

ARTIE MACK

GLOBALIZATION

AN OVERVIEW ANALYSIS OF
CULTURAL LENSES AND CLASS
HIERARCHIES THROUGHOUT
THE ERAS OF COLONIZATION

INTRODUCTION: THE CULTURAL LENS



1.1

GLOBALIZATION AND VISUAL LEARNING

In the Fall of 2021, I compiled a video series about globalization using hand drawn and colored illustrations to explore the workings of monoculture in our globalized society – focusing through the lens of disability. The six-part video series is a mixed media, virtual intertwinement with capital-focused societies and its coexisting ableism. I consecutively explore: *globalization*, how *ableism* moves through capitalist ideologies and creates body-mind hierarchies, the rise and dominance of *monoculture* as nation-states and societies are formed, the *removal* of undesired bodies in said societies, and the *liabilities* placed on them to justify processes of removal and erasure. As a Black, hard of hearing, gay, U.S. born, self-proclaimed scholar and advocate for visual learning (perhaps inspired by my deafness and exposure to American Sign Language), it feels imperative to not only conceptualize and then *reconceptualize* in written, spoken, and Signed forms the effects of globalized, ableist, capital-driven

forces working against and alongside the human race (centering disabled and/or neurodivergent body-minds), but to join them with the multiple tools and resources I have available to express my ideas with – thus collaborating with visual art. The finalized project, *Globalization*, is featured as part of a critical thinking, digital video series on Disability Arts History and Politics titled, *DIS-KURS*, and was funded by the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and Media in Germany.

In the time that has passed my growing research and endless ponderings about the effects of a globalized society prompted a return to the series. Further expansion is necessary on the intricacies of globalization by tracing its origins and by visualizing the conditioning of cultural lenses that every human being embodies throughout their lifetime. These lenses come from the cultural and social conditions that shape us, as well as reinforced capitalist ideologies that are both consciously and unconsciously filtered through us. Throughout this body of work, I illustrate emerging social and cultural horizons to demonstrate both an active resistance against neoliberal capitalism and proof of the existence of countless human experiences and social realities. Many of these experiences and realities are targeted for suppression and removal as part of the historic and continuous acts of colonial violence. These violent acts of removal enforce cultural homogeneity and thrive on the unequal distribution of wealth among the classes.

Emphasizing our *cultural lens* and its primary functions (i.e. socialization, a sense of belonging) and then illustrating a few ideas of how these lenses manifest and operate under centuries of expansionism and domineering ideologies worldwide (white supremacy, heteropatriarchy, Christianity, individualism, and ableism, to name a few) may broaden understanding towards class structure and the often politicized rhetoric of “*us versus them.*” An excessively focused or focusing cultural lens (illustrated in this essay

to symbolize dominant viewpoints that control cultural and social horizons and influence our everyday thoughts and behaviors) implies the existence of unfocused spaces of equal (if not more) excess. These unfocused spaces are also occupied and filled with living, breathing, marginalized body-minds with their varying cultures and social realities. These individuals and groups are pushed to the peripheries and *invisibilized* (or filtered out of the cultural lens) by aspirations of capitalism and cultural homogeneity.

There's something intimate about doing these illustrations by hand as I attempt to make sense of globalization and piece together a "big picture." From hand drawing, using colored markers, to handwriting the way I perform and engage in each activity are inevitable byproducts of my own sociality and cultural lens. The linguistic, artistic, and academic resources I have access to that enable me to conceptualize this research also play a role in how I interpret and translate them. I'm not a journalist nor am I employed in an academic field. I don't have photo editing programs on my laptop or phone. I don't have a degree in graphic design. I do, *however*, have all sorts of drawing paper, crayons, ink pens, markers, acrylic paint, canvases, and colored pencils. I have a passion for reading, writing, and learning. I'm documenting, presenting, creating, and preserving knowledge using my hands – the same hands that gesture and communicate with American Sign Language. Human beings absorb knowledge differently, and this knowledge can be translated in numerous ways, even other than speech – a reminder of the undeniable diversity of our species.

As I mentioned earlier, my ongoing research is done on my own time. This is my own attempt at connecting the dots between the written materials I've chosen to use and absorb into this building assessment of globalization, ableism, and our cultural lenses. At times this work is poetic, an overlapping flow and exchange of ideas and imagery that stem from stream of consciousness. Other times

it employs mathematic-looking artistry meant to reconfigure an idea from text to image in hopes of inspiring real-life connectivity. Centuries of colonization have led to the eradication of many lives, civilizations, ideas, indigenous practices, art, and articulations of the human experience. These eradicating acts thereby give rise to a dominant culture that's easily recognizable via our conditioned cultural lenses; lenses that often mimic the colonizing nation-state we reside in along with its dominant ideologies. Discussing these above topics requires fluidity in observing and processing how these ideologies are globalized over time and operate alongside the flow of capital. As part of my ongoing resistance towards monoculture and standardized learning methods, I sketch out and illustrate pictures of these dynamics to enhance the English written or spoken word.

These illustrations (as opposed to real-life photography) also make room for abstraction and a more inclusive experience of relatability. The human figures drawn are purposely left without facial features or any presumable characteristics of personality to allow audiences to psychically project themselves into them and see them as themselves, even if they may not belong to that specific demographic being represented. I think the basic "stick figure" (acknowledging the reality that not everybody has walking privilege) is one most sight-privileged human body-minds recognize, making it easier to consider the possibility that that stick figure could be *them*. This recognition seems primal somehow, perhaps going back to our ancestors drawing on cave walls to make sense of the realities of their time. We see ourselves in each other.

The original *Globalization* video series was filmed and captioned in English and edited to feature American Sign Language as well as was translated into German with available German Sign Language. The series also features numerous drawings not only for reflection, but to break up the monotony of a speaker onscreen talking at an audience. For *one* project to not only be accessible to multiple

linguistic populations but have its concepts made visible for the sight privileged and conveyed across populaces with deafness, hearing loss, auditory processing disorder, are language learners, or are generally people who prefer to use subtitles symbolizes how accessibility provides connection across overlapping demographics. It's also not lost on me that this project wouldn't have been possible without globalization. It was contracted by negotiations between myself here in the U.S. and my artistic director overseas from Serbia on temporary residence permit in Germany. It requires technology and is available for viewing on the internet. It features an exchange of cultural ideas across multiple geographic regions on the planet. This is another reason to return to the series and acknowledge the complexities of living in a globalized society.

My intent is to explore cultural lens conditioning in the age of globalism by using metaphors and illustrations of lenses to demonstrate how focal points are akin to centering dominant class narratives and capital agendas. This conditioning thrives on othering marginalized groups and dismissing anti-capitalist rhetoric. I propose that through visual learning and engagement we can interrupt monocultured perceptions by building upon traditional ways of taking in information to foster connections that may not always be made with writing or oral speech alone. If art can make us *feel* and is considered an expression of the human condition, why not absorb illustrations and visuals into the inexhaustible breakdown of capitalism and the driving forces behind and through it?

This body of work is categorized into six sections. I begin with exploring globalization on a macro level by tracing its beginnings with ancient networks of trade routes in Central Asia expanding westward. From there emerged the Age of Exploration and then the Industrial Revolution all the way up to our modern Information Age. According to the National Geographic Society (2025) our current age is interconnected to such where “economic success or failure at one

focal point of the global web can be felt in every major world economy” (“Globalization,” para. 5). By first introducing “The Cultural Lens” in this section, I will introduce key definitions and illustrations as reference points that will appear throughout this entire body of work. Then we’ll zoom out to get a grasp of “Globalization: The Big Picture,” title of the next section. We will visualize how our world has become globalized over time and explore examples of this interconnectedness using analogies of street traffic and conveyer belts to represent the endless flow of capital shaped by this hegemony. The selected works of Toni Morrison provide a deeper look into the processes of globalism and ample material to illustrate the rise of fascism.

As we continue to conceptualize globalization and cultural lenses, we’ll dive into “Disability in the Age of Neoliberal Capitalism,” engaging with Robert McRuer’s *Crip Times* to visualize the nature of human biodiversity and neurodivergence. We’ll assess the ways that neoliberal capitalism and austerity politics has conditioned our cultural lenses to deny or filter out this nature, thus presenting human body types as ranging from “normal” to “abnormal” and, therefore, controllable. By exploring the development of cultural lenses and how our thoughts and behaviors are conditioned, we’ll also begin to connect them to violent tactics of “othering” in colonizing nation-states designed to not only create and protect a sense of “normalcy” or “the way things are,” but also to combat feelings of foreignness and chaos that Morrison often addresses in her speeches and essays.

Once the big picture is in formation and the emergence of various human experiences and conditions are expressed and illustrated, we’ll direct our cultural lenses to zoom out and glance across the multiple lives and cultures across the world as part of our growing awareness. This will aid us during “Monoculture: Globalism’s Homogenous Effects and the Gateway to Ethnocentrism” where we explore globalization’s intertwinement with monoculture and visualize how marginalized experiences are filtered out of our collective and

individual consciousness. This will lead us into our fifth section, “Shrinking Peripheries: Removal, Liabilities, & the Violence of Colonization” as connections are made between ethnocentrism and ongoing practices of scapegoating, criminalization, and removal of undesired bodies within governing nation-states. By examining histories and examples of ableist rhetoric, anti-immigration discourse, government cutting of resources, systemic racism and the ways that each plays multivalent roles in prejudices and stereotypes that are absorbed into our cultural lenses, we will make connections to how economic wealth unequally and unfairly distributed upwards depends on ideologies of hatred, enforced separation, class division, and widespread tactics of othering.

In conclusion, we will turn to artistic expression and disability justice in “Centering Peripheral Experiences & Emergent Identities Resisting Capitalism.” By centering the queer crip horizon introduced by McRuer, we can disrupt and expand our cultural lenses (both individually and collectively) to resist and counter violent capitalist demands for cultural homogeneity and excess wealth accumulation at the expense of the underrepresented peoples of the global majority. We can shift away from dominant ideologies of the colonizer to confront our internalization of “the way things are” and ponder Morrison’s question, “*What is the matter with foreignness?*” We can imagine alternatives, a globalized society that considers the needs and differences of each human body-mind on earth and incorporates them rather than deny the growing horizon of biodiversity and its simultaneously emerging cultures.

EYES ON THE ROAD

Earlier this year, I went on a springtime driving trip from my hometown in Nebraska to visit some dear friends in Minnesota as a birthday present to myself. It was my second long-distance trip driving alone, having driven four and a half hours to Iowa City a few years prior for a friend's wedding. Although I've been on the road before with friends, and I've certainly more than once had these thoughts that I'm about to share now, I became incredibly aware of, perhaps fixated by, not only how much of the geographic horizon was being traversed at high speeds (seventy-five, eighty, ninety miles an hour despite the posted speed limit), but all the visual information and life occurring on these horizons that were being overlooked while moving at such urgent speeds. We pass through so much wildlife in traffic daily, focused on our destinations. I thought about the dangers of getting caught up in trying to gaze even for a few seconds at the greenery and the occasional body of water surrounding the interstate. Of course, you must focus on the road and be aware of the constant flow and interweaving of traffic or risk endangering not only your own life, but everyone else's as well. I admit, I don't like being in traffic. Not being able to control other drivers gives me anxiety. Although we have traffic laws, there are still so many unknown variables that are characteristics of a socially, culturally, and cognitively diverse populace on nationwide, intersecting roadways that function as part of a larger, globalized society. Taking all of this into consideration as well as the realities of the dangers of driving, and we (those of us who are sight privileged) can appreciate the statement, "Eyes on the road" to maintain a sense of collective order and to save lives. Keeping our "eyes on the road" demands a sense of urgency and directs our attention to what's in front of us. This also includes scanning our surroundings and glancing in the rearview mirror to get a sense of what's happening, even though our attention is primarily on getting to where we need to go.



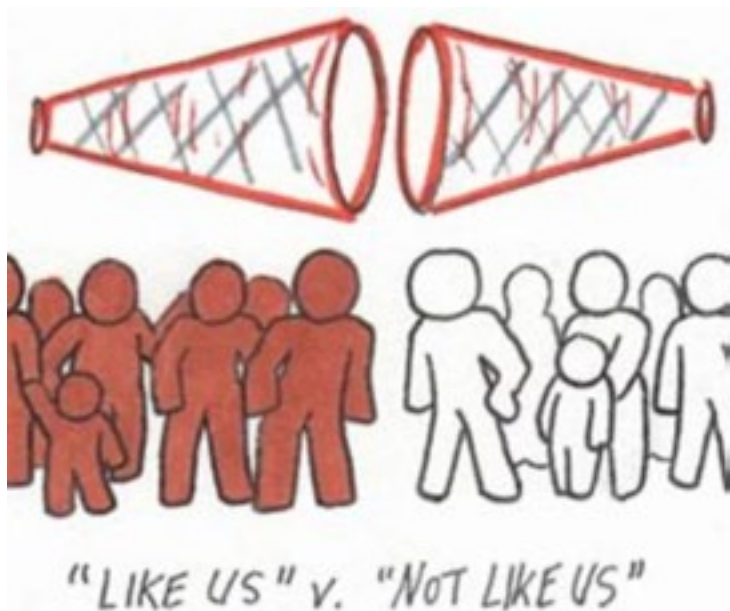
1.2. A close-up of an interstate with traffic driving in both directions. Each vehicle is colored and features a “focus” lens highlighted in orange. The surrounding trees and sky are uncolored because the drivers’ attention is focused on the road (as should be in real life!).

Since roadways were initially built to connect societies to one another, especially for purposes of trade and moving capital, and moving along these intersecting pathways has been the foundation of our globalized society since its inception, I’m intrigued by how much our cultural lenses mirror these centuries’ long movements in, around, and through capital-oriented societies. Do we turn our “eyes off the road” once we’re no longer in a moving vehicle and are engaging amongst one another in public, or are we still “focused” in other ways?



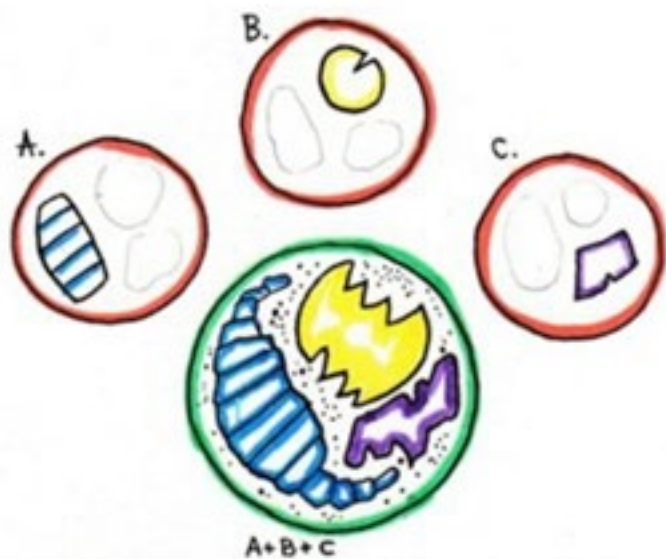
1.3. Reimagining the previous illustration – now the drivers that were on the interstate are featured as cartoon-like figures associating with one another in public, matched by color and a set of cultural lenses except for the lone lavender shaded figure in the bottom right corner. A pair of white figurines in the center standing opposite of one another have their focus on each other with the words “Like Me” quoted above and “Safety” highlighted in green below.

Dr. Victoria Wilson describes the formation of a group of people for a common purpose being one of the key foundations for culture, which “consists of the beliefs, values, and goals that guide daily life” for said group (para. 5). The way things are as we understand them is built through traditions, rituals, and celebrations around us that create a sense of belonging. Belonging makes us feel safe. Throughout time and space and “decades of inherited narratives we absorb the beliefs and behaviors the group sees as ‘normal’ into our subconscious until we genuinely think their standards are our own,” the resulting cultural lens being “the unique perspective each of us forms due to the cultural conditioning we receive from our groups” (Wilson, para. 23, 6, 7). This breakdown of cultural lenses serves as inspiration behind the illustrations I present to analyze globalism’s effects. According to Wilson, our cultural lenses serve three primary functions: *how we see ourselves, how we see others, and how we make decisions that lead to action* (para. 15).



