

# She/Her/Hers: Pronouns, possession and white women's consumption of gender

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## Abstract

Gender is a catastrophic oppressive imposition. Gender structures and is structured by settler colonialism, just as it marks and is marked by ongoing investments in anti-blackness. Not only is gender a violent erasure of Indigenous ways of being, but as Spillers (1987) detailed, gender—specifically femininity and womanness—are foreclosed to Black women as an ongoing effect of chattel slavery. In this article, we focus on the pronouns she, her and hers as an artifact of white womanness. In so doing, we trace how white women not only articulate gender as a site of possession—here we specifically draw on Harris's (1993) notion of the absolute right to exclude—but consume gender in a move toward necrocapitalism. Put another way, white women consume gender to further their presumed goodness, at the same time as—and indeed as a function of—desiring the death of trans women. As a result, trans women are rendered killable subjects, with their killability acting as a necessity for the furtherance of the catastrophe of gender itself. Through the commodification of the pronoun as a signifier of gender (e.g. pronoun stickers and pins, the performative nature of bringing trans women to speak without any resulting transformative change), we argue this acts to further necrocapitalism, especially in the notion “economy of deadly violence”, as it “ensures the maintenance of authority's spread and permanence” (Sheehi in conversation with Shalhoub-Kevorkian; see Introduction to this special issue for further details).

**Keywords:** Pronouns; Transmisogynoir; Antiracism; Gender; Race

“As we hold on to the many meanings of Trans\* we can and must think and imagine laterally, across a series of relations in the ship, the hold, the wake, and the weather” (Sharpe, 2016, p. 32).

“A pronoun is an institution” (Ahmed, 2014, para. 6).

## Introduction

The bag sat on our bed, full. Its silver sheen gave a quasi-futuristic appearance, but one reminiscent of older B films centered on “strange encounters of the third kind”. Perhaps the bag was made from repurposed alien costumes from these films? It would surely be a nod to both the upcycling that their brand’s demographic appreciated, as well as to the transformative desire held in the contents of the bag:

*Wear this and you can become someone new.*

*Wear this and you can do whatever you want.*

*Wear this and you can join the team, the squad, the party.*

Peeking out from the inside fold of the lip of the bag are three words in a prominent font, all caps and printed in white, standing out on the metallic silver background: POWER OF SHE.

The words are as striking in their visual clarity as they are in their epistemological confusion. What, exactly, is the work that *she* is doing? What does *she* signal, particularly through its historicity operating as a mode of exclusion-via-white-feminism? How, then, is *she* operating as both a site and symptom of the technology of whiteness, which is to say a furthering of the killability of trans women and womanhood? Encounters of the third kind, indeed, as *she* modifies trans women into an unalterable state of *being*. That the POWER OF SHE is part of a transaction of/under capital, too, is particularly important. In other words, one buys (into) *she*, and through the purchase, *she* becomes property to be protected, held and used at the behest of the property owner. If it is true—and we suggest it is—“that property performs the critical function of identification” (Harris, 1993, p. 1721), then what does *she* register and how does *she* operate as an “economy of deadly violence” as it “ensures the maintenance of authority’s spread and permanence” through the purchase at the register (Sheehi in conversation with Shalhoub-Kevorkian; see Introduction to this special issue for further details)? And even if *she* is not bought at a store, how is *she* always for sale and thus always a commodification predicated on the grammar of the killability of trans women and trans womanhood?

In what follows, we focus on the pronoun *she*—and *she*’s relatives, *her* and *hers*—as an artifact of white womanness. In so doing, we trace how white women not only articulate gender as a site of possession—here we specifically draw on Harris’s (1993) notion of the absolute right to exclude—but consume gender in a move toward necrocapitalism. Put another way, white women consume gender to further their presumed goodness, at the same time as—and indeed as a function of—desiring the death of trans women, femininity and womanhood. As a result, trans women are rendered killable subjects, as present primarily through their *being*, with their killability acting as a necessity for the furtherance of the catastrophe of gender itself. Through the commodification of the

