# 1NC – UCO Round 1

## 1NC

#### Settler colonialism is an ongoing political project that serves to seize land, resources, and cultural practices – settler colonial research practices only codify settlerism as a normalized colonial practice manifested through mimicry of expert knowledge that precludes effective modes of learning.

Patel 14 – PhD in Curriculum Development at Boston College [Lisa (Leigh) Patel (2014), Countering Coloniality in Educational Research: From Ownership to Answerability, Educational Studies, 50:4, 357-377, DOI: 10.1080/00131946.2014.924942, Accesed via Taylor Francis Online] ku - mads

The United States, in addition to many other places such as Australia, Canada, and Israel, is ongoing project of settler colonialism (Byrd 2011; A. Smith 2010; Wolfe 1991). Rather than a single event, settler colonialism is a continuous process and logic with three mutually dependent components (Tuck and Yang 2012), all of which work in tandem and rely on each other to maintain the structure of colonialism. The first practice is to seize the land, resources, cultural practices, and goods of a desired location. Beginning with land grabs in the 14th century and continuing through contemporary times, the United States was founded on the practice of outsiders claiming land and resources. However, in settler colonialism, there can never be enough land to satisfy the thirst of a few. The logic of physical invasions and opportunistic treaties with Native peoples echo in contemporary times with private takeover of public, potentially collective, spaces (Martusewicz, Edmondson, and Lupinacci 2011). In education, this is most notable through the dismantling of public education (Fine and Fabricant 2012) for the proliferation of privatized venture philanthropy in education and teacher education, leveraged through educational metrics measuring teacher, school, and pupil performance (Kumashiro 2010). As one of the last public spaces in the United States, education has experienced a surge of privatization that acts in keeping with a genealogy of land grabs. What were once public schools, with names like Washington Elementary School or Paul J. Robeson High School, are increasingly renamed and claimed for private interests, with many locations simultaneously claimed and linked through private ownership, under the names of Harlem Children’s Zone, Kipp Academy, and MATCH (e.g. http://www.matcheducation.org/). Au and Ferrare’s (2014) network analysis reveals the small number of educational reformers who leverage disproportionately large symbolic and material sponsorship to establish private-like charters and claim those lands. But to sustain this land grab, the peoples already residing there must be eliminated for settlers to replace them, whereby state-sanctioned violence occurs as a second conjoining practice of settler colonialism. As Smith (2012) put it, “This logic holds that indigenous peoples must disappear. In fact, they must always be disappearing, in order to enable non-indigenous peoples’ rightful claim to land. Through this logic of genocide, non-Native peoples then become the rightful inheritors of all that was indigenous—land, resources, indigenous spirituality, and culture.” A key trope through which settler colonialism operates is erasing to replace. The land grabs relied on, and continue to rely on, codified blood quantum laws to ensure the gradual diminishment of Native peoples. This logic is present in the land grabs of public schooling spaces that use the law and metrics of achievement as codified strategies to claim property, specifically through the marginalizing and eroding of histories and place-based knowledges of communities (Fenwick 2013). K–12 schools are also connected to the tertiary education and the forms of knowledge and knowledge production sanctioned therein. Higher education, as key companion pillar with the church and state in the establishment of this settler colony as a nation (Wilder 2013), further reflects these move of settling, including erasing to replace. The settler colonial project first constructed colleges as places for ministerial education for wealthy men, with strict focus on Greek, Latin, geometry, ancient history, logic, ethics and rhetoric, with few discussions, or as Freire (1970) termed, a banking approach to education wherein students, even the privileged male students allowed to enjoy this property, were seen as vessels in which the culture of the colony should be sown. For White men, though, this planting of knowledge was with home codes and perspectives. For Indigenous communities, this banking approach erased their lived experiences with Eurocentric epistemologies, which can never be made home because of the dispossession it is premised upon (Anzaldua 1999). This project of erasure is ´ found throughout many of the historical manifestations of IHEs’ curricula, a logic that grounded Indian boarding schools in the philosophy of “kill the Indian to save the man” (Pratt 1892, 214). Contemporary manifestations of this logic include the maintained and protected use of euro-centric curricula and pedagogy as common core to a solidified banking approach to higher education (Spring 2010). As Wilder points out in his historical analysis of the roles elite institutions of higher education played in supporting, exploiting, and perpetuating slavery in the United States, studies that unproblematically investigate how to best and most efficiently teach academic standardized English to nonnative speakers are complicit in this erase to replace colonial trajectory. It is important to note here that the deepest investment of settler colonialism is to erase Indigenous peoples. The erasure of culture and language of minoritized peoples, such as migrants, works in tandem with replacing Indigenous peoples with others, such as migrant workers, but not as landowners. The erasure of Indigeneity is also apparent in the knowledge production more specifically located in educational research that names White, Black, and Latino populations, sometimes Asian, but rarely Indigenous peoples in statistics of schoolbased achievement. Although the White center of achievement gap studies problematically reifies Whiteness as normal and desirable (Leonardo 2009), the failure to name Indigenous peoples acts echoes this need to erase. Even though the recent US federal policy of No Child Left Behind (NCLB 2002), prompted states and districts to disaggregate achievement data according to racial groups, including Indigenous students, the prevailing trope in educational research, particularly wellfunded educational research, is the achievement gap between White and Asian to that of Black and Latino students. This binary leverages a linked achievement rate of glossed-over statistics of various Asian Americans’ achievement to standards of White achievement to fundamentally locate deficit within Black and Latino populations while also erasing Indigenous peoples. Additionally, the US federal policies of NCLB and its follower, Race to the Top ([RTTP] 2001) demand identification to punish so-identified delinquent populations, rather than to redress a system based on colonial stratification (Leonardo 2009). By organizing research around these policies and pursuing their funding streams, not only has federally sanctioned educational research contributed to this construction of Whiteness, it has also supported the almost constant conflation between test scores and learning, an abrogation of responsibility to which I return in the conclusion of the article. A third necessary practice of settler colonialism, and one that conjoins tightly with White supremacy in the United States, is to import slave labor in chains and render human beings as chattel. In this process, humanity is immediately put in tension with, and ultimately subjugated to, property. African slaves became chattel long before the transporting ships reached their destinations, with bodily treatment of the captured Africans becoming the first in an ongoing stripping away of humanity (Spillers 1987). Continuing through the contemporary prison industrial complex and the low-wage locations of forced migrants (Ngai 2005), slave labor is necessary to become chattel, harvest the resources of the land and, through economic stratification and sequestering, ensure that land and property rights are reserved for a much smaller group of settlers. Higher education is, like other social fields in capitalist-anchored settler colonies, predicated on individuals holding differential status so that many are competing for the limited resources of higher status, reflected in salary and reputation. Within that field, publications and grant procurement (Daza, 2012, 2013a) represent the forms of capital most readily translated into higher status. By reflecting rather interrupting hierarchies based on competition and status, the academy has sustained problematic relationships with vulnerabilized communities (Tuck 2009). Part of this has transpired through scholarship that has worked from and validated racist premises of societal difference (Wilder 2013), as well as the relationships between researcher and researched (Tuck and Guishard 2013). For applied fields, such as educational research, these patterns manifest themselves in who is researched and what theoretical frames drive the data gathering, analysis, and implications.