1.4. Two groups of people (one shaded in brown, the other white) stand opposed to one another with their collective cultural lens gazing at the other. The grey, crosshatch pattern symbolizes their contrasting cultures and social norms.

The conditioning of a cultural lens is a natural process and is demonstrated in this body of work in a multitude of ways to represent its constantly focusing and *un*focusing; its contracting and expanding nature – like viewing things through a microscope. The danger lies with viewing “every situation through this lens, deciding how we feel about it and reacting based on whether it confirms or challenges our [established] socialized beliefs” (Wilson, para. 9). Imagine instead of a microscope (or any other scope) showing things as they are, they’re embedded with filters that blank out and blur certain undesired or suspected objects within viewing range. The only way we can get a fuller picture is if we’re willing to look through other people’s scopes to get a sense of just how much we’re missing because of our own embedded filters.



1.5. Three individual circles highlighted in orange and labeled A, B, and C each scope the same three items, but only one is discernible in each. By merging into A+B+C the circle, then highlighted green, largens and shows in more artistic detail all three abstract items.

No matter what, our lenses will never be large enough to encompass the entire human race, absorb every culture, learn every language, and consider every human experience. No single person can fully understand the entire human race yet alone see from every person's perspective. The beauty of being alive is that we get to be curious about other people and to observe and ask questions rather than assume we can ever have all the answers. Our limitations do not mean we can't adjust our cultural lens (which inevitably absorb capitalist and other dominant ideologies of our time) and expand to center other viewpoints (or lenses) that are made invisible or filtered out of the collective consciousness. We can shift our lenses to acknowledge the mass deportation of poor, working class immigrants in the United States or the worldwide persecutions and disappearances of members of the LGBTQ community fueled by state sanctioned propaganda and media misrepresentation, for example. We can acknowledge how patriarchy causes even cisgender heterosexual men to suffer and that men in general need mental health resources and safe spaces to explore their masculinity. The limited range of our cultural lens doesn't mean that we can't imagine globalizing accessibility and practices of even and just distribution of resources and wealth and center marginalized, disabled body-mind experiences in government, politics, medicine, media, art, even architecture. We can even deconstruct and adjust our cultural lens when it comes to confronting our own biases, insecurities, personal goals, and relationships with other people.

How do these primary functions of cultural lenses work alongside today's constantly expanding global economy and the many cultures it impacts? How is neoliberal capitalism on a macro level affecting or changing the filter settings embedded in our micro level, everyday lenses as we engage with each other in the world? If monoculture is achieved alongside imperialism, creating and promoting homogenous populations and ideas to control the flow of capital, is it reasonable to suspect that both our individual and collective cultural lenses are somewhat monocultured as well? Instead of our eyes being "on

the road” are our eyes, or perhaps our focus (to be more inclusive), on populations whose ideas, behaviors, and physical traits conform with what’s been established (over years of colonization) as “normal” and “acceptable”?

At the beginning of this Introduction is an illustrated circle outlined in bold orange [1.1]. This represents our cultural lens – both individual and collective. Throughout this essay our cultural lens will be represented in various illustrations pertaining to the title of the section they are featured in. The size of and the number of lenses will also vary to represent filtering out marginalized and vulnerable populations (getting smaller) or filtering them in (getting larger). However, in the next section the large, orange circle is an invitation for us to zoom out to *imagine* globalism on a large scale with every person in the world being represented and affected simultaneously – even though I’ve previously stated that knowing every person’s experience in the world isn’t *realistically* possible. To resist expanding nation-state ideologies rooted in class division and capitalism urges that we imagine regardless. Understanding globalization means accepting that our actions, thoughts, behaviors, and engagement with society inevitably impacts other people even if we don’t interact directly with them.

Depicting our cultural lens as an actual circle with an enclosed finite space, then placing this representational lens among abstract patterns and grey areas that represent endless variations of human biology and cultures illustrate how globalized ideologies and narratives that are profit-over-people oriented are in excess and thereby limit our ability to perceive one another despite being a globalized network. The final section of this essay features illustrative possibilities of adjusting our cultural lens to not only filter in peripheral viewpoints and become more aware of marginalized groups and their existing and expanding sociocultural horizons, but to push the boundaries of what we understand about humanity through curiosity, inclusion,

and coexistence. These illustrations imagine globalized accessibility tactics and people-over-profit-oriented societies designed to benefit as many body-minds as possible.

For reference, I've included a key for the recurring symbols that appear throughout various illustrations in this essay.

KEY ILLUSTRATIONS



The cultural and social horizons relating to the human body-mind experience, the grey lines in this diagonal, crosshatch pattern are to be imagined as endlessly expanding outward in all directions with no borders, representing the realities and the possibilities of being human. This pattern symbolizes biodiversity, neurodivergence, emerging and dying cultures worldwide, identities, sociality, languages, etc. Essentially everything that makes us human – from our physical bodies and civilizations to our thoughts, emotional spectrum, and dreams.



This blue frame represents our limited understanding of human body-minds historically, scientifically, culturally, and socially. As much historical documentation, medical advancements, and civil rights movements we've done to enlarge this square, still so much is unknown about the past, the body-mind, and other, marginalized cultures.



Our resulting and shifting cultural lens and perceptions in a modern globalized society formed through centuries of imperialist expansionism is represented by this orange circle. The presence of this circle is simultaneously both inevitable and the byproduct of cultural conditioning. Its position among expansive cultural and social horizons within our limited understanding of our existence defines what each one of us sees as “normal” and “not normal.”

To view the original Globalization series please visit dis-project.info/dis-kurs.

GLOBALIZATION: THE BIG PICTURE



2.1. An orange circle outlines the planet Earth, prompting us to zoom out as much as possible to perceive the big picture. This illustration represents our collective cultural lens as a globalized society that has developed (and is developing) throughout time and space. By tracing the origins of globalization alongside capitalism and its supporting ideologies, and by identifying ubiquitous forms of government (serving as “blueprints”) for colonizing-nation states in the era of imperialism, we can visualize how much our cultural lens and ideas about the way things are have been shaped by forces that have been operating for thousands of years.

SILK ROADS

During our “Introduction” I mentioned the driving trip I took to Minnesota and compared being in traffic with our “eyes on the road” to having a cultural lens reiterating dominant ideologies and the values of those most represented in each society. I find it necessary to return to the topic of “traffic” and expand our definition (and visualization) of it. After all, road traffic is just one kind of traffic. As we consider foot, wheel, animal, vehicle, air, and sea traffic we can imagine each as individual threads running back and forth along the entire globe simultaneously, representing what’s currently a nonstop global mass movement of people.



2.2 A blue sphere with numerous intersecting lines running throughout it symbolizing multiple modes of traffic occurring across the globe.

Referring to these illustrations of our planet, we can zoom in on how much nonstop traffic occurs daily in multiple forms – from walking, limping and rolling on sidewalks, to driving on the interstate alongside thousands of others, going from one continental land mass to another, whether under, across, or above the oceans. What’s moving or being transported from place to place around the clock? People, goods, government policies, culture, diseases, languages, data, plants, animals, and capital, to name several.



2.3. An illustration of planet earth in the center surrounded by visuals of subjects that are globalized ranging from (starting at the top center going clockwise) people, money, animals, plants, technology, language, diseases, culture, and goods.

The increasing interconnectedness and interdependence of our societies and cultures and economies around the world is known as *globalization*. Our world is moving fast in ways humanity has never experienced before. Globalization exists in a transformative state, constantly shaping the world's economies and cultures depending on the driving forces of expansion and capitalism. It's neither inherently good nor bad. By journeying through the past to trace and visualize globalization's origins, we can understand more about the nature of this worldwide interconnectedness and the different types of globalization manifested through these complex connections. We can also consider if neoliberal aspirations of a monocultured global society (think, "one people, one world") have devastating or unforeseen consequences.

Globalization can be traced all the way back to the emergence of the Silk Roads in East and Central Asia around 50 BCE. This network of trade routes linked China to the West and consisted of land and sea routes that eventually spread across Eurasia and reached parts of the Russian steppes, the Arabian Peninsula, North Africa, and the Mediterranean region. According to the National Geographic Society (2025), "[a]dvances in metallurgy led to the creation of coins; advances in transportation led to the building of roads connecting the major empires... and increased agricultural production meant more food could be trafficked between locales" ("Globalization" para. 2). As the magnetic compass was developed and ship designs improved, European explorers of the Old World sought out new trade routes and the Age of Exploration emerged (dating as far back as the early 15th century), spreading people and their coexisting cultures, goods, and diseases across the oceans. Imagine these emergent modes of exploration as threads igniting the formation process of globalization as

[t]he web of globalization continued to spin out through the Age of Revolution, when ideas about liberty, equality, and fraternity

spread like fire from America to France to Latin America and beyond. [Globalization] rode the waves of industrialization, colonization, and war through the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries, powered by the invention of factories, railways, steamboats, cars, and planes (National Geographic Society, “Globalization,” para. 4).

This historic breakdown allows us to consider the complexities of globalization as it operates on multiple, overlapping, layers. The “waves of industrialization, colonization, and war” intertwined with globalization demonstrates its transformative state as well as alludes to how ideologies and conditions are upheld and trafficked through these waves. To make our lenses more critical for observing how globalization has and continues to shape our world, Dr. Chris Drew (2023) provides us with its eight types: social, technological, financial, economic, political, cultural, ecological, and geographical (“8 Types of Globalization”). The ideas about “liberty, equality, and fraternity” that spread during the Age of Revolution are examples of cultural globalization, and the integration of those resulting societies are examples of social globalization. Cultural globalization includes “cultural adaptation, cultural diffusion, and hierarchical diffusion,” while social globalization “refers to the idea that we now live in a shared society” made up of different cultures (Drew, Cultural section, para. 3, Social section, para. 1).

The modern Information Age featured by advances in computer communications technology has made the exchange of data between geographic regions seamless and instantaneous, an example of technological globalization. This is what made it possible for me to write on a computer, film using my phone camera, upload said films to email as digital files and then send them to my artistic director overseas within seconds for the original video series of this project. Thanks to financial globalization, which Drew describes as the “internationalization of financial markets [which] has made it easier for people to transfer money,” I was able to be compensated for my labor and artistic vision despite the differences of currencies in the United States and in Germany (Financial section, para. 1).

It's crucial to understand the complexities of globalization before we can assess class hierarchies and the ideologies, politics, and state-sanctioned (sometimes violent) reshaping of geographic regions that categorize and/or remove people according to traits deemed desirable or undesirable by a given society. Since our history begins with silk, let's do some visual wordplay and imagine a single strand as represented by this line as one of the numerous emerging Silk Roads thousands of years ago:



As these interconnecting roads linked empires and nation states and continued to expand throughout time, this illustration now branches out to represent maritime travel alongside land travel during the Age of Exploration (15th century). No longer a single line going in two directions, but now multiple strands of “silk” extending outwards diagonally in search of new routes.



The Industrial Revolution marked the age of factories during the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries. Alternating modes of traffic are represented as more branching out occurs, now

giving our original illustration the appearance of a snowflake or perhaps a gear to be in tandem with the subject of emerging factories and a growing work force. Modes of traffic now consist of railways, steamboats, cars, and airplanes.



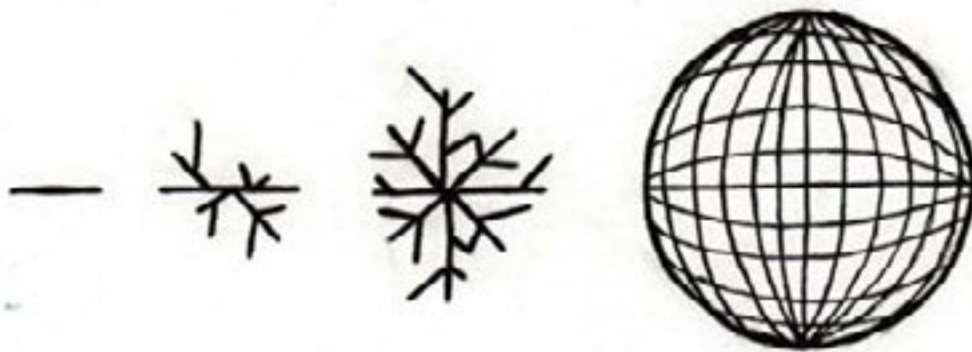
2.6

The intersecting threads and seemingly infinite branching out symbolize the unstoppable interconnectedness and overlapping mass movement of people and ideas in the fourth and current stage of globalization – *The Information Age*. It's no surprise that this illustration should resemble a matrix grid, since this age is the emergence of virtual realities along with ideas and currencies being exchanged online. Perhaps as these threads connect across the globe, they represent a full circle – an idea of what humanity is capable of as a globalized species.



2.7

Now that the four major stages of globalization have been laid out and respectively illustrated, let's present them side by side for an abstract representation of the emergence of this mass movement of people, goods, cultures, and politics throughout history.



2.8. The Silk Road, Age of Exploration, Industrial Revolution, Digital Age.

Imagine the threads running across the globe – as shown previously and at the beginning of this section – representing travel via established trade routes, connecting societies, shared ideas and politics, emerging governments, and expanding nation-states. Each thread could also symbolize a nerve or a blood vein inside the human body-mind. Pathogens can end up in our bloodstream, leading to harm. They can appear harmless and to be coexisting with us – like a parasite. This image of contamination can be represented in several ways: oil polluting streams and lakes, dirt clogging up pipes, even cracks appearing on roads that eventually lead to disrepair. Whatever image we use here, the idea is that a connecting pathway, vessel, or a thread can become contaminated or fractured. Once something gets inside it may be difficult, if not impossible, to clean, remove, or repair – especially if it has had time (particularly centuries) to adapt or accumulate. Remember, globalization exists in a transformative state.

Since the lines in these illustrations represent a globalized society in full force beginning with its inception, and this current society is built upon class systems and unequal distribution of wealth and resources among them, let us imagine that some of the “pathogens” infecting, or having emerged alongside these longstanding international lines since the dawn of capitalism, are racism, sexism, homophobia, religious dogmas, and ableism.

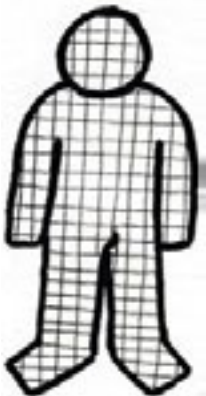
HOME AND FOREIGNNESS

In *Crip Times*, McRuer (2018) explores how cultures and movements are formed around the logic of neoliberalism, which we will explore further in the upcoming section, “Disability in the Age of Neoliberal Capitalism.” Supporting our understanding throughout this essay, I rely on the dictionary definition of neoliberalism as “a modern politico-economic theory favoring free trade, privatization, minimal government intervention in business, [and] reduced public expenditure on social services” (Random House Unabridged). McRuer introduces neoliberalism as the dominant political economy since the 1980s, often presented as noninterventionist and nonregulatory while masking corporate dominance. In the United States under President Ronald Reagan “neoliberalism was consolidated and slowly globalized through the state-driven privatization and deregulation of forces that would block the sacrosanct ‘free flow’ of capital” (McRuer, p. 14). This globalized logic of neoliberalism shapes our movements in the world, travels alongside us in traffic (no matter what mode we use), and filters our cultural lens.