pronoun as a signifier of gender (e.g. pronoun stickers and pins, the performative nature of bringing trans women to speak on college campuses without any resulting transformative change, the endless hashtags, memes and products that centralise the pronoun), we argue that this acts as a signal of necrocapitalism's reach and grip. Call it overkill (Stanley, 2011), scenes of gratuitous violence (Wilderson, 2010), trans negativity (Hayward, 2017) or the spectre of the tranny (Nicolazzo, 2021b); they all register a particular logic that targets the ~~beingness~~ beingness of trans women and womanhood as a necessary condition of life under racialised (necro)capitalism, marking an ongoing emergency of "death, in both quotidian and spectacular forms" (Snorton & Haritaworn, 2013, p. 66).

## Gender as artifact and property of whiteness

Through the ongoing act(ion)s that comprise settler coloniality and chattel slavery, gender has long been a catastrophic oppressive institution. Specifically, the catastrophe of gender has meant a continued violent erasure of Indigenous ways of being (e.g. Boellstorff et al., 2014; Wesley, 2014). Furthermore, the middle passage itself, what Sharpe (2016) figures as "the ship" and "the hold", worked to ungender (Spillers, 1987) Black women and children. The calculus of the ship and the hold—the ticking off of numbers of stolen African bodies, the willful disregard for names, the erasure of gender—stripped Black people of the particularities of (white) gender: of personality, of relationship, of naming and names. The hold and the wake (Sharpe, 2016) of the slave ship attempted to foreclose a range of embodied experiences called gender. And yet Black being—"translation, transatlantic, transgression, transgender, transformation, transmogrification, transcontinental, transfixed, indeed the Trans\*Atlantic" (Sharpe, 2016, p. 30)—exceeds the racial calculus and political arithmetic of slavery and its afterlives (Hartman, 2008).

And although histories of the middle passage and the transatlantic slave trade regularly figure white nontrans men as the movers and drivers (literally and figuratively) of the institution of slavery, white women played—and play—integral roles. Put another way, the acts of white women buying (into) *she* have long trajectories across time and space. White women bought and sold Black Africans as property (Jones-Rogers, 2019), they invested in chattel slavery and profited from the ungendering of Black people. White women bought (into) *she* both as "slave owners" themselves (Jones-Rogers, 2019), but also in the ways they managed households to enforce un/gendering, severed relationships between Black parents and children, and taught their white children racism and transmisogyny both in ideology and practices of physical violence (McRae, 2018). These practices remain in and maintain "the weather" of antiblackness in the present day (Sharpe, 2016); they extend the *longue durée* of the afterlife of slavery and its ungendering, investing in "containment, regulation, punishment, capture, and captivity and the ways the manifold representations of black[trans]ness become the symbol, par excellence, for the less-than-human being condemned to death" (Sharpe, 2016, p. 21).

Beginning during the transatlantic slave trade and extending into the present day, the ability for white nontrans women to buy (into) *she* depends on whiteness operating as property. Three property functions of whiteness particularly facilitate white nontrans women's moves toward ownership and consumption of *she*: the law of first possession, the absolute right to exclude, and reputation and status property (Harris, 1993). Only whites had rights to first possession within US legal and social codes; the settler colonisation of Indigenous lands on Turtle Island depended on the negation of any first possession rights of Indigenous people and communities. This negation was forced both via genocide and the legal establishment of Indigenous people as non-white. As Harris (1993, p. 1721) explained, "This racist formulation embedded the fact of white privilege into the very definition of property". This racist formulation of the law of first possession also assumes and creates the absolute right to exclude. The absolute right to exclude is a central principle of whiteness as identity, since whiteness has primarily been "characterized, not by an inherent unifying characteristic, but by the exclusion of others deemed to be 'not white'" (Harris, 1993, p. 1736). These property functions taken together create the groundwork on which white nontrans women can possess, own and consume *she* and its attendant access/proximity to power, excluding anyone deemed unwoman, nonwoman, not-woman-enough or not-the-right-kind-of-woman. Reputation (as white), in fact, is a function of whiteness as property; the right to exclude anyone who sullies the purity of whiteness and threatens white reputation becomes paramount. White nontrans women, then, to protect their whiteness, must also protect their white womanhood from the threats of transness, Blackness, and Indigeneity, propping up the white supremacist, cisheteropatriarchal, capitalist, settler state.

