FIELD STATEMENT ONE

A Question of Methods: Political Science, Interdisciplinarity, and Africana Understandings

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Introduction

I saw a world in which the sun and the moon shone at the same time. They appeared in a way I had never seen before: the sun was The Sun, a creation of Benevolence and Purpose and not a star among many stars, with a predictable cycle and predictable end; the moon, too, was The Moon, and it was the creation of Beauty and Purpose and not a body subject to a theory of planetary evolution. The sun and the moon shone uniformly onto everything. Together, they made up the light, and the light fell on everything, and everything seemed transparent, as if the light went through each thing, so that nothing could be hidden.

—Jamaica Kincaid

The focus of this field statement is on questions and practices of interdisciplinarity re/produced within and between the social sciences and humanities disciplines. More specifically, I am concerned with how the discipline of political science can become more interdisciplinary in an effort to be more critically aware of the knowledges that it re/produces and more accountable to the people these knowledges affect. In particular, I am interested in the intersections of knowledge re/productions on, about, and within “ideas of Africa” because many of the complex social relations involved in the “ideas of Africa” speak to larger questions of non/human interaction within this planet and shed light upon questions of what it means to do interdisciplinary work. Political science has re/produced ideas of Africa that inform state policy and practice towards the continent of Africa and the people who live there. Since political science’s theories, methods, and practice effect state policies, academic theory has material implications for the people and environment of Africa. This is a concern because most of the policies, practices, and attitudes towards Africa and about Africa through the west have been in neo/colonizing forms such as racism, slavery, colonial occupation, and development. The policies, practices, and attitudes of the west towards Africa have contributed to a series of violent material implications for certain people within the global sphere. This paper seeks to locate how political science’s ontological and epistemological contributions are accountable to forms of violence that are perpetuated between Africa-west relations in an effort to re-think forms of knowledge re/productions.

Mainstream political science\(^2\), international relations, and area studies produce particular understandings of Africa: ones that are concerned with questions of security; ones that are based upon accepted knowledge of states, regions, and state interaction; ones that are concerned with predetermined structures of government, economics and social interaction; and ones that have been established and depend upon significantly unequal relations of power that place the west as center and Africa as peripheral. The mainstream political science re/production of Africa is
measured in relationship to the US and European states and is always done so through negative terms such as conflict and contagion, as well as through binary terms such as weak/strong and failed/success. For example, Somalia is considered a weak and failed state because it ‘lacks’ a central government and participates within a “parallel economy”, while South Africa is a strong and successful state within the interstate system because it is both democratic and a major participant within capitalism. What does this tell us about these two sites? Barely anything because neither of these categorizations speak to multiple productions and understandings of these territories marked as Somalia or South Africa, nor do they speak to the understandings of democracy and capitalism because they are constructed in a predetermined, linear way that offers only singular perceptions of what these concepts may or may not mean. There are numerous constructions from multiple sites that re/produce Somalia and South Africa differently then merely the status of their state. However, mainstream political science fails to acknowledge other possible knowledge frameworks that re/produce Africa in different ways, instead it makes a spectacle of Africa through its theorizations. How and why does knowledge production take place on certain people’s bodies?

Mainstream political science is concerned with re/structuring and mapping Africa in a linear and scientific way, which is always in relationship to the west, so that Africa can be named and known by western theorists and state policy makers. These re/productions of both Africa and the west validate a state system where the west is centered and Africa is peripheral. These re/productions further validate the discipline of political science within both academia and the state structure by strengthening its relationship to power and influence by its ability to predict African and Africa-west relations. The current mainstream political science structure of knowledge re/production on and about Africa contributes to the political economy of political science and the US state. In short, political science’s knowledge frameworks keep political science and the State in business. For instance, the 2005-06 US Institute of Peace’s call for funding proposals “Rule of Law in African Countries Emerging from Violent Conflict” is one testament to the necessity of re/producing political science and the state system in such a way that Africa “needs fixing” by western experts. These constructions are problematic because they promote predetermined, linear, incorrect, and often violent ideas of Africa that support the hegemonic role of the US and the west within the world system, keeping the west as center and
Africa as peripheral through western eyes. What would it mean to re/configure political science’s and the west’s methodological and theoretical approach to understanding Africa and themselves?

