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“Go West young man, and grow up with this country” : Settler Colonialism, Gender and Property

by

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Abstract

As a theoretical starting point, this paper takes up Connell's concept of hegemonic masculinity which posits that gender configurations are shifting and determined by whichever expectations best motivate behaviors that reinforce a hierarchical and complementary relation between genders. This hierarchical structure, following theorizations by Maria Lugones, is itself a product of the colonial encounter. With this in mind, this paper compares historical shifts in American gender configurations to the material demands of settlement. Utilizing existing research into settler gender identity between 1760 and 1870, it finds that the increasing emphasis on domesticity in gender discourses concretized gender configurations in the racialized nuclear family, facilitating overwhelming population booms and justifying land-grabbing. Resultingly, American manhood was configured around patriarchal familial relations and property, intimately connecting settlement and masculinity.

The 2016 Malheur occupation in which armed, primarily white, militia members took over the Malheur national Wildlife Refuge in Oregon exemplifies this settler masculine complex. The militants routinely emphasized that their access to land was necessary for them to maintain their livelihoods and thereby their position as patriarchs. This paper finds that the connection between property and manhood is an important part of settler colonization because it embeds, at the level of socialization, an internal motive to seize and hold territory. Looking more broadly, the explanatory power of combining post-colonial feminist scholarship with modern gender research paradigms reveals not only their utility but also the need to take settler colonialism as a structural factor seriously in current American gender formation research.

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Introduction

The January 18, 2019 Indigenous Peoples March was the first of its kind. The action took aim at ongoing colonization, environmental destruction, horrendous disappearances and murder rates of indigenous women, police brutality against native peoples, and other injustices, crises and violence indigenous people face across the world. Organized by the Indigenous Peoples' Movement, the march built on the momentum of the Keystone XL protests in North Dakota, demonstrating the strength and growth of grass roots activism. This historic movement was overshadowed by a confrontation later in the day between Omaha tribe elder Nathan Philips and a group of Covington Catholic High School students. In a video that would later go viral, Philips approaches a large group of students, playing his drum and singing in the Omaha-Ponca language. As he moves through the crowd, Philips is met by Nick Sandmann standing on the steps of the Washington monument, wearing a "Make America Great Again" hat. Philips continues to move forward but Sandmann refuses to yield. While there is ambiguity in the confrontation, and much of the context is left out of the video, much of the outcry surrounds Nick Sandmann's gaze, fixed directly on Philips, a step above him, staring down the native American elder who persists until Sandmann finally yields.

The video is steeped deeply in symbolism. The 16-year old's refusal to yield ground, Philips persistence in the face of mockery, and even their respective ages (16 and 65) evoke something powerful, a scene laden with historical baggage. White impediment of indigenous movement, mockery of indigenous cultural practices, constructions of white innocence meeting savage predation, the new against the old, white man against native man; these

narrative and symbolic conflicts are powerful because they pervade our historical present. Indigenous people in the United States face tremendous challenges. According to a USDOJ report, 56% of surveyed Native American and Native Alaskan women have experienced sexual violence, while 84% report having experienced violence (Rosay 2016). As of 2005 one study found that 51.9% of Native American/ Native Alaskan men age 20-24 had attempted suicide (Nock et al. 2008). Poverty rates nationwide place Native Americans consistently near the top with one study finding that 26.1% of American Indians live in poverty (Brown and Schafft 2019:263). The Federal Indian Health Service's fact sheet on Indigenous health disparities attributes these to, "inadequate education, disproportionate poverty, discrimination in the delivery of health services, and cultural differences".

This paper attributes these and many other issues facing indigenous peoples to the ongoing settler colonization of the United States. Unlike other colonialisms that take on a circular structure of venturing out and an eventual return 'home', "settlers come to stay" (Veracini 2010:94). This paper takes the position that the United States is a settler colony, that colonization of the US is ongoing, and that this ongoing settlement is a structure that pervades social, political and economic life. All US prosperity, sovereignty, power, and indeed its very existence is/are predicated on the dispossession and elimination of indigenous peoples (Tuck and Yang 2012). As the crucial work of Native feminists, post-colonial theorists and many scholars of settler colonialism note, it is a deeply gendered project (Arvin, Tuck, and Morrill 2013; Glenn 2015; Lugones 2007, 2010; Morgensen 2010; Smith 2010). Like settler colonialism, gender and sexuality pervade social relations (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005). As Lugones' (2007, 2010, 2017) work demonstrates, there are two sides to the gendered colonial encounter. The 'light side' of this dynamic, the way the colonial encounter structures power relations among colonizers, will

be the primary focus of this work. However, this ‘light side’ is inseparable from the ‘dark side’ of colonialism, which works to dehumanize and subjugate the colonized. The plight of indigenous women is inseparable from the way that settler men are socialized. A focus on the colonizer elucidates not only how we¹ see ourselves but also how our own self-concepts are structured by and for ongoing settler colonialism.

This paper will argue that American gender configurations have been structured by the needs of the settler colonial project through, and alongside, the racialized nuclear family and property. As will be shown, these institutions and identities work in concert to drive and naturalize the settler colonial present. The first section of this paper will provide a basis upon which various pieces of intersectional work can be synthesized for greater understanding of how white patriarchal masculinity is shaped by and supports settler colonialism. Theorizations of settler colonialism and gender hierarchy will be outlined here, and some preliminary connections drawn between those works. The next section will expand on these to form a theoretical position developed through engagement with historical shifts in gender configurations between 1760 and 1870. Lastly, using the 2016 Malheur occupation as a grounding point, the paper will explore the implications of its findings, delineating relevance and arguing for greater attention to settler colonialism in modern gender research.

Theoretical Foundations

Lorenzo Veracini (2013) marks the emergence of the field of settler colonial studies around the mid-1990s and rooted in the Red power activism and decolonization movements of the

¹ I am intentionally using first- and second-person language here to identify myself as a settler and implicate myself and other settlers in the findings of this project. My work is informed and contained by the structural position I occupy. By marking this in the text I hope to lend greater clarity to readers about the position from which this work was produced.

60s, 70s and 80s (Veracini 2013). Whereas previous formulations had conflated settler colonialism with colonialism, the field of settler colonial studies delineated it as distinct form of colonialism with many structural differences that require separate analysis (Ibid). Most work in settler colonial studies has been concentrated around the US, Canada, Australia and Israeli occupation of Palestine. Settler colonialisms are diverse, disparate and very much driven by context. Though the dynamics of settlement may change based on context, all settler colonial projects have basic similarities that drive, often comparable social, economic, and political relations (Hixson 2013). Though the United States is the focus of this inquiry, its structural similarities to other projects make it possible to cross apply (with some restrictions) research from/to other contexts. After outlining the basics of settler colonialism as a concept, I will then point out several aspects of American settler colonialism that stand apart.

Settler Colonialism

Many scholars have delineated settler colonialism and colonialism (Gahman 2016; Glenn 2015; W. L. Hixson 2013; Inwood and Bonds 2017; Veracini 2010; Wolfe 2006). In Lorenzo Veracini's theoretical overview of settler colonialism, he identifies colonialism as having a "narrative circularity" based in a clear delineation of home (the metropole)² and the frontier/ colony (2010a:97). This is fundamentally distinct from settler colonialism which is instead structured as a progressing line. Veracini (2010) explicitly identifies the narrative structure of colonialism as that of Homer's *Odyssey* while settler colonialism is structured as Virgil's *Aeneid*, a poem with a singular forward narrative progression, a

² And here I am alluding to the vernacular of post-colonial studies that delineates a relationship between the metropole and the colony in which the metropole is extractive and exploitative of the colony.

journey on which we cannot turn back (Veracini 2010:97–98). The structuring of settler colonialism and colonialism in a similar manner to these classical Western texts is important in that it reminds us that colonization and settler colonization are both shaped by Western narrative paradigms. Moreover, Bonds and Inwood’s work unpacking the concept of settler colonial white supremacy highlights that “in a settler context ‘narrative is particularly relevant’ because of the central role they play in creating coherence between complex and historically situated movements, what Seawright refers to as settler traditions of place” (Inwood and Bonds 2017:261). Thus, investigating the dynamics of power at play, as well as how and why stories about settlement are told, reveals power relations imbedded in Eurocentric thinking.³

Though distinct, settler colonial projects often happen in conjunction with colonial ones, transforming traditional colonialisms into projects of settlement (as the US did ultimately through the American Revolution)(W. L. Hixson 2013; Veracini 2010). The frequent result is that “settler discourse recurrently resents distant sovereigns— when they interfere because they do, when they do not because they neglect their duties” (Veracini 2010:62). The relationship between settlers and the metropole is a tenuous and contentious one because the settler’s new home is simultaneously the object of extraction by the metropole. Thus, the metropole threatens the project of settlement and the settler’s sense of place. Though Veracini (2010) does not elaborate on this dynamic, it has clear resonances with the relationship between rural people (located in the frontier) and urban people (the place where resources go i.e. the metropole). While it will not be explored here, this

³ While this point will not be elaborated on here, eurocentrism in narrative telling points us toward Anibal Quijano and Maria Lugones’ theorizations of the colonality of power/ gender as structuring power relations in part through Eurocentricity.

dynamic will be important to analysis of the Malheur occupation, explored in the third section of this thesis. Settler colonialism is a structure (Wolfe 2006). It starts with dispossession and elimination and continues to ‘progress’ by building on what it destroyed (Veracini 2010; Wolfe 2006). The ‘logic of elimination’ identified by Patrick Wolfe (2006) clears indigenous peoples from the land which is then built on in the process of territorialization and settler homemaking, as elaborated in the second section of this paper (Glenn 2015; Tuck and Yang 2012; Veracini 2010).

Wolfe’s (2006) logic of elimination is an important theoretical point because it makes clear that settler colonialism is not necessarily genocidal but employs a variety of tactics intended to eliminate indigenous occupants of land. Genocide, Glenn (2015) clarifies, is one method of elimination among many. Other scholars have identified various tactics of assimilation (both biological—via the enforcement of blood quantum⁴ for example—and cultural—boarding schools, child separation, etc.) (Glenn 2015; Tuck and Yang 2012; Veracini 2010; Wolfe 2006). Elimination through assimilation has in many ways taken over for more violent and genocidal methods of settlement⁵ (Coulthard 2014; Morgensen 2011).