Conceptualizing a “big picture” of globalization is necessary to understand our current age of neoliberal capitalism and its relationship with disability. This will also guide us toward understanding the

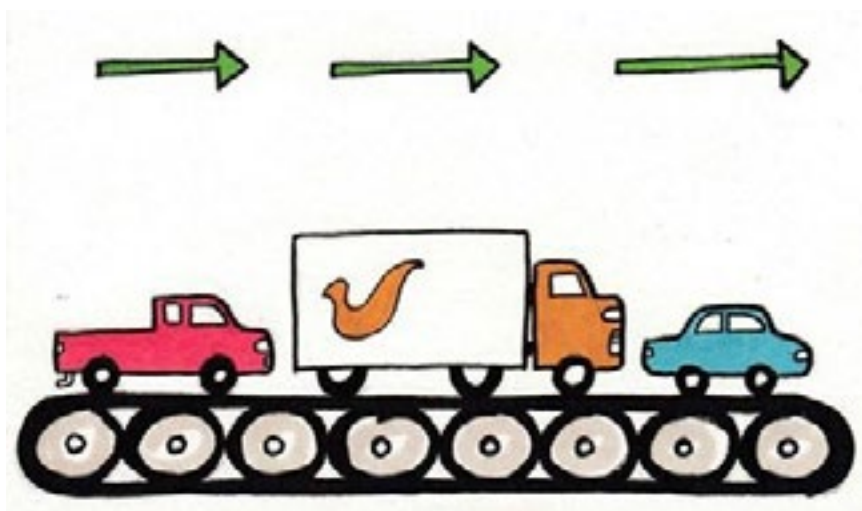
development and conditioning of our cultural lenses and why we see the world the way that we do. It's important to ask and to assess all that capitalism demands of the human body and to explore whether all human body-minds can adhere to the oppressive regimes that enforce these demands. The short answer is *no*, especially when you consider that “*reduced public expenditure on social services*” often comes at the expense of body-minds that rely on them and clearly aren't within the expanding neoliberal state's agenda. The more capital-oriented and labor intensive our global network becomes, the more potential, sometimes demands, there are for monoculture and state-sanctioned tactics to remove people whose body-minds aren't compliant.

We must consider the values that are being promoted within and throughout globalism. We must examine the ways that capitalism demands we physically move our bodies through space with a sense of urgency and confront this capital-driven idea of hastened mobility in consideration of real limitations (physical and non-physical) experienced by body-minds that are disabled, aging, chronically ill, neurologically diverse, and/or socioeconomically disadvantaged.



2.9. A globalized human body-mind, drawn with grid lines to match a globalized planet.

Let's turn to more illustrations of globalization to visualize how our society is based around movement and transportation. Sometimes I imagine looking down at street traffic from above and seeing it as a factory line or a giant, grocery store conveyer belt. Many of us are moving from one place to another to fulfill a capitalist demand. The traditional "9 to 5," eight-hour workday routine (however this may vary in actual hours). Not to suggest that we're all merely grocery products sitting on a damp belt waiting to be scanned and tossed into a paper bag that was already at capacity three cans of beans ago, but it does point to the idea that the end goal is oftentimes *consumption* – be it consumption of money, time, labor, shopping goods, etc. Bodies are expected to always be on the move, oftentimes with a sense of urgency.



2.10. A red pickup truck, a yellow and white city delivery van, and a blue car drive across a massive conveyer belt, directed by three green arrows pointing east.

To expand further, Morrison (2002) describes globalization as “a movement of workers, intellectuals, refugees, armies crossing oceans, continents, immigrants through custom offices and hidden routes, speaking multiple languages of trade, of political intervention, of persecution, of exile, violence, and poverty,” and this voluntary or involuntary “redistribution of people all over the globe tops the agenda of the state,” controlled via monitoring

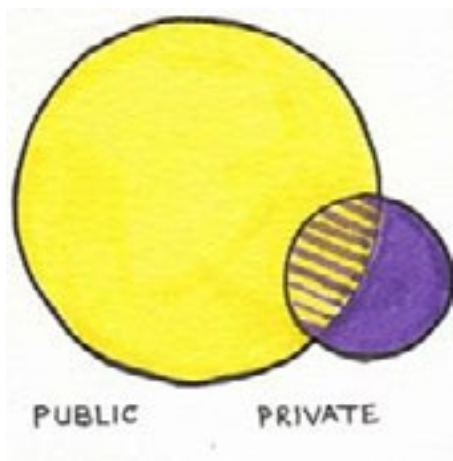
the dispossessed (p. 5). The key words *voluntary* and *involuntary* notes not only globalism's complexities but also brings attention to how lives are positively and/or negatively affected by agendas of the state. Globalism's disregard of marginal spaces and borders and its populaces living there is part of "its abhorrence of diversity" and paves the way for "indistinguishability, the elimination of minority languages [and] minority cultures in its wake" (Morrison, 2002, p. 7).

Globalization affects everyone, even those who aren't immediately subject to removal or being uprooted from their homes. Morrison proposes that our idea of "home" (and perhaps our sense of belonging, to build upon Wilson's definition of culture) is disrupted by globalism's "distortion of the public and the destruction of the private," pointing to data-collections by governments, the privatization of prisons and public schools, publicizing private details of one's life – especially celebrities, and limiting public spaces such as parks and playgrounds to private use (2002, p. 7). The author even goes on to demonstrate how often the interiors of our houses are designed to look like store displays and vice versa; how often young people's behaviors echo what's represented on screen and vice versa. The way the public and private spheres have been blurred throughout time by processes of globalization has contributed to our growing anxieties about foreignness. If our global societies are interconnected and constantly influence one another and large groups of people can be displaced at any given moment to make room for capital expansion, then where exactly is home and is home permanent?

As a U.S. citizen, I feel the urge to bring up anti-immigration rhetoric surrounding the border between Mexico and the U.S. that has existed for years, as well as the hate-mongering and fear stirred up by the current Trump Administration to justify agendas to deport millions of immigrants throughout its term (approximately one million each year) to foster ongoing beliefs about threats to national security since 9/11. The U.S. has seen record high mass deportations during the Bush,

Obama, and Biden presidencies and shows no evidence of slowing down. Morrison (2002) argues that this spectacle of mass movement that is globalism calls attention to “the borders, the porous places, the vulnerable points where one’s concept of home is seen as being menaced by foreigners” as a location for us to examine the uneasy relationship with our own foreignness and our “rapidly disintegrating sense of belonging” (pp. 5-6). Riding the wave of mass deportation are prejudices and stereotypes about immigrants (especially non-white ones) and radicalized fears of white people being replaced. As of August 2025, NBC News reports approximately 59,041 migrants currently in ICE detention as part of ongoing processes of removal featuring mass arrests and deportations of nearly half a million migrants – thousands of whom have been sent to third countries (Wu et al.).

The distortion of public and private spheres is an opportunity to illustrate a Venn diagram representing two spheres as separate entities coexisting alongside one another. However, since the public is made up of many lives, it makes sense that these two spheres should differ in size and appearance. Unless you’re fortunate enough to live completely self-sufficiently and off the grid, most of us engage with or use public facilities in some way on a regular basis. These may be social or governmental contracts, such as working, paying taxes, ordering takeout, or exercising with friends in a public park. Our Venn diagram may look something like this:



2.11. Two spheres overlap – the larger, yellow sphere labeled “Public” and the smaller, purple sphere labeled “Private.” The striped area in between represents social and governmental contracts between oneself and the society they live in.

However, the more this distortion occurs between public and private spheres the more our Venn Diagram can be illustrated to appear as if the exponentially large public space is fully absorbing the private space (and rights) presumably belonging to everyone. This second illustration alluding to the “*rapidly disintegrating sense of belonging*” described by Morrison, compounded by Wilson’s explanation of how much culture gives us a sense of belonging, suggests a connection to the violent, retaliatory acts of removal by colonizing nation-states with ideologies designed to preserve the heritages of the colonizers. These ideologies are strengthened by citizens whose cultural lenses operate on behalf of their nation-state by targeting and othering minorities, even if they’re unaware they’re doing so.

Returning to my mentioning of U.S. immigration and the growing animosity towards migrants and misinformed beliefs of restoring the labor force and the economy via mass, swift deportations, say we imagine the lives of American citizens to be represented by one “private” sphere. Meanwhile, undocumented immigrants represent the other, “public,” and therefore, *foreign*, sphere that’s commingling with its counterpart and disrupting some American citizens’ sense of belonging and heritage. I believe this implicit feeling of disruption and fear of being replaced is exploited in many American citizens and capitalized upon to justify the very whitewashing of our nation, incentivizing discrimination and violence towards even those who *are* documented but don’t pass as white.

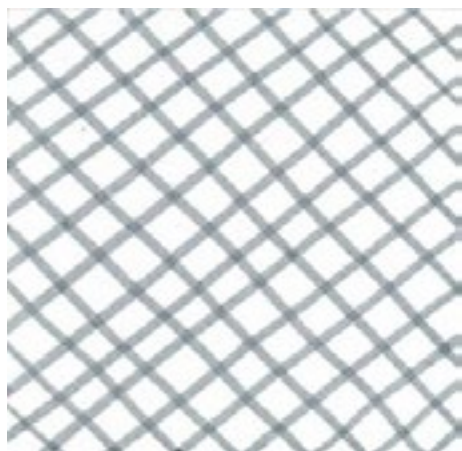


2.12. The yellow, “Public” sphere has now fully absorbed the smaller sphere, incorporating it fully and distorting the “Private” self.

If globalization is the result of the intermixing of our societies, how do nation-states and their peoples stand to benefit long-term from monoculture and class hierarchies? If our sense of belonging is disrupted and our fear of being replaced can lead us to retaliate violently, wouldn't globalization exacerbate this retaliation as our private lives become more public, more capital-oriented, and less *ours*? We've merely scratched the surface to reveal the many ways each of us both internalize and resist globalism's ideals.

How much of our cultural lens is conditioned into a globalized resistance towards foreignness, priming us to be compliant towards tactics of othering and removal committed against vulnerable populations by our government? How deeply do we internalize and act out the ideas of the colonizing nation-state we are citizens of? Now that we've laid out a general history of globalization tracing back to the Silk Roads, and can visualize countless overlapping human movements throughout time that are fueled by exploration, territorial expansion, labor, and capital, we can start to look at ideologies flowing through these movements that shape cultures and ideas, become foundations for laws, and ultimately determines which human lives are legitimate and which ones are disposable in the ages of capitalism.

DISABILITY IN THE AGE OF NEOLIBERAL CAPITALISM



3.1. This diagonal pattern of grey lines represents growing social and cultural horizons that arise from human biodiversity and neurodivergence.

DISABILITY AND LANGUAGE

The word “disability” is not limited to diagnosis or definitions within the medical industrial complex. Disability is a birth or learned experience. Disability creates cultural horizons and its own languages by those who experience it in the various ways it manifests in human body-minds over their lifetimes. Disability includes the experience of being in a body-mind that’s unacknowledged and unaccommodated for by society (and oftentimes within communities) and has inaccessibility to resources and cultural understanding that are guaranteed to privileged members of said society. Disability doesn’t care what able-bodied, so-called “experts” say about disabled bodies if they aren’t listening to those disabled bodies in the first place – hence the saying, “*Nothing about us without us.*”

A person may be disabled by obstacles and barriers in their everyday life that could be removed or addressed as a collective society willing to imagine and act upon accessibility. Capitalism *disables* bodies.

Bodies are beaten down and broken in war and during waves of colonization and slavery. Body-minds laboring long-term without access to healthcare or social services are more susceptible to becoming disabled. In many of my readings of disability studies there is growing discourse and agreement that body-minds with HIV/AIDS, addiction, chronic physical illness, mental illness, and/or transgender are defined as disabled with their individual cultural experiences, languages, and sociality. They're also vulnerable to being labeled as liabilities and then subject to violent acts of removal from their societies. There's a sentiment within the disabled community that *"Everyone will be disabled if they grow old enough."*

There are spectrums of disability as well as visible and nonvisible variations. Deafness, for example, is an invisible disability spectrum blanketing deaf-since-birth, later in life hearing loss, auditory processing disorder, and hard of hearing experiences. Some disabilities are permanent, and others are temporary – like a broken arm or a leg. Though eyeglasses have been normalized (and the growing need for eyecare capitalized upon over time), many people are disabled without their accommodating seeing devices. Body-minds come in all shapes and sizes with varying capabilities. They are all proof of the naturally occurring biodiversity and neurodivergence in all human body-minds as well as their emerging cultures. This is illustrated at the beginning of this section with a crosshatch pattern expanding outwards in all directions with no definitive borders [3.1].

This growing horizon of experiences is why it's crucial to centre disability when assessing capitalism's impact on human body-minds, as well as advocating for the dismantling of oppressive *isms*. These disabled experiences defy hierarchy according to ability or biology. They defy capitalist expectations and place the problem with the obstacles and misunderstandings in society rather than identifying body-minds themselves as problems that need to be corrected or removed. Disability overlaps and occurs across all human groups regardless of geographic

region, race, gender, sexual orientation, culture, religious beliefs, or age. This unifying experience presents the possibility for united fronts against neoliberal capitalism and fascism.



3.2. This illustration features an ear with a hearing aid, a walking cane, a pair of red and blue pills, and a pair of dark-rimmed glasses to account for the various disabilities and life conditions featured in our species.

In the era of neoliberal capitalism where profit is valued over people and the meritocratic creed has influenced the global economy, McRuer breaks down how “compulsory able-bodiedness or able-mindedness structure the rhetoric of the political economy,” demonstrating how metaphors praising able-bodiedness are *everywhere* in contemporary society (p. 190). As an example, the author employs a crip analysis of UK’s former prime minister Margaret Thatcher and her 1975 speech “Let Our Children Grow Tall” to emphasize her messages of competition over equality of outcome, and the use of *tallness* as a metaphor for able-bodiedness and aspiration (p. 186). Language is important. It’s one of the major driving forces behind globalization while also being globalized itself. Language gives meaning, shape, and color to ideas that are part of our cultural lenses. Politicized metaphors inconspicuously influence the way that we see certain groups of people. In Thatcher’s following speeches the prime minister invoked lines such as “chronic schizophrenia” and “sickness” to describe issues within the Labour government, reiterating how often “disability routinely functions in our cultural narratives to explain something bad” (McRuer, p. 191).

We've come to define *ableism* as discrimination against body-minds with disabilities and sensory differences. Ableism consists of attitudes and prejudices that are passed down from generation to generation throughout societies worldwide and are conditioned into our cultural lenses. Ableism includes systemic oppression and unfair wages. It thrives on inaccessibility and exclusion, banking on the devaluation of an individual and/or a group based on their disabled status. Its relationship with capitalism is undeniable.

Why do many people have negative feelings or discomfort towards disability? How are these feelings and prejudices conditioned into our cultural lenses that (consciously and unconsciously) also uphold capitalist agendas? Where does language including “lazy” and “scrounger” to describe people who are unable or unwilling to work emerge from? It's essential to assess how these ideas result in othering disabled and/or neurodivergent people, thereby making them easy targets for criminalization, scapegoating, and removal. Confronting capitalism means confronting the reality that our bodies are not invincible and will eventually age, weaken, and die.



3.3. A brown-skinned figure sits in a wheelchair.

Capitalism promotes productivity and functionality. Don't the machines we use, the technology we employ, and the roadways we travel on all have to be in working condition to ensure our economy keeps spinning? This also means that our bodies must work as well – although what exactly we mean by *work* can be interpreted in multiple ways. Are we referring strictly to labor in exchange for compensation, food, and shelter, or perhaps how our body-minds function individually – as different as each *body* is? When things break, it can be upsetting, especially if it's something irreparable. Our bodies are not things, but they can be broken and irreparable. They can get sick, become immunocompromised, lose sensations, or suffer from mental distress. Disability doesn't discriminate as much as it is discriminated against. Perhaps ableism is rooted in the fear and denial of the possibility of becoming disabled. At the same time ableism denies the reality that all bodies are different and hinders us from making peace with this.



3.4. Five gears are arranged against a yellow backdrop. In the original “Globalization” video series these gears represent labor in a capitalist society and are presented side-by-side with human bodies to analyze what is demanded of both groups.

Disability Rights advocate Emily Ladau (2021) argues that normal human functioning doesn't exist because "our bodies and brains work in different ways. We process things differently; we communicate things differently; we move differently. This means we all need help and support in different ways to get things done" (p. 18). Acknowledging our differences is essential to addressing our individual and collective needs – be they a person's drug prescriptions and need for dependable transportation or a racial demographic being harassed and monitored by police. This means confronting our binary notions of functionality. Ladau notes how often disabled people are referred to as *high functioning* or *low functioning* (especially in medical or school settings) and explains that "functioning labels promote the false idea that there are standard abilities that all people have," calling for an end to this divide between disabled and nondisabled peoples, as well as divisions within both groups (p. 18). Ideas about functionality and its metaphors are absorbed into our cultural lenses and appear in our everyday languages. This can influence how we view and treat people. Autistic activist Noor Pervez explains further how labels of "low functioning" denies agency to disabled peoples with high support needs while "high functioning" denies resources to people who can mask their disabilities well (qtd. in Ladau, pp. 18-19).

