

**Taking Settler Colonialism Seriously in Abolition Ecologies:
Centring Indigenous Dispossession in Geographies of Carceral Power, Ecocide, and the
Abolitionist Ecological Imagination**

Kyla Simone Piccin

Department of Politics and International Studies & Centre for Gender Studies

University of Cambridge

Cambridge, UK

ksp38@cam.ac.uk

Abstract

Scholarship increasingly examines international social movements advocating for the abolition of the prison-industrial complex. Within this landscape, Abolition Ecologies has emerged as a generative intellectual space for examining the intersections of carceral power, environmental exploitation, and racial-capitalist violence. However, there are opportunities to address the material dynamics of settler coloniality and Indigenous dispossession in this literature. Amid debates concerning the compatibility between abolition and anti-colonialism, this article asks: What insights emerge when we centre Indigenous dispossession and settler coloniality in Abolition Ecologies? How might these insights complicate how solidarity is conceptualised and activated in the literature? This article identifies three under-explored frictions that arise in centring Indigenous dispossession and settler colonialism in Abolition Ecologies. These frictions reveal complex challenges for the field. However, this article ultimately argues that Abolition Ecologies offers creative analytical and methodological tools to engage with these frictions. Rather than foreclosing solidarity, these frictions spark new opportunities for analysis.

Keywords

abolition, ecology, carceral, geography, settler colonialism, dispossession

Introduction

Scholarship increasingly examines growing, international social movements advocating for the abolition of the prison-industrial complex. Following movements like Black Lives Matter (US), #ENDSARS (Nigeria), and struggles against military police in Brazil, academic literature is increasingly concerned with the future of the carceral system and with abolition

as a growing worldwide paradigm. However, amid climate crises, neoliberal carceral expansion, and global demands for land justice, it is increasingly difficult to understand environmental exploitation and carceral violence as separate issues. Police violence toward anti-extraction and land justice movements reveals the continuation of centuries-long projects of colonial dispossession that are facilitated and maintained by capitalist-carceral power (Dunlap and Brock 2022; Di Ronco 2023). Environmental conservation projects increasingly employ militarised approaches to “protect” ecosystems while enabling extraction elsewhere, generating new avenues for dispossession and displacement (Simlai 2015; Trogisch 2021). This ever-evolving relationship between carcerality and ecological injustice poses an urgent political necessity to think abolitionist and environmental politics together.

Abolition Ecologies provides a generative intellectual space to challenge the contemporary politics of carcerality, racial state violence, and ecological injustice. However, there are opportunities to deepen engagement with settler colonialism and Indigenous dispossession in this literature. Leading scholars, Heynen and Ybarra (2021: 27), suggest that Abolition Ecologies in the settler-colonial context must centre “an understanding of territory as an Indigenous nation’s homeland”. Yet, questions remain: What does centring Indigenous territory *mean* for non-Indigenous Abolition Ecologists? What unique demands does centring Indigenous dispossession place on Abolition Ecologies’ pedagogy and frameworks (Barker 2018)? How does emphasising the materiality of settler coloniality in Abolition Ecologies complicate the “terrain” on which justice and solidarity are thought and activated? And what tensions emerge ethically, politically, and analytically when we centre Indigenous territory at the intersection of abolition and ecological justice?

Thus far, the Abolition Ecologies literature primarily examines Turtle Island/North American settler-colonial contexts. Here, settler colonialism involves the seizure of Indigenous lands and strategies of elimination that seek to establish “permanent self-governing ‘sovereign’ polities on stolen territories” (Simpson and Huggill 2020:1313; Wolfe 2006). These dynamics of settler colonialism and Indigenous dispossession are highlighted throughout the Abolition Ecologies scholarship on Turtle Island, but their implications for the field warrant deeper analysis. Heynen and Ybarra (2021: 30) note that “the violence of settler colonialism ... points to the urgent need for decolonisation”. Pellow (2019: 60) argues that settler colonialism creates “unequal land and property relations” producing “violent and uneven geographies”, while Ranganathan and Bratman (2021: 116) emphasise that “climate change praxis cannot be divorced from harm done unto indigenous bodies and their environments through settler colonialism”. These engagements highlight the critical ways

settler colonialism interconnects with and shapes other kinds of power relationships. Yet, these references commonly point to settler coloniality as an important and complex consideration that has yet to be as fulsomely addressed in the literature as compared with other material structures of white supremacy, heteropatriarchal power, and violence.

Ultimately, there are opportunities to deepen the examination of settler colonialism in Abolition Ecologies because doing so reveals critical tensions in the field that demand close attention. Though abolitionist and anti-colonial analyses converge in the histories of struggle against Western imperialism, colonial land dispossession in the settler colonies complicates the possibilities for easy commensurability between Abolition Ecologies and Indigenous struggles for self-determination. Further, the particular relationships Indigenous communities have to state violence, carceral power, and ecological injustice in the settler colonies constitute varied and diverse political cosmologies that cannot easily be subsumed into other anti-racist, leftist, or environmentalist struggles (Mei-Singh 2021; Tuck and Yang 2012). Scholars increasingly recognise these tensions, but further examination is needed (Curley et al. 2022; Garba and Sorrentino 2020; Hamlin 2023; Sexton 2014).

Thus, this article identifies three under-explored frictions within Abolition Ecologies that emerge when centring settler colonialism and Indigenous dispossession. These frictions represent generative points of connection and disconnection—or convergence and divergence—that are crucial for advancing abolitionist approaches to ecological justice in settler-colonial contexts. Rather than identifying gaps or absences in Abolition Ecologies, these frictions represent opportunities for deeper exploration. They mark moments where we may feel “stuck”, encountering unresolved tensions that challenge us to pause, reflect, and engage more critically with what resists easy reconciliation. While these frictions expose the complexities of solidarity in Abolition Ecologies—beyond mere caveats or reminders for awareness—they also present generative intersections of possibility, where the tension itself marks a turning point and sparks new opportunities for analysis.

The first friction highlights that while Abolition Ecologies critiques dominant property relations, it has yet to fully address the complexities of imagining alternative property relations on Indigenous homelands—where ongoing settler invasion and occupation produces overlapping jurisdictions and contested sovereignties. Additionally, because settler societies enact a “unique species of theft” through colonisation, “dispossession” remains a deeply contested, complex, and generative concept—one that warrants further exploration in theorising alternative property relations in Abolition Ecologies (Nichols 2019: 30).

The second friction points to the criminalisation of human/other-than-human relations as a deliberate tool of Indigenous genocide in settler-colonial contexts. In distinguishing between “acceptable” and “deviant” human/nature interactions, the settler state enforces a genocide-ecocide nexus that raises tensions within Abolition Ecologies, tensions that also plague abolitionist literature more broadly: to what extent, if at all, should we engage the settler state in ecological struggle when the very criminalisation of Indigenous land relations serves as a mechanism of genocidal occupation and settler state-building?

The third friction underscores that Indigenous cosmologies produce diverse yet distinct ontological and ecological politics in settler-colonial contexts—politics that may not always be commensurable with non-Indigenous approaches. There are opportunities to theorise this radical difference and how it challenges how we formulate and articulate abolitionist ecological justice claims, especially when seeking to make them legible or persuasive to state power.