It is also one of the most diverse field of tactics employed by settler colonists. Importantly, assimilation is always backed up and perpetuated by the threat of violent

⁴ Blood Quantum is a mechanism imposed by the US government to limit tribal citizenship. To be a legal citizen of a native American tribe, one must have sufficient (determined by the tribe) ‘indian blood’. The Navajo nation currently required 25%. This means that as people reproduce outside of the native community, the number of sovereign tribal citizens decreases, furthering the decline of native populations and eroding territorial claims. This is why many scholars consider it an assimilating or even genocidal policy (STGAdmin 2018).

⁵ Though the primary mechanism may have shifted towards assimilatory violence, genocidal violence very clearly persists in the astonishingly high rate of violence (sexual and otherwise) perpetrated against indigenous women (Rosay 2016).

dispossession. Boarding schools, designed as tools to separate indigenous children from their families and thereby destroy intergenerational ties, cultural practices/beliefs, and socialize native Americans as white are one exemplary form of cultural assimilation. Famously, Richard Pratt, the head of one major boarding school once said of students that the goal of such programs was to “Kill the Indian in him, and save the man” (Glenn 2015:57).

Hixson (2013) points out that because settler self-identity relied upon “totally subservient colonized subject...colonial identities...were constructed, unstable and required constant repetition and affirmation in order to assert them as being real” (3). Indigenous peoples on the American continent necessarily did not meet this expectation, often actively disrupting it through various strategies of resistance; “Indians destabilized the colonizer’s identity...persistent rupturing of the colonist fantasy...had a traumatic impact on the colonizer” (Ibid. :4). That traumatization in combination with a destabilized identity in part explains the acceleration of violence during the settlement of the American continent. Genocidal violence is a symptom of unstable settler identity formations reaffirmed through acts of violence that reassure the colonizer of their superior position relative to the colonized. When settler identity formations—and crucially the claims to land around which they are constructed—are threatened, settlers “defend[] them violently and at all costs” (Ibid. :7). That ‘defense’ was often more *offensive* in character.

After eliminating the indigenous occupants of the land, land must be secured for settlers. Here settler colonialism comes to structure regimes of property. As Glenn (2015) points out, securing land for settlers was “accomplished by imposing a modernist property

regime that transformed land and resources...into ‘things’ that can be owned” (55). In the United States this Eurocentered understanding of land has left little room for indigenous understandings, circumventing their access to property (Glenn 2015; Inwood and Bonds 2017; Tuck and Yang 2012). Legal structures are deeply entrenched in and shaped by settler colonial practices; the project structures all our political, economic, and social lives, in part through regimes of property.

However, securing land required more than legal sanction. As Hixson (2013) writes, “a culturally imagined and legally sanctioned relationship with the land creates the conditions and contingencies of social relations” (6). A variety of cultural elements cohere in the process of settlement to produce strong emotional investments and sense of place, even as the continued existence/presence of the indigene troubles and disrupts this imagined relationship. Property, identity, and culture fuse to produce powerful social arrangements that secure imagined relations to land in a variety of ways. Hixson (2013) summarizes, “as they linked private property and individual land landholdings with freedom, progress and national destiny, under God, settlers assumed control over colonial space” (7).

Seawright (2014) identifies these investments and relations as resulting from what she calls settler traditions of place. These “normative habits and practices...passed down for generations, encouraging particular relations to place” (Seawright 2014:557), constitute the settler episteme⁶ and thereby help constitute all social relations. Securing land is just as

⁶ “the ethics, logics, and ideologies foundational to a knowledge system that have been passed down across generations, a knowledge framework that establishes what is known (the socially constructed commonsense of a culture), how things come to be known (the process of attaining new knowledge), how the world is to be interpreted according to what is known (the social construction of reality), and how the self is known in relation to perceived reality (the politics of self)” (Seawright 2014:557).

much about people and their sense of self/each other as it is securing resources. After the indigene is cleared off the land, as that land is secured by legal sanction, settlers make it their home. Even as it results in colonial ambiguity, homemaking reifies and constitutes settler identity, replacing the indigene and distancing settlers from the metropole. American settler homemaking, as will be explored in the next section of this paper, was a deeply gendered process tying the family and identities together in new and complex ways.

The instability and constructed nature of settler identities discussed above produced “slippages and uncertainty” that were expanded and deepened by various forms of indigenous resistance and anti-colonial violence (Hixson 2013). Colonial ambivalence put settlers in a position where “the colonizer desired the colonized other...yet was repulsed by his primitiveness and the dangers that he posed” (3). The nature of this desire is elucidated by Glenn (2015) who argues that “the adoption of indigenous symbols and attributes differentiates settlers from residents of the metropole” (58). These adoptions and desires are far from unproblematic, but they reveal that settler identity formations exist in tension with/between the indigene and the metropole. Moreover, while ambivalence pervades settler colonialism, the process of elimination creates “settler guilt and haunting” (Tuck and Yang 2012:9). Resolving this guilt as well as the tension between the settler and metropole prompts settlers to position themselves as indigenous—“a desire to play Indian is a settler desire to be made innocent” (Ibid.). These ‘settler moves to innocence’ work in concert with a disavowal of historical violence to naturalize settlement while maintaining the power relations. Unsurprisingly, there is little unsettling about settler colonialism; to settlers it feels natural, necessary, and just.

In the United States, settler colonialism has taken a particular form with distinctions worth noting. First and foremost “the breadth and scope—and therefore the violence—of Euro-American settler colonialism [has] no parallel” (Hixson 2013:9). The sheer number of settlers, rate of territorial expansion, and intensity/ prevalence of genocidal violence set the settler colonization of the US apart. The unparalleled rapidity of settlement, especially in the American West, is in part responsible for the instability of settler identities and resulting violence.

Nuclear familial arrangements among settlers were an important element in facilitating this rapid expansion as populations boomed (Hixson 2013; Phillips 2009). As Gahman (2014) observes, settlers (in the modern day and the past) do not understand themselves as “trying to conquer anything ...just here to build a home, raise a family, and practice their faith” (162). American settler colonialism continually emphasized the necessity of “heteropatriarchal nuclear-domestic” familial relations “in which the father is both protector and leader”(Arvin et al. 2013:13). These relations were key to maintaining “a steady westward migration towards the agricultural frontier as the threat of Indian attack diminished” (Glenn [quoting Elliot 2006] 2015:56), and shoring up the integrity of settler masculinity as civilized by preventing/repairing ‘contamination’ resulting from encounter with the indigene⁷ (Guidotti-Hernández 2011). This in part is why settler colonialism in the United States is a productive arena to investigate how settler colonialism shapes gender formations.

⁷ “Women were venerated and cherished because they represented homes and families that had been left behind.’[Quoting Seacrest] [this] reflects the idea that women embodied civilizing influences” (Guidotti-Hernández 2011:47).

Though all settler colonial regimes operate through and deploy the grammar of race, American settler colonialism gave rise to a particularly violent racial formation derivative of slavery and the middle passage. Slavery fundamentally changed and was changed by settler colonialism in the United States. Glenn (2015) asserts that “the structure of settler colonialism rests on social, economic, and political underpinnings that link racisms” (61). The resulting racial formation ties white supremacy (anti-blackness) and settler colonialism inseparably together (Bonds and Inwood 2016; Glenn 2015; Tuck and Yang 2012). The relationship between settler colonialism and slavery is one of the most discussed, contentious, and important fields of theoretical inquiry within settler colonial studies. Though relevant to this paper, it will not substantively engage with these debates. Instead, it takes as given that settler colonialism and chattel slavery both sit at the heart of social life in the United States.

Settler identity is inseparable from white supremacy; thus, engaging either requires and permits the investigation of both. Much of settler colonial studies work focuses on indigenous peoples, their struggles and what settler colonialism does to them/ their cultures. Several academic voices have pointed to the need to investigate settlers as well in order to ensure we do not “continue understanding the settler as normative” (Glenn 2015; W. L. Hixson 2013; Veracini 2010:15). By focusing on the settler, we not only get a more complete picture of the process of settlement, we also better understand the workings, logic and anxieties of the powerful. Such insights inform more targeted, reflexive, and ultimately effective resistance to/ dismantling of the structure of colonialism.

Gender and Patriarchy

Gender, as a concept and field of inquiry is far too broad, variable and complex to be unpacked fully within the constraints of this project. The focus of this paper is the way masculinity, specifically white masculinity, is influenced by and supports settler colonialism. Here, I provide a theoretical grounding point on which I will build in the next section. Patriarchy—writes feminist author, scholar and activist bell hooks—“is a political-social system that insists that males are inherently dominating, superior to everything and everyone deemed weak, especially females, and endowed with the right to dominate and rule over the weak” (hooks n.d.:2). In theory, patriarchy is an organizing principle of social life that positions individuals assigned and identified with male status as intrinsically superior in relation to women and other gender identified persons.

Johnson (2005) identifies several characteristics of patriarchy that all work to “promote male privilege” (5). First, patriarchy is male dominated. This more material aspect of patriarchy grants men greater control over resources, access to positions of power, and ultimately greater control over social, economic and political decisions (Ibid). Secondly, patriarchal society is male identified, meaning that “what is considered good, desirable, preferable, or [perhaps most importantly] normal” is gendered masculine or associated with men (6). This aspect positions maleness as the default, rendering women and their experiences as deviating from the norm; femininity (and other gendered embodiments) is/ are therefore rendered the exception. By discursively positioning women “as ‘other’” (10), men’s claims to power and privilege are secured (Johnson 2005). Third, patriarchy is male centered. Men are the agents in our sociocultural stories. This is a product of the socialization of gendered relations whereby men

are valued for what they do, and women for the degree to which they support others (namely men) (Johnson 2005).

Patriarchy at its core is about control. These traits are reflective of the intrinsically power laden nature of hierarchical gender relations. Control binds them together in a deliberately self-perpetuating/reproducing arrangement. As aspects of social structure rather than biological fact, these traits of patriarchal society necessarily elide tremendous variability in gendered embodiment and power relations. They also notably ignore the role of race in gender construction (this will be explored in the next section). However, they still mark aspects of a social structure that effect all aspects of social life (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005; hooks n.d.; Johnson 2005; Schippers 2007).