How does Ladau's argument of the inexistence of normal human functioning and her insistence on community ("*we all need help*") hold up against existent, globalized ideas such as individualism, for example?

The definition of *functionality* is "performing a specified action" or "able to cope with everyday life" (Random House Unabridged). Suppose a person can't perform a specific action or has difficulties coping with everyday life? Are they, by definition, *nonfunctional*? What does it mean to be *nonfunctional* in the era of neoliberal capitalism where government spending cuts on social benefits that poor and/or disabled people rely on is on the rise? Many societal obstacles and ideas can

prevent a person from being functional. Does being nonfunctioning mean you don't have rights or agency over your personhood and are less of a human being? If so, then how do we determine and measure a person's functionality? We all age and eventually will not be able to work anymore. We will all become disabled if we live long enough. There is value to human life outside of productivity.

It's important to be aware of our ideas and use of language about functionality because they're filtered through our cultural lens as extensions of the globalized society we're living in. The economy is built by our collective movements, needs, and labor. The economy also impacts our feelings, the language we use, and the ways that we view one another. These viewpoints emerge in topics such as U.S. immigration and work capability assessments of disabled peoples in the U.K. They determine who gets rights, representation, benefits, and who doesn't.

ENGAGING WITH *CRIP TIMES*

As part of the emerging definitions of disability by disabled people, the reclaimed term *crip* “as a marker of an in-your-face, or out-and-proud, cultural model of disability” reiterates that *crip*

[stands] in opposition to both the medical model, which would reduce disability to the univocality of pathology, diagnosis, or treatment/elimination, and to some forms of the well-known social model, largely developed in the UK, which suggests that disability should be understood as located not in bodies per se but in inaccessible environments requiring adaptation (McRuer, p. 19).

The emerging queer *crip* horizon is a collective act of resistance against rigid heterosexist and ableist ideologies. To deny this horizon is to deny biodiversity and the spectrum of sexuality. This denial solidifies the

idea of a “normal” and obtainable body-mind with a matching lifestyle. *Crip* embodies non-normative or non-representative disabilities. *Crip* connects to Disability Justice. We are to position the terms *crip* and *cripping* “alongside a range of terms that represent the need for new or multiple languages for thinking about disability” and note how “to crip” something “exposes the ways in which able-bodiedness and able-mindedness get naturalized and the ways that bodies, minds, and impairments that should be at the absolute center of a space or issue or discussion get purged from that space or issue or discussion” (McRuer, p. 23).

Austerity is the transnational class strategic response to the crises of neoliberal capitalism in the twenty-first century. Austerity is a “rhetoric of emergency” characterized by “a lowering of government spending, an increasing of labor hours for workers, cuts to benefits and social services, and – wherever possible – privatization of those social services” (McRuer, p. 16). It is essentially an intensified version of neoliberal capitalism. The people who are harmed and removed by these “cuts to benefits and social services” oftentimes belong to vulnerable and marginalized groups such as those who are poor, elderly, and/or disabled. Addressing capitalism and class inequality means confronting our government’s willingness to dispose of disabled people. It means confronting our ideas about disability and the ways capitalism leaves many people behind if they’re unable or unwilling to work. Even though disability encompasses the largest minority group in the world, widespread ableist ideologies that appear in our governing nation-states alongside our everyday thoughts, conversations, and behaviors are contributing factors as to how disability “is one of the under theorized central issues of a global austerity politics” (McRuer, p. 30).

I can’t help but draw metaphors from the geographic horizon I mentioned earlier when I was driving to Minnesota, to the queer crip social horizon presented by McRuer. This queer crip sociality

represents emerging and intersectional cultural and social experiences that resist capitalist agendas and divisive class ideologies that limit or hinder this horizontal growth. Traversing the geographic, Midwestern horizon without paying much attention to the trees, rivers, lakes, hills, cornfields, barns, houses, and animals that fill in and characterize the land mass surrounding the interstate feels somewhat analogous to a lens that glances over the vast cultural landscapes of humanity without paying much attention to the poor, nonwhite, queer, disabled, neurodivergent, sick, and working class people who fill in the mass surrounding the lens centered on those most represented. The purging of queer crip realities is part of the functioning of globalized neoliberal capitalism.



3.5. A group of people with varying physical characteristics and capabilities are featured with an orange lens centered on two white individuals in the middle.

The interstate was the focal point, while the surrounding areas were *filtered out*, made irrelevant to the journey. By centering disability as a lens to recognize and resist austerity politics, McRuer “aims to make explicit and central what is implicit and peripheral in other studies” (p. 13). This is one of the main reasons that I wanted to revisit this series and illustrate the cultural lens to demonstrate how we may not be conscious of other people.

In the previous section, I brought up conveyor belts and factory lines as analogies of moving through street traffic, imagining the globe as one big machine trafficking *us* back and forth. The reality is that machines don't always compensate for the changes and the fluctuations that occur spontaneously in the human body-mind. These changes include, but are not limited to: disability, mobility, health, alertness/mood, impaired senses, and cultural bias.

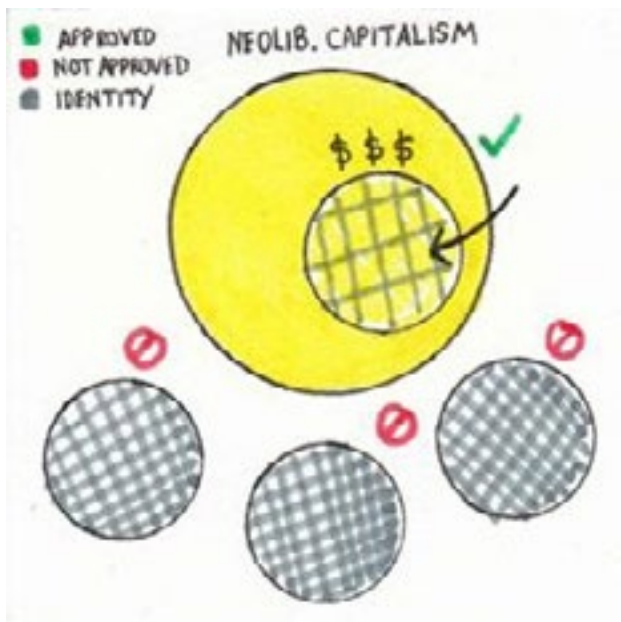


3.6. A color-coded list of changes occurring in the human body-mind is accompanied by an illustration of a body with the same colors. Next to them both is a black gear that is not susceptible to any of the listed changes.

Globalized ideologies within nation-states that demand cultural (and sometimes biological) homogeneity to control the flow of capital do not support this human spontaneity. Ideally, every human body-mind would have to be “built” similarly to be part of conforming, working class society. Reinforcing this rhetoric is a gateway to *monoculture*. Despite my anxieties about being in street traffic, I can't control other drivers and mistakes and accidents will happen because people are imperfect.

Sins Invalid, a disability justice-based performance organization, emphasizes the importance of building an intersectional framework when tackling civil rights issues, one that doesn't separate disability from race, gender, and sexuality for "we can only truly understand ableism by tracing its connections to heteropatriarchy, white supremacy, colonialism, and capitalism" (p. 18). Systems of oppression take on similarities when the end goal is maintaining economic class and the status quo – making our histories and social issues intertwined under globalization. Capitalism requires the marginalization of bodies and their categorization into hierarchies, where wealth is unfairly redistributed towards the top. These hierarchies are determined by "interrelations [between] heteropatriarchy, white supremacy, colonialism, and capitalism, each system co-creating an ideal body-mind built upon the exclusion and elimination of a subjugated 'other' from whom profits and status are extracted" (Sins Invalid, p. 111). The "ideal body-mind" exists within our minds as part of global cultural conditioning regardless of how much we can conform to the ideal, if it all.

While disabled body-minds challenge the rhetoric of able-bodiedness, McRuer also explores neoliberal capitalist recognition of disabled sociality and how *some* individuals within the group are marketed based on their emergence of identity. These disabled identities disappear into identities of neoliberalism and are normalized for the appearance of valuing these demographics, while this value does not extend to *all* members of the group. In other words, certain types of disabilities in certain individuals are tolerable, and therefore, marketable, within the grand scheme of neoliberal capitalist globalism, but not everyone is accounted for. McRuer points out that "dominant forms of neoliberal capitalist globalization would like to ensure identity and difference are corralled into the hierarchical organs of a political body" (p. 231). This is to control who gets represented and how. This is also to deter attention away from who is *not* represented and to make *their* removal inconspicuous.



3.7. A large, yellow sphere representing Neoliberal Capitalism sits in the center having absorbed a smaller sphere with approved identities and/or credentials to fuel and expand its empire. Below are three small spheres whose contents are not approved to be absorbed into “the hierarchical organs of a political body,” and are therefore rejected.

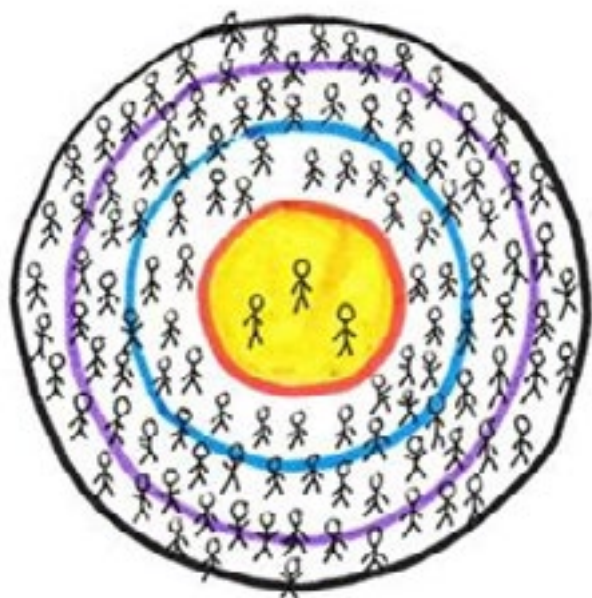
It is urgent to bring up inspiration porn in the disabled community. This includes *overcoming* narratives featured in media that portray disabled people as overcoming their daily obstacles and struggles (rather than society addressing and removing the obstacles) to induce feel good sensations for both able-bodied and disabled populations. These pornographic figures of disabled people (be they white, deaf celebrities or white, paraplegic athletes or white comedians with cerebral palsy) are featured within our cultural lenses as what’s acceptable and mainstream and become globalized (yet limited) representations of disability culture. Going back to Ladau’s explanation of “high functioning,” the individuals who are assigned this label by able-bodied society (i.e. those who can mask their disability or neurodivergence) are the ones who are “corralled into the hierarchical organs” and absorbed into neoliberal capital society. Masking is a tool that may protect a disabled person from suspicion or harassment, but it’s also one that mimics the ideal able-bodied and able-minded human being. The “inspiration” is in one’s ability to be as able-bodied as possible, despite still being subject to removal, a possible target for humiliation, or continually at risk of losing bodily autonomy.

For analysis, McRuer examines the worldwide spectacle and inspiration porn surrounding the 2012 Paralympics in London. At the same time, \$18 billion were cut from the welfare budget in 2010 Britain and “work capability assessments” were being contracted by the Department for Work and Pensions that would leave thousands without benefits and/or employment while draining millions in taxpayer dollars (pp. 66-67). Media circulations of whitewashed images of “inspiring” disabled athletes filled with overcoming narratives represents what the acceptable paradigm of disability in a globalized society is, while those representing the more “radical” spectrum of crip identity are subject to containment or removal. This austerity of representation trains us how to invisibilize or view disabled people through our cultural lens. Any emerging identities or realities appearing too radical or nonconforming threaten our sense of reality, and therefore the globalized economy.

To make our examinations more intersectional, consider the history surrounding America’s gayborhoods where white gay men had more housing opportunities and were even marketed as desirable as opposed to nonwhite queer people and/or those who aren’t male. Consider colorism in Black communities where lighter-skinned Black people are seen as more intelligent and mild-mannered and employable than those with darker skin tones. Consider the normalization of and widespread accessibility for people with sight impairment who need glasses. Consider autistic individuals who are labeled “*high functioning*” and how that means “*less inconveniencing*” for their neurotypical counterparts, therefore more assimilable.

The inclusion of *some* members of the disabled community (or any marginalized population) makes it easier to appear inclusive as a society while removing undesired members existing on the peripheries – the body-minds that can’t pass socially or conform to employment expectations. It’s a cull starting from the outside working its way in; a *monoculturing* of a nation-state through media

propaganda, legislature, and militant forces beginning with those most vulnerable. An austerity of politics relies on an “us versus them” rhetoric. Politicians often target disabled and other marginalized populations and label said groups as scroungers of social benefits in attempts to shift public attention away from class inequalities. One of the things complicating the potentiality of a united front across demographics against capitalism is that “neoliberalism conjures up spectacularized identities to forestall alliances that might be generated through and across acknowledged differences” (McRuer, p. 227). If it doesn’t *appear* as if anyone’s being oppressed and there are *clearly* minorities in positions of power and/or who are being represented, then what’s the problem? Certainly, everyone else must be doing something wrong or they aren’t working hard enough. At least, that may be how our lens is conditioning us to think...



3.8. With the collective cultural lens (orange) focused on and extending privilege to only a few populaces, many others are pushed to the peripheries as a mass culling occurs on the outside and makes its way inward. Hierarchies are established along the way as indicated by the blue, purple, and black rings.

In conclusion, I return to the emerging cultures, studies, and theory calling for centering disabled experiences by emphasizing the 10 Principles of Disability Justice initially introduced by Sins Invalid. Each principle is key in recognizing the autonomy and wholeness of disabled people as well as the importance of a united front across oppressed groups (disabled and non-disabled) whose needs, rights, and experiences overlap and are infringed upon by neoliberal capitalist agendas of the state.

10 PRINCIPLES OF DISABILITY JUSTICE

Intersectionality

Leadership of Those Most Impacted

Anti-Capitalist Politics

Cross-Movement Solidarity

Recognizing Wholeness

Sustainability

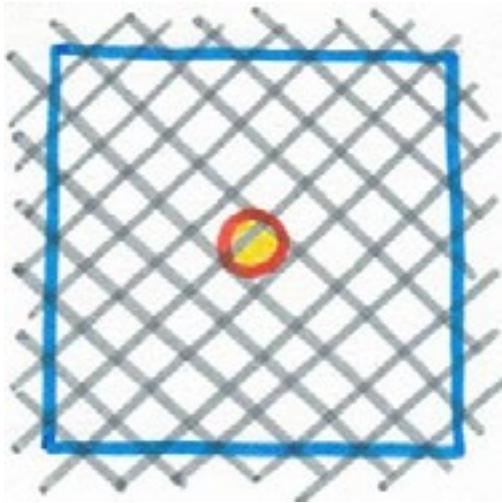
Commitment to Cross-Disability Solidarity

Interdependence

Collective Access

Collective Liberation

MONOCULTURE: GLOBALISM'S HOMOGENOUS EFFECTS AND THE GATEWAY TO ETHNOCENTRISM



4.1

The four-sided blue frame symbolizes what we know so far about humankind biologically, neurologically, socially, culturally, and historically. This knowledge is limited because we don't know everything there is to know about each other. There's also history that's lost or erased. I imagine this blue square bank of knowledge to include all the ideas, dreams, cultures, lifestyles, indigenous practices, and sociality that exists on earth – which are represented by the crosshatch pattern. These lines – growing horizons of human body-mind experiences – are continually expanding outward, checked only by nature. The blue sides represent humans trying to understand, categorize, document, and treat what it means to be human – an ongoing “framing” of our existence from multiple viewpoints and knowledges worldwide since our ancestors drew on cave walls.