These frictions highlight the urgency of deepening our analysis of settler colonialism in Abolition Ecologies. Abolition Ecologies offers valuable analytical and methodological tools to navigate these frictions as sets of productive negations, “generative no’s”, that require intellectual care without necessarily foreclosing solidarity (Tuck and Del Vecchio 2018). Indeed, the entanglements between Indigenous and non-Indigenous worlds, as co-constitutive processes and series of encounters, reinforce that these worlds do not exist in separation or binary terms (Gombay and Palomino-Schalscha 2018). Likewise, abolitionism and anti-colonialism are fundamentally intertwined, and settler colonialism and racial capitalism mutually shape both ecological politics and carceral power.¹ While I position the following three frictions as under-explored, Abolition Ecologies scholars increasingly engage coloniality and non-Eurocentric approaches to ecological justice that inspire these offerings and point me toward these concerns (Kimari and Parish 2020; Mei-Singh 2021; Reddy 2021). In other words, this work is only just beginning.

Before Proceeding: Five Points of Clarification

Five points require clarification. First, given that much of the Abolition Ecologies literature is geographically focused on Turtle Island/North America, this article focuses on tensions that emerge in fostering solidarity in this specific geography. This place-specificity is a limitation of the article, and the current Abolition Ecologies literature, highlighting the need for global perspectives where (settler) colonial domination, carcerality, ecological crises, Indigenous dispossession, and anti-Black racism take different forms.

Second, focusing on Indigenous dispossession does not minimise the impacts of enslavement and displacement on non-Indigenous communities in settler colonies, nor does it foreclose further thinking on the diverse histories of violence experienced by different racialised groups under settler border regimes (see Bonds and Inwood 2016; Glenn 2015). The terms “settler” and “Indigenous” are not fixed or immutable, but are “political categories, created, institutionalised and policed always anew” (Englert 2020: 1650). Moreover, anti-Black racism remains central to carcerality, and struggles against slavery are at the root of abolitionism (Teed 2023). These considerations cannot be overlooked and, in centring settler coloniality in this article, I draw from work that theorises the shared justice struggles between Black liberation and Indigenous resurgence in settler-colonial contexts (Byrd 2011; Guess et al. 2014; Maynard and Simpson 2022; Simpson et al. 2020; The Red Nation 2021).

Third, Indigenous and anti-colonial thought intersects with abolitionism, and Indigenous struggle has greatly informed the history of abolitionist politics (Dorries and Harjo 2020; Estes et al. 2021). However, to analyse contemporary trends in the literature, this article sometimes draws artificial disciplinary distinctions between Indigenous Studies and abolition regarding land, dispossession, and ecological justice.

Fourth, while ecological and land justice are the focus of this article, the often-pervasive connection of Indigeneity with land, resources, and territory can overlook the fact that Indigenous cosmologies are not necessarily restricted to these spaces, especially in the face of continuous, colonial displacement (Cameron et al. 2014; de Leeuw 2014). The complex particularities of Indigenous knowledge, concerns, and histories in settler colonies are not generalisable, nor are the specific trajectories and histories of the settler colonies themselves. Indigenous thought is rich and expansive, but for the purposes of scope, this article will focus on intersections of ecological justice and carceral power.

Finally, this article does not suggest that Abolition Ecologies should “adopt” any aspects of the diverse cosmologies that constitute Indigenous political thought. Indigenous theorists caution against the co-optation of Indigenous thinking by non-Indigenous scholars who apply it to other bodies of scholarship, including political ecology (Todd 2016). “Applying” Indigenous thought without recognising its embodied expressions, histories, and laws, and connection to land and self-determination, simply becomes another form of colonisation by way of epistemic violence. This knowledge is sacred, not static or performable. It is crucial to be aware of how these knowledges are represented and articulated in spaces of knowledge production (Tuck et al. 2014). It is precisely the question

of how to conduct ethical intellectual interchange in conversation with and in honouring Indigenous knowledge systems that animates the central aims of this article.

Abolition, Abolition Geography, Abolition Ecologies

Abolitionist critiques of criminalisation and imprisonment emerged with the rise of the prison as the primary form of state punishment (Davis 2003; Mathiesen 1974). Academic scholarship on abolition has grown significantly in the past decade, particularly since George Floyd's murder by Minneapolis police in 2020. Rooted in the Black radical genealogy of revolt and insurgency against chattel slavery in the Americas, contemporary abolitionism reflects diverse histories of radical thought, including various oppressed groups' particular relationship to trans-Atlantic slavery, racial capitalism, and Western imperialism (Rodriguez 2019). This literature examines the role of criminalisation, punishment, and confinement in the making of the modern capitalist world, "whether that be in the workhouse or the slave ship", and which "make recurring waves of accumulation possible" (Bhandar and Ziadah 2022: 199).

Gilmore (2002, 2022) introduced "carceral geography" to describe the spatialised processes of discipline, punishment, and criminalisation, in which the prison is but one feature. She later developed "abolition geography" to analyse geographies of anti-carceral resistance that "elaborate the spatial—which is to say the human-environment processes—of Du Bois's and Davis's abolition democracy" (Gilmore 2022: 491). Abolition geography challenges the normative presumption that "territory and liberation are at once alienable and exclusive" (ibid.). The framework of abolition geography builds on two premises for Gilmore (2002: 16): first, that a geographic imperative lies at the heart of every struggle for justice; and second, that justice is embodied. Therefore, abolitionist justice is always part of making place.

Abolition Ecologies extends Gilmore and others' geographic frameworks to interrogate how carceral logics shape and are shaped by environmental exploitation and uneven racial development in land relations (Hardy et al. 2022; Heynen 2018). Unlike liberal environmentalism or "green criminology", it approaches ecological justice through Black radical, feminist, and anti-racist readings of the environment (Stephens-Griffin 2023). In this literature, carceral geographies are not exceptional, isolated places or institutions, but are continuums of everyday spaces enmeshed in human/nature relations (Ranganathan and Bratman 2021). The field identifies environmental injustice as state-sanctioned violence against racialised communities who face hyper-surveillance and criminalisation (Pulido and

De Lara 2018). Prisons are studied as spaces of environmental struggle: toxic landscapes of contaminated air, water, hazardous waste that produce dire health effects on a disproportionately racialised population (Bradshaw 2018; Saed 2012). Even processes of ecological restoration can “ignore, delegitimize and even criminalize the relationships between degraded ... [natures] and the people whose daily lives and social reproduction are critically entangled with ... [them]” (Kimari and Parish 2020: 644).

Thus, Abolition Ecologies envisions alternatives based on ecological self-determination, seeking “institutions and processes that are explicitly focused on the political ecological imperatives of access to fresh air, clean water, sufficient land, amelioration of toxic chemicals, and beyond” (Heynen and Ybarra 2021: 22). Drawing from the Black Radical Tradition, it pursues “an emancipatory politics of land and property” that challenges the oppressive logics of racial capitalism (Hardy et al. 2022: 868). Recent work by Kimari and Parrish (2020) and Mei-Singh (2021) reveals complexities in integrating anti-colonial and Abolition Ecological analyses. I build on this emergent work in the following sections to explore the tensions and possibilities that emerge when we centre settler coloniality and Indigenous dispossession in Abolition Ecologies.

Centring Indigenous Dispossession and Settler Coloniality in Abolition Ecologies: Three Frictions

[1] Geographies of Invasion and Occupation: The Tensions of Abolitionist Place-Making on Indigenous Homelands

Abolition Ecologies envisions alternatives to dominant property relations and institutions that secure “political ecological land rights” (Heynen 2021: 100). It takes the idea of the commons seriously, “meaning the collective ownership of the earth’s resources by all of us” (Walcott 2021: 38; see also Hamlin 2023; Ybarra 2021). Drawing from the Black Radical Tradition, this field shows how policing and criminal punishment sever our relationships to the commons, replacing them with private property and heavily policed public spaces. Scholars ask how we might mobilise “an emancipatory politics of land and property ... to produce commons that work to repair and heal the violence done through enslavement and ongoing displacement” (Heynen 2021: 95). Others theorise geographies that reject punishment, exclusion, and domination, fostering institutions that “meet needs that states cannot or will not provide” (Pellow 2019: 60). They call for abolishing borders and militarised geographies, challenging the very nature of property and possession itself (Cohen et al. 2023; Stephens-Griffin 2023).