#### That cannot be delinked from settler institutions – the settler state is driven by the logic of elimination – the primal drive to expansion that materializes native land dispossession, displacement, and genocide – it cannot be contingent – settler societies establish the structure of invasion through the will-to-possession and structural occupation of indigenous land

Rifkin 14 – Associate Professor of English & WGS @ UNC-Greensboro [Mark, ‘Settler Common Sense: Queerness and Everyday Colonialism in the American Renaissance,’ pp. 7-10] ku - mads

If nineteenth-century American literary studies tends to focus on the ways Indians enter the narrative frame and the kinds of meanings and associa- tions they bear, recent attempts to theorize settler colonialism have sought to shift attention from its effects on Indigenous subjects to its implications for nonnative political attachments, forms of inhabitance, and modes of being, illuminating and tracking the pervasive operation of settlement as a system. In Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of Anthropology, Patrick Wolfe argues, “Settler colonies were (are) premised on the elimination of native societies. The split tensing reflects a determinate feature of settler colonization. The colonizers come to stay—invasion is a structure not an event” (2).6 He suggests that a “logic of elimination” drives settler governance and sociality, describing “the settler-colonial will” as “a historical force that ultimately derives from the primal drive to expansion that is generally glossed as capitalism” (167), and in “Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native,” he observes that “elimination is an organizing principle of settler-colonial society rather than a one-off (and superceded) occurrence” (388). Rather than being superseded after an initial moment/ period of conquest, colonization persists since “the logic of elimination marks a return whereby the native repressed continues to structure settler- colonial society” (390). In Aileen Moreton-Robinson’s work, whiteness functions as the central way of understanding the domination and displacement of Indigenous peoples by nonnatives.7 In “Writing Off Indigenous Sover- eignty,” she argues, “As a regime of power, patriarchal white sovereignty operates ideologically, materially and discursively to reproduce and main- tain its investment in the nation as a white possession” (88), and in “Writ- ing Off Treaties,” she suggests, “At an ontological level the structure of subjective possession occurs through the imposition of one’s will-to-be on the thing which is perceived to lack will, thus it is open to being possessed,” such that “possession . . . forms part of the ontological structure of white subjectivity” (83–84). For Jodi Byrd, the deployment of Indianness as a mobile figure works as the principal mode of U.S. settler colonialism. She observes that “colonization and racialization . . . have often been conflated,” in ways that “tend to be sited along the axis of inclusion/exclusion” and that “misdirect and cloud attention from the underlying structures of settler colonialism” (xxiii, xvii). She argues that settlement works through the translation of indigeneity as Indianness, casting place-based political collectivities as (racialized) populations subject to U.S. jurisdiction and manage- ment: “the Indian is left nowhere and everywhere within the ontological premises through which U.S. empire orients, imagines, and critiques itself ”; “ideas of Indians and Indianness have served as the ontological ground through which U.S. settler colonialism enacts itself ” (xix).

#### The 1AC in anchored in a model of rational economic decision-making that’s prefigured to displace indigenous bodies and naturalize conquest.

Hardin & Towns 19, \*Carolyn, Assistant Professor of Media and Communication & American Studies @ Miami University. \*\*Armond R., Department of Communication Studies @ The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. (December 2019, “Plastic Empowerment: Financial Literacy and Black Economic Life”, *American Quarterly*, Volume 71, Number 4, pg. 978-980)

Homo Economicus’s Others: Black Objects and Black Debt One of the financial literacy programs run by the government, Money Smart, is a free “instructor-led curriculum” that can be taught in “a classroom or small group setting.”56 The curriculum covers “deposit and credit services offered by financial institutions, choosing and maintaining a checking account, spending plans, the importance of saving, how to obtain and use credit effectively, and the basics of building or repairing credit.”57 These materials, among many others, display the basic and well-established assumptions of financial literacy education: that individual financial stability requires rational calculations and decision-making. In other words, financial literacy is a normative project to bring individuals into compliance with the simplistic assumptions of economic models, or what James Kwak terms “economism.”58 As such, financial literacy acknowledges and seeks to remediate what behavioral economists have long noted: that models do not match reality because individuals do not act rationally.59 However, if individuals can be made to act rationally, optimal economic outcomes can be achieved. In other words, the purpose of financial literacy is to make each of us a well-functioning and rational “homo economicus,” the idealized subject of free market capitalism. Financial literacy is just the latest narrative to deploy a version of homo economicus as the baseline subject of economic rationality. Although the term is said to have originated only in the nineteenth century in response to the writing of John Stuart Mill, the notion of a “proper” capitalist subject who acts correctly within various models of capitalism is much older.60 It is also a raced subject. The history of capitalism reveals that the dominant notion of economic rationality is constructed as/in a white subject over and against black bodies both as objects rather than subjects of capitalism and as intense targets of exploitative debt. This racial tension at the heart of economic rationality reveals the racial stakes of calls for financial literacy education of black consumers. White Subject, Black Object According to Michel Foucault, the homo economicus of the late twentieth century eschews the early political economic concern of buying and selling one’s own labor power—with all its potentially collectivist political implications—for the individualized pursuit of self-interest “as an entrepreneur of himself.”61 Foucault offers as evidence Gary Becker’s universalizing idea of “human capital.” Homo economicus is he who can solve any social problem by accumulating human capital that produces an earnings stream for the entrepreneur of himself. But this entrepreneurial self-determination is not equally accessible by all raced subjects. According to Denise Ferreira da Silva, the black is not self-determined but “outer-determined,” which is to say, always open to being “affected,” manipulated by the Western subject for his own benefit.62 The black, then, functions as one about whom choices are made, not one who makes choices. Sylvia Wynter provides the most explicit argument of the overrepresentation of homo economicus as white within the Western construct of the human, which she argues cannot be disarticulated from capitalism. Indeed, homo economicus emerges out of the shift from the Renaissance’s conceptions of politics and Western Judeo-Christianity as signifiers of the human, what she calls “Man1,” to “Man2,” or “a figure based on the Western bourgeoisie’s model of being human that has been articulated as, since the latter half of the nineteenth century, liberal monohumanism’s homo oeconomicus.”63 Likewise, Lisa Tilley argues that Wynter’s homo economicus is a revision of a racialized humanness, “formulated within the colonial episteme’s Darwinian distortions as divided between the naturally selected (Europeans) and the naturally ‘dysselected’ (those racialized as naturally inferiority).”64 Wynter finds the origins of this shift in humanness in the “colonial matrix of power.”65 In her essay “1492,” she argues that Christopher Columbus functioned as a racialized turning point for Europe, one that replaced Western religious conceptions of knowledge, such as the world being flat, with secularized conceptions of the world.66 Further, Columbus’s voyage had as much to do with spreading Chris- tianity and glorifying the Spanish nation as it did with enriching “himself and his family with all the gold and tribute he could extort from the indigenous peoples, even from making some into cabezas de indios y indias (heads of Indian men and women), who could be sold as slaves.”67 Wynter notes that Columbus is often positioned in terms of celebratory American “discovery” in ways that brush over the colonial, nationalistic, and imperialistic implications of his individual financial aspirations and the objectification of black bodies on which those aspirations depended. Walter Mignolo follows Wynter, providing some insight into the racial foundations of homo economicus, particularly connecting it to Western colonialism and imperialism, both of which are inseparable from the post-Columbian context.68 Mignolo argues that the self-interested optimization that fleshes out the figure of homo economicus assumes coloniality and imperialism.69 In effect, Western colonial enrichment—at the expense of indigenous racial others of Europe—is already inherent in the “economic rationality” of homo economicus, as it is seen as a financially rational tool of enrichment, rather than a moral wrong. Elsewhere Wynter claims that the proto-notion of homo economicus that circulated in the sixteenth century underwent important transformations by the nineteenth century. Further removed from Judeo-Christianity, conceptions of economic rationality in the nineteenth century functioned in raced form to articulate both black and indigenous populations in the “New World” as the epitome of economic irrationality. Wynter notes that by the nineteenth century, the black slave “would now be made into the physical referent of the ostensibly most racially inferior and non-evolved Other to Man, itself redefined as optimally homo economicus.”70 The black slave is in effect the defining opposite of homo economicus, that nonbeing who is less than human and/ or not human at all. Where homo economicus is self-interested and free to choose—the subject who can fulfill the ultimate human goal of surplus accumulation on his own—the slave is utterly removed from not only this goal but even the possibility of choosing or acting within the construct of the self.