The orange circle inside the square symbolizes our cultural lens in a monocultured society where dominant regimes suppress the voices and cultures of its marginalized peoples. As large as the frame is, this lens encircles and scopes only a fragment of the crosshatch lines inside – recognizing only a fraction of the totality. The space inside the circle emphasizes demographics and ideas that are reinforced through colonization and are eventually globalized, shaping individual cultural

lenses. Despite a world full of alternating viewpoints, protests, rich cultures, diverse languages, neurodivergent experiences, and art history made manifest in all sorts of body-mind shapes and colors, only part of this world is celebrated or acknowledged. Over time this excessively acknowledged portion of humanity – be it a particular race or a specific set of religious beliefs and customs - becomes the “norm.”

There’s still the uncircled area between the outer rim of the circle and inside the square. These are the invisibilized populations, even if many of them are out and about among us. These “differences” may not be easily observed, such as disability or sexual orientation. While most of us are living in a globalized society (with or without borders), laboring through multiple levels of oppression and simultaneously generating economic wealth, there are inevitably those who are silenced and pushed out to the peripheries – making their realities appear nonexistent as others become more homogenous. Lack of empathy toward these pushed-out groups comes with dire consequences.

“THE WAY THINGS ARE”

Monoculture represents the dominant ideas, behaviors, and politics of our time; dominance that’s secured through sameness. Initially an agricultural term, “monoculture” has been implemented by social sciences to describe “a way of life, worldview, set of popular media touchstones... that is considered emblematic of a dominant culture;” a culture “considered with respect to its homogeneity” (Random House Unabridged). Monoculture makes us feel comfortable about “the way things are” when it comes to our cultural lenses and social patterns. Like globalization, monoculture is neither inherently good nor bad – but sometimes occurring as groups merge into civilizations with shared ideas, values, and language(s) that become dominant over time. However, monoculture may trigger negative responses

when certain groups of people are deemed inferior because they don't conform to the status quo, which is a gateway to *ethnocentrism*.

The connection between globalism and monoculture is undeniable considering how colonizing nation-states remove undesired members to homogenize populations for easier consolidation and control of the flow of capital. Drew's eight types of globalization show how fused our world societies are politically, culturally, and economically. Imagine if the world operated as one, cohesive machine. Is globalization perhaps a monoculturing of the planet?

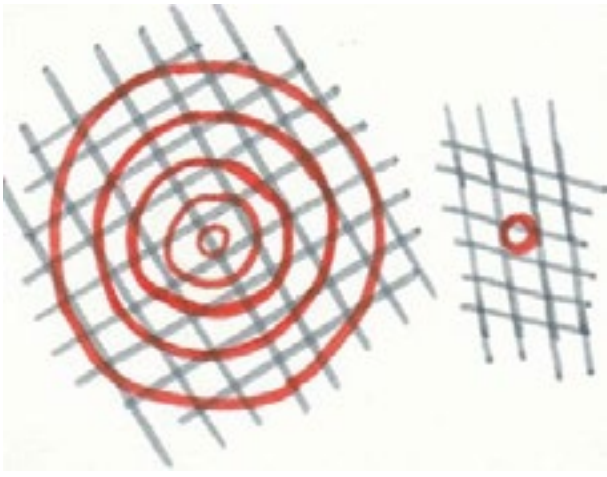
Evidence of monoculture is *everywhere*. Matching, cut lawns in residential districts, gender binaries with signifying dress codes to match, and English as the national language of the U.S. are all examples of monoculture in action. We accept these things as true and assume this is the way things are *everywhere* until we learn otherwise. Defensive reactions toward alternatives to cut lawns (letting native plants grow or planting a garden), alternatives to gender norms (men wearing skirts and dresses), and alternatives to increasing military power (redistributing funds to cover the cost of social benefits for vulnerable groups) demonstrates how attached we are to how we *think* the way things are supposed to be. This attachment, if threatened enough, can lead to ethnocentric retaliation, where the defended attachment to an idea or lifestyle is posited as superior and protected at nearly all costs. This is especially dangerous when governments retaliate against its citizens to violently enforce monoculture.



4.2. A white figure glares angrily at a brown-skinned neighbor wearing a blue shirt that says “Abolish ICE” while waving an Asexual-themed flag. The neighbor smiles back while surrounded by a yard overgrown with plants.

How this homogeneity occurs throughout time is in large part due to colonized nation-states absorbing the values and behaviors of the colonizer, but we know that globalization is transformative, which complicates our understanding.

In the original *Globalization* video series I stated that monoculture is the birthchild of globalism. I need to deconstruct this former statement and propose that we look at how monoculture *and* ethnocentrism manifests during waves of colonization when multiple populations and their emergent cultures are removed or eradicated. *Monoculturing* a nation-state for capital and/or cultural homogeneity solidifies ideas of class hierarchy. Visualize a large circle contracting inside of itself in layers and creating distance between the shrinking lens (represented groups) and the outer area (marginalized groups), which is now peripheral and *outside* of the “main” circle.



4.3. Monoculturing and the establishment of hierarchies forces our cultural lens to shrink over time as more groups are pushed out to the peripheries (both spatially and consciously) and our worldview narrows despite diversity that's all around us.

Suppose that for many of us (especially when we're young and inexperienced) our cultural lenses are on *monocultured* settings – finely tuned and zoomed in on standardized images, ideas, accents, lifestyles, names, and belief systems. After all, we have to start somewhere as we develop perceptions about our environments and ideas on how to behave in them. Some of us may not even be opposed to new ideas presented by different people. We may not be aware of or have access to them or aren't particularly looking if we're comfortable with our lives the way they are. One doesn't have to be a member of the privileged groups most represented in society to have a monocultural lens. These lenses represent *dominant* ideas and customs, but not the only ones. Reiterating Wilson's framework on cultural lenses, the danger lies in viewing every situation through a lens that isn't adaptable to other viewpoints.

Dispossession or removal of marginalized groups and their emerging cultures are globalized tactics of *monoculturing* a nation-state so that its citizens are more likely to be compliant and the flow of capital is easier to control. Not to mention there'd be *more* wealth to distribute upward since it's not being shared with as many people or spent on resources that those people would need. Removing undesired groups also decreases public vocabulary, hinders social language and communication across different ethnic groups, and disallows representation and understanding of body-minds and lifestyles that are a threat to no one's existence.

Expanding on the visual effects of homogeneity, queer crip author Eli Clare (2017) characterizes monoculture during a recollection of being at the San Francisco airport after a weekend with hundreds of LGBTQ, disabled people. Despite recognizing human diversity among the people in the port, there was something noticeably missing as Clare writes,

Suddenly I realize everyone around me has two arms and two legs. They're walking rather than rolling; speaking with their lips, not their hands, speaking in even, smooth syllables, no stutters or slurs. They have no canes, no crutches, no braces, no ventilators, no face masks, no oxygen tanks, no service dogs. Their faces don't twitch nor their hands flop; they don't rock back and forth. They hold their backs straight, and their smiles aren't lopsided. They move as if their body-minds are separate and independent from the others around them. For a split second, they all look the same (p. 132).

This apparent sameness resembles monocultures – “ecosystems that have been stripped, through human intervention, of a multitude of interdependent beings and replaced by a single species” (Clare, p. 132). Acknowledging one of monoculture’s original purposes in agriculture, Clare directs our attention to cornfields and how much they deplete the soil along with the use of harmful fertilizers and pesticides. The history of agribusiness demonstrates how “monocultures do an immense amount of damage. So much labor and violence goes into creating and maintaining them. Their existence requires hundreds of eradications and removals” (Clare, p. 133). Eliminating native species of plants to grow one crop does tremendous damage to the ecosystem, yet this act of removal is a key component to monoculture. Removal as an extension of ethnocentrism is an act of extreme monoculturing. Its inception in the U.S. goes as far back as the genocides of Indigenous tribes during the Age of Exploration when European explorers colonized an already occupied continent, to immigrants today being scapegoated and rounded up by ICE for deportation.

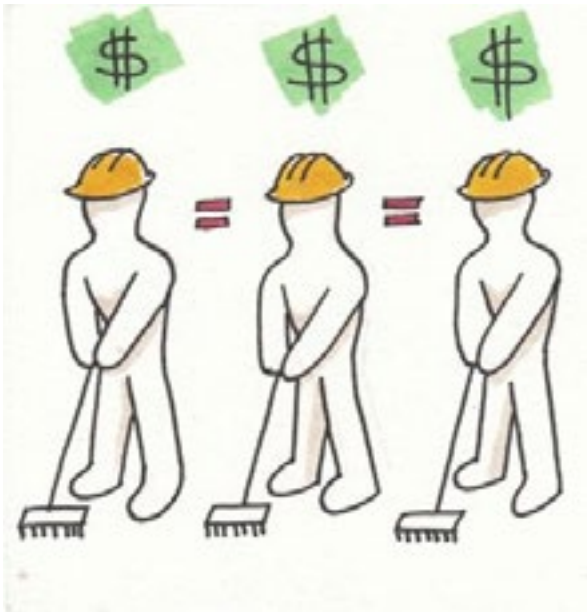
There are countless examples of monoculture. Standardized education and academic teaching methods that disregard new information or students with learning disabilities. The way that cities and lawns are designed and lawfully regulated to discourage people from growing food at home. The presumptions of shared religious beliefs with others, especially during nationalized Christian holidays. Generalized assumptions that all bodies can (or should) perform the same physical tasks in the same manner and within the same time frame. Pushback against gay families raising children because there hasn't been enough allowable public discussion, representation, and understanding of queer culture and queer families.

Analyzing audism and deafhood, Ashanti Monts-Tréviska (2019) describes how oralism is a form of “monocultural colonialism” – an extension of “phonocentric privilege [that] leads the dominant group to practice audism as a socially constructed discrimination or bias towards Deaf people” (pp. 72-73). The normalization of oral speech as the primary mode of human communication, the dominant languages that followed, and ethnocentric practices that have arisen throughout time have consequently pushed sign language aside as an inferior mode of communication. This in turn exacerbates the suppression of the histories and cultures of deaf and hard of hearing people. The dominance of oral speech and the recognition of English as the official language, while neither inherently good nor bad, is not without potential to turn into discrimination against those who can't be easily absorbed into this homogenized culture.

“NOT LIKE US”

Since its inception globalization has implemented the structure of our shared economies and civilizations – even visibly altering the surface of the planet and effecting climate change. Ancient modes of long travel on dirt roads connecting empires rapidly evolved to nationwide interstates that can cover great distances in shorter time, along with sea and air travel. How has globalization affected our cultural lenses and the way that we view one another? Considering modes of traffic again: driving on the street, flying in an airplane, and cruising by boat overseas – the vehicles in each scenario are machines that must have uniform parts that operate consistently. There’s no room for errors such as faulty wiring, a leaking radiator, empty fuel tank, etc. Uniform functionality is expected when it comes to computers and machines. Our lives depend on them. Our lives cannot, however, *mimic* them. Bodies are not machines. People can’t be programmed to be exactly alike because we vary genetically, neurologically, socially, and culturally. We experience life differently. We age. There are countless forces and events that can change our bodies at any given moment in ways that can’t be reversed or “fixed” like a machine can.

How do we deal with the reality that human body-minds are diverse in a capitalist society that demands people be as much alike as possible? Able-bodied and able-minded, for example. As mentioned in the previous section, ableism and capitalism have an undeniable relationship. There’s little room for disabled and/or chronically ill bodies in a physically labor-intensive society, especially one where burnout culture is celebrated and a person’s labor (physical or emotional) is equated to their worth.



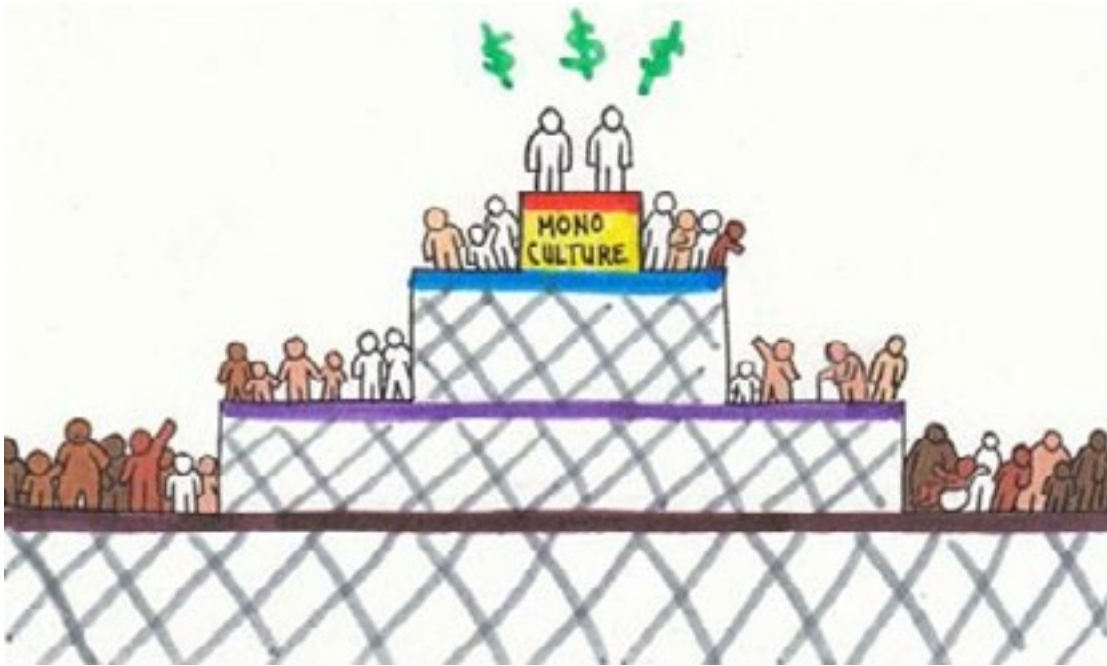
4.4. This illustration of three workers standing side by side in hardhats with equal signs in between them invites us to see how capitalism and social hierarchies play a role in ideas about able-bodiedness, able-mindedness, functionality, and sameness.

The danger of monoculture is when emergent supremacist ideologies are filtered through the cultural lens as both a “sense of belonging” and a utile globalized ideology justifying the dehumanization and removal of bodies believed not to belong. For example, white supremacy benefits racists who seek the removal of non-white bodies through false propaganda, religious persecution, passing oppressive laws, and deploying military force. When people are removed or kept from participating in society it makes it easier for monoculture and ethnocentrism to thrive. This removal declares, “Only some of us can be here, not all of us.”

Given our current sociopolitical climate in the United States regarding immigration and national security, I turn to Morrison (2009) who describes political tactics of othering as extensions of the expanding global empire, noting “at no other period have we witnessed such a myriad of aggression against people designated as ‘not us’” such as now, with the central political question being “Who or what is an American?” (p. 20). Considering anti-immigration rhetoric stemming from misrepresentation and misinformation in media, as well as the ongoing and increasing hostilities towards non-white bodies through the lens of neoliberal capitalism, and we can see how these groups are targeted for removal.