However, centring Indigenous dispossession reveals a complicated geography to contend with when imagining abolitionist place-making, where the lands on which we live and organise are marked by contested sovereign authorities. Centring Indigenous dispossession requires us to better understand and challenge the histories of dispossession, occupation, and ecological harm where we are and where our analyses are located (Ybarra 2021). While identified in Abolition Ecologies, these dynamics remain under-explored yet are crucial, particularly given that “dispossession”—a central concept in Indigenous Studies—remains contested in abolitionist traditions and broader critical theory (Moreton-Robinson 2015; Sexton 2014; Simpson 2020). Thus, not only are the material implications of Indigenous dispossession for place-making under-engaged in the literature on property, but this under-engagement masks a generative friction. This friction emerges because, on the one hand, dispossession is a contested, sometimes inadequate concept for articulating liberatory justice claims beyond notions of borders and spatial exclusion. On the other hand, it remains crucial in reckoning with the realities of contemporary settler-colonial contexts. The friction generated through this analysis deeply complements Abolition Ecological thought and demonstrates that purported tensions between Indigenous structural critique and the Black Radical Tradition are deeply productive for reckoning with the contemporary moment.

Settler Colonialism as Invasion and Occupation—Settler colonialism aims to secure settler certainty through property relations and assertions of territorial jurisdiction. Jurisdiction, as the “authority to have authority” over a particular territory, has been a primary mechanism for stripping Indigenous nations of their self-determination (Stark 2023: 4; see also Cowen 2018). Settler jurisdiction is rooted in the doctrine of discovery, terra nullius, and bourgeois liberal conceptions of property ownership and personhood (Byrd et al. 2018; Goeman 2008). Rooted in chattel slavery, racial categories themselves take on a propertied status in settler-colonial contexts, in that “to be white is akin to having a propertied investment: a source of political and cultural capital as well as material privileges” (Hamlin 2023: 760; see also Bhandar 2018; Harris 1993; Lipsitz, 1995). Over time, these principles and logics congealed into a mode of rationalisation and set of discourses that sustain settler state sovereignty and aim to replace Indigenous sovereignty (Moreton-Robinson 2015; Nichols 2019).

The transformation of land into “property” produced the settler colonies as carceral geographies of exclusion, containment, bordering, and spatial regulation, constraining Indigenous relations, movements, and subjectivities (Borrows 1997). For Indigenous peoples, a geography of survey lines, reservation boundaries, enclosures, roads and railways,

industrial camps and settler homesteads, defined where they could and not go, and severed connections to home and other-than-human kin. Settler infrastructures continue this process as “the routinized, systemized and lasting means through which settler colonialism is reproduced” in the landscape (Cowen 2018: np). Settler infrastructures—in the form of police, prisons, highways, dams, and oil pipelines—transform Indigenous homelands and other-than-human ecologies into settler possessions, policing mobilities and carrying logics of discipline, surveillance, and containment (Cowen 2018; Pasternak et al. 2013; Spice 2018).

However, these infrastructures also constitute materialisations of a particular imaginary that can be and is challenged every day. Centring settler-colonial dispossession as an ongoing ecological and territorial project shifts the conversation “from assumptions about Indigenous dispossession to questions about white possession” (Brown 2014: 6). This reframing denaturalises settler possession in the Abolition Ecologies imaginary as an ongoing occupation and reconfigures geographies of dispossession as ever contested and incomplete. Continental counter-imperialism by Indigenous nations across North America is a manifestation of the fact that settler-colonial contexts are geographies of multiple competing sovereignties, “rather than any simple unfolding of colonial rule” (Chua and Bosworth 2023: 1352). In concert with Abolition Ecologies, Indigenous Studies destabilises the racial-capitalist property paradigm by reminding us that settler-colonial infrastructures, including borders, carceral institutions, and oil pipelines, are not inevitable, static, or eternal.

Land Justice and the Dilemma of Dispossession—There are opportunities to further analyse these considerations in Abolition Ecologies. Although the literature does not propose a blanket “return to the commons”, it has yet to fully address the material challenges of imagining alternative property relations on Turtle Island. A central tension lies in envisioning new forms of connection and accountability to place while confronting colonial structures that continue to occupy Indigenous lands. Scholars highlight the effects of domination on Indigenous communities but there is room to explore how settler occupation complicates non-Indigenous activists’ visions for the future (Pellow 2019; Ranganathan and Bratman 2019; Stephens-Griffin 2023).

The Ada’itsx / Fairy Creek anti-logging protests in Pacheedaht territory illustrate these complexities. Both Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants faced the dilemma of continuing the protest despite Pacheedaht leadership’s request to leave (Winter 2021). While Pacheedaht members were ultimately divided on whether to authorise old-growth logging in their territory, given revenue possibilities after centuries of orchestrated community impoverishment, these conflicts over what should be done are neither rare nor

straightforward. They reveal that ambiguous calls to respect local Indigenous leadership are insufficient when theorising alternatives in Abolition Ecologies. Amid difficult ethical and practical dilemmas, the realities of enacting place-based solidarity are nuanced and require critical reflection.

Moreover, many abolitionist scholars are critical of concepts like “dispossession” and “sovereignty” central to Indigenous scholarship. Some argue that articulations of sovereignty or land repatriation reinforce Western biopolitical violence, as sovereignty itself is inseparable from histories of colonial governance and anti-Blackness (Garba and Sorentino 2020; Sexton 2014; Wilderson 2010). Further, the assertion of ownership or theft of possession is criticised for its inability to address the unique histories of propertisation and displacement for Black and racialised subjects in the settler-colonial context (Chandler 2013; Moten 2013). Instead, abolition, rooted in resistance to the foundational logic of anti-Blackness, must track the figure of the “unsovereign” and resist the impetus of possessive logics (Sexton 2014).

Centring settler colonialism in Abolition Ecologies creates opportunities to deepen this debate as a critical and productive juncture. The field’s focus on land, territory, and place makes it an ideal intellectual space for exploring conceptual tensions around dispossession and sovereignty, and there is abundant scholarship emphasising the critical linkage on these issues (Coulthard 2014; Jackson 2012; Kauanui 2018; King 2019; Mays 2021). Nichols (2019: 6) examines critiques of Indigenous claims that are perceived as contradictory: on the one hand, that Indigenous peoples “are the original and natural owners of land that has been stolen from them”; and on the other hand, “that the earth is not something in which any one person or group of people can have proprietary rights”. Nichols (2019: 31) describes this as the “dilemma of dispossession”, that settler colonialism is “not (only) about the transfer of property but the *transformation into* property”. In this way, Indigenous dispossession “create[d] an object in the very act of appropriating it” (Nichols 2019: 145). In settler-colonial contexts, where colonial governance reorganised landed relations, they did not “simply steal a stable, empirical object called land” but “transferred control over the land ... [and] recoded its meaning” (ibid.).

Abolition Ecologies has yet to contend with this dilemma in its engagement with dispossession: that while we imagine an end to property logic, settler colonisation *does* involve “a unique species of theft for which we do not always have adequate language” (Nichols 2019: 30). The recursive logic of the concept of dispossession means that it can be difficult for Indigenous communities to voice opposition to settler-colonial domination

without drawing upon the conceptual and normative frameworks imposed through occupation. Moreover, where colonial governance sought to erase or assimilate Indigenous presence, concepts like dispossession and sovereignty have emerged as a forms of anti-colonial relationality for many communities. As Audra Simpson (2020: 691) contends, “sovereignty remains as an active antagonist as long as there is a state that is predicated upon dispossession”.