#### Environmental extinction reps motivate security-oriented solutions and genocidal violence.

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We argue that scientific debates and cultural representations offer parallel imaginings of apocalypse that escape specific culpability (for instance, in processes of settler colonialism, capitalism, or imperialism) and instead center a universal human frailty that ends with triumph, a clear moral, and a clean slate. Not all imaginaries reiterate this narrative; in closing we turn to fantastical artwork that holds the violences of colonialism, racism, and environmental destruction in tandem with creative and abundant futures. Our aim, as three scholars working at the intersection of climate justice, geopolitics, and futurity, is to bring race more firmly into conversations of the Anthropocene. We suggest that apocalyptic imaginings have often been framed through an exclusionary hierarchy of humanity, necessitating closer examination of how clichéd genre conventions that saturate our media environment rely on anti-Black racism and indigenous erasure. Without such attention, we risk reiterating these clichés in narrating environmental crisis. We focus on renderings of the apocalypse in American popular culture as a window into cultural anxieties, following scholars in media studies and ecocriticism (Murray and Heumann, 2014; O’Brien, 2016; Willoquet-Maricondi, 2010) and geography (Dittmer and Gray, 2010; Dodds, 2008; Kennedy and Lukinbeal, 1997; Lukinbeal and Zimmermann, 2006; Sharp, 1998). Bettini (2013) and Hartmann (2010) caution that unexamined apocalyptic imagery in policy documents will shift governance in response to climate change from politics to security. The spillage of sci-fi into science and security is not hypothetical; consider the U.S. Army’s recent “Mad Scientist Science Fiction Writing Contest,” encouraging contestants “to explore fresh ideas about the future of warfare and technology … with implications for how the Army operates in future conflicts” (US Army Training and Doctrine Command, 2016). We write here for political geographers, political ecologists, and scientists engaging with the politics of the environmental future. It is beyond our expertise to comprehensively detail genres of apocalypse, but rather we outline three among many possible geo-historical junctures that can clarify the political stakes of the Anthropocene. This does mean, as we explain later, that our readings of the films lean into the clichés of these genres, rather than untangle their simultaneous complexity. We understand these geo-historical junctures as flashpoints of a “master-narrative of the political unconscious” (Jameson, 1982), a turbulent reckoning with what it means to be human that is fraught with the racialized hauntings of genocide, slavery, and ongoing imperialism. What kind of urgency does the Anthropocene produce? For whom? Baldwin (2012: 172) argues whiteness is figured through “tropes of uncertainty, Utopia, apocalypse, prophesy, hope, fear, possibility and potentiality.” Here, we disaggregate futurity’s tropes in conversation with a parallel undoing of the fundamentally racialized definitions of humanness (da Silva, 2011; Gilroy, 2018; Weheliye, 2014; Wynter, 2003). At the core of processes that accelerated environmental devastation, now represented as global, has been the consistent sacrifice of some lives for the betterment of others. The Anthropocene uncomfortably reiterates a nature/human binary figured in racialized terms, at times serving as a proxy for deep-seated anxieties of racialized Others “taking over” the planet. We construct three geo-historical junctures: a staged encounter between geological proposals under review by the Anthropocene Working Group and corresponding cinematic apocalyptic genres. Building on Jameson’s (1982: 153) articulation of sci-fi as dramatization of “our incapacity to imagine the future … the atrophy of the utopian imagination,” we analyze how these apocalyptic imaginaries break down or intensify human/nature divisions in ways that sometimes disrupt but more often reinvigorate a racial classification of humanity. We begin by reviewing the Anthropocene as a collective contestation over what it means to be human, elaborate our rationale for examining popular culture, and then analyze the underlying racial premises of common Hollywood tropes. We close the article with warning signs and alternate imaginaries that disrupt this troubled legacy. Anthropocene as apocalyptic futurity We build on a rich tradition of “storytelling” in environmental justice activism and research (Houston and Vasudevan, 2017) that examines the Anthropocene as a narrative (Buell, 2014) whose meaning is being contested among scientists, social movement actors, critical theorists and cultural producers. What then do we learn from the storytelling that takes place in debates over when the Anthropocene began? Lewis and Maslin (2015, see also Davis and Todd, 2017) propose, 1610 as start date: the conquest of the Americas. This territorial accumulation highlights, “a long-term and large-scale example of human actions unleashing processes that are difficult to predict or manage” (Lewis and Maslin, 2015: 177). While the, 1610 proposal has not gained traction in the scientific community (Hamilton, 2015), its acknowledgment of colonization’s genocidal violence makes possible a more incisive understanding of what is meant by the designation of the epoch (Davis and Todd, 2017). Other proposals also highlight politically charged moments in history, and are read as Gergan et al. 3 a corrective to Enlightenment hubris (Lovbrand et al., 2009). As noted by Robbins and € Moore (2013: 9), “Anthropocene scientific culture thus simultaneously displays a panicked political imperative to intervene more vocally and aggressively in an earth transformation run amok and an increasing fear that past scientific claims about the character of ecosystems and their transformation were overly normative, prescriptive, or political in nature.” Analyzing climate change as a literary narrative explores how scientific knowledge gains traction, “[crystallizing] the anxieties of a wider public” (Buell, 2014: 272). For Yusoff (2013), this “geological turn” pushes our focus beyond social relations with fossil fuels and human impacts on Earth, to think of human being as itself geologically composed; the social then emerges as an expression of geology and geochemistry. The Anthropocene debate offers critical scholars a rare opportunity to engage with the scientific community, making possible a more political geoscience (Castree, 2015: 15). However, these proposals may elide who is contained within the “human,” while potentially legitimating “non-democratic and technophilic approaches, such as geoengineering” (Baskin, 2015: 11). Ahuja (2016) argues, “Geology is a spawn of the colonial capitalist assemblage that is rapidly transforming the planet … the discipline cannot stand objectively outside the relations that term clumsily attempts to name.” We find ourselves in agreement with theorization of the Capitalocene that challenges the narrative of a “fictitious human unity” erasing the unevenness of ecological violence (Haraway, 2016; Moore, 2017), and in agreement with critiques centering the persistent role of colonial processes and settler colonialism as inseparable from climate-driven conditions of violence (Davis and Todd, 2017; Whyte, 2016, 2013). For Baldwin (2014: 525), climate change anxieties reiterate the human as a racial category “at a moment often characterized as simultaneously post-racial and post-human.” While post-humanist scholarship has presented an important critique of the anthros, postcolonial, decolonial and critical race studies suggest that analysis of the Anthropocene must consider how colonial demarcations of the human–nonhuman boundaries were premised upon and developed alongside racial hierarchies of human difference (Gilroy, 2018; Jackson, 2013; Livingstone et al., 2011). Ecological anxieties abound (Robbins and Moore, 2013), and “fantasies of apocalypse are both a product and a producer of the Anthropocene” (Ginn, 2015: 352). But what politics do visions of future catastrophe engender (e.g. Baldwin, 2012; Ginn, 2015; Katz, 1995; Schlosser, 2015; Skrimshire, 2010; Swyngedouw, 2013)? Following the premise of popular geopolitics, we understand that popular culture narratives enable particular forms of truth making, inciting affective predispositions that generate political action (or inaction) (Dittmer and Gray, 2010; Dodds, 2008; Sharp, 1998). Apocalyptic film can be consumed as a spectacle of future ruin that closes space for political action by fetishizing causes (such as carbon), proposing technological fixes, and downplaying unevenly violent results of ecological change. But it can also be a form of social dreaming that makes different futures possible (Ginn, 2015; Schlosser, 2015). What kind of present is generated by representations of the future that reinscribe the racialized colonial origins of the Anthropocene? Future rendered as “white decline” is fundamental to the operation of biopolitical projects in the present (Smith and Vasudevan, 2017). This anxiety is new in the specificity of Anthropocene as discourse, but also contains strands of familiar apocalyptic imaginings, and crossover between policy and pop culture. The cover of The Population Bomb (Erhlich, 1968), centers a small white baby in a bomb to generate anticipatory fear and action in the form of “population control.” This neoMalthusian vision is one among many cultural productions of its time that reveal the undercurrent of fear under the guise of preventing war and environmental catastrophe (Hartmann, 1995). But Public Enemy’s, 1990 Fear of a Black Planet album cover art is, to our eyes, a franker reading of overpopulation fears: a vision of a Black planet eclipsing the earth, with Star Wars lettering and the words “the counterattack on world supremacy” repeating at the bottom. This cover art renders visible the submerged storylines of reversal and takeover that occur through proxies and fantasy in mainstream pop culture. White fragility (DiAngelo, 2011) is here stripped of pretense.