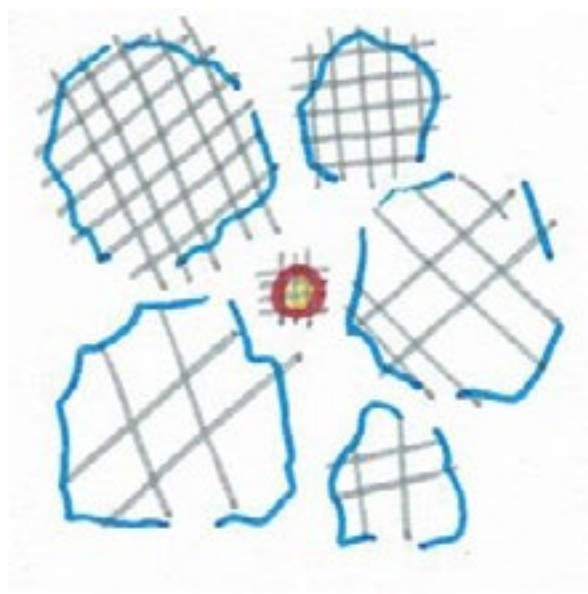
Ethnocentrism – the belief in a superior culture or ethnic group – is rooted in fears of replacement and/or chaos. Morrison states, “When chaos resists, either by reforming itself or by rebelling against imposed order, violence is understood to be the most frequent response and the most rational when confronting the unknown” (2008, p. viii). In our history of genocide are patterns consisting of nation-states, “governments seeking legitimacy and identity,” shaping themselves by destroying a collective “other” (Morrison, 2009, p. 20). This “collective other” is formed through demonization of targeted groups. It doesn’t matter that this targeted other is different, only that their differences can be exploited if land grabs are on the table. Morrison warns that, should these noticeable patterns of colonialism throughout our history be consistent, “we will see more and more illogical waves of war – designed for the grasp of control by the leaders of such states” (2009, p. 20)

A monocultured lens filters our thoughts and narratives to excess. A monocultured reality dictates our feelings and behaviors and limits our understanding of other people and of ourselves. Given what we’ve visualized about cultural lenses and their already built-in filters, I propose that “mono” be viewed as the setting a person’s or a society’s lenses are set to. I propose that when confronted with ignorance or hateful ideologies geared toward an entire group of people with the insistence that there’s “not enough room for all of us,” that we turn to the monocultured lenses that are unable to scope just how large the room actually is. While monoculture presumes to make globalism smoother, thus keeping the economy spinning, we must consider how much we lose every day when it comes to silencing the voices of the marginalized.



4.5. A tiered platform featuring various classes of people with their numbers decreasing towards the top, where groups are noticeably whiter and presumably able-bodied. The top platform is highlighted yellow for neoliberal capitalism, while the pair standing above are haloed by green dollar signs.

SHRINKING PERIPHERIES: LIABILITIES, REMOVAL, & THE VIOLENCE OF COLONIZATION



5.1

No longer framed, the emerging horizon of humanity is torn apart and left in chunks surrounding an enclosed circle outlined in red. The scattered pieces retain most of their crosshatch pattern, but intersection between them is severely disrupted. The red circle in the center represents the violence of ethnocentrism as a dominant regime emerges and targeted populations, their cultures, histories, languages, and stories are removed from society as well as from our collective consciousness. To mimic this illustration is to suppress curiosity about other human beings and to give in to ideologies that fuel class division and the expansion of capital at the expense of lives and the global environment.

THE ERA OF TRUMP

Globalization doesn't occur without surveillance and removal. The distribution of capital accelerates, alongside increasing militarization and policing of governing nation-states. A strengthened military symbolizes power and the ability to quash public dissent. Since its inception in the United States, the crimes and atrocities committed by the Trump Administration present us with an inexhaustible list of scapegoating and liabilities placed on marginalized populations that are targeted for policing, censorship, criminalization, displacement, incarceration, deportation, misrepresentation, and other extreme methods of removal under the banner of fascism. As I write this, the president of the United States has issued a military takeover of Washington, D.C., spouting false claims about rising crime rates. It's not long before this model of excess policing spreads across the nation and disrupts the lives of vulnerable populations such as non-white and/or houseless body-minds. Whether it's the administration rolling back LGBTQ rights, cutting government spending on social benefits that poor, working classes rely on, or ordering the dismantling of the Department of Education as well as the Smithsonian's Exhibit on the history of slavery – these acts demonstrate the filtering out and the shrinking spaces of those who don't conform to the status quo.



5.2. A fleet of police cruisers circle the planet with green dollar signs in between each vehicle.

Following our topic on monoculture, we can further examine several things about cultural lenses and how we as citizens of the global community are conditioned over time to erase targeted demographics from our consciousness or believe that they never existed in the first place (like people who are intersex or transgender). Monoculture followed by ethnocentrism makes it harder to develop an intersectional framework or an understanding of civil rights issues as *interconnected*. The emerging multiplicity of human experiences resists cultural and social monotony and vice versa. We can be conditioned not to recognize other cultures or overlapping body-mind experiences such as a person being Black *and* queer *and* disabled, or both women and disabled people fighting for agency over their own bodies. Not seeing our now globalized experiences as interconnected impacts people's ability to empathize with one another. When people forsake curiosity about other people and their emergent languages and cultures for the sake of comfort and homogeneity – thereby also forsaking curiosity about their own selves – and these behaviors are normalized, then so many populations become vulnerable and at risk of being removed to make room for expanding capital and dominant ideologies.

Ethnocentrism primes nation-states to enact violent methods of removal of undesired groups. This removal goes unnoticed or is dismissed depending on the formation of our cultural lens. This is why it matters when people say things such as, “I don't want to see gay couples in movies” or “I don't have a problem with Mexicans, but...” These are telltale signs of a person's perception of humanity and how easily they *other* individuals or groups with different backgrounds. This unwillingness to perceive and incorporate these individuals and groups into our societies at a micro level falls in line with how a colonizing nation-state's government and media can exploit these prejudices and micro level engagements on a large scale and commit macro level atrocities against the populations being othered – whether allegedly in the name of national security, restoring the economy, preserving heritages, or “protecting the children.”



5.3. A set of police cruisers patrol a gated community where numerous citizens are marked as suspects with a red 'x.' Approved citizens are check-marked green and highlighted within an orange lens.

According to the Department of Homeland Security (2025), Trump's One Big Beautiful Bill has "fully funded the 287(g) program and provided funding to secure 80,000 new beds for ICE to utilize when detaining and deporting the *worst of the worst* [emphasis added]." Aligning with the current presidency, the governor of my home state, Nebraska, has worked with the Department of Homeland Security to put in motion the conversion of a minimum-security prison work camp into a migrant detainment center in McCook County. This detainment center is to mirror Florida's "Alligator Alcatraz" with its name "Cornhusker Clink." This plan was announced Tuesday, August 19th to the dismay of many residents throughout the state. Josh Funk (2025) of AP News reports, "[Secretary Kristi] Noem's agency posted a picture on social media showing ears of corn wearing U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement hats, standing in front of a prison fence."

Disregarding civilian rights and concerns is part of an ongoing, globalized sweep to detain and remove poor, working, brown bodies. The concerns in my home state are not coming only from immigrants. They're expressed by people from all backgrounds and ethnicities, with concerns about mistreatment of civilians, families being torn apart and children being detained, the costs, changes in environment, etc. Governor Pillen has stated, "This is about keeping Nebraskans

– and Americans across our country – safe,” showing solidarity with the Trump Administration’s crackdown on immigrants (qtd. in Funk, 2025). The development of Cornhusker Clink is “expected to be a Midwestern hub for detainees from several states,” in compliance with increased government funding towards US Immigration Control and Enforcement as part of President Trump’s One Big Beautiful Bill Act (Funk).

There’s nothing beautiful about these acts. There’s no longer any need to pretend globalism values internationality – which is precisely what Morrison warns us about. Our modern era of neoliberal capitalism doesn’t care as much as it used to about marketing diversity and inclusion. Our growing demands and consumptions of capital have made us impatient. Morrison (2002) compares globalization to manifest destiny and how both promise freedom but court a dangerous dystopia because of

[globalism’s] disregard of borders... tariffs, laws, and languages; its disregard of margins and the marginal people who live there; its formidable, engulfing properties accelerating erasure, a flattening out of difference, of specificity for marketing purposes. An abhorrence of diversity. We imagine indistinguishability, the elimination of minority languages, minority cultures in its wake (p. 7).

It is our fear of an irrevocable alteration of major languages and major cultures that are to arise should we not violently resist monoculture and ethnocentric ideologies that’s driving our globalized society.

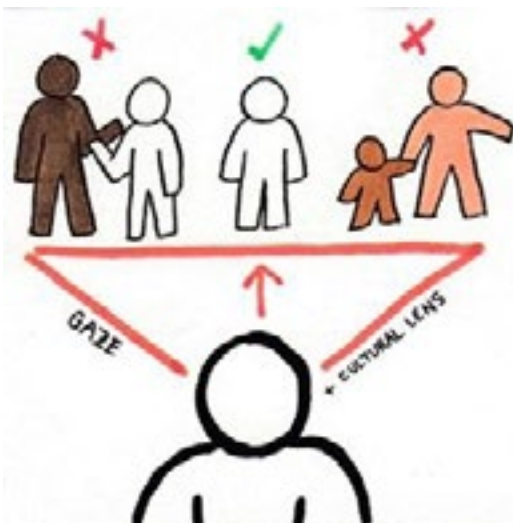
I turn to McRuer’s exploration of macrolevel homogeneous mass production and its connection to microlevel reinforcement of social norms and cultural values during both eras of Fordism (early 20th century) and post-Fordism (after the 1970’s). McRuer expands on how a sense of “unison” among working classes is no longer required for neoliberal capitalism to thrive, for “Global capital has increasingly ‘given up’ on some earlier forms of enforced uniformity,

installing... accelerated (and essentially militarized) commitment to dispossession that does not always and everywhere require Fordist uniformity of behavior and identity” (p. 76). Our current economy values accumulation of capital over the short term rather than long – meaning less time and effort goes into homogenizing nation-states by spreading ideas of “uniformity,” favoring quick (often violent) displacement instead. McRuer emphasizes *dispossession* as a necessary component of wealth accumulation and global austerity politics, which “escalates super-exploitation of workers globally and protects capitalists while slashing services to the poor” (p. 57).

Neoliberal capitalism thrives on instability. We’re no longer reliant on rhetorics of inclusion or taking the long route to cultivating a sense of cultural and social homogeneity. If you don’t conform, then you are removed. Our globalized society has progressed to the point where “not making it in this new social and economic system doesn’t necessarily mean one is made to conform with or consent to social norms; it means that, whether you are ‘normal’ or ‘freaky,’ you are simply and similarly dispossessed, displaced, shut out – literally made homeless” (McRuer, p. 76). McRuer reiterates that displacement is always *crip*, operating under the rhetoric of moving “unruly” bodies elsewhere – bodies depicted as *scroungers*, *shirkers*, *malingeringers*, and *squatters*. This removal in turn leads to *more* disability and illness.

Demonstrating an example of this process of removal in *Crip Times*, McRuer analyzes work capability assessments in 2012 Britain following welfare cuts that left many disabled people without a job and/or benefits. The public support for the 2012 London Paralympics and *some* represented disabled athletes while support systems were being removed for *all* disabled peoples in the UK is an example of how an austerity of representation entails making a spectacle out of *some* individuals within a group to divest attention away from how the entirety is being removed or erased.

A monocultured lens can filter in an “acceptable” presentation of a minority or a marginalized person. For examples, consider an “articulate,” token Black person who makes racist white people feel comfortable and as if that Black person is the exception, a sexually inactive and single queer person who keeps homophobic, straight people oblivious about gay sex, or an oral deaf person who has undergone years of speech therapy in a lifelong attempt to assimilate with hearing family members who refuse to learn sign language. Simultaneously, this lens rejects visible members deemed “radical” or too extreme and anti-conforming – identifying these body-minds as a threat rather than body-minds that are resisting societal obstacles and prejudices. Such perceived radicality may include: Black people protesting racism, sexually active gay couples raising children, or queer crip trans folks demanding accommodation and basic healthcare.



5.4. An individual gazes outward at the public. Their cultural lens subconsciously identifies which engagements are perceived to be a threat or a risk (marked with a red ‘x’) and which ones are safe (marked with a green checkmark).

Identifying an entire group as a “risk” with select few “tolerable” individuals falls in line with surveillance tactics used by police. Removing undesirable body-minds from a nation-state has been the key component of colonization since human empires started to expand and wherever they continue to do so, utilizing propagandized tactics of othering as justification. As the Trump Administration’s One Big Beautiful Bill Act demonstrates – a militarized police force

is usually deployed to carry out these insidious biddings of fascist imperialism. Addressing neoliberal capitalism means confronting its relationship with the police state and its role in surveilling bodies and controlling their movements in the global economy.

SURVEILLANCE & BODILY AUTONOMY

Despite the advancements humanity has made in the medical field, prejudices still run amok. Harm is done in the way people are misdiagnosed, mistreated, and/or misrepresented based on disability, physical characteristics, or neurodivergence. The dark history of eugenics and forced sterilization of disabled people cannot be separated from medicine's intertwinement with government and capital, neither can the medical advancements that have been made by experimenting on and cutting open Black bodies without anesthesia during American chattel slavery. In both scenarios, disabled body-minds and Black body-minds (and especially Black, disabled body-minds) are deemed inferior (with these ideologies backed by politics, religion, and "science") and stripped of civil rights and profited from while ultimately being rendered as disposable.

Prejudices also occur in the academic field where people are graded or reprimanded based on how they perform on tests, taught by instructors who may have preconceived notions about how their students will learn or perform based on who they are or where they're from. There's also the matter of resources available to schools and public funds that are diverted to privatized schools. *Warehousing* is a common experience for disabled students, who are grouped together without regard to individual social and learning needs, and are often provided inferior education and inadequate staffing.

Bodies being stripped of autonomy create peripheral spaces that invisibilize the experiences and realities of these bodies as they're filtered out of both our collective and individual cultural lens. Using the above examples, we can first visualize germinating within the globalized medical industrial complex its (primarily Western) practices of: diagnoses, categorization, treatments, rehabilitation, torture, and experimentation, while existing in compliance with (at times, *resisting*) capitalism's agenda to categorize said bodies according to ideologies (race, religion, gender, etc.), not science, and profiting off their illnesses.

Second, we can visualize how these widespread ideas and practices starting "up top" move through time and space to shape cultural beliefs and social norms within us, the globalized populace "down below" laboring through these institutions while absorbing all sorts of ideas and values. Our cultural lens oftentimes mirrors the ideologies of the dominant regime, though we believe them to be our own. Harmful beliefs and opinions geared towards other people have the potential to become globalized institutions of oppression. For example, prejudices that disabled people and Black people are culturally and biologically inferior have become widespread belief throughout history – even though this is not true. Laws have been drafted and passed positioning women as less than men "based on facts." Many people associate homosexuality with mental illness or social deviance without supporting evidence. These ideas are enforced through socialization. They're circulated through the media and the entertainment industry. We teach them to our children. We make bigoted or backhanded comments on air where thousands of people are tuned in. We draft and pass laws to defend and normalize these ideas. They influence our reality. They shape our lens, but we can deconstruct these ideas.



5.5. Ideas are enforced and passed down to civilians from institutions such as academics, medicine, law enforcement, and religion. This illustration depicts civilians exchanging cultural values, opinions, and behaviors with one another with their thought and speech bubbles highlighted orange because they're all cultural lenses shaped by the dominating forces above.

Our cultural lenses impact how we research (or don't), do our jobs, engage with each other, and advocate for laws that affect people's livelihoods. This includes the police. Police officers are not immune to this type of conditioning. If anything, they're essential for mass conditioning. Policing is one of the many methods of state-sanctioned containment or removal of marginalized populations deemed undesirable or in the way of capital agenda. In acknowledgement of its numerous purposes, we could argue that policing is both a globalized tactic of monoculturing and upholding ethnocentric ideologies among the world's nation-states. Considering the roles law enforcers have played in the U.S. since their inception as slavecatchers and ongoing disruptors of the emerging experiences and realities of marginalized populations fighting for survival and inclusion (populations often labeled as "radical"), it's not far of a stretch.



5.6. The planet earth is depicted in the center with the area surrounding it sectioned off by three major industrial complexes that dominate our shared society: academia, prison, and medicine. Each section contains a variety of subjects that play a role in the overall controlled flow of people and capital.

