or queerness as something that is alternative and about experiencing life differently. Both theorists would argue that trans children experience their gender in a different way than their cis counterparts. Thus, trans children and adults live different lives and have different life narratives.

While strong, this article is somewhat limited by its age, as it was written seven years ago in 2016. While this is not a particularly long period of time, it can be argued that in these years there have been reversals of some attitudes regarding trans individuals, examples of which include increasing barriers to access healthcare in the UK, and increasing vitriol regarding trans individuals and children such as drag storytime at libraries. These reversals are in conflict with Halberstam’s optimistic view of the future. While optimism is warranted as significant changes to perspectives on gender variant individuals have occurred, as demonstrated by Halberstam, further research would be required to update these theories for the current global context.

Questions/Points for Discussion

1. This article takes a very optimistic perspective on the advancement of rights and recognition for trans individuals. Do you share this perspective, particularly in light of political and social changes regarding trans individuals since the article was published in 2016?
2. Halberstam uses both the term gender queer and gender variant, but primarily uses the term gender variant. What do you think is the significance of this choice of language?
3. This article argues that there have been linguistic shifts between different generations of gender variant individuals as their perception of themselves has changed. Is this a convincing argument, and can you think of any other examples of groups with this type of linguistic shift?

Citation

Changfoot, Nadine and Carla Rice.(2020). “Aging with and into disability: Futurities of new materialisms.” *The aging/disability nexus*. Edited by C. Aubrecht, C. Kelly,, and C. Rice. 163-179. University of British Columbia Press, 2020.

Thesis of the article/chapter

This article argues against viewing aging as decline and as separate from disability. Instead, it argues that aging and disability should be seen as continuously in process and possessing livable and desirable futures.

Method and Outline of Main Findings (provide page numbers for quotes and paraphrasing)

What is the method of the author(s)? What are the main findings? How are they organized? How do they connect to each other? How do they connect to the thesis of the text? What examples are used to illustrate the main findings?

This article begins with an overview of the authors’ theories regarding aging and disability. It then continues with a description of information collected through art informed research. It argues that disabled and aging embodiments are continuously in process and their

features should be viewed as livable and desirable. (163) This is in contrast to what the authors present as classic understandings of disability and aging with view aging as decline and separate from disability (163). Additionally, they offer a critique of ideas of “aging well” (164) and seeing aging individuals as biopedagogical panic buttons. (165) The article then moves on to discuss the experiences of aging individuals who participated in arts based research. It describes these individuals' perceptions of their own experiences with aging, which they argue can be used to displace dominant narratives of aging and disability. (168) Finally, they argue that this research and theory can be used to understand new ways of aging with and into disability. (175)

Key Terms/Concepts (Define them, providing page numbers from the source)

1. Materialism - rejects the mind-body dualism (165)
2. New materialism - theorizes embodiments to be connected with the world beyond their body (166)
 - a. Matter has agency independent of people's perceptions or manipulations of it (166)
3. Intrasecting - cannot be broken or distended (167)
4. Western conceptions of time - understand certain life trajectories as inevitable, thus closing of a range of future possibilities (167)
5. Aging well - a way in which western society believes that individuals should age, as able bodied and financially independent
6. Biopedagogical panic button - fear of the public burden of older adults as they have not saved enough money or are entering into debt (165)

Response (What is your response to the article/chapter? How does the source relate to your research question/thesis or themes? How does it fit into the themes thus far? What is the perspective of the author(s)? How well does the author support his/her/their argument? Are you persuaded? When/where/how can their ideas be used, thinking of a specific project? How or why is the source important? Which authors resonate? Are in tension? What resonates? What does not resonate?)

One way in which this article was different from the majority of articles examined this far in class is through its methodology. Most of the other articles have engaged primarily with theories of other scholars, and have then connected these theories to historical or present events. The methodology for this article departed from this classical approach as it centered on arts based research. This allowed for the researchers to listen to a broad base of knowledge from those outside of the academy. This method allows for the introduction of different ideas, and for the incorporation of voices from a broader segment of the population who may not have otherwise had access to or interest in academic publications such as this. Using arts based perspectives allowed for the theories presented to be substantively different from the classical aging and disability narrative presented, and also to be grounded in lived and livable experiences. The theory and argument presented in this article is significantly strengthened by its use of the arts based research provided.

Due to its short length, this article offers a limited, but fascinating analysis of the intersection of race and aging. It argues that historical framings of racialized people as disabled

can make identifying as disabled for racialized individuals more complicated. (169) This would be a beneficial departure point for further research into this topic. Overall, this article presented both a compelling theory, as well as introducing a new method to do philosophical research.