While Harris does not explicitly unpack these gender/race relations, she makes deliberate decisions to understand gender/race as coupled and implicated through the technology of whiteness. For example, she begins her exploration of whiteness as property by discussing her grandmother's passing as a white woman to work and make a living for her family. Specifically, she describes how her grandmother's economic livelihood depended on her sublimation of a particular gendered/racialised subjectivity; *she* (here understood as the particular gender/race construction of a white woman) could only earn a wage through the logics of whiteness. As Harris (1993, p. 1711) retells, *she* was a "mask" that, after work "each evening, [her] grandmother, tired and worn, ... laid aside ... and reentered herself". Tracing this further, her grandmother's economic livelihood, held together tenuously by the white logics of gender/race, exposes the vulnerabilities of blackness, transness and Black transness under necrocapitalism. Put another way, Black women's livability—and here we can think of the linking of blackness and transness that Sharpe (2016) gestured to at the outset of this manuscript—is always at risk due to how whiteness works and how work is framed through whiteness. Capitalism becomes a place of (slow) death for Black, trans and Black trans women; a place Harris's grandmother—and, by proxy, all Black/trans women—must leave to reenter her (Black/trans woman) self.

## Whiteness as a container and Black trans women's **being**

In their detailing of trans necropolitics, Snorton and Haritaworn (2013, p. 68) discussed the ways trans people of colour's bodies have been used, primarily in death, to promote life for nontrans populations. As they noted:

The discursive construction of the transgender body—and particularly the transgender body of color—as unnatural creates the precise moment where we as scholars, critics, and activists might apprehend a biopolitics of everyday life, where the transgender body of color is the unruly body, which only in death can be transformed or translated into the service of state power.

What these authors also describe in their essay, but which evades view in the above quotation, is how it is the figure of the Black trans woman whose (dead) body is the very flesh on which state power is consolidated. That is to say, the state-sanctioned use(s) of blackness/transness/womanness are inextricably linked with the furthering of life for some at the cost—literal and otherwise—of marooned populations. Recognising the state as operating through its institutions (e.g. education, psychiatry, law) and thinking back to Ahmed's (2014) provocation at the outset of this manuscript regarding the institutional nature of pronouns brings about an understanding of how *she* becomes the provenance of a technology of whiteness that promotes life for some through the flesh of trans women's **being**, especially Black trans women's **being**.

Thinking back also to Sharpe's (2016) quotation at the outset of this manuscript, to think trans\* across the past/present/future expanse of chattel slavery is to infuse transness, blackness and womanness with(in) one another, *including their impossibilities*. Here, ungendering takes on a decidedly trans\*itive property through which one can recognise how systems of oppression, violence and harm operate in tandem. As Stewart and Nicolazzo (2018) suggested, these entanglements demarcate 'whiteness as a container' or how various modes of (un)conscious violence move together in the service of the technology of whiteness. Far from a flattening, whiteness as a container obviates how the technology of whiteness is, acts and operates through amplification. In other words, whiteness as a container recognises the parasitic nature of interlocking systems of oppression, particularly in their compounding of profuse harms of Others for the furthering of life for some.

Take, for example, the following tweet from bingo (figure 1). Anger becomes an affective field through which trans women's hold on being women is made fungible. While not specifically named in the tweet, bingo gestured to the anger of nontrans people, which, when considering the interlocking nature of gender/sex/race violences that signal whiteness as a container, one may recognise "someone's anger" as white nontrans anger. Another way of saying this is that when trans women's trans womanness is no longer silent, white anger seeks to modify their trans becoming as **being**. Here, she-as-trans-being is silenced through white anger, and, as we argue, particularly as white nontrans women's anger.



