

BLOCKADES BUILD WORLDS: BEAVERS, LAND, AND DECOLONIAL THEORY

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3:30pm North Classroom
Room 1535



“Blockades build worlds. Stopping the flow of forces, redirecting their energies, creating and supporting life, are ways of building worlds otherwise. A blockade—be it physical, social, political, theoretical—can interrupt the various flows of the existing world and stop them, inhibit their progress, and redirect those flows into new worlds. Blockades change the material conditions of possibility for what can be done, both foreclosing and creating possibilities, sometimes in the same moment. Blockades are made by creatures of all kinds, built in the world by agents who pull together material, bodies, words, ideas, and forces available to them (sometimes the only forces left available) to alter the flows of the existing world. Through negative and positive practices, generative and degenerative forces, blockades can build worlds.

This presentation, drawn from our book manuscript, introduces our approach and method to blockade against two pernicious and widespread theoretical practices in settler political theory and philosophy: the disavowal and mere avowal of land as object upon or background against which worlds are built. Taking up an invitation in the work of Leanne Betasamosake Simpson (Michi Saagig Nishnaabeg), we argue that decolonial world building possibilities made available by theorizing in relationship with land. We hope to erect a generative blockade of these practices as part of a project of redirecting our own energies toward other practices: those that treat land as relational, those which are grounded normatively, and therefore build, support, and protect worlds that are antithetical to settler colonial worlds.”

Conversation and light
refreshments to follow.



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