Additionally, many Indigenous scholars articulate sovereignty and self-determination in ways that reject settler proprietary logics, rooted in situated, reciprocal connection, not possession or control (Moreton-Robinson 2015). This perspective reframes sovereignty to refer to “the social and political order of Indigenous governance and society” and “cannot be equated or reduced to the property of North American legal philosophy and practice” (Barker 2018: 21). Indeed, millions of Indigenous peoples have long cultivated practices of “care as counterdispossession” (Nichols 2019: 157; see also Simpson 2014; Watts 2013). Indigenous sovereign relationships to land generate the processes, practices, and knowledges that inform political systems, and are the channels through which solidarity is practiced. As Glen Coulthard and Leanne Betasamosake Simpson (2016: 254) explain, “[t]o willfully abandon them would amount to a form of auto-genocide”.

While interpretations of land justice and sovereignty vary across Turtle Island, the histories and justice claims of Indigenous communities cannot be sidestepped “if we wish to remain responsive to the specific historical experience at stake” (Nichols 2019: 30). Grappling with the language of sovereignty and dispossession is essential in Abolition Ecologies, as they provide “an appropriate and conceptually complex apprehension of the nature of [the] problem at hand” (ibid.). However, the concepts should always involve “a repositioning, a reclarification of purpose that can be unsettling because of ... [their] very rootedness in place and in history” (Simpson 2020: 689).

Thus, the tension between the limitations and utility of “dispossession” or “sovereignty” offers fertile ground for further thinking, where we can lean into the uncertainties they raise for clarifying key concepts across traditions. Abolition Ecologies could grapple with the following questions from Barker (2018: 34) to animate further analysis:

In whose territory has ... [this political movement or analysis] begun (which Indigenous groups are implicated)? What are the specific legal terms and conditions of dispossession confronted by the Indigenous peoples of that territory? Do the

Indigenous peoples of that territory have the recognized status or rights necessary to legally contest their dispossession? How have they been contesting their dispossession ... [with or without] legal status? How can their history reframe ... [the movement's or analysis'] origins and objectives? Irrespective of imperial state policies, how do Indigenous peoples live on the land anyway?

The Black Radical Tradition also continues to offer generative insights into the dilemma of dispossession related to the body or self and is similarly tangled in unresolved yet indispensable debates about apprehending this violence without reproducing its terms (Hartman 1999; King 2019). Afro-Indigenous scholarship from Latin America provides further possible pathways for mobilising such a complex analysis in the settler-colonial context (Jackson 2012; Ybarra 2021). Moreover, King's (2019: 5) framework of "shoals" suggests the possibilities of frictional spaces where specifically Black and Indigenous critique "meet in productive, shifting, and contentious ways". Shoals are ruptures, ever-shifting terrains, that require adjustments and "new footing" to navigate (King 2019: 4). As an alternative space that is "always in formation", shoals can also inspire work in Abolition Ecologies to "create new epistemologies, lines of critical inquiry, and creative practices" premised on building place-specific solidarities (King 2019: 28). Approached in this way, this friction is a generative analytic.

[2] Assimilation by Criminalisation: Settler-Colonial Policing in the Genocide-Ecocide Nexus

Abolition Ecologies examines settler-colonial contexts as rooted in an anthropocentric mode of production defined by the human/nonhuman binary. This mode of production involves mass enclosure, exclusion, and entrenched inequalities shaping racialised, gendered, and classed geographies of ecological injustice (Bradshaw 2018; Hardy et al. 2022; Ranganathan and Bratman 2021). Central to this analysis is the carceral logic underpinning these processes. Drawing from political ecology, Abolition Ecologies explores how racial and gendered categories of exclusion reinforce binaries like human/nonhuman, civilised/savage, order/disorder, normal/deviant, and innocent/criminal (Pellow 2019). Simultaneously, this field reimagines human/other-than-human relations to address the disproportionate ecological harm and land injustice for hyper-criminalised groups.

Centring Indigenous dispossession in these concerns uncovers the role of criminalisation as a tool of genocide and assimilation to a violent ecological regime. While

Abolition Ecologies literature recognises this logic of criminalisation, its implications for understanding carceral power as a genocidal project remain under-explored. This oversight is particularly significant because it complicates how we conceptualise the settler state's role in abolitionist ecological struggle, raising a productive friction: to what extent, if at all, should we engage the settler state in ecological struggle when the criminalisation of Indigenous land relations is itself a tool of genocidal nation-building? Centring Indigenous dispossession in Abolition Ecologies enriches the field by exposing the unique challenges posed by the settler state as a potential ally as well as offering possible pathways for confronting these challenges.

Assimilation, Criminalisation, and the Settler State's Assault on Indigenous Ecological Relations—Settler colonialism persists through the control of land, justified by legal fictions that render it static, empty, and fixed “resource” (Moreton-Robinson 2015). This system relies on liberal productivity and ownership frameworks, underpinned by the human/nature binary (Goeman 2008; Moreton-Robinson 2015). This binary relies on “strategic forms of compartmentalisation, based on ... exclusionary logics” (such as Indigenous/non-Indigenous, nature/culture, civilised/savage, irrational/rational), that regulate, legitimate, and discipline both human and other-than-human populations (Gombay and Palomino-Schalscha 2019: 2; see also Wynter 2003). In this regulatory framework, mobile markers of difference like race, sexuality, gender, and ability become the naturalising terrain that legitimises carceral power, capitalist violence, and ecological injustice as necessary and inevitable (McKittrick 2021; Pellow 2019; Ross 1998).

In settler-colonial contexts, Indigenous peoples' refusal to assimilate into settler society has historically authorised their criminalisation because their worldviews challenge the anthropocentric human/nature binary that underlies settler capitalism (Ross 1998; Sapić 2020). While settler-capitalist practices are positioned as rational, legitimate, and productive, Indigenous land-based practices are labelled as backward, irrational, extreme, and even threatening or criminal. Settler narratives pathologise Indigenous relations to land as “as unfit for modern life”, positioning settlers as “legitimate heir[s] to the land” (Razack 2002: 193). Simultaneously, they cast Indigenous resistance to assimilation as a threat to societal (capitalist) progress, authorising hyper-surveillance, incarceration (on reservations, in residential schools, or in prisons), and ecological degradation of their homelands. This disciplinary regime criminalises Indigenous practices, such as hunting, fishing, and harvesting, and access to sacred sites (Peterson et al. 2017; Snook et al. 2020). Environmental

laws and conservation policies often disguise this criminalisation under the language of protection and stewardship.

In this context, settler colonialism enacts regulatory violence against Indigenous land and other-than-human relations, where criminalisation is a penalty for failing to assimilate into settler-colonial society. Because Indigenous land relations impede “development”, they are criminalised through the legal enforcement of European ontological assumptions about proper human/nature relations. While sometimes framed as “development programmes” or “advancement schemes”, these measures ultimately serve genocidal purposes by severing Indigenous identities and relationships to land (Harris 2002). The criminalisation of Indigenous land relations erodes the means of collective cultural and physical survival—an assault on the frameworks that sustain ecosystems and Indigenous ways of being. These dynamics have intensified post-9/11, with counter-terrorism measures casting Indigenous ecological self-determination as a prevailing domestic security threat (Monaghan and Crobsy 2018; Seraphin 2023).