Figure 1. bingo's tweet

As we mention above, white nontrans women have deeply invested in reifying the category of woman through trans women's *being*. As “constant gardeners of segregation” (McRae, 2018, p. 19) and the ideology of white supremacy that frames the work of segregation, white nontrans women have consistently situated themselves alongside cisheteropatriarchy. Whereas white men have no care for women beyond objectification—this is, after all, the ongoing effect of living through misogyny—white nontrans women spend time and energy crafting sharper knives to cut out who can(not) be a woman. In other words, white nontrans women continue to view womanhood—represented through *she*, the pronoun-as-artifact—as property. And, as property, white nontrans women feel emboldened, encouraged and motivated to exercise the right to exclude (Harris, 1993), thereby securing their places as not-quite-less-than through the rubric of cisheteropatriarchy. Whatever or whomever white nontrans women are, they use the absolute right to exclude, as if to say, verbally and otherwise: I/we are not *that*; she is and can never be *us*. Trans women, femininity and womanhood are made things, nonhuman, never-to-have-been-human, while white nontrans women shore up their gender/race positionality through/over the ungendered flesh of Black/trans *being*.<sup>1</sup> In other words, whiteness as a container becomes the ideological filter through which trans women's *being* continues to be materialised. Here, the epistemological  $\leftarrow \rightarrow$  ontological violence that underscores trans women's killability is not only reproduced, but is nurtured, cultivated and constantly gardened by white nontrans women (Nicolazzo, 2021a, 2021b).

## White nontrans women's consumptive habits under necrocapitalism

There is a significant amount of currency in pronouns these days. Especially in seemingly liberal spaces/circles, pronouns are becoming (the) business. People buy

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1 We recognise that there are overt forms of epistemological  $\leftarrow \rightarrow$  ontological violences that may undergird our analysis of bingo's tweet. Trans Exclusive Radical Feminists (TERFs), for example, are quite vocal, harmful and aggressive in their tactics of declaring that trans women do not exist. While there are certainly more pronounced examples that we could use to expose and articulate these violences, we are taking seriously that they exist in quotidian *and* spectacular form. As such, we invite the reader both to read TERF logics as undergirding bingo's tweet, as well as not relegating such logics just to TERFs, or to 'those feminists' over there, as if they have nothing to do with how technologies of transmisogyny others may/do take up in more subtle—and yet, still harmful—forms.

enamel pronoun pins. They list pronouns on their business cards and in their professional email signature lines (and so does she, and sometimes even he does, too). It seems a mark of being out of touch not to list one's pronouns next to one's name on Zoom, or to share them after one's name by way of introduction—as in, “My name is Jenny; she, her, hers.” She/her/hers has even been given a distinct scent, used to further Burberry's global brand (see figure 2). Pronouns are selling, and people are selling pronouns.



Figure 2. Shopping for Her

One cannot only smell of *she/her/hers*, purchased at the perfume counter of any major retail outlet, but *she* can also “move mountains” (see figure 3). Under the guise of women's empowerment, GoDaddy sells webspace by promoting the .org “She Moves Mountains.” In the commercial, Lizzy VanPatten, founder of She Moves Mountains, says her “goal is to help women do what they think they can't”, while a video plays of a white woman extending a hand to a Black woman, guiding her up a mountain face, presumably to help the Black woman “to the top of her game.” *She/her/hers* here “empowers” via climbing, conquering and participating in colonial practices. *She*—understood through GoDaddy's vision as white nontrans womanhood—saves other women by bringing them up into modes of (white) conquest, looking good and always coming out “on top.”