#### The 1AC's framing of existential threats is a false form of white neutrality that posits them as the hero of modernity which actively effaces the structural violence of settlement and racial slavery.

Mitchell and Chaudhury 20 – Basille School of International Affairs; York Universite – Keele Campus [Mitchell, A. and Chaudhury, A., 2020. Worlding beyond ‘the’ ‘end’ of ‘the world’: white apocalyptic visions and BIPOC futurisms. International Relations, 34(3), pp.309-332.] ku – mads

Discourses that predict the imminent ‘end of the world’ are not as universal as they often claim to be. The futures they fear for, seek to protect and work to construct are rooted in a particular set of global social structures and subjectivities: whiteness. Whiteness is not reducible to skin pigmentation, genetics or genealogy. It is a set of cultural, political, economic, normative, and subjective structures derived from Eurocentric societies and propagated through global formations such as colonization and capitalism. These multi-scalar structures work by segregating bodies through the inscription of racial difference, privileging those they recognize or construct as ‘white’4 and unequally distributing harms to those that they do not.5 Whiteness is also a form of property6 that accrues benefits – including material, physical, and other forms of security – and pervasive forms of power, across space, time, and social structures. Due in part to its trans-formation through long-duration, global patterns of violence and conquest, whiteness takes unique forms wherever and whenever it coalesces, so it should not be treated as universal – despite its own internal claims to this status. Most of the leading contributors to mainstream ‘end of the world’ discourses discussed in this article are rooted in Euro-American cultural contexts, and in particular in settler colonial and/or imperial states such as the United States, Canada, Australia, and the United Kingdom. As such, the forms of whiteness they embody are linked to particular histories of settlement, frontier cultures, resource-based imperialisms, genocides of Indigenous communities, histories of slavery, and modes of anti-Blackness. Whiteness is remarkable in its ability to render itself invisible to those who possess and benefit from it. Many, if not most, of the (often liberal humanitarian) authors of ‘end of the world’ discourses seem unaware of its integral influence on their thinking, and would almost certainly be horrified at the thought of their work entrenching racialized injustices. We are not suggesting that these authors espouse explicit, intentional and/or extreme racist ideals, on which much public discussion by white people of racism tends to focus.7 Nor do we wish to homogenize or present as equivalent all of the viewpoints discussed in this paper, which display a range of expressions of whiteness and levels of awareness thereof.8 On the contrary, we work to center broad, everyday, structural ways in which underlying logics of whiteness and white supremacy frame and permeate mainstream paradigms and discourses, including those identified as liberal, humanitarian, or progressive. Even amongst white people who consciously and explicitly disavow racism, unconscious, habitual, normalized, structurally-embedded assumptions circulate, and are reproduced in ways that perpetuate race9 as a global power structure. This includes one of the authors of this paper (Mitchell), who, as a white settler,10 continues to benefit from and participate – and thus ‘invest’11 – in structures of whiteness, and therefore has a continual responsibility to confront them (although total divestment is not possible).12 The ‘habits’ of racism13 are reflected strongly in the way that contemporary ‘end of the world’ narratives frame their protagonists: those attributed with meaningful agency and ethical status in the face of global threats; those whose survival or flourishing is prioritized or treated as a bottom line when tradeoffs are imagined and planned; and, crucially, those deemed capable of and entitled to ‘save the world’ and determine its future. This is expressed in several key features of the genre, including its domination by white thinkers; the forms of subjectivity and agency it embraces; and the ways it contrasts its subjects against BIPOC communities. First, contributors to fast-growing fields like the study of ‘existential risk’ or ‘global catastrophic risk’ are overwhelmingly white. As we will see, almost all of the authors identified by the literature review on which this paper is based, and certainly the most influential thinkers in the field, are white. For example, the seminal collection Global Existential Risk, 14 which claims to offer a comprehensive snapshot of this field, is edited by two white male Europeans (Nick Bostrom and Milan Circovic) and authored by an almost entirely white (and all-male) group of scholars. Likewise, the most senior positions within influential think tanks promoting the study of ‘existential risk’, such as the Future of Humanity Institute, the Cambridge Center for the Study of Existential Risk and Humanprogress.org, are dominated by white men, with few exceptions.15 Another expression of this tendency toward epistemic whiteness is found in the habit, prominent amongst white academics, of citing all or mostly-white scholars, which entrenches a politics of citation16 that privileges whiteness and acknowledges only some intersectionalities as relevant.17 As mentioned above, Mitchell’s (2017)18 work offers an example of this tendency: while it engages critical, feminist, and queer postapocalyptic visions written by white authors, it does not center BIPOC perspectives or knowledge systems. These examples do not simply raise issues of numerical representation, nor can whiteness necessarily be dismantled simply by altering these ratios. More importantly, all-white or majority white spaces create epistemes in which most contributors share cultural backgrounds, assumptions, and biases that are rarely challenged by alternative worldviews, knowledge systems or registers of experience. In such epistemes the perceived boundaries of ‘human thought’ are often elided with those of Euro-centric knowledge. For example, influential American settler journalist David Wallace-Wells19 contends that there exists no framework for grasping climate change besides ‘mythology and theology’. In so doing, he ignores centuries of ongoing, systematic observation and explicit articulations of concern by BIPOC knowledge keepers about climactic change. The bracketing of BIPOC knowledges not only severely limits the rigor of discourses on global crises, but also, as bi-racial organizer and thinker adrienne maree brown20 argues, it produces distorted outcomes. For instance, it smuggles normative judgments that ‘turn Brown bombers into terrorists and white bombers into mentally ill victims’ into apparently ‘objective’ claims. Similarly, the influential work of Black American criminologist Ruth Wilson Gilmore21 demonstrates how white imaginaries of the threat posed by BIPOC bodies has produced the massive global penal complex and the radically unequal distribution of life chances. In short, imaginaries create worlds, so it matters greatly whose are privileged, and whose are excluded. Further, emerging narratives of the ‘end of the world’ explicitly center figures of whiteness as their protagonists – as the survivors of apocalypse, the subjects capable of saving the world from it, and as those most threatened. In these discourses, ‘survivors’ are framed as saviors able to protect and/or regenerate and even improve Western forms of governance and social order by leveraging resilience, scientific prowess, and technological genius. For example, the cover of American settler scientists Tony Barnosky and Elizabeth Hadley’s book Tipping Points for Planet Earth features a stylized male ‘human’ whom they identify as former California governor Jerry Brown (a powerful white settler politician) holding the earth back from rolling over a cliff.22 Similarly, presenting a thought experiment about the planet’s future, Homer-Dixon23 asks his readers to imagine ‘an average male – call him John’ (in fact, the most popular male name globally at the time of writing was Mohammed). This is followed by images of a Caucasian male dressed in safari or hiking gear – both emblematic of symbols colonial conquest24 – tasked with choosing from two forks on a path, as imagined by white American poet Robert Frost. This image of rugged masculine whiteness, embodied in physical strength, colonial prowess, and the ability to dominate difficult landscapes is mirrored in his framing of his former co-workers on oil rigs in the Canadian prairies25 as models of resilience. Similarly, American settler science writer Annalee Newitz26 proposes the Canadian province of Saskatchewan as a ‘model for human survival’, based on her perceptions of the resilience, persistence and collaborative frontier attitudes of its people. Saskatchewan is a notoriously racist part of Canada, in which violence against Indigenous people continues to be integral to its white-dominated culture27 – yet this polity and its culture are held up by Newitz as a model of ‘human’ resilience. By imagining subjects in whom whiteness is elided with resilience and survival, these discourses not only normalize and obscure the modes of violence and oppression through which perceived ‘resilience’ – or, in blunt terms, preferential access to survival – is achieved. They also work to displace the threat of total destruction ‘onto others who are seen as lacking the resourcefulness of the survivor’.28

#### The alternative is a pedagogy of the land that reverses the settler tactic of deterritorialization as a direct hit to the exoskeleton of colonial power. Scholarship guides settler violence – each disruption destroys the fulcrum that upholds settler society.

Ballantyne 14 – Dechinta Bush U, Dechinta Bush University: Mobilizing a knowledge economy of reciprocity, resurgence and decolonization [Erin Freeland; *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* Vol. 3, No. 3; 2014; pg 67-85] ku - mads \*pronoun change denoted by brackets