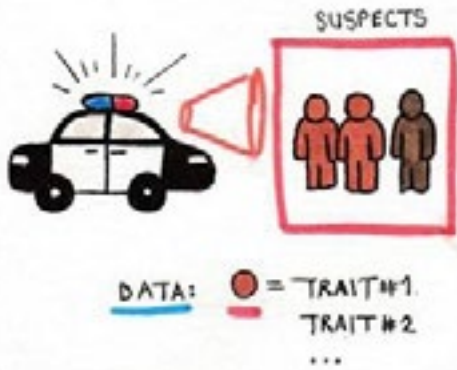
According to Sins Invalid, over fifty percent of people killed by police every year are disabled (p. 48). The organization acknowledges that the function of the police is to control and that increased militarization of police leads directly to increased police violence, declaring “as people with disabilities our bodies and minds are not controllable and cannot always comply – this must be understood. Our bodies and minds are not criminal” (p. 52). Ableism’s intertwinement with capitalism and police surveillance silences and invisibilizes the reality that our bodies are all different, for

[s]eldom do we find mainstream discussions of the fact that people with disabilities are disproportionately subjected to police violence, nor do we hear of the scores of children with disabilities that are abused, neglected, even caged as unhuman, murdered by their families or ‘caregivers’ for failing to perform able-bodiedness. Similarly invisible is the callous herding of people with disabilities into jails, prisons, and institutions such as ‘nursing homes,’ ‘psychiatric facilities,’ and ‘rehabilitation centers’... Just as we can trace the origins of the police

to slave patrols, the coercive warehousing of people with disabilities and the rampant violence visited upon us today is rooted in eugenics, forced sterilization, and outright genocide. (Sins Invalid, pp. 112-113)

Police brutality has been a growing concern worldwide, as evidenced through the Black Lives Matter movement that erupted in 2013 after the murder of Trayvon Martin. Camp and Heatherton interview Dr. Arun Kundnani (author of *The Muslims Are Coming*) about total policing and surveillance, positioning U.S. policing as a global issue. By examining the history of countersubversion and authorized monitoring of political activities going all the way back to the Cold War, Kundnani points out “in post-9/11 New York, there is a clear continuity in practices such as the construction of vast databases on people’s activities, surveillance of communities for their purported ideologies, the use of informants, and the deployment of agents provocateurs to criminalize legitimate political activity” (qtd. in Camp, 2016a, p. 85). These practices extend across protesting Muslim communities and reveal a history of policing Black protests, protests of labor, and various anti-imperialist movements throughout the twentieth century. Taking COINTELPRO into consideration, the trio discuss how a community becomes suspect through surveillance, analyzing increased surveillance of Muslims post 9/11 and the ways “radicalization” has shaped our understanding of counterterrorism. Political policing or policing dissent “is also a means through which race itself is reproduced. By defining a community as ‘suspect,’ you construct a racial lens through which that community is viewed” (qtd. in Camp, 2016a, p. 86).

"SURVEILLANCE GAZE" P.1



5.7. A flashing police cruiser is gazing upon and databasing three alleged “suspects” based on skin color.

I find it interesting that Kundnani states, “the notion of radicalization has become the main way in which counterterrorism is understood in the US. It blurs the distinction between what might conventionally be described as criminal activity and what might conventionally be described as an expressive activity” (qtd. in Camp, 2016a, p. 84). McRuer brings up the term “radical” being used to describe emerging queer crip identities and realities that are resisting monoculture and are perceived as a threat to the established order. Within our current policing model “dissent becomes criminalized in the name of national security, and the term ‘terrorism’ becomes a means of criminalizing various kinds of political opposition, dissent, or insurgency” (qtd. in Camp, 2016a, p. 85). In Morrison’s terms, “radical” would also be described as “chaos” or “foreignness.”

The police’s focus on a community demonstrates a “surveillance gaze” – grouping individuals based on traits. This gaze can be illustrated as an extension of our cultural lenses focusing on designated targets to enforce dominant regime ideologies, utilizing sanctioned officers of law – who are also human beings with cultural lenses featuring globalized capital values and ideologies. For example, Irish “communities” were formed in 1970s and 1980s Britain via policing and interrogation of Irish citizens and their relatives, “this method of investigation [producing] in the minds of the police a picture of the ‘community’ as a network of suspicious persons linked

together by various social relationships” (qtd. in Camp, 2016a, 86). Surveillance creates a racialized identity. Since capitalism has come to be intertwined with systemic racism and imperialist violence, “the struggle against surveillance cannot avoid confronting capitalism itself” (qtd. in Camp, 2016a, p. 93).



5.8. Deepening the surveillance gaze, it now becomes a part of the responding officer’s cultural lens as marked individuals are primed for removal based on perceived threat level.

Confronting surveillance and capitalism also means confronting a global, politicized process of removal that’s become heavily dependent on propagandized othering – mass deportation. Camp and Heatherton interview Mizue Aizeki (deputy director of the Immigrant Defense Project) about the era of mass deportation and its intertwinement with broken windows policing, mass incarceration, and immigrant detention. The convergence of the war on crime, the war on terror, and the war on immigrants is used to invoke a state of emergency – targeting Black, Brown, and poor bodies and utilizing militarization as the solution. Aizeki explains that “broken windows policing and immigrant policing... share a logic that criminality is innate to certain groups of people for whom excessive policing and punishment is justified to maintain social control” (qtd. in Camp, 2016b, p. 207). The post 9/11 era saw U.S. President George W. Bush bring in anti-terror and anti-immigration rhetoric into the militarization of the border and across the country, with Muslim

immigrants becoming increasingly viewed as a threat to public safety.

When asked how distinctions of “deserving” and “undeserving” immigrants came to be, Aizeki states that these frames are the initial foundations of European settlement in the U.S. and “expulsion and exclusion are the fabric of nation-state building, essential to the creation and maintenance of a racialized national identity and intimately tied to US global and economic power. This is the underlying logic legitimizing border policing and mass deportation” (qtd. in Camp, 2016b, p. 208). Deportation is a mass weapon made possible by its connections to police surveillance of communities. Broken windows policing strategies and its inception in early 1990s New York, before being implemented globally, gave way to increased militarization, increased surveillance, total policing, and data-sharing across groups such as ICE, the FBI, public schools, social workers, etc. When it comes to mass deportation the targets change over time, but the tactics remain the same – “the nation-state and maintenance of the status quo requires an ‘other’ to shore up the ‘we’” (qtd. in Camp, 2016b, p. 209).



5.9. A single line separating the two – on the left a white, seemingly nuclear, American family is protected by dollar signs, a religious cross, housing, and the Bill of Rights as a police cruiser and military tank deports a brown-skinned family on the right. An American flag breaches the divide with the words “we/us” on one side and “other/them” on the other.

The “new normal” surveillance police state, where “data, technology, equipment, and personnel are seamlessly shared between federal, state, and local agencies” is evidenced by the U.S.’ excess spending on policing immigrants and ICE’s ever-growing collaboration with local police (Camp, 2016a, pp. 209-10).

Echoing Morrison’s sentiment, globalism in the era of neoliberal capitalism disregards biodiversity, neurodivergence, marginal spaces, cultural differences, and disability. It disregards the peripheries. Policing methods implemented globally with these inherent disregards highlight why they’re problematic, especially when the police are militarized and used in collaboration with other enforcement agencies such as ICE. Agents of removal, or “law enforcement officers,” work through monocultural lenses on behalf of neoliberal capitalism to homogenize human populations and the spaces they occupy.

The history of violent control and oppression of people’s bodies began “with exploration, conquest and colonization of Indigenous lands and practices, and through chattel slavery and dehumanization through torture of Black people” (Sins Invalid, p. 59). Analyzing state-sponsored eugenics programs, forced sterilization of prison inmates and immigrants, COINTELPRO, and the unjust response to the AIDS crisis, these “historical attempts to control ‘deviant’ bodies show that reproductive choices must be understood as a human rights issue” (Sins Invalid, pp. 60-61). While Sins Invalid acknowledges abortion as a human right, this acknowledgement exists alongside the reality that “the fear of disability has been used as a tool to manipulate individuals’ reproductive choices, sometimes causing people to opt for selective abortions to avoid disability, which is in line with eugenics,” while disabled people have “been forced to terminate pregnancies under the pretense that we cannot be good parents because we are disabled” (p. 62). Disability justice aligns with bodily autonomy, reiterating McRuer’s stance that centering

disabled people's needs and viewpoints would sooner liberate us out of oppression and create possibilities of globalized accessibility and incentivize equal distribution of resources.

It is startling to imagine just how many people are silenced daily. How many stories, ideas, rituals, indigenous practices, and civilizations were disappeared in the name of colonization throughout our shared human history. How many voices today are warehoused, incarcerated, aborted, deported, censored, and/or unalived to maintain class hierarchy. At the same time, we pick out a few individuals from marginalized groups facing discrimination and disappearance, hold them up in the limelight and say, "See? We do value diversity! We do celebrate everybody!"

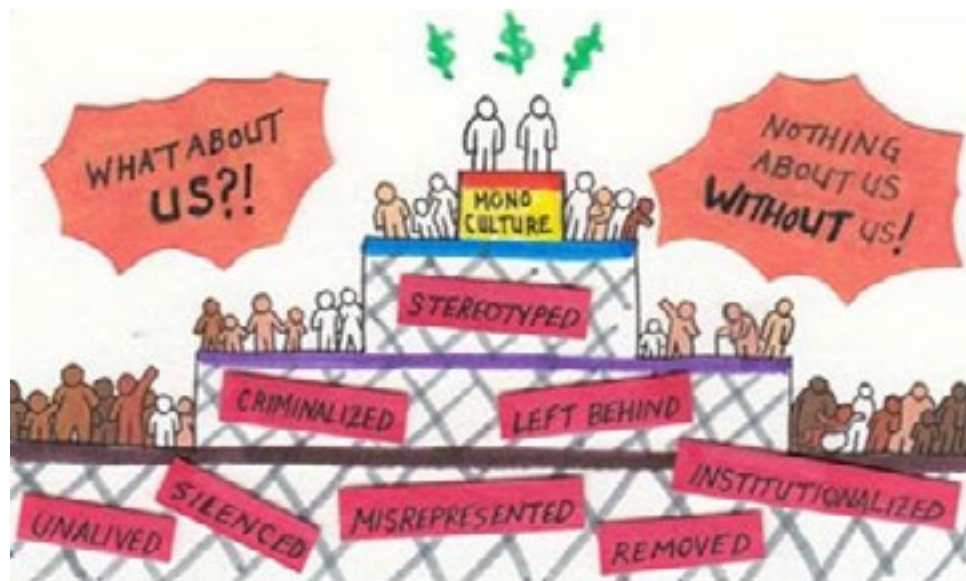
Mono means *one*. A singular entity. Regarding everything we've considered so far, it's clear that neoliberal capitalism requires cohesiveness if it's going to thrive in a globalized economy. A rigorous set of rules and surveillance is required to maintain this mass movement of people, their consumption of goods, and the constant flow of wealth being generated. Manifestations of removal or exclusion or monoculturing include: war and genocide, deforestation, discriminatory laws, housing displacement, cutting government spending on life-saving resources and social benefits, harassing houseless bodies on the street, lack of media representation for underprivileged groups, and inaccessible public facilities for disabled people.



5.10. A color-coded list and matching icons of the ways populaces are removed or excluded from society.]

Ableism ensures the intersecting modes of removal occur with ease. As mentioned earlier, capitalism breaks down and *disables* bodies. Disability is an experience that all body-minds can (and most likely will) have at any point in time. Ableism operates through the colonization and the establishment of working classes for able-bodied and able-minded people and manifests cultural and social norms that not all body-minds can adhere to. Ableism's intertwinement with racism, sexism, queerphobia, and police surveillance elevate illusions of what's considered "natural" and fosters ideas of "the way things should be," as conditioned through our cultural lens, and puts those who don't conform at risk of being othered when enough of us agree without question. Marginalized bodies of the global majority are subject to systemic violence and oppression while their existences and cultures emerging alongside the alleged majority are misunderstood, filtered out to the shrinking peripheries, and/or treated as if they never existed in the first place.

However, these globalized acts of removal are never met without resistance.



5.11. The same tiered platform featured in 4.5, however, now the marginalized groups on the bottom are marked "Criminalized," "Left Behind," and "Institutionalized" while their collective caption bubbles demand, "What about us?!" and "Nothing about us without us!"

CONCLUSION: CENTERING PERIPHERAL EXPERIENCES & EMERGENT IDENTITIES RESISTING CAPITALISM

ARTISTIC EXPRESSION & DISABILITY JUSTICE

The last video I filmed for the original *Globalization* series opens with the question, “Where do we go from here?” There was no easy answer then and I find it almost absurd to ask such a question five years later. It feels impossible. From a generational and economic standpoint, the glaring disparities between what one could afford and their ability to house and feed their families off a working wage just fifty or sixty years ago compared to now points to excess wealth being unevenly distributed across groups within an out-of-control system of capitalism. From a marginalized standpoint, to be unfairly compensated for labor that barely covers my basic needs while navigating institutionalized, prejudicial ideas about all the ways my body-mind is supposedly inferior and a threat to others – and to connect these ideas to something bigger and older than myself that’s designed to mass surveil and control infighting groups of humans – is exhausting.

Exhausting and *necessary*, because through connecting and understanding the history of globalization and how our ideas and economy have come to be through colonization gives us clarity. It allows us to conceptualize *why* and *how* things are the way they are and to dig deeper when it comes to assessing and deconstructing our cultural lens and the things we accept as truth without question. This work helps us to understand how many people in our everyday lives are suffering and act out of fear or not having enough information.

However impossible it feels to answer the initial question of where to go from here, I believe answers are found in centering the experiences and the realities of those most marginalized or impacted by neoliberal capitalism and harmful ideologies in our globalized society. I believe that addressing the needs of those who are othered, sidelined, and pushed to the peripheries redirects us to class inequality, divisive political agendas, and problem areas calling for the most attention and resources. If we can liberate oppressed groups from stigmatization, accommodate the most marginalized by confronting billionaires and corporations to redistribute capital and resources back towards working classes, and develop and advocate for mental health resources for *everyone*, wouldn't that cover a lot of bases and resolve much infighting and political warfare?

Perhaps I'm being naïve, but I don't believe this *centering* has to take attention or resources away from other groups because everyone suffers when capitalism exploits and divides them. For example, centering women's rights for bodily autonomy and equal pay and acknowledging growing tensions between heterosexual women and heterosexual men when it comes to relationships and sex doesn't mean we ignore that many men are suffering from societal pressures to repress emotion and act aggressively and suffer from lack of positive models of masculinity, mental health resources, and safe spaces to express vulnerability.

Once again, I turn to Morrison and McRuer, who remind us of the importance of writers and the emerging queer crip horizon. Since I identify as both a writer and being queer and disabled, their words have come to resonate with me deeply, reminding me of the importance of writing about the world we live in and reiterating how my very existence is resistance to fascist governments and neoliberal capitalism. Considering today's threats to journalism and the lives of those in pursuit of facts, Morrison (2008) writes

Authoritarian regimes, dictators, despots are often, but not always, fools. But none is foolish enough to give perceptive, dissident writers free range to publish their judgments or follow their creative instincts. They know they do so at their own peril. They are not stupid enough to abandon control (overt or insidious) over media. Their methods include surveillance, censorship, arrest, even slaughter of those writers informing and disturbing the public. Writers who are unsettling, calling into question, taking another, deeper look. Writers – journalists, essayists, bloggers, poets, playwrights – can disturb the social oppression that functions like a coma on the population, a coma despots call peace, and they stanch the blood flow of war that hawks and profiteers thrill to. (p. vii)

Writers call attention to societal ills. Morrison describes art as one of the responses to the perception of chaos, with writers constantly trying to construct meaning in the face of it. Writers are essential to humankind and can translate deep traumatic experiences that others are unable to. I consider writers to be artists and argue for the inclusivity of many mediums of art that translate human experiences and disrupt monocultured ideologies. Artists can disrupt the illusions of peace enforced by dominant regimes and stir the public with what Morrison refers to as “troublesome truths.” They’re also targets of removal in the era of neoliberal capitalism and fascism. It’s no surprise that rainbow crosswalks and Black history murals are currently being removed in the U.S. It’s no surprise that the Smithsonian Institute is under attack by those who wish to whitewash the histories of American slavery. The truth is that powerful.