Figure 3. Conquering Her

She Moves Mountains is a non-profit sponsored by The North Face and Black Diamond, companies recognised for their premium (i.e. expensive) outdoor gear and their sponsorship and outfitting of expeditions “to some of the most far-flung, still largely untouched corners of the globe” (The North Face, n.d.). However, belying this (white nontrans woman) desire is the damning reality that the north face of Mount Everest, or *Chomolungma* in Tibetan, has been devastated by the masses of white Westerners paying to achieve the once impossible (for white colonisers); there are traffic jams at the summit, deaths due to inexperience and the long waits with too little oxygen, (necro)capitalist exploitation of climbers and sherpas, and insurance fraud. These realities are so well-documented as to be axiomatic at this point. However, what has occurred through She Moves Mountains is that *she* is now part of the drive, the climb, the achievement, the colonisation and the ongoing march toward slow death that mark necrocapitalism. Empowering *her* to “move mountains” depends on the theft of land for exploration and recreation (literally moving sacred and Indigenous land) and on death, whether of sherpas or of clothing labourers, or – more ideologically – on the creation of deathworlds for women who do not or cannot look, move, perform or buy (into) *she* as white nontrans explorer/coloniser. The non-profit industrial complex here furthers the catastrophe of gender, gendering to(ward) slow death under the guise of (nontrans) women’s empowerment. Liberal organisations and institutions such as She Moves Mountains organise themselves via literal death, both catastrophic and slow, and the ~~being~~ of trans women, particularly trans women of colour, while promoting she/her/hers as empowerment, salvation and progressive humanism.

In a similar move to save themselves and to promote themselves as progressive “good” organisations, educational institutions, non-profits and companies invite trans women to speak. The invitation to speak—whether about trans oppression, trans representation, trans death and remembrance, trans theory (the list goes on)—is predicated entirely on the fact that these same organisations do not hire trans women in the first place (for examples in higher education, please see Nicolazzo, 2021a, 2021b; Simmons, 2017; Stryker, 2020). Instead, trans women are offered temporary pay (if any pay at all) and expected to provide window dressing that covers the violences perpetuated by organisations themselves. White nontrans women, in particular, use these invitations to feel good about themselves by including trans women marginally or performatively, while at the very same time not drawing trans women fully into organisational participation. That is, while white nontrans women may seek to invite, include and be present with trans women who are invited to speak, they do so in a way that does not unsettle their (nontrans women’s) sense of gendered/raced self and ownership of womanhood, of *she* as white nontrans women figure *her* to be. Trans women are always deemed outsiders, given access only for a moment, and rarely if ever in a manner that supports beyond a (nominal and always negotiated) paycheck, which itself cannot account for the libidinal excesses and harms of the institution’s investments in trans killability (Nicolazzo, 2021a, 2021b).



Moreover, white nontrans women invite trans women in to feign connectedness and community, while distancing themselves from real, ongoing relationship. In this way, white nontrans women practise whiteness's right to exclude, wherein "whiteness becomes an exclusive club whose membership was closely and grudgingly guarded" (Harris, 1993, p. 1736). Rarely, if ever, are white nontrans women in community, partnership or loving relationship with trans women. Here we are thinking of love through a framework of Black feminism, which recognises unfolding conceptions of selfhoods and community care (e.g. Carruthers, 2018; hooks, 2000). This sort of love is corrosive to white nontrans women's desire to exclude, to "grudgingly guard" womanhood. However, without ongoing commitments to community and to deep, expansive love of white nontrans women toward trans women, and particularly trans women of colour, gender/race remains guarded territory, with trans women being excluded from the "exclusive club" of femininity/womanhood—all while white nontrans women protect themselves through pleas of innocence, made through invitations to speak.

### The unstated gender/race underpinnings of necrocapitalism

The elucidation of necrocapitalism as a conceptual construct has occurred largely in/through the absence of gender. Even though necrocapitalism is a construct(ion) of coloniality, and coloniality is deeply entangled with furthering the violent catastrophe of gender, there is a silence and stillness surrounding the connections between necrocapitalism and gender. Such an absence, though, is far from benign or ambivalent. As Nicolazzo (2021a) has articulated, white nontrans women's silence operates loudly. Not sonically, perhaps, but affectively, white nontrans women's silence acts as a mechanism of gender/race control. White nontrans women learn to wield and weaponise their silence to further cisheteropatriarchy. In so doing, they become protectors of who is/can/should be understood as able to exist as women. The fact that trans women's ~~being~~ is yet to be traced through the archives of necrocapitalism may underscore further the nefarious ways that white nontrans women have always already been the vanguard of tending to white supremacy (Jones-Rogers, 2019; McRae, 2018).