The patriarchal structure of gender relations both gives rise to and is maintained by a hierarchical organization of gender formations. R.W. Connell (1989, 1995, & Messerschmidt 2005), one the most influential scholars of masculinity, conceptualizes gender as performed, embodied, and arising from social relations rather than a biological essence. Connell (1995) begins with the supposition that there are multiple masculinities and femininities and that these “configuration[s] of practice [are] organized in relation to the structure of gender relations” (843). Like gender relations more generally, masculinities exist in hierarchical relation to other masculinities. Hegemonic masculinity represents “the currently accepted answer to the legitimacy of patriarchy” (Connell 1995:77), or a particular “pattern of practice that allow[s] men’s dominance over women to continue” (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005:832). As gender relations, even within a patriarchal social structure, differ by context, any given time and place will have a particular hegemonic masculinity that upholds the structure of gender

relations best in that context. Shifting as it is, most men do not embody hegemonic masculinity which instead can often be a symbolic ideal to which men are compared and disciplined into (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005; Schippers 2007). As the scope of analysis narrows from the global to regional to local, the diversity of hegemonic masculinities decreases. Thus, by situating it in the context of particular people, in a particular place with a particular history, we can examine hegemonic masculinity as a more stable idea and make inferences about the forces shaping it (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005).

Hegemonic masculinity is not synonymous with patriarchy but instead is the gendered embodiment that best stabilizes and legitimizes patriarchy within a particular context (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005). Hegemonic masculinity is a dynamic and adaptive system of socialization and control that both ensures men remain invested in patriarchy and work to sustain it across contexts. Masculine hegemonies are contested meaning that while a particular configuration might be most suitable to maintaining the social structure, other relations can intervene and contest this hegemony, providing potential avenues of escape through alternative or hybrid masculinities (Arxer 2011; Connell and Messerschmidt 2005). The important take away for this project is that gendered embodiments are organized according to structure. Where that structure arises from/ the structures it is intertwined with therefore shapes the particular configurations of practice that occupy the hegemonic position in gender relations. This theory opens the possibility of an intersectional analysis of how masculine identity is formed as well as the stakes these formations have for structures of power.

Settlers relationship to land, to each other and to indigenous people emerge out of a confluence of race, homemaking and trauma. Moreover, the shifting and constructed nature of masculinity, as well as the attachments to power and control that masculine subjects are socialized to value bear striking resemblance to settler identities which are likewise unstable, contested and demand constant reaffirmation. According to the USDOJ, in 86% of reported instances of sexual violence against native women, the victim reported that the attacker was non-native [read settler] (Rosay 2016). Gendered violence against native women is racialized colonial terrorism. White masculinity's relationship to settler colonization needs to be investigated because it lies at the heart of the settler colonial project. The next section of this paper will synthesize theories of gender and settler colonialism and apply this theoretical position to historical shifts in American gender configurations. By comparing these shifts with the material/structural needs of settlement, we can better understand both the structuring of gender configurations and the contours of American settler colonialism.

Theoretical Position and Gendered Settler Colonialism

Gender seems—much like settlement, capitalism, and race often do—natural, universal and timeless. The insidiousness of this has been the subject of decades of research, thought, and debate. However, the structuring and imposition of Eurocentric gender formations has yet to be elaborated. While preliminary nods to the gendered nature of settlement have been made, an examination of how gender relations are structured is necessary to a productive investigation of the coevolution of positions within that structure.

Theoretical Position

Connell's (1995) theorization of hegemonic masculinity is determined by historical and contemporary processes that produce a political economic environment in which certain configurations of practice become favored because they better support the needs of gendered structure at any particular moment (Connell 1995; Connell and Messerschmidt 2005). Because material conditions are heterogeneous, different configurations can exist simultaneously even if they contradict. Because multiple configurations can present solutions to the current threats to the structure of gender relations, often several competing formations emerge (Arxer 2011). Though only one can be hegemonic, complicit and subordinated masculinities can often appear as socially valuable identities thereby attracting more individuals to them. As material needs shift, these insipient configurations can often be integrated into or take over for hegemonic masculinity. Thus, at any given time, multiple masculinities that serve to preserve structure in different ways can coexist.

Building on Connell and Messerschmidt's (2005) work Mimi Schippers (2007) argues that masculinity and femininity are "what women and men should be" while social practice is the mechanism by which hegemony is maintained. Thus, in Schipper's (2007) view, "the significance of masculinity and femininity...is that they establish symbolic meanings for the relationship between women and men that provide the legitimating rationale for social relations ensuring the ascendancy and dominance of men" (91). Masculinity and femininity are ideological, informing and shaping social practice. 'Gender structure' for Schippers (2007) is "the extent to which a hierarchical and complementary relationship between masculinity and femininity is institutionalized" or made to seem natural (Ibid).

Gender relations and gender positions do the ideological heavy lifting for the actions taken by men, women, institutions, governments and states that support/maintain men's dominance. Both Schippers (2007) and Connell & Messerschmidt (2005) offer important insights into gender formation, relations, and structure but unfortunately fall short in accounting for colonialism and the impact this has on shaping gender relations/formations. What access do colonized peoples have to gender hegemony? How does gender hegemony/structure relate to/ arise from/ contribute to colonialism? These questions must be resolved in order to reveal the interconnections between colonial and gender power relations.

Feminist post-colonial scholar Maria Lugones' (2007, 2010, 2016) concept of the coloniality of gender offers a path towards integrating gender and colonialism. Lugones (2007, 2010, 2016) builds off the work of Anibal Quijano (2000) who understands the coloniality of power and modernity to be the two constitutive axes of global colonial capitalism, an ongoing series of interrelated power relations that pervade all aspects of social life (Quijano and Ennis 2000). The colonial event in this reading, comes to structure global power relations⁸. Complicating gender theory, Lugones (2007) argues that colonialism "imposed a new gender system that created very different arrangements for colonized males and females than for white bourgeois colonizers" (186). Lugones (2007, 2010, 2016) identifies a light and dark side to gender in the colonial encounter. In Lugones' (2007) view, the processes described by Schippers (2007) and others are part of the light side of the colonial encounter in which "biological

⁸ This point bears important resemblance to Scott Lauria Morgensen's (2011) central argument in "The Biopolitics of Settler Colonialism" where he argues that the unique political structure of the settler colony leads to the global spread of power relations beyond its sovereign boundaries. More complex than can be reiterated here, this point does demonstrate that there is significant reason to think that settler colonialism is not incompatible with Quijano (2000) or Lugones' (2007) theorizations but in fact enriches them.

dimorphism, heterosexualism, and patriarchy are...hegemonically...written large over the meaning of gender” (Lugones 2007:190). Like Schippers, Lugones (2007, 2010) sees gender relations as complimentary, dichotomous, and hierarchical. The distinction and hierarchicalization of men and women becomes for Lugones (2010), “a mark of the human and a mark of civilization” (743). While “the European, bourgeois, colonial, modern man become a subject/agent...a being of civilization, heterosexual, Christian, a being of mind and reason” (Ibid), white bourgeois colonial modern women were those who reproduced the social order and aided man in the pursuits of his interests and thereby the interests of the humanity itself (Ibid).

Lugones (2007, 2010, 2016) understands gender arrangements on the light side of colonialism as serving the needs of white racial, Eurocentric, patriarchal capitalism that arises in the moment of the colonial encounter. Even when limiting considerations to the light side of the colonality of gender (as this project largely does) masculinity and femininity, the relationship between them, and the organization of society in gendered terms not only arises from colonialism but are determined by the needs of the colonial modern project. Prior to colonialism, many pre-colonial cultures had vastly different understandings of gender relations or even no understanding of gender as a mechanism of social organization (Lugones 2007, 2010, 2016). Gender was weaponized in the colonial encounter in order to dehumanize the colonized *and* grant access to humanity for the colonizer.

For settlers (specifically those conscripted into manhood), embodying gender becomes a means of accessing full subjecthood and agency. Expanding on this Lugones (2007, 2010, 2016), sees humanness as synonymous with European, civilized, male, rational, bourgeois and heterosexual. Strikingly, Shaira Vadasaria (2015) marks the act of settlement itself as granting

access to this same humanity. She writes that in leaving Europe to find a new home “Zionism...would rid [Jews] of their ‘parasitical’ qualities and transform them into being ‘hardworking, scientifically minded, strong, rational, clean, and civilized (read: European) (Vadasaria 2015:127).” For the colonized, gender/access to gender becomes yet another marker of inhumanity, justifying colonization and death. While within the light side of colonialism a dichotomous hierarchy is drawn between men and women, on the dark side gender (in explicitly racialized terms) marks the “the dichotomous hierarchy between the human and the non-human” (Lugones 2007:743). Thus, the only real “men” within this conception are white men while others become men without being “masculine” or possessing the social qualities that grant them full access to manhood.

Moving forward from this theoretical base, there are several key takeaways that are crucial to the forthcoming analysis on how manhood is shaped by settler colonialism. Implicitly the above statements lead to the conclusion that masculinity and femininity (in their hegemonic conception) are intrinsically racialized. Though racialized populations are not excluded from the expectations attached to manhood and womanhood, they are excluded from access to the positive aspects of gendered embodiment. For racialized people, gender functions necropolitically while for the white colonizer it is biopolitical⁹ (Lugones 2010, 2016; Mbembé and Meintjes 2003; Morgensen 2011). Building off of Schippers (2007) and Lugones (2007, 2010, 2016) the ‘quality content’ or what is expected of men and women is determined by the structure of gender relations which are structured both by the hierarchical, complimentary relationship between men

⁹ These concepts are derivative of work by Foucault, Agamben and Mbembe. Biopolitics simplistically describes the way particular populations are made to live (in particular modes that are marked as positive) and Necropolitics the way particular populations deemed undesirable are routinely exposed to conditions that accelerate their death because their death is deemed beneficial all other populations. The death of colonized peoples is identified by Mbembe, along with chattel slaves, as the quintessential example of Necropolitics.

and women as well as by the hierarchical and dichotomized relationship between human and non-human established by colonization. This leads further, considering the unique structure of settler colonialism, to the conclusion that those qualities that best meet the needs of settlement at a given time will be valued over others. As will be shown in the remainder of this paper, this theoretical claim clearly bares out in the history of American settler colonialism and—as will be fully explicated in the third section—in research into modern American masculinities.