As the conversation of Dechinta grew, the ugly politics of education on a broad political scale quickly surfaced. It became clear that education is a domain of power and privilege that is fiercely protected. Questions relating to control over its content, production and process were, apparently, not open for discussion. Curricula were deeply homogenized, deterritorialized and standardized. Post-secondary in the territory was overtly geared toward training people for industry and the endless promise of mining, pipeline and oil and gas booms (and busts). People were either emphatically supportive of the notion of ‘Elders as professors’ being recognized as equals and collaborating with university professors, or incensed by its disruption of typical academic power. The creation of Dechinta was polarizing, and reactions were telling of the deeply embedded sense of entitlement and power that the state, and existing institutions, had over determining what did and did not count as ‘education’. Rather than support spaces where academic and Indigenous knowledge would overlap, Indigenous knowledge was viewed as curriculum that should be relegated to ‘culture camps’. That processes like hunting and moose-hide tanning could draw parallels, or even inform governance, consensus building and self-determination, continue to elude most mainstream reporters, critics and institutions. Coming back to the land is a battle. ‘Education’ on the land is a direct hit to the exoskeleton of continued colonial power. By specifically disrupting education as a domain of settler colonial control to be deconstructed and re-imagined, Dechinta has challenged the most comprehensive, yet skilfully cloaked machine of settler colonial capitalism - the prescriptive education process, which produces more settler colonial bodies, thinkers, and believers. Building strong relationships of reciprocity with the land results in the crumbling of settler capitalism because it fundamentally shifts the relationships people experience and what they believe about who they [people] are, how they are in relation to and with land, and what they believe to be true. Being together on the land, learning with the land, and having a strong relationship with the land is antithetical to settler capitalism itself. The power of settler colonization relies on the total deterritorialization of people’s relationship with land. Deleuze and Guattari’s (1972) work on deterritorialization, ‘the process whereby colonization leads not just to the loss of territory but also to the destruction of the ontological conditions of the colonized culture’s territoriality,’ is a fitting philosophical conjecture to Dene expressions of how they are dislocated from their relationships with land due to process of nation-building and capitalism, and how this deterritorialization separates people from practices with the land that keeps them healthy, even if they still live on the land (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p. 192; Hipwell, 2004, p. 304). As Said (1993) has stated: land, in the final instance, is what empire is about. In this way, our relationships with land are central to the great unsettling. Reconnection, and the exchange of skills, knowledge and practice with land, thus directly threaten the settler colonial project. It removes bodies from the forces designed to encode the body as capital. The foremost space of enclosure, of encoding, is the ‘school’. The ongoing trend in Indigenous and Northern settler education since its earliest colonial intrusion has been to train Indigenous bodies to serve the needs of industry. Education has happened in Denendeh since time immemorial. It has been the settler prerogative to dismantle Indigenous ways of knowing and being, of education. Returning learning to an intergenerational exchange, on the land - which has at its very core the fundamental teachings that, if we take care of the land, the land takes care of us - will shake the foundation of settler colonization by breaking the dependency that has been created on capitalism through deterritorialization. Transformational learning supports intergenerational learners and teachers to think critically and re-imagine what the purpose of learning is. Learning on the land is healing and being in community on the land is challenging, pulling our attention to the hard work of decolonization. The year after our initial gathering, Dechinta launched a pilot semester with three courses nested within an interdisciplinary approach. Student evaluations of the program indicated it was profoundly ‘transformative’, and was for some the first ‘safe space’ of education that they had encountered (Luig et al, 2011). Interdisciplinary and collaborative, the pilot set the stage for the following four years. Dechinta now has 8 original courses, and a two semester-long program growing into a full degree that operates from -50 winters to the steamy height of summer. The challenges have been substantial. Conflict between academics and Indigenous students have made real the tensions of working on decolonization in concert, even with those who identify, or who are identified as allies. Solving conflict and difficulties through shared governance circles, while combating ingrained reactions of lateral violence and other social expressions codified in settler colonization are truly challenging, but deeply rewarding. Through the building of relationships we have a growing cohort of faculty dedicated to not just teaching but sharing in the creation of safe spaces, where the hard mental work of decolonizing in theory is met with the even harder work of decolonizing as practice. When students and faculty create a community where their relationships are ordered through their relationships with land, the work of decolonization move from a discussion in theory to practice of being and becoming a source of decolonial power. At Dechinta we debate this, and experiment with its meaning in tangible ways. Here, skills categorized as ‘subsistence’ or ‘arts and crafts’ are fundamental in forming and understanding theory. Such practices are themselves theory in action.