Alternative Human/Other-than-Human Relations amid Ongoing Genocide—What does centring Indigenous dispossession bring to theorisations of alternative human/other-than-human relations in Abolition Ecologies? Centring Indigenous dispossession exposes how carceral power operates as a vehicle through which to decipher between deviant and obedient forms of human/other-than-human relations and to “distribute violence accordingly” (Simpson and Le Billon 2021: 119). It clarifies how the criminalised subject is shaped by the disciplinary logic of settler-humanism and racist constructions of “backwardness”. It demonstrates how other-than-human populations are implicated in carceral power and underscores the enduring colonial distinctions between human/non-human, civilised/savage, and modern/primitive that continue to justify carceral violence in settler-colonial contexts. It also foregrounds the specific violence inflicted on Indigenous land and nature relations as part of a genocide-ecocide nexus that undergirds settler state building. Ultimately, it deepens our understanding of the specificity of the settler state as a particular historical and institutional formation. This context raises challenging questions for Abolition Ecologies: to what extent should we engage the settler state in anti-carceral and ecological struggles?

Abolition Ecologies unsettles the settler state’s mythology as the “arbiter of justice” and questions the very nature of authority itself (Dunlap and Brock 2022; Stephens-Griffin 2023). Yet, Hardy et al. (2022: 872) argue that although the state is complicit in racial and environmental injustices, collaboration with allied sections of the state may be necessary to “mobilize an emancipatory politics of land and property and to produce a commons that heals

the multiple histories of racial violence”. These tactical engagements with the state are also practised and theorised across Indigenous scholarship and struggle, however, they are consistently weighed against the reality that they are negotiating with their occupiers. While Abolition Ecologies is critical of state power and its ability to provide justice, there are opportunities to consider more explicitly what is at stake when we ally with the settler state as an institution involved in an ongoing genocide. What does this particular form of state power demands of movements who challenge it?

These considerations are particularly significant in contexts like Canada, where a state-driven politics of cultural inclusion encourages Indigenous identity expressions within a liberal rights framework while simultaneously legitimising militarised violence against those whose “more threatening” expressions challenge settler state industry and legitimacy (Crosby 2021: 9; see also Simpson and Le Billon 2021). Carceral power often becomes a mechanism through which Indigenous recognition is simultaneously “claimed, accorded, and denied” (Bell and Schreiner 2018). State-led inclusion extends the carceral power of the settler state, distinguishing between “deviant and obedient” forms of Indigenous ecological relations and using this distinction “to distribute violence accordingly” (Simpson and Le Billon 2021: 119). This process naturalises the everyday violence of environmental harm and carceral power while obscuring the state’s role as a structure of colonial occupation.

In this complex landscape, where violence can appear benevolent, there are challenging questions that remain unanswered in Abolition Ecologies: When understood as an ongoing occupation and genocidal force, what role should the settler state play in our justice frameworks (if any)? What are the risks and benefits of engaging with settler state institutions, such as courts or regulatory bodies, and how can movements navigate these particular risks? If we decide to engage the state, how do we determinate which settler state entities might serve as strategic allies and under what conditions? And how can Indigenous/non-Indigenous alliances navigate tensions between differing strategies, particularly when some favour working within the state and others favour complete opposition to it?

Little Bear’s (2000: 77) concept of “jagged worldviews” illustrates how Indigenous communities navigate “the heritage of colonization and persisting structures of settler colonialism with what ... [they] have managed to protect and maintain” (Atleo and Boron 2022: 10). This navigation may involve adapting governance structures and land relations to reflect settler-colonial frameworks “in order to maintain a level of autonomy”, asserting land claims through legal channels, or outright refusing state engagement (ibid.). Indigenous

communities have long practised strategic adaptation and resistance in this way, enacting alternative and diverse governance models, which is widely discussed in the literature (Borrows 1997; Lightfoot 2016; Spice 2018). While these analyses are place-, community-, and culture-specific, they offer valuable lessons for grappling with the possibilities of state engagement and there are opportunities to contend with the tensions these analyses raise. Further discussed in the following section, centring Indigenous dispossession deepens our understanding of settler-colonial human/other-than-human relations as a terrain of criminalisation, but it also complicates our understanding of the settler state in abolition ecological struggle.

[3] Solidarity in the “Uncommons”: Enacting Ecological and Anti-Carceral Justice across Ontological Difference

Abolition Ecologies challenges the notion that humans only extend into the nonhuman world in causal interactions and envisions liberatory, non-exploitative human/other-than-human relations. In doing so, Heynen and Ybarra (2021: 22) call for deeper dialogue across differences, emphasising how “differential identities shape the politics of possibility” in place-making. Centring Indigenous dispossession answers this call and urges us to deepen our understanding of “difference” in this context. Specifically, centring Indigenous dispossession complicates claims in Abolition Ecologies regarding what we mean by “nature” or even “ecologies” in our scholarship. While identity and cultural heterogeneity frameworks can be useful, they can also collapse Indigenous onto-epistemologies and ecological relations into those of other anti-racist or leftist struggles (Cameron et al. 2014).

The limitations of the cultural difference framework are not only significant for complicating how we contend with “difference” in Abolition Ecologies, but also because the settler state often requires Indigenous people to adapt their cosmologies to Western legal frameworks for rights or recognition, particularly through frameworks like identity, religious, or spiritual difference. While Abolition Ecologies does not mobilise an uncritical approach to inclusion or identity difference, centring Indigenous dispossession in Abolition Ecologies raises questions of the literature that are under-explored: On whose terms and through what frameworks—legal or otherwise—are we pursuing ecological justice? Through what epistemological and ontological frameworks do we conceive of the “ecological” itself? How can we foster solidarity across ontological differences when the ecological issue or nonhuman entity (e.g. a river, soil, mountain, or animal population) we are mobilising to “protect” is

understood in different ways despite shared interest? Centring Indigenous dispossession generates these tensions but also expands the field by embracing their complexities.

Ontological Pluralisms in Abolition Ecologies—While Abolition Ecologies recognises differences in human/nature relations, there are opportunities to deepen our understanding of “difference” and how to build solidarity through it. Identity difference is characteristically conceptualised through human-centric frameworks that interpret variations epistemologically—how groups know or understand the world. Rooted in Euro-Western anthropology, these frameworks typically sustain a foundational ontological split between “nature” and “human culture” as if it were universal, reducing differing relations to matters of religion or spiritual belief. However, Indigenous cosmologies often reflect difference not only epistemologically but also ontologically: they offer not merely alternative perspectives on a shared reality but entirely distinct realities and relations between humans and other-than-human existence. For example, Watts (2013: 21) demonstrates that the Haudenosaunee and Anishnaabe understand the world through “Place-Thought”, based on “the premise that land is alive and thinking and that humans and non-humans derive agency through the extensions of these thoughts”. In these cosmologies, lands and natures are active participants in social life, for they reflect fundamentally different ways of understanding reality itself (Borrows 1997; Monture-Angus 1999). These relations are not symbolic or metaphorical but real, reciprocal, and central to existence.

In their diversity, Indigenous cosmologies challenge the universalisation of Western modernity. Yet their embedded relations, histories, and creation stories are typically presumed (if at all) to be simply “lore, myth or legend” in the settler imaginary (Todd 2016: 21). Consequently, if considered, the settler state simply incorporates them into a liberal multi-cultural framework where they are “recognised” but subordinated to national economic security and development priorities. Coulthard (2014) critiques state-led efforts like community consultations and impact benefit agreements for translating Indigenous relations to other-than-human kin into settler ontologies—typically framing them as cultural or religious beliefs. In these contexts, the settler state retains the authority to distinguish “the real-real (or the natural-real) from the cultural-real”, a supposedly benevolent authority granting the latter only partial legitimacy (Blaser and de la Cadena 2018: 17). As a result, the implementation of these ecological rights is often inconsistent and weak, especially when economic interests conflict. This dynamic can create a reliance on state institutions and legal processes, reinforcing colonial power structures without producing transformative change.