Finally, because gender ideology informed by coloniality shapes the social practices of individuals as well as other actors (Schippers 2007:92) individual practices cannot be separated from their structural significance nor from the institutions that influence/are influenced by them. The relationship is more than bidirectional, instead representing complex social arrangements and assemblages that exist in co-constitutive, interwoven and unstable relation with each other. It is therefore difficult to trace a neat starting point. This paper will thus focus on excavating some of the complex relations between gendered embodiments, the family as a distinct social unit and gendered ideology, and property relations/epistemic relations to land. Doing so will reveal the ways unstable, violent identity formations come into being due to the structure of the settler/colonial project and its material demands.

Historical Masculinity, Settlement, and Gendered Embodiment

Given the potentially immense scope of settler colonial history in the Americas, as well as gender and masculinity, this paper will have a necessarily limited focus. Utilizing several studies of American masculinity and family life, it will be limited to the United States from roughly (1760-1870). This spatio-temporal context is productive for a number of reasons. First it marks the full and final separation from the metropole and subsequent establishment and negotiation of

American national identity through the American Revolutionary war (Hixson 2013; Sachs 2015; Veracini 2010). Further, founding myths, ideologies and arrangements were consolidated during this time period, granting it an important place in American cultural memory (Hixson 2013; Hoefle 2004; Jafri 2013; Sachs 2015). Finally, the wealth of research into this time period make it far easier to examine within the constraints of this project. Though much of this section will be presented in chronological order, its focus will be on how changing material circumstances and gendered arrangements of masculinity, family, and property codeveloped. Necessarily, this will require some jumping between time periods. This is deliberate as it better reveals the structural continuities overtime while marking important points of change in the resulting social arrangements.

The Early American Frontier (1760-1790)

During the mid to late 18th century an established sense of American identity had already taken hold in many corners of the United States (Sachs 2015; Stoll 2017). The colonial government operated with a great deal of autonomy, political organizations and societies were well established and New England through Georgia was at least partially settled. Territorial claims for the most part secured (legally, not materially). Those seeking land and a new start found space, for the most part, in the western edges of the Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia territories. Though, the proclamation line of 1763 marked the official edge of English territory on the continent, settlers “took advantage of deteriorating imperial relations to slip beyond the grasp of colonial authorities” (Greenberg 2005; Hixson 2013; Sachs 2015:46; Stoll 2017).

As Honor Sachs (2015b) observes in their book *Home Rule*, settlers saw what would become the Kentucky territories, or what today might be called Appalachia, as an important site

of opportunity. Changing opportunity structures in the years preceding the 1770s had led to an outflux of largely poor people from more fully settled sections of the colonies in search of opportunity and access to land through preemption claims (Sachs 2015). The frontier was understood as a space where “the poor, the disenfranchised, and the destitute could prosper” (Sachs 2015:31). From the beginning of the American revolution through the late 1770s, the frontier space represented tremendous opportunity. As Sachs (2015b) makes clear, opportunity was implicitly gendered and familial. Sachs (2015) writes that “land ownership represented the cornerstone of personal independence, the foundation upon which the master’s status as a patriarch and citizen rested” (Sachs 2015:48). Property ownership marked poor men’s transition ‘from servant to master’ by assuring material security. For many, it likewise represented their best chance to achieve and maintain the insipient culturally idealized vision of the American family; “As the head of a household, the minion became the patriarch, the anonymous drudge became a figurehead for many” (Sachs 2015:32).

Settlers imagined Kentucky as a plentiful, empty land through circulating stories of idyllic life amid natural splendor. What they encountered was more than a decade of violent resistance to their invasion of indigenous land (Hixson 2013; Sachs 2015). The subversion of colonizer expectations by indigenous peoples during the colonial encounter results in the destabilization of settler identities and the creation of third spaces that further trouble and create ambivalence in colonial relations (Hixson 2013). Walter Hixson (2013) identifies violent indigenous resistance to American settlers as fundamentally destabilizing to settler identity (Hixson 2013:4). This destabilization threatened the security of settlers self-concept as civilized and superior (Hixson 2013). The promise of the frontier, indeed the promise of manhood itself, was subverted by indigenous resistance. As Sachs reports “instead of finding clearly ordered

families and productive homesteads, aspiring patriarchs faced a steady decline [in] their social status” (Sachs 2015:34). High male mortality rates resulted in changing roles for women (Sachs 2015:37). This shift in the gendered division of labor in response to unexpectedly violent indigenous resistance surprised not just settler families but the American public as well. The destabilization of settler identities narrowed the capacity for colonial ambivalence (Hixson 2013).

While frontier violence traumatized early American settlers and destabilized gender relations, idealized stories of frontier bravery by the likes of Daniel Boone quickly valorized the American frontier and frontiersmen in the national consciousness (M. Kimmel 1996; Stoll 2017). In spite of the far from ideal realities of frontier life, these stories of frontier bravery and conquest, spread through news print, would later be fully mythologized as part of the symbolism of particular masculinities during the mid 19th century. These myths would feed the renewal of western expansionism (Anahita and Mix 2006; M. Kimmel 1996).

Masculine valor would be contra-positioned in these cultural stories with narratives of feminine victimhood. Real experiences in the Kentucky frontier, such as the 1776 Hite family kidnapping¹⁰ were quickly mobilized against indigenous peoples as proof of their inhumanity (Jacobs 2017; Phillips 2009; Sachs 2015). Indigenous men were portrayed as rapists and sexually violent predators, threats to white womanhood. These narratives likewise highlight the profound cultural importance of the family to settler identity; as Sachs (2015) writes the attack on the Hite’s home “represented more than just an act of aggression against an individual household, it

¹⁰ Jacob Hite had, after failed negotiations with the Cherokee, moved his family onto Cherokee land in order to lay claim too it. The Cherokee responded to this violation by attacking and killing Hite and his son and kidnapping his wife and daughter (which they primarily did in order to replenish their numbers and repay a blood debt) (Sachs 2015).

was an assault on the inviolate and foundational institution of Anglo-American identity” (Sachs 2015:41).

Implicit is both the complementary (and hierarchical) relation between narratives of masculine bravery and feminine victimhood contained within the institutional vehicle of the household. If the household represented an inviolate and foundational institution, then a foundational building block of settler identity is a hierarchical and complimentary relationship femininity and masculinity. This relationship becomes mobilized against the colonized as proof of their inhumanity, mirroring Lugones’ (2007, 2010, 2016) theorizations and demonstrating that the family is the cultural package through which the relations between genders are solidified. Sachs (2015b) ultimately concludes that “the very concept of a [male dominated] household constructs a mythology of human relationships that manifests inequality in ways that seem organic and natural” (Sachs 2015:163).

Settler experiences in the Kentucky frontier, concretized the family as a marker of civilization that must be protected against savage Others. This positioning destabilized faith in American manhood to achieve such security requiring renegotiation (Sachs 2015). This incapacity to provide security ultimately represented a loss of control, a central edict of patriarchal masculinity (Johnson 2005). Cyclically, the loss of control drives men to try and regain control by doubling down on defensive violence and dominating relations with others. Because the fundamental orientation of the settler project is the elimination of indigenous peoples (Wolfe 2006), what might be resolved through mutual de-escalation instead becomes mobilized by men as a threat not just to their manhood, property, families, or lives but to society and humanity itself. This in turn drove accelerating spirals of violent conflict with indigenous

peoples (Sachs 2015). Through renegotiation, mythologization, and print media, the experiences on the Kentucky frontier produced new images of American manhood, families, and the relationships between them.

Antebellum America (1800-1870)

Michael Kimmel's (1996) *Manhood in America* is a crucial text to the study of masculinity. It is one of the first works in the field to explicitly examine how masculinity has historically evolved in America. As such it offers invaluable insights into the development of masculinity in America. Kimmel's (1996) history begins around the end of the 18th century and spans (at least for the purposes of this work) up to the mid 19th century. The newly born American nation was entering its first years of life. The frontier was expanding and founding myths had begun to take shape. It is in this moment, just at the turn of the century, that Kimmel (1996) identifies two archetypal masculinities vying for hegemonic status in the early republic: the heroic artisan and the self-made man.

The heroic artisan was an idealized proletarian. Kimmel (1996) writes "independent virtuous and honest, the Heroic Artisan is stiffly formal...loyal...an honest toiler, unafraid of hard work, proud of his craftsmanship and self-reliance" (16). Manhood for this archetype is derived from his independence, self-discipline, and investments in "shirtless democracy" or a community of equal, independent individuals. However, in a rapidly industrializing economy, economic insecurity/instability lead to a loss of status for the heroic artisan (M. S. Kimmel 1996). The market was too unstable for labor alone to assure stability (Ibid). From the 1820s through the 1840s the heroic artisan became increasingly untenable as a hegemonic masculine ideal; the social practices it produced could no longer assure the dominance of men over other

men, or over the family as labor alone was no longer a stable basis for economic independence (Greenberg 2005; M. S. Kimmel 1996).

The self-made man in contrast was “temperamentally restless, chronically insecure, and desperate to achieve a solid grounding for masculinity...manhood must be proved—and proved constantly” (M. S. Kimmel 1996:17, 23). This insecurity wedded well to the instability of colonial identity driving men to continually prove their masculinity. Seizing land from indigenous peoples became one readily available mechanism through which men could achieve success and social mobility. Writ large over masculinities of all kinds was what Kimmel (1996) calls “the breadwinner ideal” which venerated recognition of responsibility, namely, to materially support the family (Ibid:20). Though the relationship between manhood and familial obligation might change, the relation itself, across the scope of this paper, remains central to gender identities.

Because hegemonic conceptions of masculinity had shifted to require constant demonstration, the impetus for control in all things was increasingly emphasized in American gender configurations (Ibid). Pinar (2001) explicitly identifies self-control and independence (economic and otherwise) as central edicts of masculinity throughout the 1830s and 40s. Self-control, as Johnson (2005) traces, still today represents a cornerstone of patriarchal hegemonic masculinity (Johnson 2005). During its emergence in the mid-19th century, men quickly chafed against new restraints on manhood¹¹. As gender configurations shifted in response to industrialization, men’s lives became increasingly occupied by public life (work, politics and

¹¹ Men were encouraged to refrain from eating meat, masturbation, drinking and even sex. Self-control meant self-discipline around supposed indulgences (M. S. Kimmel 1996).

business) and women were increasingly relegated to the domestic realm. Expectations of the genders began to shift (Ibid).