## Case

### 1NC – Food Prices

#### Justifying food policies through catastrophic geopolitical consequences naturalizes a liberal world order that’s the root cause of industrial agriculture and environment collapse

Le Billon et al 14

[Melanie Sommerville, doctoral student in the Department of Geography at the University of British Columbia, Jamey Essex, Assistant Professor of Geography at the University of Windsor, & Philippe Le Billon, Professor at the University of British Columbia with the Department of Geography, “The ‘Global Food Crisis’ and the Geopolitics of Food Security,” *Geopolitics* 19:2, 2014]

Since 2007, rising prices and pronounced volatility in international food markets have combined to dramatically refigure global food security and produce what many have termed a ‘global food crisis’. Driven by a variety of factors including demand for agrofuels, the intersection of food with oil and financial markets, the steady erosion of agroecological systems and social safety nets, and pronounced inequalities in global agro-food systems, these food price shifts have had profound social and political effects. In many poorer countries, price spikes led to domestic unrest and widespread food riots, prompting emergency market-control measures by several governments. Increased unrest and rising food bills led many governments to reconsider their agricultural and food policies, with exporting states shutting down food surplus shipments, and several import-dependent countries further investing in offshore food production, a practice linked to a broader ‘global land grab’ with severe repercussions for small-scale farmers and the rural poor. For many observers, these combined social, economic, and political features have been read as the markers of a new ‘global food crisis’, which has continued into 2013, and shows few signs of imminent resolution. Internationally, concerns about a new global food crisis resulted in new funding streams, combining overseas development assistance with philanthropic capital, and emphasising the development opportunities associated with agriculture as the seat of rural economic growth. These new capital flows, in combination with strengthened activism by agrarian social movements, have reshuffled the global governance architecture around agriculture and food security, creating new political actors and allegiances and strengthening others. Yet with almost 870 million people continuing to suffer from chronic and acute hunger, there are genuine questions about whether the root causes of global food insecurity have been addressed, and indeed whether a solution to the crisis is within grasp.1 Price shocks and the broader ‘food crisis’ have brought considerable attention to the geopolitical dimensions of food security and the shifting political geographies of agro-food systems more generally. In both popular and policy forums, food security increasingly appears as a matter of urgent geopolitical calculation and strategy, and as an issue central to discussions of national and human security, climate change, development and global inequality. Leveraging neo-Malthusian predictions of an imminent descent into socio-political chaos amidst growing global food supply-demand imbalances, such narratives call forth liberal humanitarian interventions promising development for the hungry and security for the (privileged) rest of us in one tidy package. These doubly securitised framings are now being used to press forward technological and market-driven solutions to food insecurity with new urgency. Even as the global food crisis has offered a potent opportunity to challenge dominant agro-food political paradigms, then, it has also tended to reinstall them. Political geographic knowledges and geopolitical framings are not neutral in this process, but rather are deeply inscribed within it. This re-prioritisation of food security within political discussions and the geopolitical agenda appears to have gone largely unnoticed by political geographers. Indeed, agriculture and food issues have long occupied a somewhat marginal position within the subdiscipline, a curious situation given the growing attention they have garnered from scholars elsewhere in geography in recent decades.2 Our aim in this paper is to begin reversing this pattern of neglect and filling the gap that has resulted. Our paper proceeds in two main parts. In the first section, we examine the geopolitical framings of food security that have come to dominate popular and policy narratives in the last few years, and demonstrate the importance of critical political geography approaches for unseating these dominant narratives. We argue that these framings promulgate a neo-Malthusian and securitised reading of food security that privileges technological and market-extending responses deployed through further liberal humanitarian interventions. Rather than interrupting the structural conditions underpinning the current food crisis, such instances of ‘neoliberal geopolitics’ obscure both the continuing relevance of questions regarding inequality and domination within the global agro-food system, and the role of crisis narratives in depoliticising recent interventions into this system. We call for critical political geography perspectives to attend to the central role of geopolitical discourses in constituting the political economy of agro-food production and consumption, and to highlight counter- and alter-geopolitics readings of food security. In the second section, we take up this challenge by examining four key areas where such approaches can help question the status quo, while also finding common ground with contemporary research in agro-food studies. In so doing, we hope to inspire political geographers to direct more attention to food and agriculture as important areas of geopolitical inquiry.