Similar patterns of understanding difference appear in settler environmentalism, which often defends “nature” while overlooking circumstances where “nature” is not solely understood as such (de la Cadena 2015). Meanwhile, Indigenous communities are frequently compelled to navigate settler frameworks tactically, as discussed previously, translating their needs into language intelligible to settler ontology. However, this process always involves risks such as undermining their ways of life, reinforcing colonial power relations, and legitimising settler state authority (Lightfoot 2016). In Abolition Ecologies, further work is needed to theorise ontological plurality and explore ways to work in solidarity with Indigenous communities facing these challenges in pursuit of ecological justice.

Solidarity in the Uncommons—By centring Indigenous dispossession in Abolition Ecologies, we can think further about how we conceive of the “ecological” in our work and in our justice claims, as well as how to navigate the practical challenges of ontological diversity. For instance, in opposing a damaging resource extraction project or mobilising for food sovereignty in our community, how might we mobilise amid divergent ontological positions on the issue without subsuming their difference as mere matters of culture or belief for the sake of unity? In other words, in Abolition Ecologies, how can we work at a “permanent interface where practices [are] at the same time alike and different” (Blaser and de la Cadena 2018: 9)?

As a starting point for further thinking, Blaser and de la Cadena (2018: 19) propose the uncommons: “the heterogeneous grounds where negotiations take place toward a commons that would be a continuous achievement, an event whose vocation is not to be final because it remembers that the uncommons is its constant starting point”. This framework acknowledges that the river, forest, mountain, or soil we organise around may hold meanings that exceed our individual understanding (de la Cadena 2015). It provides an analytic to account for the river’s existence as something *other than* what it is to us, without needed to define or fully comprehend that excess—that it is a “river”, but it is not *only* that.

Donald (2012: 535) offers a complementary decolonising approach through “Indigenous Métissage”, which moves away from cultural “hybridity” to embrace the ambiguous, layered, complex, and often conflictual character of Indigenous/settler relations “without the need to deny, assimilate ... or conclude”. Donald (2012: 536) advances an ethical stance that “requires attentiveness to the responsibilities that come with a declaration of being in relation” and “carefully attends to the particular ... contexts from which a person or community understands and interprets the world”. Moreover, Mei-Singh’s (2020) notion of solidarity as “accompaniment” further helps move beyond binary or fixed ally-based

politics by theorising alternative relations with land and others that are responsive to material conditions.

These frameworks propose an ontological openness beyond “cultural plurality” or “belief”, working at an interface where we can accept that our concepts both overlap and exceed each other (de la Cadena 2015). Without appropriating place- and community-specific cosmologies, these frameworks encourage us to complicate our justice claims in Abolition Ecologies not just across identity or epistemological difference but also ontologically (de la Cadena 2015). They inspire us to make more explicit—in our politics, analytical framing, methodologies, and community practices—the multiplicity of understandings about land and other-than-human existence while building solidarities across ontological, historical, and identity differences.

Amid emergent trends, such as the militarisation of environmental conservation or the growing recognition of nature’s legal rights and “personhood”, there are opportunities to think further about how we position and discursively produce other-than-human existence within Abolition Ecologies (MacPherson 2019; McGregor 2018). Specifically, who is the subject of abolitionist ecological freedom? Of abolitionist ecological justice? Rather than a mere turn to “post-human” politics, centring Indigenous dispossession supports the abolitionist goal of liberating the humanism at the centre of liberal inclusion politics from its colonial and carceral conceptions (McKittrick 2021; Wynter 2003). In this way, we can foresee challenges that arise when we think across human/nature relational difference in Abolition Ecologies as a terrain of struggle *and* possibility.

Conclusion

This article is not an exhaustive account of all that can be drawn by centring Indigenous dispossession in Abolition Ecologies. Instead, it identifies generative frictions as invitations to complicate and deepen Abolition Ecologies as an anti-colonial project. By centring Indigenous dispossession and settler coloniality in the Abolition Ecological imagination, this article seeks not only to enhance our understanding of the contexts in which Abolitionist Ecologists live, think, and organise, but also to reveal productive tensions in reconciling Indigenous and non-Indigenous visions for liberation. As Gilmore (2020: np) asserts “even solidarity needs to be remade and remade and remade, it never just *is*”.

Centring Indigenous dispossession puts pressure on any notion of a unified “we” and reshapes how liberatory futures are theorised. It pushes us to expand modern categories that define what is at stake in ecological struggle, particularly in framing abolition politics as a

more-than-human arena. By foregrounding settler colonialism as interconnected yet distinct from other forms of racism, inequality, and power, this article highlights how carcerality and ecological degradation constitute a critical intersection through which the settler-colonial project is sustained and legitimised. In this way, Indigenous perspectives on land, ecological self-determination, and human/other-than-human relationalities are not simply additive to critical epistemologies in Abolition Ecologies; they are transformative, offering vital insights into criminalisation, ecological injustice, state power, and imagining otherwise. We must continue to build on these insights to challenge the carcerality of property relations, of anthropocentrism, ecological destruction and criminalisation, and settler-colonial occupation.

The tensions in this article remind us that anti-colonial ecological justice politics is not about “rescuing a settler future” and may not “bring neat closure to the concerns of all involved” (Tuck and Yang 2012: 31). However, this does not foreclose possibilities for solidarity. Critiques of abolition often label it as abstract, utopian, or lacking concrete solutions (Davis 2003). Yet these characteristics are precisely its strengths. Abolition, as an intellectual tradition, ethical position, and radical methodology, represents a “dis-epistemology” that rejects knowledge systems tied to certainty, uncritical optimism, and modern notions of futurity, temporality, and humanism (Ben-Moshe 2018: 341). Instead, abolition offers a disruptive, creative methodology for conceptualising futurity as relational, exceeding developmentalist or teleological political strategy, and infinite, in terms of “what is to be done” (Gilmore 2020). In conversation with abolitionist literature and Indigenous thought, Abolition Ecologies creates a critical space to recognise the knowledge we produce as always partial, incomplete, and never fixed (Gilmore 2002; Hunt 2014). Ultimately, Abolition Ecologies provides potent intellectual ground to engage what may be ontological incommensurabilities in the project of abolition itself. At the same time, this field emphasises that systemic violence in settler-colonial contexts is always connected and that world-making “does not occur without others” (Gombay and Palomino-Schalscha 2018: 5).

However, there are warnings that we must heed in the academy. Hunt (2014: 5) asks: “what does it mean for Indigeneity to be theorised, accounted for, and constructed as a category, within hegemonic ... systems of knowledge production where only a small number of Indigenous people situate their work?” Hunt underscores the risk of reproducing colonial legacies and calls for constant vigilance in reviewing assumptions as part of a complex, political, and uncertain process. To what extent are we engaging these tensions merely as an academic exercise? Centring settler coloniality and Indigenous dispossession in Abolition Ecologies—and addressing the frictions this generates—may demand a fundamental shift in

how we approach academic practice. These tensions compel us to adopt an approach that is ethically and politically accountable to where, how, and with whom we produce knowledge.