This division, termed “the separation of the spheres”, represented a division between public and domestic life (McRuer and Bérubé 2006). The domestic space was feminized (feeding off of latent cultural narratives of female victimhood originating in the 1770s) (Jacobs 2017; M. S. Kimmel 1996; Sachs 2015) and public life masculinized. The domestic sphere became the sole space where men could recuperate from their trials in public life. Kimmel (1996) writes “the home [and women in the home specifically] would be a balm to soothe men from the roughness of the working day” (53). The domestic sphere became a space for moral as well as physical/emotional recuperation. The all-consuming edict of success established a gendered arrangement where women and the domestic sphere became the ‘moralizers’; “women set the tone of those institutions that restrained masculine excess—schoolroom, parlor, church” (M. S. Kimmel 1996:59).

Clear tensions arise here between masculinity and domesticity/femininity. Expectations of self-control and independence conflicted with the moral restraint represented in the home as well as its recuperative qualities. Men both needed and resented women’s role as moral restraint and emotional laborer because they implied an inability to control oneself and extant emotional distress. The home was emasculating for many middle-class men because they shifted arrangements away from patriarchal control and reminded them of their vulnerability and reliance on others. This emasculation coincided with a now fully mythologized frontier, offering a space of hypermasculine self-transformation through violence, conquest and unrestrained masculinity (M. S. Kimmel 1996). The command “Go West, young man, and grow up with the

country” (M. S. Kimmel 1996 [quoting Horace Greeley 1837]:60), offered personal transformation and maturation from the boyhood of civilization to the manhood of settlement through aggressive expansionism (Ibid). As the self-made man archetype developed and was increasingly positioned as hegemonic, new, conflicting ways of seeking out success emerged in response to shifting socio-economic structures. Amy Greenberg (2005) marks these tensions as two distinct manhoods operating in antebellum America: restrained manhood and martial manhood (11). These new manhoods are better understood as the successive negation of hegemony due to changed material conditions.

In her words, restrained manhood “valued expertise...they believed the domestic household was the moral center of the world and the wife and mother its moral compass...their manhood derived from being morally upright, reliable, and brave” (Greenberg 2005:11–12). Kimmel’s focus is on men who sought escape from domesticity in the frontier. As a result his argument presents anxieties over changing gender arrangements, like those supported by Greenberg’s (2005) restrained men, as prevalent across masculinities. Greenberg’s analysis demonstrates however, that men who invested in domesticity were prevalent at the time, suggesting once again the existence of multiple masculinities vying for dominance within the frame of settlement.

This archetype’s rival, martial manhood, “rejected the moral standards...their masculinities revolved around dominance...[they] believed the masculine qualities of strength, aggression and even violence better defined a true man” (Greenberg 2005:12). Martial manhood drew directly from the symbolic reservoir of the now thoroughly mythologized heroes of the early American frontier (Greenberg 2005; M. S. Kimmel 1996; Sachs 2015). In Greenberg’s

account their masculinity was explicitly and aggressively expansionist, prompting these men to engage in genocidal campaigns of elimination against indigenous peoples (sometimes called filibustering). Though some individuals would always oppose American expansionism, most did not. It would be wrong to mark restrained manhood as anti-colonial or even uniformly anti-expansionist.

From a settler colonial perspective both these gendered embodiments served, albeit differently, the needs of settlement. For Patrick Wolfe (2006), one of the foremost theorists of Settler colonialism in the United States and Canada, the “organizing principle of settler society” is the “logic of elimination” which produces relations whereby indigenous peoples are outright killed (genocide) as well as relations where they are subsumed into the body of the settle state/ nation within its new sets of relations (Wolfe 2006:388). Building off of Wolfe (2006), Glenn (2015) clarifies that because the bedrock for the logic of elimination rests in control of land and territory (Glenn 2015; Hixson 2013; Veracini 2010; Wolfe 2006), settler colonialism necessitates two activities: first settlers must “eliminate the indigenous occupants of the land” and second “secure the land for settlers” (Glenn 2015:55). Martial manhood, violent, aggressive and fulfilled through violent conquest of frontier spaces, served to clear indigenous people from land. This model importantly appealed to a great many “both the ambitious and unsuccessful” men who saw the frontier as a space of opportunity (M. S. Kimmel 1996:60). However, as Greenberg notes, it “had special appeal to working men by promising a reward commensurate with their martial virtues, regardless of their financial success at home” (Greenberg 2005:13).

The rising prominence of restrained manhood in the colonies made certain that “violence and license [as manly virtues], were, symbolically and to some extent actually, pushed out”(Connell 1995:194). In a dynamic mirroring gendered discourses of separation with Britain, Martial men coded the metropolitan United States as feminized and frontier as the site of masculine virtue. This distancing dynamic is theorized by Lorenzo Veracini (2010) as a means by which the settler distinguishes themselves from the metropole, a separatism that resolves tenuous relations between the frontier (the settlers’ new home) and the metropole. This separatism was explicitly gendered during the American revolution, marking Britain as a space of feminization and America as a space of masculine valor and moral uprightness (M. S. Kimmel 1996). The dynamic seems to be almost memetic in settler society, shaping not just martial manhood’s relationship with a ‘civilizing’ Republic but also between the sovereign patriarch and sovereign polity as Courtney Irons (2017) observes in the Malheur occupation (Irons 2017; M. S. Kimmel 1996; Veracini 2010).

While Martial manhood served the eliminatory needs of settlement, it did little to legitimate or secure settler claims to land, particularly because they often operated against the explicit wishes of the American state. Notably, while martial manhood was relegated to spaces as yet unconquered, restrained manhood was emphasized in spaces where the indigene was already eliminated. Restrained manhood held a more colonially ambivalent position, arguing for religious conversion and commerce¹² as mechanisms through which American territory might be expanded (Greenberg 2005). During the first two thirds of the

¹² As Walter Hixson points out however, the humanitarianism proponents of conversion imagined themselves as embodying was in reality far from kind or gently; missionaries and proponents of conversion deployed “dispossession, child removal, and assimilation programs [utilizing] compulsion and the threat of starvation to force compliance” (Hixson 2013:140).

19th century, restrained manhood held different significance to the project of settlement. Its emphasis on the patriarchal household as “the moral center of the world” did important work to truly settle the continent.

While martial manhood cleared land, civilized and domesticated/ing restrained manhood secured it. The family functioned not just as a means by which men achieved manhood but a crucial building bloc of/tool for settlement and grounding mechanism for property rights. This division, demonstrates the theorization of the relationship between gender and coloniality forwarded in the beginning of this paper because it demonstrates both a continued emphasis on hierarchical and diametric relationship between femininity and masculinity (in the ultimately socially valued archetype of restrained manhood) and that gender roles are dictated by the needs of settlement. Moreover, as the needs of settlement are diverse, even conflicting visions of manhood can for some time coexist as martial and restrained manhood did during the 1830s and 40s. The heterosexual family as the ultimate exemplar of the proper relation between men and women (Schippers 2007), likewise carries continued importance to settlement both materially and symbolically.

The Family, Property, and Settler Colonial Identity

As noted by Maile Arvin, Eve Tuck, and Angie Morrill (2013), “The hetero-paternal organization of citizens into nuclear families, each expressing a ‘proper’ modern sexuality, has been a cornerstone in the production of a citizenry that will support and bolster the nation state” (Arvin et al. 2013:14). As Hixson (2013) and Glenn (2015) both note, part of what made American settler colonialism so successful was the overwhelming number of settlers moving westward. It was, ultimately, a demographic game; expanding settler populations and

diminishing numbers of indigenous peoples made settlement both feel inevitable and gave settlers an advantage in terms of numbers. Put more plainly, Margaret Jacobs (2017) writes that “settler colonialism *depended* on and promoted white women’s’ reproduction of children, families, and social institutions” (Jacobs 2017:13).

As early as the Florida Armed Occupation Act of 1842 but later followed by the 1850 Oregon Land Donation Act, and 1862 Homestead Act, these familial structures were materially incentivized with property (Jacobs 2017). The Oregon Act for example allowed married claimants twice the land of single settlers. The Homestead Act is distinct not only because it was the largest in scale of land give away but also because it was the first such law to allow single, never married women to claim land (Ibid). This seemingly ‘progressive’ policy’s passage was predicated on the argument that unmarried women would eventually find husbands in the frontier. Propertied women, it was argued, were more likely to be sought out by husbands, encouraging the now juvenilized martial masculinity to follow the initial path of settlement narrativized by Greeley and “grow up with this country”. Ultimately, Martial masculinity collapses into a more restrained manhood because the nuclear family was a materially beneficial familial/gender relation and because embodiment of such a relation was institutionally rewarded with land.

The family also functioned symbolically with manhood to justify settlement/expansionary violence. Experiences in the Kentucky frontier had imbedded within the family an insecurity in the presence of hyper-masculine savage others. Womanly victimhood came to be projected onto the settler family representing its vulnerability to violation (Sachs 2015). This projection would remain an important motivation for offensive violence against indigenous

peoples and a rational for conquest. The change in gender relations brought about by the early 19th century separation of the spheres rendered domesticity fully feminine (Greenberg 2005; M. S. Kimmel 1996). While this pushed some men out of the family westward, it also doubled down on the securitizing of the settler home.

The violability of the home by the predatory hypermasculine savage motivated preemptive violence and justified not just vigilante settler violence but also active support from military forces. A relation was set up by these constructions that rendered the settler home incommensurable with indigenous survivance/presence on land. The protection of settler families, not just from indigenous peoples but of their inherent right to existence/property was a documented rationale for innumerable massacres, campaigns of ethnic cleansing and governmental removal policies like the trail of tears (Hixson 2013; Jacobs 2017; M. S. Kimmel 1996; Phillips 2009). The family is constructed as an endlessly justifiable end, it provides for many the ideological scaffolding for “settler moves to innocence” that distance the colonizer from colonial violence (Gahman 2016; Tuck and Yang 2012).