Questions/Points for Discussion

1. Does treatment of aging vs disabled at birth individuals substantively differ? If so, how, and what does this say about society's perception of these identities?
2. What are the benefits of selecting arts based research as a method of study? How could this type of research be used more broadly?
3. How has the pandemic affected your views on aging and disability? Do you believe that it has impacted societal views more broadly?

Citation

Changfoot, Nadine, Carla Rice, Sally Chivers, Alice Olsen Williams, Angela Connors, Ann Barrett, Mary Gordon, and Gisele Lalonde. "Revisioning Aging: Indigenous, Crip and Queer Renderings." *Journal of Aging Studies* 63 (2022)
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaging.2021.100930>.

Thesis of the article/chapter

This article discusses the different perspectives on aging offered by Indigenous, disabled, and queer individuals. It argues that each of these perspectives holds value and that they should not be collapsed into each other.

Method and Outline of Main Findings (provide page numbers for quotes and paraphrasing)

What is the method of the author(s)? What are the main findings? How are they organized? How do they connect to each other? How do they connect to the thesis of the text? What examples are used to illustrate the main findings?

This article opens and closes with a discussion of theories regarding aging offered by scholars in the field. It also discusses what the traditional form of aging is which is linear, hetero-patriarchal, able-bodied and able-minded (1). It then moves on to a discussion of perceptions of aging in art-based storytelling. The storytelling is roughly divided into sections based on theory from each of the following, Indigenous, disabled, and queer. The Indigenous section understood life in older age as cyclical (4). The disabled section argued that disabled aging misfits heteronormative futures and is seen as threatening or frightening (5). Arguing that this puts responsibility on people to age without disabilities or to prevent becoming disabled (5). The queer section argues that queer people have different life courses and trajectories changing their perception of aging (6). All of these sections are based on an alternative view of aging, time, and people's own views of their futures. It concludes by arguing that these futurities should not be collapsed into each other, but rather should be engaged with in order to understand alternatives to traditional understandings of aging.

Key Terms/Concepts (Define them, providing page numbers from the source)

1. collapsed together - an integration of two or more theories together, negating their individuality. This article argues that the three perspectives should be valued individually rather than being collapsed (1)
2. non-linear or cyclical aging - a non-prescriptive way of understanding the future. Rather than understanding an individual's life as a series of achievements, which then get passed onto future generations and inherited from past ones, it understands life as a circle integrated with the past and future, and which does not have to follow one specific path (2)
3. aging as the ongoingness of life - rather than viewing aging as a crisis, or a negative thing that should be avoided, understanding aging as the natural progression of time and life (2)

Response (What is your response to the article/chapter? How does the source relate to your research question/thesis or themes? How does it fit into the themes thus far? What is the perspective of the author(s)? How well does the author support his/her/their argument? Are you persuaded? When/where/how can their ideas be used, thinking of a specific project? How or why is the source important? Which authors resonate? Are in tension? What resonates? What does not resonate?)

This source is important because it provides an alternative to traditional western perspectives on aging. It is not overly critical of these traditional perspectives on aging as a whole, but it is critical to the hegemony that they enforce. Rather than presenting a theory on what the writers deem to be the correct perspective on aging, the authors present others' perspectives in the form of alternatives. This means that they do not present a counter-narrative, but rather present the idea that there are alternatives that do exist, and provide examples of these alternatives.

A few weeks ago in class, we had a discussion regarding counter-narratives. Points brought up in this discussion seemed to place ideas on a continuum, with one side being the traditional perspective, and the other a radical alternative. Students debated whether counter-narratives could achieve this radical alternative, or could potentially move society to more of a middle ground.

This article presents a third option. Rather than taking a counter-narrative approach where it argues for a radical alternative, it argues against hegemony, but not for a specific radical alternative. This is valuable both in that it presents increased options for individuals, but also in that it disrupts the binary narrative that we had built in class. This is through its suggestion that a multitude of options, rather than one radical alternative, can be the alternative to a hegemonic traditional perspective.

Questions/Points for Discussion

1. Why do you think that aging is something that is feared? Can this be connected to the social or deficit model of disability discussed in the facilitation by Kail?
2. Conceptions of aging are often applied exclusively to those which we consider to be old. What are the ways in which the theories presented can be applied to your experience, or general experiences, as a younger adult?

3. Does this article's presentation of a variety of alternatives challenge or support your preexisting views on counter-narratives? How and why?