



The Academy and What Can be Done

Guest edited by Ashon Crawley, with co-editors Eve Tuck & K. Wayne Yang

What is to be done about the university? This is at least a double question, because of what the word “done” can do in the English language. Done can mean acted upon, engaged, intervened upon, changed. “Done” can also be finished, completed, made to be over. So in this themed issue we are teaming with guest editor Ashon Crawley to ask about the university: what about it can be changed, and what about it can be finished.

- The submission deadline for this Spring 2018 themed issue is **March 1, 2017**.
- For submission guidelines, see www.criticaethnicstudiesjournal.org/calls-for-papers
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The question of what possibilities exist for the university to do something along the line and root of justice is one urgently felt in our contemporary moment. From calls for solidarity with Palestinians against apartheid to calls for becoming land co-protectors with Indigenous people; from solicitations to join with the Movement for Black Lives to demands for equitable access to education, healthcare and shelter; how the university relates itself to ongoing crises is a constant consideration because crises are often what are studied and diagnosed in the academy (Rooks 2006; Chakravarty and Silva 2012). Because academic labor pays well and is stable, except for that it is usually not, and most academic workers are now precariously employed (Massé and Hogan 2010; Bousquet 2008). Yet, even with such studies and diagnoses, what remains evergreen is the ongoing nature of pernicious violence and violation, the proliferation of white supremacy, the pop-ups against justice. So we ask about what is to be done about the university, about the academy, because of what seems like acquiescence of projects from within its strictures to the status quo. We want to contend, in other words, with the possibility for the capacity to be a disruptive force that allows, from such a space as the academy, for justice to emerge. And, given the themed issue of Critical Ethnic Studies Vol. 2.2, titled ‘what justice wants,’ what would “justice” even mean in relation to the university?

Consider the following: What is to be done *about* the university where, here, *about* indexes both spatial and epistemological concerns. Spatially, *about* the university is announces the surround, the outside, the beyond the physical location of the university, particularly given the neoliberal fantasies enacted through real estate initiatives that displace communities, often of color, often impoverished, a settler colonial, antiblack racist logic of expansion (Gomez 2013). This *about* that announces an inside and outside the academy, of course, is a ruse, is a categorical distinction that cannot be maintained. But also *about* bespeaks the *concern*, it bespeaks the *matter of thought*, of the university. Just what is the job of the university, what is its role in our world, and can it be otherwise?

This special issue of *Critical Ethnic Studies* anchors the idea of the university to its current iteration, the production of neoliberal, settler colonial, antiblack racist expansionism. And what are we, we that are committed to justice against white supremacist capitalist patriarchy, we that are committed to justice against antiblack racism and settler colonialism, to do, how are we to inhabit, how can we possibly disrupt the university as such? And this while also remaining committed to learning as a decolonial, noncolonial, abolitionist practice?

Key Ideas to Consider:

- What is the place and the problem of diversity in the university (see Ahmed 2012)?
- What are the possibilities for enacting projects of disruption within the university against neoliberalism (see Marez 2016; Martineau and Ritskes 2014)?
- Can one be in the university but not of the university? How does the neoliberal university establish itself by incorporating diversity and difference, radical disruptive energies, into itself (see Ferguson 2012; Newfield 2008; Rooks 2006)?
- Can there be a decolonial university (see Patel 2016)? Can there be an abolitionist knowledge project (see Hong 2008)?
- How have “studies” – Black, Indigenous, Gender, Sexuality, Women’s – been incorporated into the university to disallow dissent? What can be done against this disallowance (see Tuck and Yang 2014; Ferguson 2012; Ahmed 2012; Hong 2008; Rooks 2006; Judy 2000; Spillers 1994)?
- Does the very research for even this special issue become undone by the demands for the university for more research, by the demand for academic knowledge to be produced for the consolidation of the university’s existence?
- What, given all this, is possible? What does possibility produce, and where does one find it? How does can we cultivate a practice of possibility that is not easily incorporable into neoliberal fantasy and expansionism (on possibility see Malabou 2006) ?
- Is an undercommons, and is fugitivity, possible from within the space of the university (see Harney and Moten 2008)?
- What is the place of imagination in a decolonial, noncolonial, abolitionist practice in but not of the university?

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Critical Ethnic Studies provides a space for unique and insurgent critique among academic and activist intellectuals within ethnic studies. It invites interdisciplinary works that reposition the guiding assumptions of other fields, and engage the new methodologies, philosophies, and propositions of this emerging intellectual formation. It recognizes that distinct fields have been collapsed in the institutionalization of Ethnic Studies in universities, and presses back against equivocations which domesticate critique and action.

The Journal encourages and enacts several related, multilayered lines of inquiry. First, this journal questions the nation state model, paying attention to the present manifestations of colonialism, extra-national effects of globalization and privatization, as well as structural redevelopment programs on Indigenous people and people of color.

Second, this journal appraises the productive tensions between fields that have institutionalized together under the umbrella of Ethnic Studies. Particularly, Indigenous Studies has attended to ongoing settler colonialism and ongoing Indigenous resistance to occupation and erasure, whereas Ethnic Studies has often been vexed by the ways in which discussions of race, civil rights, immigration, labor exploitation, and inclusion may ignore settler colonialism.

Third, by explicitly foregrounding white supremacy as a logic and social formation intimately abetted by race and racism, the journal provide trenchant critiques of how and why race, racism, and antiblackness persist and not merely state or describe their persistence.

Fourth, the journal reflects intersectional, feminist and queer analyses that treat categories such as race, class, gender, and sexuality not as additive modes of identity, oppression, or discrimination—but rather as constitutive, as robust analytics for critically apprehending and theorizing alternatives.

The journal is published bi-annually by the University of Minnesota Press.

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Essay Submission Guidelines

Essays (between 6,000 and 10,000 words) should be prepared according to the most recent edition of the *Chicago Manual of Style* using endnotes and submitted electronically to justice@criticaethnicstudies.org.

Please submit manuscripts in Microsoft Word. Author's names should not appear on manuscripts. Instead, please include a separate document with the author's name, email, work address, the title of the article, and abstract (250 words) with your electronic submission.

Authors should eliminate any self-identifying information (such as notes or credits). References to the author's work should be in third person.

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