Long before the passage of these expansionary policies, the family functioned as a means of securing property, specifically for men. After the difficult 1770s in the early Kentucky frontier, disputes arose over property ownership in the area between small holding settlers and land speculators. Small holding settlers explicitly couched their arguments for land rights in gendered familial terms. “At the heart of these debates”, writes Sachs (2015), “were white male anxieties over their right to govern their own households” (50). Though the ultimate compromise fell somewhat in favor of land speculators and a more commodified notion of land, the mobilization of the capacity to support family was a culturally potent potential grievance. These

arguments came to be integrated into property jurisprudence in the early United States, embedding the family as a form of improvement to property that could be leveraged as a claim to land (Sachs 2015; Stoll 2017).

Land was understood by settlers as a resource and eventually a commodity as well. As a resource, the land provided a stable material base on which familial relations could be built. The securing of land meant more than just securing title to it. Settler homemaking is the ultimate goal of the settler project. It drives the tension with the metropole which threatens the integrity of the settler's home in the colony through its exploitative relationship with it and the logic of elimination which desires to unmake and then remake land in the cultural image of the settlers. Restrained manhood worked with martial manhood but better approximated an ideological formation that would motivate settler homemaking as a masculine social practice. The family was the symbolic and material social unit through which relations to place could be imagined that "linked private property with freedom, progress and national destiny, under God" (Hixson 2013:7). This is why Greenberg terms the nuclear family system of organization "manifest domesticity". The family ties property, manhood, and the settler colonial project together. Seawright's (2014) settler traditions (read epistemologies) of place come into being through the unique assemblage of family, manhood and nation that structure subjective/intersubjective relations¹³ in the colony.

This fusing of property, family and manhood is unique and particular to the American settler colonial encounter, these relations emerge there (Jacobs 2017; Lugones 2010). Moreover

¹³ The subjective/intersubjective is one of the four co-constitutive axes through which coloniality structures global power relations per Quijano and Lugones' understandings of them (Lugones 2007, 2010, 2016; Quijano and Ennis 2000).

this formation is implicitly racialized as white. Colonized people and people of color were at the time, and in many ways still, excluded from this relational matrix. Because the patriarchal family is raced as white, Whiteness as property bolsters the tie between the family and property rights even more. Ultimately, these relations are collapsed into the colonizer identity under the structural arrangement of power relations theorized by Lugones (2007, 2010, 2016). Whiteness, maleness, the nuclear family and property rights are all interwoven; an assault on one becomes an assault on all fronts, an assault on humanity itself.

This tightly interwoven subject formation explains the intrinsic insecurity, fragility, and tenuousness of all these particular identities (Boucher 2004; Hixson 2013; Johnson 2005; Sachs 2015) because they are not in fact singular but multifaceted, exponentially multiplying the insecurity of each when they are treated individually. This not only resonates with the broad theoretical claims of gender theorists (Arxer 2011; Connell 1995; Connell and Messerschmidt 2005; Johnson 2005; Lugones 2007, 2010, 2016; Schippers 2007), it also ties important commonalities—uncovered across research projects—between whiteness, maleness, heterosexuality (nuclear family relations), and colonial identities together. Settler colonialism, as Glenn (2015) argues provides a theoretical scaffolding through which gender and racial formation in the United States can be better understood. Its application reveals interconnections lost in other analytical orientations. In the next section, the implications of the above arraignment will be explored as they relate to right wing nationalism/libertarianism, violent masculinity and contested sovereignties in the modern-day American polity.

Implications: The Malheur occupation, Settler Colonialism and Property

The confluence of structures, institutions, and identity discussed above has profound implications for a variety of research paradigms and contemporary phenomena. The structure of settler colonialism, its allegiances with heteropatriarchy and property, manifest in multiple contexts in different ways. When looking for individual manifestations of structural positions, as much as this can be productive in highlighting the contours of systems of power, case studies are necessarily fraught with variables. Thus, even those analyses with greater scope and depth than the project presented here will necessarily have shortcomings. Structured by settler colonialism and constructive of settler traditions of place, the unique relationship between white masculinity, the patriarchal family, and property reveals much about the implications of ongoing colonization. As this project has so far focused on the ‘light side’ of colonialism or the way structures and relations affect settlers broadly and white settlers in particular, the implications section of this project will follow suit. Though there are a multitude of potential case studies, the 2016 occupation of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in Oregon by White, land owning settlers not only illustrates the theoretical claims of this project but also their relevance to studies of public violence, rurality, and right-wing populism. This paper will begin by outlining the 2016 occupation—its background, timeline and result—followed by an examination of its meaning within the context of this project. Extrapolating beyond this case, the author will point towards potential future directions in research and ultimately conclude the project.

Background

A Brief History of The Land:

The Malheur National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) sits within Harney county on the eastern edge of Oregon within the Harney Basin and Great Basin. The land itself has a long history of

human presence with the earliest archeological evidence of human beings in dating back to 10,400 BP and a major archeological site¹⁴ within the area now designated as the Malheur NWR dated to at 7600 years BP (Sam 2018). Indigenous peoples have therefore been present in the area for well over 7000 years (Ibid). The area in question rests within the traditional territory of the Northern Paiute who were semi-nomadic peoples with diffuse social organizations reliant on seasonal cycles. (Ibid) The Northern Paiute currently claim those who utilized the Malheur site as their ancestors, in line with archeological evidence (Ibid). Westward and more secluded than much of Oregon, the Malheur land and its indigenous residents had little contact with Westerners until the 19th century, remaining unmapped almost entirely until 1845 (Sam 2018). The Northern Paiute had by 1860 faced successive waves of settlement in other parts of their territorial homeland and seen the establishment of the Warm Springs Reservation onto which displaced Tenino and Wasco peoples were forced (Ibid). This fomented conflict between the traditionally rival tribes as well as American settlers and the US government, ultimately resulting in the Snake War in which two thirds of the existing Northern Paiute people would be killed (Ibid). The Treaty of 1868 which ceded Northern Paiute territory to the federal government, despite good faith on the part of the Paiute, was never ratified by congress; “the US government effectively reneged on this concession by not ratifying the treaty” (Sam 2018:20). Instead, by executive order in 1872 President Grant established the Malheur Indian Reservation onto which the Northern Paiutes living in the Harney and Great Basin were relocated (Ibid).

Shifting returns from mining and cattle ranching in California increasingly drove interest in Northern Paiute land beginning around 1860 (Robbins 2016; Sam 2018). During the 1870s, a

¹⁴ The archeological site referenced here is located at the Malheur NWR headquarters, the main staging area and base for the occupation. Some artifacts were damaged during the occupation by occupiers. (Inwood and Bonds 2017; Robbins 2016; Sam 2018)

cattle speculator named Peter French consolidated land claims through the Homestead, Swamp land, and Desert Land Acts to buy up “enormous acreages of land—always centered around waterways.” (Robbins 2016:581). This buy up would later be consolidated into a huge stretch of valuable land owned and operated by the Pacific Cattle Company. The economy was the epitome of extractive resource management. Robbins (2016) writes “Flamboyant Bill Hanley, who emerged as a major ranch operator and political figure in the twentieth century, put the case bluntly: “the cattleman looked on the settler as someone getting in his way. The settler looked upon the cattlemen as a monopolist” (586). Homesteading settlers began arriving between 1880 and the mid 1890’s. However, due to difficult farmland and lack of access to waterways many would fail selling their land to cattle barons like French (Ibid). This competition between corporate and settler claims on land represents a lasting class tension in settlement, echoing tensions in the early Kentucky frontier (Sachs 2015).

In 1908 President Theodore Roosevelt designated the major waterways around Malheur Lake as the Malheur Lake Bird Refuge (Robbins 2016). However, it was not until 1935 that the water ways were consolidated formally within federal control through the *US v. State of Oregon* supreme court ruling. Whatever the legal basis, indigenous people were forcibly removed from their ancestral home by the federal government on the behest of settlers and land speculators (Hixson 2013; Robbins 2016; Sam 2018). The 2016 occupiers, including their widely recognized leader Ammon Bundy, claimed that the land was the domain of the State of Oregon and its residents, illegally taken by the federal government. This claim does not bear out in constitutional law (Bonds and Inwood 2016; Inwood and Bonds 2017; Irons 2017; Robbins 2016, 2016). However, as Carolyn Gallaher rightly points out this claim,

Is based on a selective reading of history that emphasizes...when the government took ownership of land not claimed during the settlement period, instead of the stage leading up to it, when the government seized Indigenous land for white settlement. So construed, the occupiers could claim they were taking the ‘people’s’ land back from the government rather than engaging in a second round of white theft of Indigenous land (Gallaher 2016).

Fundamentally both claims rest on settler logics and conventions that were and are deliberately constructed to exclude indigenous land regimes and claims (Gallaher 2016; Glenn 2015; Gombay 2015; Inwood and Bonds 2017; Livingston 2018). Thus, in the proceeding analysis the issue is not who rightfully controls the land but rather what the act of occupation is motivated by/represents within the structural context of American settler colonialism.

The Sagebrush Rebellion

Bonds & Inwood (2017) as well as many other commentators have identified the Malheur occupation as an extension of the Sagebrush Rebellion. Bonds & Inwood (2017) write “While the rebellion has ebbed and flowed...many associate its origins with the passage of an array of environmental laws and reforms in the late 1970s...described [by some] as ‘federal colonialism’ (260). The movement is explicitly situated in States Rights discourses, specifically around control of land. One of the primary goals of the movement, which is mainly popular in the Western United States, is the ceding of Federal Bureau of Land Management land to state control in conjunction with the removal of environmental regulations (Inwood and Bonds 2017). As Robbins (2016) writes “of the nation’s approximately 640 million acres of public land, only 4 percent lies outside of the West.” (578). Moreover, in the west itself 47% of all lands are owned

by the federal government with as a high as 80% in some states (Irons 2017). Thus, many private land owners have come to believe that this distribution of land ownership “affords the federal government undue authority in the Western states” (Inwood and Bonds 2017:260). This distribution of power, write Bonds & Inwood (2017), “has long sat uneasily next to a pervasive and mythologized ethos of boot-straps individualism and white property rights” (255).

As identified in the second section of this project, these notions of property rights and self-sufficiency emerge out of a historical relationship between settlement, white supremacy, and patriarchal masculinity—a relationship that is consistently present throughout the movement and its offshoots. These themes and ideas pervade the Malheur occupiers’ public statements and actions (Inwood and Bonds 2017; Irons 2017; Seraphin 2017). Importantly then, the Malheur occupation and its implications are not limited to a single event, instead representing a broader socio-political populist movement in the American west.