And yet, writing the impossible—the always hidden and hiding—is a vexing process: At once sure of the archive and its effects, while at the same time confounded by its inexplicability, writing these sorts of ongoing violences is hard specifically because there may be no way to render their manifestations tangibly. Here, we recall Hartman's (2008, p. 14) commentary on writing the impossible through the archive:

The task of writing the impossible, (not the fanciful or the utopian but "histories rendered unreal and fantastic"), has as its prerequisites the embrace of likely failure and the readiness to accept the ongoing, unfinished and provisional character of this effort, particularly when the arrangements of power occlude the very object that we desire to rescue.

Technologies of whiteness have always operated to erase, mete out and occlude the very object that we, as authors, desire to rescue here: trans women's being. As we have shown in the previous examples, white nontrans women constantly and consistently attend to this technology, foreclosing the very possibility that we, as authors, desire the most. Being becomes *being*, the violent state that it always was (imagined to be). Trans women are stamped out, thrown overboard, cast asunder, made nobodies who are nowhere, erased as they are from space/time. Gender/race becomes a nexus through which white nontrans women continue to devour.

And yet, nobody and nowhere are not nothing. This is not to say that the gratuitous violence that marks the unending scene of the middle passage—a space/time that Spillers (1987) noted as creating a nowhere into which Black flesh was thrown—should be overlooked. Nor does it mean that the epistemological  $\leftarrow \rightarrow$  ontological violence that marks trans women's *being* can somehow hold a positive spin. Simply put, there is no spinning the all-encompassing and unending harm of technologies of whiteness. But perhaps there is something to the idea of nobodies, especially for trans women enmeshed in the project of necrocapitalism. While there is no escaping necrocapitalism, there may be possibilities of dreaming differently, and of doing so through the idea of becoming nobodies.

In her graduation address to students at Hampshire College in 2016, Tourmaline discussed the importance of being nobodies (Hampshire College TV, 2016). Rather than desiring to be somebody—a fantasy of the white imagination that posits the individual as solely important, as the only unit of measure by which one should gauge the goodness of life—Tourmaline encouraged graduates to dream of being and becoming close to nobodies, to divesting from systems that have forever divested from those highly vulnerable subjects punished time and again by the nation-state. This, she suggested, was a way to care for and with each other underneath the ongoing gaze of racialised capitalism. If they could not change the trajectory of this structural violence, then perhaps they could imagine new possibilities while under it. In a somewhat related turn, Hayward (2017) describes *trans negativity* as a turning away from anti-trans claims. That is, while Hayward recognises the harm of such claims, particularly as they relate to the unlivability of Black trans women's lives in the United States, she also argues that responding to such claims by reasserting one's humanity—that one is a trans somebody—is itself an investment in anti-blackness. Instead, Hayward encourages her readers to embrace what a move away from the anti-black project of humanity, of reasserting ontological somebodyness as a political project, may mean. Building on Spillers's and other scholars' writing in Black Studies (e.g. Gossett, 2017), Hayward (2017, p. 193) wrote:

Rather than building a political and intellectual project on the bodies of dead black trans women—the ongoing project of slave making—trans negativity asks how trans identity, representation, and politics have needed the murdered bodies of black trans women and trans women of color to constitute “the transgender tipping point.” It is no surprise that *Time* magazine's “tipping point” cover features Laverne Cox; conscripted labor of black

trans women is the inevitable violence that institutional trans/sexual/gender projects (broadly imagined here) need in order to become, in order to potentialize the politics of identity. These projects, then, are an effect of progressive humanism, with white uplift as their aim.

Hayward does not suggest an alternative vision of what could or should be but leaves the reader with what is wrought from the impossibility of Black trans women's *being*: white uplift. As we discuss in our analysis, progressive humanism—itself a staple of the “good white woman” fantasy—is the rallying cry around which white nontrans women tend to necrocapitalism through the consumption of *she*.