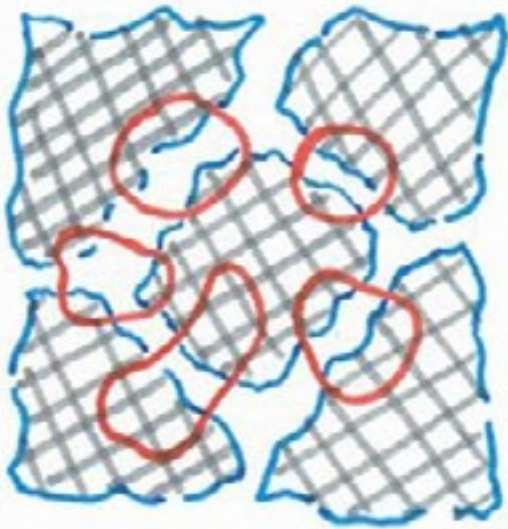
I share Morrison’s dread of “the erasure of other voices, of unwritten novels, poems whispered... for fear of being overheard by the wrong people,” for to imagine the total outlaw of dissent and a world full of “unstaged plays” and “canceled films” due to an ethnocentric regime sounds nightmarish indeed (p. viii). It’s a world disregarding diversity; one without empathy. Considering the censorship of artistic

expression and the ongoing threat to journalists, Morrison warns “the historical suppression of writers is the earliest harbinger of the steady peeling away of additional rights and liberties that will follow” (p. viii).

McRuer reiterates the importance of *cross racial solidarity*, one of the Ten Principles of Disability Justice. This emergent term draws attention to intersectional experiences across demographics and advocates for unity across groups suffering under capitalism. Addressing the United Kingdom Independence Party’s anti-immigration rhetoric in Britain, McRuer stresses how numerous “forces [are] put in place to block revolutionary alliances” and states historically

the extensive discursive disqualification of disabled people has germinated alongside the xenophobic, racialized disqualification of nonwhite bodies in England. This discursive disqualification draws into its wake immigrants and nonimmigrants alike, as UKIP’s rhetoric materializes a white and able-bodied British ‘us’ always threatened by ‘them’ (p. 224).

The removal of one group is never a singular act. These removals occur simultaneously and trickle across groups that consider themselves to be separate, taking them by surprise when the nation-state they’re residing in *finally* comes for them as well. In consideration of forces that block these “revolutionary alliances” I feel it necessary to go back to how conditioned our cultural lenses may be when it comes to perceiving (or not perceiving) each other as allies and human beings sharing the same planet.



6.1. An abstract illustration of an attempt to piece back the ideas, values, histories, and people who've been removed from our society. By redirecting our (now multiple) lenses to areas most deserving, we can bridge gaps in communication and accessibility and create a "fuller," more inclusive picture of humanity.

FINAL WORDS BY THE AUTHOR

"And that's all people do. Take. Eat. Exploit. Indulge. Then they gonna get online and say, 'fuck capitalism!' Nah, boo, you IS capitalism. Your emotional and mental state mimics the dominant regime that only wants to feed itself at the expense of everyone else."

—ranting with a friend on September 7th, 2025, saved in Snapchat memories.

As I write this just hours after globalized news that conservative influencer and podcaster Charlie Kirk has been shot dead while speaking at Utah Valley University in Orem, Utah, I brace myself for the inevitable: martyrdom, hate speech, desensitization and lack of public empathy, more radicalization of young, white conservatives and further completion of Project 2025 in the US – overshadowing other victims of gun violence happening at the same time, more talk of gun control without any change, and the criminalization and othering of entire demographics based on who the shooter is suspected and/or revealed to be and how their identity will be politicized by the media. I brace myself for the complete disconnect from those who are enraged between what the late victim clearly advocated and the irony of his horrific demise.

The uproar that unfolded since, inciting further political division, has pushed the country towards another collapsable edge. At the same time on the other side of the world the country of Nepal is undergoing a social revolution and has elected its first female prime minister after dismantling its corrupt government through nationwide protests led by Gen Z.

As a Black, hard of hearing, queer millennial putting this all into perspective – knowing what I know about what was done to my Black ancestors during chattel slavery and Jim Crow, the forced sterilization of disabled people and deaf children who continue to be harmed by the works of Alexander Graham Bell and his opposition to Sign Language, and how all of us had gay ancestors who lived their lives in secret and shame in fear of religious persecution and exile – I see these all as historical and modern occurrences within regimes that want to expand capital and profit by pinning people against each other.

Globalized ideologies based on hate that utilize state-sanctioned tactics of othering are smokescreens to cover up how we, the people, are all being played and pitted against one another. Hating or fearing people can be collectively exploited to fulfill neoliberal capitalist demands and distribute wealth unfairly and unequally upward, regardless of if wealthy elites actually believe in the ideas being exploited or promoted. This hatred or fear makes people complicit towards invisibilizing biodiversity, neurodivergence, and emerging cultures by othering and removal, consequently creating intertwined functioning systems of oppression based on normalized beliefs and monitored behaviors.

To be honest, I feel like I've barely scratched the surface on globalization and capitalism's impact on humanity. I could go on and on about how cultural lenses shape our thoughts and behaviors because it's as equally fascinating as it is exhausting. It's helped me to become

more self-aware of my own prejudices and identify which behaviors are a byproduct of an unchecked, filtered lens that's hindering my growth and/or is impacting my relationships with other people. It's helped me to pause as I question in frustration why some people are "the way that they are," confronting my own monocultured lens and arriving at possible answers that help lessen the generalized frustration and redirect it towards institutions and societal ideas that may be hurting people physically, emotionally, psychologically, socially, politically, culturally, financially, and/or generationally. Also, some people are just different and that's okay. This isn't to excuse harmful behavior or to absolve one of personal responsibility, but it helps to understand that many people are suffering. Myself included. Globalized monoculture has us thinking the world's smaller than it actually is. We're missing out because of colonization and capitalism that fuels ethnocentrism. We're divided because of corporate businesses and profit-over-people and unequal distribution of wealth. We're fighting against ableism, class division, our own biases, and it's tiresome. Everything I mentioned plays a role in "the way things are" as we understand them, as we came into the world conditioned to accept many of them deeply as truth.

This learning process is endless. I'm not a teacher. These are connections and visual illustrations based on research, observations, and thoughts made by a citizen of the global community in 2025. In several years I'll look back on this essay, and revisions and updates will be made in parallel with my growing understanding of the global society we live in.

At times the research is heavy, and I must step away from it for a few days. The past summer has been a reminder of the importance of play and making time for things that are important to me outside of work and research – like biking, gardening, cooking, painting, and revisiting spaces where I'm accepted for who I am. These are joyous acts that also serve as acts of resistance to capitalism and the belief

that my free time must be filled with productivity or money-making aspirations. Learning new skills like making sushi or homemade soaps connects me to different people and ideas and histories from around the world. I also can't stress enough the importance of reading, especially words written by people from different backgrounds across time and space. These acts keep us curious and connected to our humanity and to each other.

This past Fourth of July I visited with my parents and sister, not feeling particularly festive or patriotic, but convinced it was alright to get out of the apartment for a few hours and away from the heavy concentrations of fireworks. Plus, I didn't feel like cooking dinner and hoped there'd be barbecued ribs. At one point in the evening, I stepped out of my parents' house onto the front porch where my dad was sitting in his chair. We'd engaged in a brief conversation, which quickly escalated when he mentioned wanting to take a family photo wearing Fourth of July t-shirts and I agreed to the photo but declined to wear the shirt. Despite having stated my beliefs, and being told they were understood, it was insisted upon that I needed to "see the bigger picture." Recognizing that I'd once again fallen into the same old dynamic that has strained my relationship with my father for as long as I can remember, it wasn't long before I started to become emotional and demanded out loud, "Why can't you just make room for me, and people like me?"

Of course, my dad asked *who* these people were, which frustrated me further, but also revealed something deeper. While researching for and putting together this overview of cultural lenses I had to reflect upon the ways monoculture has impacted my own life, like being sent to the speech pathologist in grade school and resisting the use of hearing aids while straining to "hear better" – which would eventually lead to permanent anxieties and daily burnout and bouts of depression that generally went dismissed as my being a "sensitive" or an "emotional" kid. I should say "sensitive boy" to emphasize

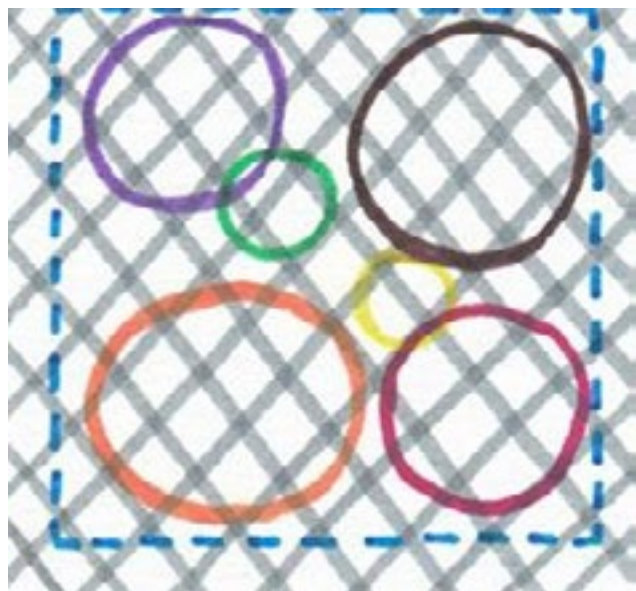
another point, as I'm certain my queerness, however it manifested throughout the years, made it more challenging for my parents to determine how to raise me.

I can *now* comprehend this “challenge” arising not from *me*, despite how I might have felt *then*, but stemming from years of globalized removal and erasure and inequality that's created an absence and unknown (sometimes, *fear*) of queer, hard of hearing experiences intertwined with Blackness. How can anyone explain something to their child or prepare them when they themselves lack exposure and vocabulary? Hence the pushback and insistence for conformity. Conformity may be a coping mechanism, however it also excuses people from doing the discomforting work of growth and inclusion that could potentially lead to cross racial solidarity and fostering of communities.

Realizing then on that holiday how often I'd been put on the spot (regardless of who was spotting me) to justify my behavior or my existence by naming or proving the existence of these “*other*” people, as if they'll somehow validate me even though I'm standing right here as living proof of an emergent cultural being, has become proof in and of itself as to how deeply conditioned we are to perceive only what we're comfortable perceiving. It just so happens that oftentimes the dominant regime profits from our comfort. How easily disrupted we are when the outside peripheries trickle into our line of view. The *other* people with their *other* ways and their *other* beliefs that should disturb us so. That conversation with my dad wasn't just about the Fourth of July t-shirts.

My existence is resistance. This visual and textual translation of collaborating research, thoughts, and feelings about globalization and neoliberalism filtered through my cultural lens defies capitalism's demands that I be ignorant and compliant. The number of targets on my back just for being in my full Black, queer, hard of hearing,

potentially neurodivergent authenticity is the result of cultural lens conditioning under fascist regimes that seeks to eradicate the “others” (me and these others like me) who complicate the illusion of a comfortable homogeneity. I’m not the problem – denying my existence for monoculture is. There’s nothing new, foreign, exotic, weird, deviant, broken, impaired, impossible, or dangerous about my biology or my personality. Nature has seen and made me many times before. There are forces at play designed to ensure we don’t notice each other. Resist monoculture and resist fascism, for true revolution comes only when we unite to globalize accessibility and cross-racial solidarity against the real enemy.



6.2

The crosshatch pattern symbolizing endless human experiences and body-mind possibilities runs throughout a dotted rectangle, crossing its “borders.” The four sides still represent humans trying to understand humans, but their porousness now symbolizes curiosity, open-mindedness, and compassion in our humbling recognition that we don’t know everything there is to know about each other. Multiple, multi-colored circles of varying sizes overlap throughout the pattern and shapes, inviting us to be conscious of intertwining body-minds and cultures in what’s currently a globalized society of remarkable human beings.

REFERENCES

Camp, J, & Heatherton, C. (Eds.). (2016a). *Total Policing and the Global Surveillance*

Empire Today: An Interview with Arun Kundnani. Policing the Planet: Why the Policing Crisis Led to Black Lives Matter (pp. 83-93). New York: Verso.

Camp, J, & Heatherton, C. (Eds.). (2016b). *Resisting State Violence in the Era of Mass*

Deportation: An Interview with Mizue Aizeki. Policing the Planet: Why the Policing

Crisis Led to Black Lives Matter (pp. 207-211). New York: Verso.

Clare, Eli. (2017). *Brilliant Imperfection: Grappling with Cure*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Department of Homeland Security. (2025). *Cornhusker Clink: A New Partnership with DHS*

and the State of Nebraska to Expand Detention Space. Department of Homeland Security. Retrieved from <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2025/08/19/cornhusker-clink-new-partnership-dhs-and-state-nebraska-expand-detention-space>

Drew, C. (2023). *8 Types of Globalization*. Helpful Professor. Retrieved from <https://helpfulprofessor.com/types-of-globalization/>

Funk, J. (2025). *Nebraska Announces Plan for Immigration Detention Center Dubbed the 'Cornhusker Clink.'* The Associated Press. Retrieved from <https://apnews.com/article/nebraska-ice-detention-center-immigration-lae76a48f62a7304da63e2780a357190>

- Ladau, E. (2021). *Demystifying Disability*. Berkeley: Ten Speed Press.
- McRuer, R. (2018). *Crip Times: Disability, Globalization, and Resistance*. New York: New York University Press.
- Monts-Treviska, A. (2019). *Audism & Deafhood. Skin, Tooth, and Bone: The Basis of Movement Is Our People: A Disability Justice Primer*. (2nd ed.). (pp. 72-76). USA: Sins Invalid.
- Morrison, T. (2002). *The Foreigner's Home. The Source of Self-Regard: Selected Essays, Speeches, and Meditations* (5-13). New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Morrison, T. (2008). *Peril. The Source of Self-Regard: Selected Essays, Speeches, and Meditations* (pp. vii-ix). New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Morrison, T. (2009). *Home. The Source of Self-Regard: Selected Essays, Speeches, and Meditations* (pp. 17-20). New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- National Geographic Society (2025). *Globalization*. National Geographic Society. Retrieved from education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/globalization/
- Random House Unabridged Dictionary. (n.d.). *Functionality*. In Random House Unabridged Dictionary. Retrieved from October 2021, from <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/functionality>
- Random House Unabridged Dictionary. (n.d.). *Monoculture*. In Random House Unabridged Dictionary. Retrieved September 22, 2025, from <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/monoculture>
- Random House Unabridged Dictionary. (n.d.). *Neoliberalism*. In Random House Unabridged Dictionary. Retrieved July 23, 2025, from <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/neoliberalism>

Sins Invalid. (2019). *Skin, Tooth, and Bone: The Basis of Movement Is Our People: A Disability Justice Primer*. (2nd ed.). USA: Sins Invalid.

Wilson, V. (2025). *Cultural Lens: How Our Environment Shapes Our Perspectives*. Exceptional Futures. Retrieved from exceptionalfutures.com/cultural-lens/

Wu, J., Strickler, L., Murphy, J., Chiwaya, N., & Ainsley, J. (2025). *U.S. Deportation Tracker: Counting Arrests, Deportations*. NBC News. Retrieved from <https://www.nbcnews.com/data-graphics/us-immigration-tracker-follow-arrests-detentions-border-crossings-rcna189148>

**This e-publication is an appendix to
MASKA Performing Arts Journal
CRIPPING PERFORMANCE
vol. XL, double issue 229-230
Winter 2025
ISSN 1318-0509**

**Published by: Maska, Institute for
Publishing, Production and Education
Metelkova 6, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia
www.maska.si
Phone: +386 1 4313122
E-mail: info@maska.si
For the publisher: Alja Lobnik**

**Editor-in-chief: Pia Brezavšček
Guest co-editor: Saša Asentić
Assistant to Editors: Jaka Bombač
Editorial Board: Bojana Cvejić, Janez Janša,
Branislav Jakovljević, Bojana Kunst, Goran
Sergej Pristaš, Miško Šuvaković, Ana
Vujanović
Oblikovanje in prelom
Design and Layout: Niko Lapkovski
English Language Editor: Jana Jevtović**