In 2014 a long brewing conflict between Cliven Bundy—the self-identified patriarch of the Bundy family— and the BLM finally came to a head. Bundy had been grazing his cattle on BLM land without paying the required fees for over a decade. In response to over a million dollars in unpaid fees, the BLM moved to seize Bundy’s cattle. The response was intense and quick. Already circulating on right wing radio, the so called ‘Battle of Bunkerville’¹⁵ was staged by the Bundys who rallied militia members and sympathetic followers to openly resist the federal

¹⁵ An intentional allusion to the inaugural battle of the revolutionary war (the battle of Bunker Hill), this name implies that the participants understood themselves as revolutionaries against a tyrannical metropolitan power (Livingston 2018). Such a positioning is particularly relevant in the context of settler colonialism because the revolutionary war represents the realization of independence from the metropole, a crucial and structural tension in need of resolution.

seizure of cattle, riding on horseback towards them and positioning snipers with guns trained directly on federal officers.

The conflict writes Livingston (2018) “pushed them [the Bundy family] and the resurgent US militia movement onto an international stage and positioned them as performers in a national drama that presented an interplay of popular and state sovereignty” (344). Studies of the 2014 standoff reveal the theatrical, narrativized nature of these events; both the 2014 and 2016 Bundy standoffs are performing and legitimating a particular relation to land and others rooted in white supremacy, heteropatriarchy and genocide (Inwood and Bonds 2017; Irons 2017; Livingston 2018; Seraphin 2017). Moreover, the ‘victory’ during the 2014 standoff is credited as having emboldened the Bundys (Irons 2017). Moreover, the event made the Bundys “icons for the movement against federal land management” (Irons 2017:484), dramatically amplifying their reach and influence as political figures.

The Malheur Occupation and Settlement

The Occupation

The Malheur occupation began as a protest against the arrest of the Hammonds, two ranchers from Oregon who in 2006 had been convicted of arson on federal lands and sentenced to less than a year in prison (Irons 2017). The judge in the trial had found the mandatory minimum of 5 years to be unconstitutionally cruel and unusual punishment (Ibid). However, the decision was later reversed after their release, resulting in their rearrests (Ibid). Ammon Bundy attached himself to the incipient controversy, eventually organizing a late December 2015, protest in Burns, Oregon in which more than 300 people participated (Ibid). At the end of the protest, Bundy announced that armed followers were in the process of seizing the MNWR headquarters, urging sympathizers to join them (Ibid).

Over the course of the occupation, participants deconstructed several fences, security cameras, and posted videos to social media in order to spread their message, described by Livingston (2018) as “a message of government overreach and local, citizen-driven protest in the mode of (imagined) colonial revolutionaries” (345). Importantly, Ammon Bundy and nearly all the occupiers identified their argument within constitutional law, specifically citing the Property and Enclave Clause (Irons 2017). They specifically stage their complaint as with government overreach, the exercise of federal authority beyond the constitution (Irons 2017; Livingston 2018). This framing specifically aligns the movement within the rationale for the revolutionary secession from England. This invocation of the revolutionary war, or the staging of the government as a foreign, tyrannical entity is evident throughout both the 2014 and 2016 occupation the implications of which will be discussed below. The occupation died down after its leaders were arrested by the FBI on January 26 with the exception of LaVoy Finicum who was shot and killed during the arrest (Irons 2017). The final four holdouts surrendered on February 11, 2016 (Ibid). In total, the armed group of mostly white, mostly male militants occupied the MNWR for forty days with only one shooting/death. Though the precise number of participants is unknown, 26 people were indicted, 24 men and 2 women (Ibid).

Several points are worth noting before proceeding to the analysis. First, though many occupiers were men, there were several women who participated in occupation as well able it in dramatically different capacities than the men with the exception of Shawna Cox who was identified as one of the leaders of the occupation. Moreover, most of the occupiers were also not from Oregon, instead largely residing in other, neighboring states. These individuals have no direct stake in the reallocation of federal lands to the state of Oregon but instead frame their motives in terms of a perceived threat to personal liberty by the federal ownership of land. Many

of the leaders of the occupation are ranchers (Inwood and Bonds 2017; Irons 2017). Though Ammon Bundy and his brother are not ranchers, their strong familial connection to the Bundy ranch in Nevada and their father Cliven tie them to a relationship with land that understands it as a prerequisite for livelihood. Land and specifically land as private property is understood by the occupiers, particularly their leaders, as the bedrock of freedom and as the sovereign domain of those who settled there (Inwood and Bonds 2017). This is evident in Cliven Bundys claim preceding the 2014 standoff “that his cattle could roam where they liked because he had ‘raised cattle on that land, which is public land for the people of Clark County, all my life ... I have preemptive rights” (Livingston 2018 [quoting Cliven Bundy]:344). His claim to land rests in the act of settlement, in the very act of using the land he gains preemptive rights to the land.

Analysis

The complimentary and hierarchical relation between men and women central to the maintenance of the colonial relations outlined in the previous section is evident in the distribution of labor set up by colonialism. Courtney Irons (2017) writes “There were several women at the occupation, but they typically took on traditional domestic roles like cooking, cleaning, and organizing supplies, while most of the men took shifts standing guard outside with guns” (488). In an Oregon Public Broadcasting piece, Amanda Peacher reports “In the shadow of the cowboy hats at the press briefings and the patrolmen styled with camouflage and rifles, women cook pots of chili, do laundry, and lead Bible study.” There is a clear division of labor at work in the Malheur occupation. This division of labor mirrors the gendered division of labor established by the separation of the spheres in the mid-19th century which relegated women’s roles to ensuring men had a space of recovery—preparing food, laundry, etc.—and a moral

check on men's behavior—leading bible study. The Malheur occupiers, men and women alike set up a gendered arrangement that is hierarchical and complimentary. That this gendered arrangement coincides with and is specifically designed to support an occupation of land has obvious resonance with the history explored in previous sections of this project. Crucially, these gender dynamics are inseparable from the heteropatriarchal familial relations. As Melissa Cooper, wife of one of Ammon Bundy's most loyal followers reported in that story, "They need women here. These guys go out there and sit in this cold, in two degrees. They're protecting me" (Peacher 2016). Cooper's identification with a feminized, domestic role and simultaneous statement that it is she the male occupiers are defending suggests that at least some of the occupiers understand the occupation as a defense of their families, thereby securing their positions as patriarchs; "throughout the occupation Ammon Bundy cited his family as the reason he was there" (Irons 2017:501). Defense of family invokes a particularly powerful narrative that justifies violence.

In her legal note on the gendered implications of the Malheur occupation, Courtney Irons (2017) explains that the issue goes beyond gendered arrangement but implicates the occupiers arguments about federalism as well; "retaining local or semi-local control over issues relating to the family was [during women's suffrage] a way to retain the patriarchal structure of the family and thus preserve the power and authority of the male heads of household" (Irons 2017:495). Land ownership is central to the existence of the nuclear family. Thus, federal control of land represents, in the minds of the occupiers, a threat to their livelihood and capacity to provide for their families; "although Ryan and Ammon are not ranchers themselves, they...feel deeply that control of land is central to liberty" (Irons 2017:501). This relationship to land specifically draws from settler traditions of place which position land as a resource to sustain white patriarchal

families. At stake/motivating the Bundys during the occupation then was a concern for loss of patriarch status and incapacitation of their breadwinner abilities.

From the perspective of the Bundys the Malheur standoff was a conflict between sovereigns. Irons (2017) identifies in the Malheur occupation two dueling sovereignties, one over the nuclear family, the popular sovereignty of small-holding settlers and State sovereignty. This tension between settler isopolities (small holdings, and communities operating outside of the state) were crucial socio-political arrangements during the early frontier because they pushed settlers to conquer land. State sovereignty would frequently not reach early settlers for years making popular sovereignty among settlers and crucially within their families an extremely important, structurally embedded political arrangement (Hixson 2013; Veracini 2010). During both the 2014 and 2016 standoff, the Bundys routinely position themselves in the vein of the revolutionary war heroes. Marking the government as unjust and tyrannical, the Bundy's emulate the same discursive tactic as the declaration of independence thereby aligning themselves with the specific symbolism of that separation. Walter Hixson (2013) writes "Settler colonies created their very identities through resolution of this dialectical relationship [metropole and indigene], in which indigenes disappeared and metropolitan authority was cast aside" (Hixson 2013:5).

Kimmel (1996) goes even further identifying the revolutionary war as a symbolic separation of sons from fathers. In his account, media before, during, and after the revolution feminized the metropole, thereby establishing American identity as masculine and the metropole as a threat to the integrity of masculine identity located in the frontier (M. S. Kimmel 1996). This lasting tension, and its recurrence in American history suggests not just a structural contradiction between popular sovereignty and state sovereignty but also a cultural fixation on separation from

the metropole. That fixation goes beyond the resolution of the structural dialectic. The Bundys seem to be looking for a metropole that they can separate from and in so doing gain subjecthood through settlement/reassertion of their control over land, property and the family (Lugones 2016; Vadasaria 2015). Their demarcation of the federal government as an exteriorized metropole feeds back into a securitized domestic space, in part explaining why Cooper identifies the occupiers as defending her. Because the home is constructed as violable to exterior threats, the threat of a competing sovereign in the form of the metropolitan government melds white male fear of loss of family, security, power, property and ultimately control.

Importantly this conflict over the west, changes the actor but not their position in the narrative; “it replayed a scenario of discovery and conquest. This time, Bundy associated the federal government with non-legitimate ‘Others’ who are not part of the body politic that comprises the owners of ‘our’ country” (Livingston 2018:350). The government stands in for indigenous peoples because it allows Bundy to live out a narrative that valorizes him and others like him as rightful, sovereign and heroic within American cultural narratives about masculinity, property, space, and political constitution. As Livingston (2018) notes, the position of the Bundy militants rests on notions of the supremacy of popular sovereignty arising specifically in settler pasts and at times even promoted by the American state (Veracini 2010). Popular sovereignty is the foundation of settler colonialism, but state sovereignty is its realization. Settlerism requires both, despite their inherently contradictory nature.