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge the generous support of my doctoral supervisor, Dr. Lauren Wilcox, and the doctoral students at the Centre for Gender Studies and the Department of Politics and International Studies at the University of Cambridge, whose invaluable insights helped strengthen the arguments in this manuscript. I am grateful for the mentorship of Dr. Emilie Cameron and Dr. Sheryl Ann Simpson, whose guidance was instrumental in developing and enriching this manuscript in its early stages. I also express deep gratitude to Dr. Baris Karaağaç, whose mentorship and guidance profoundly shaped my intellectual development and approach to anti-colonial analysis in this work. Finally, I would like to thank the anonymous reviewers for their insightful feedback, as well as Diana Ojeda and Andy Kent for their editorial work at *Antipode*.

Doctoral research financially supported by the United Kingdom Research Innovation's (UKRI) Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Doctoral Training Program (DTP) and Girton College, University of Cambridge.

References

- Atleo C and Boron J (2022) Land is life: Indigenous relationships to territory and navigating settler colonial property regimes in Canada. *Land* 11(5) <https://doi.org/10.3390/land11050609>
- Barker J (2018) Territory as analytic. *Social Text* 36(2):19-39
- Bhandar B (2018) *Colonial Lives of Property: Law, Land, and Racial Regimes of Ownership*. Durham: Duke University Press
- Bhandar B and Ziadah R (2020) *Revolutionary Feminisms: Conversations on Collective Action and Radical Thought*. New York: Verso
- Bell C and Schreiner K (2018) The international relations of police power in settler colonialism: The “civilizing” mission of Canada’s Mounties. *International Journal* 73(1):111-128
- Blaser M and de la Cadena M (eds) (2018) *A World of Many Worlds*. Durham: Duke University Press
- Bonds A and Inwood J (2016) Beyond white privilege: Geographies of white supremacy and settler colonialism. *Progress in Human Geography* 40(6):715-733

- Borrows J (1997) Frozen rights in Canada: Constitutional interpretation and the trickster. *American Indian Law Review* 22(1):37-64
- Bosworth K and Chua C (2023) The countersovereignty of critical infrastructure security: Settler-state anxiety versus the pipeline blockade. *Antipode* 55(5):1345-1367
- Bradshaw E (2018) Tombstone towns and toxic prisons: Prison ecology and the necessity of an anti-prison environmental movement. *Critical Criminology* 26(3):407-422
- Brown N (2014) The logic of settler accumulation in a landscape of perpetual vanishing. *Settler Colonial Studies* 4(1):1-26
- Byrd J A, Goldstein A, Melamed J and Reddy C (2018) Predatory value: Economies of dispossession and disturbed relationalities. *Social Text* 36(2):1-18
- Cameron E, de Leeuw S and Desbiens C (2014) Indigeneity and ontology. *Cultural Geographies* 21(1):19-26
- Coulthard G (2014) *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press
- Coulthard G and Simpson L B (2016) Grounded normativity / Place-based solidarity. *American Quarterly* 68(2):249-255
- Cowen D (2018) The jurisdiction of infrastructure: Circulation and Canadian settler colonialism. *The Funambulist* 3 May <https://thefunambulist.net/magazine/17-weaponized-infrastructure/jurisdiction-infrastructure-circulation-canadian-settler-colonialism-deborah-cowen> (last accessed 14 February 2025)
- Crosby A and Monaghan J (2018) *Policing Indigenous Movements: Dissent and the Security State*. Halifax: Fernwood
- Curley A, Gupta P, Lookabaugh L, Neubert C and Smith S (2022) Decolonisation is a political project: Overcoming impasses between Indigenous sovereignty and abolition. *Antipode* 54(4):1043-1062
- Davis A Y (2003) *Are Prisons Obsolete?* New York: Seven Stories Press
- de la Cadena M (2015) *Earth Beings: Ecologies of Practice across Andean Worlds*. Durham: Duke University Press
- de Leeuw S (2014) State of care: The ontologies of child welfare in British Columbia. *Cultural Geographies* 21(1):59-78
- Di Ronco A (2023) *Policing Environmental Protest: Power and Resistance in Pandemic Times*. Bristol: Bristol University Press
- Donald D (2012) Indigenous Métissage: A decolonizing research sensibility. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* 25(5):533-555

- Dorries H and Harjo L (2020) Beyond safety: Refusing colonial violence through Indigenous feminist planning. *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 40(2):210-219
- Dunlap A and Brock A (eds) (2022) *Enforcing Ecocide: Power, Policing, and Planetary Militarization*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan
- Englert S (2020) Settlers, workers, and the logic of accumulation by dispossession. *Antipode* 52(6):1647-1666
- Estes N, Gilmore R W and Loperena C (2021) United in struggle: As racial capitalism rages, movements for Indigenous sovereignty and abolition offer visions of freedom on stolen land. *NACLA Report on the Americas* 53(3):255-267
- Garba T and Sorentino S M (2020) Slavery is a metaphor: A critical commentary on Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang's "Decolonization is Not a Metaphor". *Antipode* 52(3):764-782
- Gilmore R W (2002) Fatal couplings of power and difference: Notes on racism and geography. *The Professional Geographer* 54(1):15-24
- Gilmore R W (2020) "Geographies of Racial Capitalism with Ruth Wilson Gilmore—An Antipode Foundation Film." <https://antipodeonline.org/geographies-of-racial-capitalism/> (last accessed 14 February 2025)
- Gilmore R W (2022) *Abolition Geography: Essays Towards Liberation* (eds B Bhandar and A Toscano). New York: Verso
- Glenn E N (2015) Settler colonialism as structure: A framework for comparative studies of US race and gender formation. *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity* 1(1):52-72
- Goeman M (2008) From place to territories and back again: Centering storied land in the discussion of Indigenous nation-building. *International Journal of Critical Indigenous Studies* 1(1):23-34
- Gombay N and Palomino-Schalscha M (eds) (2018) *Indigenous Place and Colonial Spaces: The Politics of Intertwined Relations*. New York: Routledge
- Guess A, Tuck E, Smith M, Benjamin T and Jones B K (2014) Geotheorizing Black/land: Contestations and contingent collaborations. *Departures in Critical Qualitative Research* 3(1):52-74
- Hamlin M (2023) Geography's abolitionist turn: Notes on freedom, property, and the state. *Progress in Human Geography* 47(6):755-768
- Hardy D, Bailey M and Heynen N (2022) "We're still here": An abolition ecology blockade of double dispossession of Gullah/Geechee land. *Annals of the American Association of Geographers* 112(3):867-876
- Harris C I (1993) Whiteness as property. *Harvard Law Review* 106(8):1707-1791

- Harris R C (2002) *Making Native Space: Colonialism, Resistance, and Reserves in British Columbia*. Vancouver: UBC Press
- Hartman S V (1997) *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Heynen N (2018) Urban political ecology III: The feminist and queer century. *Progress in Human Geography* 42(3):446-452
- Heynen N (2021) "A plantation can be a commons": Re-earthing Sapelo Island through abolition ecology. *Antipode* 53(1):95-114
- Heynen N and Ybarra M (2021) On abolition ecologies and making "freedom as a place". *Antipode* 53(1):21-35
- Hunt S (2014) Ontologies of Indigeneity: The politics of embodying a concept. *Cultural Geographies* 21(1):27-32
- Jackson S N (2012) *Creole Indigeneity: Between Myth and Nation in the Caribbean*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press
- Kaba M (2021) *We Do This 'Til We Free Us: Abolitionist Organizing and Transforming Justice*. Chicago: Haymarket Books
- Kauanui J K (2018) *Paradoxes of Hawaiian Sovereignty: Land, Sex, and the Colonial Politics of State Nationalism*. Durham: Duke University Press
- Kimari W and Parish J (2020) What is a river? A transnational meditation on the colonial city, abolition ecologies, and the future of geography. *Urban Geography* 41(5):643-656
- King T L (2019) *The Black Shoals: Offshore Formations of Black and Native Studies*. Durham: Duke University Press
- Lightfoot S (2016) *Global Indigenous Politics: A Subtle Revolution*. New York: Routledge
- Little Bear L (2000) Jagged worldviews colliding. In M Battiste (ed) *Reclaiming Indigenous Voice and Vision* (pp77-85). Vancouver: UBC Press
- Lipsitz G (1995) The possessive investment in whiteness. *American Quarterly* 47(3):369-387
- MacPherson E J (2019) *Indigenous Water Rights in Law and Regulation: Lessons from Comparative Experience*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Mathiesen T (1974) *The Politics of Abolition*. London: Martin Robertson
- Maynard R and Simpson L B (2022) *Rehearsals for Living*. Chicago: Haymarket Books
- Mays K T (2021) *An Afro-Indigenous History of the United States*. Boston: Beacon Press
- McGregor D (2018) Indigenous environmental justice, knowledge, and law. *Kalfou Journal of Comparative and Relational Ethnic Studies* 5(2):279-296
- McKittrick K (2021) *Dear Science and Other Stories*. Durham: Duke University Press