### 1NC – Not Key

#### US supply isn’t key to global ag.

Charles 13, NPR’s food and agriculture correspondent. Citing Margaret Mellon, a scientist with the environmental advocacy group Union of Concerned Scientists. (Dan, 9/17/13, “American Farmers Say They Feed The World, But Do They?”, *NPR*, https://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2013/09/17/221376803/american-farmers-say-they-feed-the-world-but-do-they)

And this is why the words “feed the world” grate on the nerves of people who believe that large-scale, technology-driven agriculture is bad for the environment and often bad for people. Margaret Mellon, a scientist with the environmental advocacy group Union of Concerned Scientists, recently wrote an essay in which she confessed to developing an allergy to that phrase. “If there’s a controversy, the show-stopper is supposed to be, ‘We have to use pesticides, or we won’t be able to feed the world!’ “ she says. Mellon says it’s time to set that idea aside. It doesn’t answer the concerns that people have about modern agriculture — and it’s not even true. American-style farming doesn’t really grow food for hungry people, she says. Forty percent of the biggest crop — corn — goes into fuel for cars. Most of the second-biggest crop — soybeans — is fed to animals. Growing more grain isn’t the solution to hunger anyway, she says. If you’re really trying to solve that problem, there’s a long list of other steps that are much more important. “We need to empower women; we need to raise incomes; we need infrastructure in the developing world; we need the ability to get food to market without spoiling.”

### 1NC – Thumper

#### COVID thumps food security.

Rudolfsen 20, doctoral researcher at the Department of Peace and Conflict Research at Uppsala University and PRIO. (Ida, 7/27/20, "COVID-19, Food Access, and Social Upheaval", *Climate & Conflict*, https://blogs.prio.org/ClimateAndConflict/2020/07/covid-19-food-access-and-social-upheaval/)

According to the World Food Program’s (WFP) latest report, the COVID-19 pandemic will lead to an 82 percent increase in global food insecurity, affecting around 270 million people by the end of the year. On June 29, the organization announced it is undertaking its largest humanitarian effort to assist an increasing number of food-insecure low- and middle-income countries. In a statement about the plan, WFP Executive Director David Beasley said that “until the day we have a medical vaccine, food is the best vaccine against chaos. Without it, we could see increased social unrest and protests, a rise in migration, deepening conflict, and widespread under-nutrition among populations that were previously immune from hunger.”

Why is the pandemic leading to more food insecurity? And why is David Beasley talking about social unrest and protest in connection with food?

As COVID-19 spreads around the world, fears are mounting of how the pandemic might impact and disrupt food distribution channels (e.g., transport disruptions) and disruption in the production of staple foods (e.g., labor shortages due to quarantine measures).

So far, food supply chains have been defined as essential by governments, exempting them from most lockdown measures. Thus, the impact on supply chains has been indirect, mainly caused by reduced income and remittances. A loss of income makes it harder for poor people to access affordable food but also impacts food systems by making it more difficult for producers to sell foodstuffs, since consumer’s ability to buy food declines. Governments, especially in low- and middle-income countries, will therefore have to implement policies that avoid supply chain disruptions and higher food prices.

But what do food insecurity and food prices have to do with protest and violence? The answer: it’s complicated.

The pandemic is spreading at a time when the number of severely food insecure people in the world had already increased—by more than 820 million people before the pandemic started—adding stress to areas already hardly hit by extreme weather events, armed conflict, and low economic development. However, most of these areas have not seen widespread unrest.

### 1NC IP

#### Intellectual property is the language of the colonizer.

Vats 21, Associate Professor of Law at the University of Pittsburgh School of Law with a secondary appointment in the Department of Communication at the University of Pittsburgh. (Anjali, “Temporality in time of TAM, or towards racial chronopolitics of intellectual property law”, *IDEA*: The Law Review of the Franklin Pierce Center for Intellectual Property, 61(3), 686-687)

"Intellectual property's economic structure is 'always already' raced," 4 2 because capitalism's orientation to knowledge is always already raced. Betsy Rosenblatt, for instance, demonstrates about copyright law that "[i]t rewards appropriation of materials perceived as primitive, raw, or 'folk' by purveyors of dominant culture, while punishing appropriation of materials that it associates with higher culture or views as already completed."4 3 As such, copyright law operates as "the language of the colonizer." 44 Kara Swanson similarly shows about patent law that its "ideology of slavery reached into the technical bureaucracy of the patent office, an arena of law and of the administrative state frequently considered outside politics." 45 As such, patent law implicates "an ultimate claim of whiteness as intellectual property." 46 Knowledge, in both instances, is ordered in a manner that centers whiteness and its attendant estimations of the value of creation and knowledge.

Trademark law too produces and entrenches visual economies of whiteness. Rosemary Coombe writes that trademarks "denied or downplayed the cultural and ethnic differences of some 'Americans"' through "the medium of the consuming body and embodiment...of others whose claims to an American subjectivity were complicated by contemporary relations of subjugation."47 Put differently, America's visual culture, as constituted through trademark law, constituted whiteness as valuable by objectifying people of color. One way that the "scopic regime"48 of trademark law operated was through the articulation of people of color as primitive, i.e. from a time past. As Coombe puts it, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries "we see preoccupation with the frontiers of civilization and the containment of the primitive."49 In the sections that follow, I explore how Harjo and Blackhorse not only reinforce temporally based race discrimination by portraying Native Americans as primitive but also illustrate how the manipulation of time through legal procedure can advantage certain litigants over others, with considerable racial and colonial consequences."50

### 1NC Heg

#### U.S. hegemony provokes blowback aggression due to status insecurity, sanitizes imperialism, and dooms international cooperation---decline spurs a great power concert that solves war and existential threats.