This is not to say that Tourmaline is “right” and Hayward “wrong,” or vice versa. Rightness and wrongness are not the point here, especially when such binary and simplistic thinking would be used in the service of severing or forcing apart trans women from one another. Instead, we take the lead of Tourmaline and Hayward in suggesting that nowhere/nobody/negativity may be a Black/trans mode through which to refuse the progressive fantasies that white nontrans womanhood have and project of themselves. It is to suggest that perhaps, rather than rushing to “solve” the impossible, to attempt to repair and heal the killability through which necropolitics does its violent work, that we—as a community of authors and readers—sit with the damage, the violence and the harm. It is to suggest that perhaps there could be a way to make life in the unlivable, while also never losing track of the unlivability of life under necrocapitalism. And finally, it is to suggest that perhaps nothing, absolutely nothing, will change by buying a pronoun pin.

We don't care about your pins and signature lines; we care about our sisters

“Prisons don't help; the cops don't help; none of this is actually helping our communities. It's making it worse. And so once we can figure out how to utilize our resources and our tools to, you know, build up each other and build up our communities, then that will be the thing that will keep us safe. *We keep each other safe*” (BCRW Videos, 2014, emphasis added).

This both is and is not about pronoun pins.

This both is and is not about signature lines.

This both is and is not about perfume, or the myriad ways trans women of color are transmogrified into memes that nontrans audiences (re)post on their Instagram stories to project public mourning.

This both is and is not about institutional dead(ening) zones like the academy, relying as they do on the killability of trans women, especially trans women of colour, for

amassing the capitals (intellectual, sociopolitical, cultural, financial) they need, all while projecting a liberal façade.

This both is and is not about you, with the you being a signal to (you,) the nontrans reader.

This both is and is not even about us as an authorial pair, writing across white/gendered subjectivities.

And it both is and is not all these things because that which encompasses all, that encapsulates, that excavates, that ensnares, that permeates the entire plane is the weather. Sharpe (2017, p. 104) wrote that “the weather is the totality of our environments; the weather is the total climate; and that climate is anti-black”. Therefore, the equation follows that

*transmisogyny as the mode of/through which trans women’s being is*

+

*the killability of trans women/femininity and ungending are intertwined realities  
exposing the figure of Black womanness/femininity as flesh, as nonhuman*

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*The climate is also necrocapitalism*

Which is to say necrocapitalism, anti-blackness and transmisogyny feed off one another in deleterious ways that mark abject gender/sex/race through an “economy of deadly violence [that] ensures the maintenance of authority’s spread and permanence” (Sheehi in conversation with Shalhoub-Kevorkian; see Introduction to this special issue for further details).

Therefore, the pivot is to continue to imagine life inside the intensities of the weather. If climate change will continue to induce weather extremes, then such an imagining may even take on a heightened sense of urgency. And yet we—the marooned, the criminal(ised), the queer, the trans, the endarkened and Black, the not-...—have already been doing this work, despite/through the weather. Because, as CeCe McDonald remarked in the above quotation, “*we keep each other safe.*” Because, as Tourmaline (2020, para. 3) exclaimed:

Freedom dreaming isn’t just about the big things—the huge world changes that we are manifesting in our movements, like police and prison abolition, free universal healthcare, and gender self-determination for all. When I give myself permission to slow down like this—and particularly, when I wonder what we already have that we want to keep—what I always notice are the small things. (Or I should say: What seem like the

small things, but really are the big things! The everyday acts of liberatory glamour, care, and openness that keep us alive.) I notice how much I am already surrounded by the world I dream of.

Because if this both is and is not about you, or us, or whatever pins or signature lines we do (not) use, then what it decidedly *is always already about* is the ways we—the marooned, the criminal(ised), the queer, the trans, the endarkened and Black, the not...—have made life in the midst of insurmountable, uncontrollable and unending weather.

This both is and is not a call to change practice, to change course.

This both is and is not a call to be(come) a ghost in the machinery of the colonising institution (paperson, 2017).

This both is and is not a call to dream, to imagine, to fall into excess and want and desire so much more from the catastrophe of gender.

Because many of us already have, actively are, and forever will, which both is and is not out of necessity.

*Because we keep each other safe.*

## Bios

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**Z Nicolazzo** lives and works on the ongoing and unceded lands of the Tohono O’odham and Pascua Yaqui peoples. Her work focuses on gender, affect, and resistant methodological practices in education.

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