Mei-Singh L (2021) Accompaniment through carceral geographies: Abolitionist research partnerships with Indigenous communities. *Antipode* 53(1):74-94

Monaghan J and Crosby A (2018) *Policing Indigenous Movements: Dissent and the Security State*. Halifax: Fernwood Press

Monture-Angus P (1999) Women and risk: Aboriginal women, colonialism, and correctional practice. *Canadian Woman Studies / Les cahiers de la femme* 19(1/2):24-29

Moreton-Robinson A (2015) *The White Possessive: Property, Power, and Indigenous Sovereignty*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press

Nichols R (2019) *Theft Is Property: Dispossession and Critical Theory*. Durham: Duke University Press

Pasternak S, Cowen D, Clifford R, Joseph T, Scott D N, Spice A and Stark H K (2023) Infrastructure, jurisdiction, extractivism: Keywords for decolonizing geographies. *Political Geography* 101 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2022.102763>

Pellow D (2019) Political prisoners and environmental justice. *Capitalism Nature Socialism* 29(4):1-20

Peterson M N, von Essen E, Hansen H P and Peterson T R (2017) Illegal fishing and hunting as resistance to neoliberal colonialism. *Crime, Law and Social Change* 67:401-413

Pulido L and De Lara J (2018) Reimagining “justice” in environmental justice: Radical ecologies, decolonial thought, and the Black Radical Tradition. *Environment and Planning E: Nature and Space* 1(1/2):76-98

Ranganathan M and Bratman E (2021) From urban resilience to abolitionist climate justice in Washington, DC. *Antipode* 53(1):115-137

Razack S (2002) *Race, Space, and the Law: Unmapping a White Settler Society*. Toronto: Between the Lines

Reddy R N (2021) Of holy cows and unholy politics: Dalits, annihilation, and more-than-human urban abolition ecologies. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 45(4):643–657

Rodriguez D (2019) Abolition as praxis of human being. *Harvard Law Review* 132(6):1575-1612

Ross L (1998) *Inventing the Savage: The Social Construction of Native American Criminality*. Austin: University of Texas Press

Saed (2012) Prison abolition as an ecosocialist struggle. *Capitalism Nature Socialism* 23(1):1-5

- Sapic L (2020) The criminalization of non-assimilation and property rights in the Canadian prairies. *Manitoba Law Journal* 43(5):95-116
- Seraphin B (2023) Settler colonial counterinsurgency: Indigenous resistance and the more-than-state policing of #NoDAPL. *Security Dialogue* 54(3):272–289
- Sexton J (2016) The vel of slavery: Tracking the figure of the unsovereign. *Critical Sociology* 42(4/5):583-597
- Simlai T (2015) Conservation “wars”: Global rise of green militarisation. *Economic and Political Weekly* 50(50):39-44
- Simpson A (2014) *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life Across the Borders of Settler States*. Durham: Duke University Press
- Simpson A (2020) The sovereignty of critique. *South Atlantic Quarterly* 119(4):685-699
- Simpson L B, Coulthard G and Walcott R (2018) Idle No More and Black Lives Matter: An exchange. *Studies in Social Justice* 12(1):75-89
- Simpson M and Hugill D W (2022) The settler colonial city in three movements. *Progress in Human Geography* 46(6):1311-1330
- Simpson M and Le Billon P (2021) Reconciling violence: Policing the politics of recognition. *Geoforum* 119:111-121
- Snook J, Cunsolo A, Borish D, Furgal C, Ford J D, Shiwak I, Flowers C T R and Harper S L (2020) “We’re made criminals just to eat off the land”: Colonial wildlife management and repercussions on Inuit well-being. *Sustainability* 12(19) <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12198177>
- Spice A (2018) Fighting invasive infrastructures: Indigenous relations against pipelines. *Environment and Society* 9(1):40-56
- Stark H K (2016) Criminal empire: The making of the savage in a lawless land. *Theory & Event* 19(4) <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/633282>
- Stephens-Griffin N (2023) Embracing “abolition ecology”: A green criminological rejoinder. *Critical Criminology* 31(2):433-449
- Teed P (2023) Whither abolition? *Differences* 34(2):27-57
- The Red Nation (2021) *The Red Deal: Indigenous Action to Save Our Earth*. New York: Common Notions
- Todd Z (2016) An Indigenous feminist’s take on the ontological turn: “Ontology” is just another word for colonialism. *Journal of Historical Sociology* 29(1):4-22
- Trogisch L (2021) Geographies of fear: The everyday (geo)politics of “green” violence and militarization in the intended transboundary Virunga Conservation Area. *Geoforum* 122:92-102

- Tuck E and Del Vecchio D (2018) Representing refusals: Dilemmas in making photo-based research with migrant youth. In K Gallagher (ed) *The Methodological Dilemma Revisited* (pp76-90). New York: Routledge
- Tuck E and Gaztambide-Fernández R A (2013) Curriculum, replacement, and settler futurity. *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing* 29(1):72-89
- Tuck E and Yang K W (2012) Decolonization is not a metaphor. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1(1):1-40
- Walcott R (2021) *On Property: Policing, Prisons, and the Call for Abolition*. Windsor: Biblioasis
- Watts V (2013) Indigenous place-thought and agency amongst humans and non humans (First Woman and Sky Woman go on a European world tour!). *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 2(1):20-34
- Wilderson F B (2010) *Red, White, and Black: Cinema and the Structure of US Antagonisms*. Durham: Duke University Press
- Winter J (2021) Pacheedaht First Nation chiefs in Canada tell anti-logging protesters to leave their lands. *The Guardian* 14 April
<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/apr/14/canada-logging-blockade-first-nations-pacheedaht> (last accessed 17 February 2025)
- Wolfe P (2006) Settler colonialism and the elimination of the native. *Journal of Genocide Research* 8(4):387-409
- Wynter S (2003) Unsettling the colonality of being/power/truth/freedom: Towards the human, after man, its overrepresentation—An argument. *CR: The New Centennial Review* 3(3):257-337
- Ybarra M (2021) Site fight! Towards the abolition of immigrant detention on Tacoma's Tar Pits (and everywhere else). *Antipode* 53(1):36-55

¹ Here, "anti-colonialism" refers to a commitment to ending colonial domination as a structural process. However, the theorists referenced self-identify in many ways and debates continue over which prefix (anti-/post-/de-colonial) best serves emancipatory goals (see Tuck and Gaztambide-Fernández 2013).