Importantly, there is a spatial dynamic at work here as well, the Bundys and nearly all their followers are primarily rural. Their location in and identification with rurality, particularly when cast against a government located in the ‘metropole’ that is also presumably

metropolitan/urban raises a political dynamic in the United States. Cairns (2013) writes how the exceptionalizing of metropolitan racist events “produces urban centers as cosmopolitan and tolerant, elevated against the backdrop of an apparently racist rural periphery” (642). Urbanity, the site where much of capitalism’s wealth is located and stored, becomes cast as the center the neo-civilized metropole. Settlerism, specifically in rural areas, has historically been a means to improve class standing. As Glenn (2015) notes “There was greater equality among the settlers than existed at the time among inhabitants of the metropole” (58). The peripheralized rural is simultaneously cast as backwards, mirroring the colonial dynamic between colonizer and colonized (Cairns 2013; Stoll 2017). This is not to suggest that rural settlers are being colonized. Rather it demonstrates a moment of mimesis whereby the metropole-periphery tension produced through settlement is reproduced by those with wealth and power to justify class exploitation. Rural peoples, as Cairns (2013) finds, mobilize the rural idyll, embedded in Canada’s cultural memory, to reclaim esteem lost through neoliberal economic changes. By locating themselves in the valorized narrative of frontiersmanship, rural people “secure their own identities within clean, desirable bodies and spaces” (641). That location is one built specifically off settler colonial elimination and racial exclusion, emerging from and justifying settler colonial violence.

At his most extreme, Bundy does refer, during the occupation, to the federal government as “modern day conquerors” (Irons 2017). While Irons (2017) identifies this as a gender dynamic between the sovereign patriarch and the sovereign polity, from a settler colonial perspective this statement might represent what Tuck & Yang (2012) call a settler move to innocence. These “strategies or positionings that attempt to relieve the settler of feelings of guilt or responsibility without giving up land or power or privilege” (Tuck and Yang 2012:10), are an important part of maintaining the legitimacy of the settler project. Though the economic relation between urban

centers and rural peripheries is very real, settler colonialization is more than economic and therefore incomparable, in any authentic way, to colonization. However, by positioning himself as colonized, Bundy not only trivializes colonization but likewise distances himself from the settler identity instead framing the government as a colonizing power, thereby indigenizing himself relative their clearly more exterior position. Such moves to innocence and actions that generally ‘play Indian’, arise from an arrangement where “the desire to reconcile is just as relentless as the desire to disappear the Native; it is a desire to not have to deal with this (Indian) problem anymore” (Tuck and Yang 2012:9). Thus, while some aspects of their movement might explicable as class politics, their couching of said politics in the language of sovereignty and positioning themselves as ‘colonized’ renders the Bundys occupation far more than that. An economic analysis is insufficient as is gender. Settler colonialism provides a path forward.

The confluence of these forces and embodied narratives points towards a connecting axis between whiteness, maleness, and settler subjectivity. In their investigation of wildtending practices, Bruno Seraphin (2017) finds that “the unmarked quality of whiteness—the very aspect that endows it with its social power—functions as a double edged sword: as whiteness bestows a normative superiority it also produces a feeling of lack, a hunger for meaning” (458). Johnson (2005) likewise theorizes patriarchy as male centered and male identified, suggesting a similar positioning between whiteness and maleness. That hunger for meaning is likewise identified by Scott Kouri and Hans Skott-Myhre (2016) who write that “the settler is constituted by a desire trapped in dialectic with lack, a perpetually deferred longing for ‘an imagined lost fullness of the nation’” (2). The lost fullness of the nation represents the perpetually unfulfilled promise of the completion of the settler project, of not ‘having to deal with this (Indian) problem anymore’. The incompleteness of the settler project, and hunger for meaning produced by white racial formation

lead settlers to seek “enjoyment of a series of substitutes which come to stand for the unattainable fullness” (Kouri and Skott-Myhre 2016:2). These substitutes often take the form of embodied narratives that allow the settler to ostensibly bring the project closer to conclusion when in fact resolution is impossible. The theatrical and embodied narratives played out during the 2014 and 2016 standoffs, could represent substitutes in this conceptualization, lining up with the theoretical claims of this piece.

In settler colonial contexts “narrative is particularly relevant’ because of the central role they play in creating coherence between complex and historically situated movements” (Inwood and Bonds 2017:261). Narrative builds the epistemological conditions whereby settlers maintain their sense of place and establish themselves as justly attached to land (Seawright 2014). The affective release of theatricality produces a ‘embodied mimesis’; “the citational nature of our embodied behaviors creates a ‘syncopated time’....a ‘recollection of what has not yet come” (Livingston 2018:346), which in the case of the Malheur occupation is the realization of the settler project and supremacy of settlers over all things, including other sovereignties. The repetition of settler vs. metropole, seen in identification with the original separation of the revolutionary war, can be better understood when we contextualize it as a means for alleviating settler guilt, haunting and incompleteness.

Conclusion

Tying whiteness, maleness, the nuclear family and settlement together deepens our understandings of all independent parts, opening avenues for complex, nuanced and interdisciplinary investigations of the relationship between structures, individuals and social behaviors. The application of this project’s findings to the Malheur occupation points towards

new avenues for research in populist movements, the relationship between white masculinity and violence, gun culture, and rurality. Moreover, this paper and many of those cited within it demonstrate the reflexivity and nuance achievable through engagement with settler colonialism. Though race and settler colonialism are more often put in conversation with each other in scholarly work, gender and its dimension often remain neglected outside of important work by native feminists (Arvin et al. 2013; Lugones 2010; Morgensen 2010; Simpson 2016). Though Glenn (2015) does address interconnections between race, gender and settler colonialism, his account primarily traces the way that gender motivates settlement rather than the way it is formed by settlement. This approach is typical of the way gender is integrated. This approach is one sided, failing to capture not only the ongoingness of settler colonialism as well as leaving little conceptual space for tracing connections between the structure of settler colonialism and gender formations/ arrangements.

Gender studies research, particularly those investigating masculinity likewise too often neglect settler colonialism as an important structural factor in gender formation. Though much has been done to introduce intersectionality into gender research, few research paradigms outside of native studies have taken up settler colonialism as a major point of consideration, despite its centrality to US racial and gender formation. Tuck & Yang (2012) trace the way that settler scholars frequently ‘A(s)t(e)risk’ native peoples treating them both as ‘at risk’ populations “on the verge of extinction, culturally and economically bereft, engaged...in self-destructive behaviors” (22), or asterisked populations in quantitative research reflecting a lack of data gathering on indigenous peoples relative to other racialized groups. The first treatment reduces indigenous peoples to a problematized category in need of correction by benevolent settlers (Tuck and Yang 2012). The second renders their concerns irrelevant in important data sets

reinforcing their erasure (Ibid). Gender studies mirrors this tactic in many ways. Relegating indigeneity and settler colonial accounts to the margins of research reflects and reinforces the material relegation and isolation of native peoples themselves (Ibid).

Maria Lugones (2007, 2010, 2016) offers a theoretical bridge between postcolonial theory and modern gender research paradigms such as Connell's (1995) concept of hegemonic masculinity. Schippers (2007) marks the hierarchical and complimentary relation between hegemonic masculinity and femininity as bound together by heterosexual desire. Maria Lugones (2007, 2010, 2016) widens the scope of our focus, identifying this relation as symptomatic of the light side of colonialism to which white colonizers and some racialized populations are subjected while pointing towards the existence of the dark side of colonialism where gender functions to dehumanize and mark for violence. Crucially, Lugones sees the complimentary and hierarchical relation between masculinity and femininity as reflective of the human—non-human binary constructed by the colonial encounter and writ large over racial Eurocentered capitalism. The role of heterosexual desire can be accounted for within this conception as ensuring the reproduction of colonizer populations and— depending on the particular racial formation— propagation or constraint of racialized populations. Both Schippers (2007) and Connell & Messerschmidt (2005) struggle to conceptualize how race factors into the hegemonic masculinity/femininity research paradigm. Lugones (2007, 2010, 2016) opens door to understanding racialized gender embodiments as distinct rather than derivative of white gender formations. Specifically, though gender expectations might be writ across racial lines, the perception of these expectations and embodiment of them has dramatically different meaning for different racialized populations. Schippers (2007) claims that “there is no reason to suggest that within the logic of gender difference, masculine and feminine qualities are not available to and

required of women and men of color” (Schippers 2007:98). Schippers attributes differences to “group and cultural variation” in embodiment of the same expectations. While this no doubt takes place, attributing differences to these factors flattens the specificities of racialized embodiments and marks them aberrance from the norm (whiteness) instead of a fundamentally different relationship with gender. This reinforces the unmarked ubiquity of whiteness, propagating white supremacy (Bonds and Inwood 2016). A black woman’s embodiment of femininity does not function in her favor in the same way femininity functions for white women. While both might reinforce gender hierarchy, white womanhood holds tremendous cultural capital whereas black womanhood marks one for degradation/violence. Though gender expectations might be the same, racialized populations will never have full access to gender embodiment and the undeniable privileges that come with them precisely because they are for white Europeans (Lugones 2007, 2010, 2016).

This paper has demonstrated that settler colonialism has both shaped and been shaped by patriarchal gender formations, that the history of American masculinity has embedded behaviors that still shape behavior, and that these factors filter through the heteropatriarchal family and property relations to constitute settler traditions of place that maintain settler colonialism. These findings have tremendous explanatory power for contemporary events such as the sagebrush rebellion, 2014 Bundy standoff and 2016 Malheur occupation. It has likewise demonstrated that introducing settler colonialism and postcolonial theory to modern gender theory is not only possible but in fact productive. In many cases, settler colonialism can provide a bridge between disciplines. The introduction of coloniality into gender research not only improves the reflexivity of research paradigms it likewise pushes scholars to broaden their knowledge, increasing literacy in the very modern implications of colonialism and race. Interdisciplinary scholarship improves

scholarship by widening focus and preventing minority perspectives from being sidelined. The interconnectivity of social experiences means that isolation of social scientific scholarship into disciplinary bubbles dramatically curtails its relevance. As policy makers increasingly rely on scholarly work and data to make decisions, serious and genuine knowledge of race, class, ability and coloniality is necessary to better scholarship and better policy. As new directions in contemporary gender/sexuality research emerge in the wake of Black Lives Matter and Me Too, attentiveness to domesticity, settler colonialism, property and race ought to be integrated more widely into our scholarship.

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