Pampinella 19, Stephenis Assistant Professor of Political Science and International Relations at the State University of New York (SUNY) at New Paltz (Stephen, January 23rd, “The Internationalist Disposition and US Grand Strategy,” *The Disorder of Things*, <https://thedisorderofthings.com/2019/01/23/the-internationalist-disposition-and-us-grand-strategy/>, Accessed 10-25-2021)

Why Liberal Internationalism Will Fail (Again)

But in recent weeks, mainstream US foreign policy experts have provided their own spin in progressive internationalism. Advocates and practitioners of a traditional hegemonic foreign policy have sought to co-opt progressive internationalism in a series of essays which argue for the necessity of American power and global influence. These writers embody the post-Cold War centrist foreign policy coalition of liberal internationalists and neoconservatives. For them, that the greatest threat to the democratic “free” world created by the United States remains the autocratic governance model of Russia and China. While Washington should pursue cooperation on transnational governance issues where possible, they argue it cannot do so at the expense of making security concessions which would reward revisionist behavior by great power rivals. As in the past, American exceptionalism remains the identity narrative justifying a return to US hegemony, with Anglo-American norms serving as the basis for hegemonic socialization and cooperation.

The internationalist disposition is a reminder of why a mere social democratic twist on US hegemony will fail to provide actual security for the United States and its allies. Establishment voices continue to rely on state-centric assumptions about IR and ignore how state identities and interests are a function of their relationship with each other. Or, as Jennifer Mitzen and Michelle Murray might argue, the revisionist intentions of Russia and China are a product of their ontological insecurity. A hegemonic United States defending an Anglo-American order denies them recognition of their own great power identities and their right to participate in all deliberations about global order. From this perspective, we should challenge the implicit assumption made by Anthony Blinken and Robert Kagan that Russia is revisionist by nature. An internationalist perspective suggests that Russia has adopted those intentions in relation to a Wilsonian United States which seeks domination over Moscow and the transformation of its political system. The same is true for China, which rejects being cast as a “responsible stakeholder” by Washington which would eventually accept democracy following its internal transformation by global capitalism. In other words, the very terms of US relations with these states over the past 25 years is the source of their revisionist intentions, and not some essentialized feature of their domestic politics.

Further, a liberal exceptionalist narrative that contrasts “Eastern autocracy” with “Western freedom” masks how the United States has perpetuated its own systems of illiberal dominance throughout its history. Those same structures of oppression are the greatest threat to contemporary US democracy and also serve as glaring evidence of US hypocrisy. In his defense of American exceptionalism, Jake Sullivan represents institutional racism as a bug rather than a feature of the American political system by emphasizing the liberal ideals of the Founders and casting Donald Trump’s white ethnonationalism as an aberration. But this telling of the American story whitewashes the long history of an exclusive, white ethnic US identity dating back to the early 19th Century and its role in generating the modern United States. Scholars of American political development and US history have long demonstrated that institutions of slavery and land conquest constituted US society and made possible its economic prosperity rather than some kind of intrinsic tendency toward freedom.

Fast-forward to the present: liberal exceptionalism further denies how economic globalization made possible the rise of authoritarianism. Nils Gilman and David Klion rightly argue that the kleptocratic alliance between autocrats and oligarchs is the true threat to democracy and rule of law. Their ability to concentrate political and economic power has been enabled by the emergence of an integrated global market that privileges the freedom of capital over the needs of ordinary people, one created by the United States when liberal internationalism went global after the fall of the Soviet Union.

Finally, attempts to revive US hegemony will doom transnational efforts to deal with existential non-state threats. Hegemonists like Thomas Wright argue that Russia and China are the greatest threat to the United States, and that Washington should never make concessions to either power as a means of ensuring cooperation on issues of global governance. However, “ring-fencing” global capitalism and climate change as separate issues will fail to achieve the necessary level of cooperation to cope with these threats. National security policymakers cannot recognize that the greatest dangers faced by US citizens are non-state economic and ecological global processes that shape domestic politics from the inside-out, and not rival sovereigns. Economic destitution to the point of embracing fascist dictators coupled with environmental collapse are near-certain non-state threats which transcend our boundaries – in fact, as a global power, the United States has been complicit in creating them.

The internationalist disposition would suggest that the priorities of US foreign policy must change. Regulating global processes should be the primary objective, and it requires that the United States pursue intense macro-levels of cooperation with all other states, including its rivals, to achieve them. Yet it will be unlikely to do so if it remains wedded to liberal hegemony and consumed by great power competition. Short-term incentives to accumulate resources and power will override the long-term need for global governance. The result will be a world whose people live in precarity, ravaged by climate change, and constantly on the verge of great power war.

From “Disposition” to “Grand Strategy”

The internationalist disposition clearly illustrates why old US strategies are incompatible with the progressive internationalism of the US left. However, contra Colás, progressives should not avoid developing of a positive vision for foreign policy due to the diverse range of radical perspectives. To do so would cede pro-restraint arguments to structural realist and libertarian advocates of offshore balancing who offer no template for global engagement or institutional cooperation. What progressives must do is articulate a grand strategy, or a plan that mobilizes all elements of national power and influence, grounded in a relationalist ontology that combines restraint with internationalism. This strategy must be post-hegemonic (a term even Ikenberry has flirted with), post-statist, and supportive of intense international cooperation based on the diversity of identities and values otherwise ignored by the universalist pretenses of Anglo-American liberalism. If our very existence is mutually dependent on others, then we need a foreign policy based on solidarity in response to collectively experienced threats.

I think there is a strategy consistent with the international disposition: great power concert. A concert strategy requires that all great powers pursue mutual accommodation and recognize each other’s interests as part of a larger commitment to maintain international stability. Patrick Porter and Amitav Acharya argue that a great power concert strategy is the best suited to adapt to the transfer of wealth and power to Asia along with the “multiplex” nature of world politics (not to mention a global perspective on international relations). The emergence of a diverse range of state and non-state actors bound together by extreme interdependence makes it impossible for any one actor, such as the United States, to establish rules for global governance which can mobilize all others. On this basis, a concert strategy would lead the United States to collaborate with others on the basis of mutual co-existence and embrace joint decision-making at the global level for coping with macrostructural processes that threaten all peoples around the world. In this way, a concert strategy is firmly grounded the international disposition and can serve as the realization of progressive internationalism.

Security and The Balance of Power

A concert strategy can do what establishment foreign policy cannot, namely de-escalate great power competition by giving up US hegemony. If adopted, the United States would treat other great powers, like Russia, China, and Iran, as equal partners in the maintenance of global stability and incorporate their interests into regional security agreements. The United States would give up its self-assumed role as an unrivaled global hegemon and seek a balance of power based on mutual respect with other great powers as partners rather than enemies. This kind of international posture would result in a more horizontal great power system, one that Stacie Goddard as identified as being productive of status quo rather than revisionist intentions. It would be compatible with recognition of the great power identities of other states and provide them with ontological security.