In order to begin to unpack this question, it is necessary to recognize other configurations of political science, international relations, and area studies that re/produce Africa differently. As will be discussed in the theoretical interdiction section of this paper, there are numerous critical political science scholars, such as Achille Mbembe, Mamood Mamdani, Wambui Mwangi, and Walter Rodney, who have challenged and continue to challenge conservative re/productions of Africa and the west. Authors such as these do so through forms of interdisciplinary work that includes larger conversations, debates, and knowledge re/productions of Africa and the west. These authors provide different ways of knowing “Africa” and the “west” that contribute to the necessity of multiplicity within knowledge re/productions. In short, there are multiple ways of knowing and being in the world and academic theories and methodologies must be accountable to these multiplicities, otherwise epistemological frameworks will continue to produce material forms of violence upon particular bodies. It is detrimental to have myopic re/productions of knowledge because it closes off these multiple spaces of being. This closing off contributes to re/productions of violence on a multitude of levels. However, multiplicity threatens the entrenched relations of power of the mainstream. Scholars such as the above mentioned are consistently relegated to the margins of political science because they question the methodological and theoretical underpinnings of the discipline, thus threatening the current holders of “power”. The struggle of transforming the discipline from within continues to remain a difficult process and therefore the question of interdisciplinarity continues to loom large.

Further barred from the discipline of political science are the voices of those theorists who are housed within humanities disciplines, such as comparative literature, feminist studies, and cultural studies, because their approaches to knowledge speak a different methodological and theoretical language than the social sciences. The humanities are often disregarded by political science as methodologically weak (notice the binary similarity of categorization with state status) or incomprehensible. The inclusion of humanities’ various approaches to understanding ideas of Africa and the west further bring to light the multiplicity of being and knowing because they offer different lenses of analysis. Political science’s process of exclusion and not considering literature, critical theory, and/or writings produced within the area of study (in this discussion I am referring to writers from Africa and within the diaspora) as influencing
and informing politics, continues to solidify political science’s hegemonic singularity on knowledge re/productions. It secures its expert status. Political science’s theories and methods claim to explain and prescribe the world, but failing to take interdisciplinarity seriously for the multiple knowledges that it provides contributes to political science’s inability to produce relevant knowledge about complex social relations that make up this world—in fact, the discipline is telling us less and less about the world we live in and more and more about itself. My critique follows Gayatri Spivak’s discussion, in *Death of a Discipline* (to be discussed further in the methods section), that disciplines will be inadequate if they fail to take interdisciplinary work seriously. I believe that not only will political science, despite all its efforts to the contrary, gradually become extinct if it continues its treasured myopic knowledge re/productions, but also more people will perish at the hands of its theories and methods—that is, its academic contributions will continue to mark people for material forms of state violence. A methodological re/configuration within the discipline is necessary.

Interdisciplinary work has become an attractive catch phrase for many academic departments and institutions, but it is rarely taken seriously, practiced, and encouraged by faculty members and institutional settings. My speculation for the lack of ‘real’ interdisciplinarity is that there is fear of the unknown, fear of being wrong, and the fear of losing power within a privileged yet compromising institutional structure that continuously seeks to discipline the researcher. What would it mean if political scientists and state department representatives read Chinua Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart*, Buchi Emcheta’s *The Joys of Motherhood* and Kenneth Waltz’s *The Man, the State and War* together to understand how the texts influence and explain the relationships amongst and between states, collective groups, and individuals? Could US relations with Africa transpire differently? Perhaps not, but if the practice of interdiction, putting texts in conversation with each other, were to continue it would be impossible to silence the differences within knowing. Then maybe shifts within the thoughts and attitudes about Africa and US relations would begin to take place and transformations of state policy would be more reflective of and accountable to their outcomes. Similar to this example would be taking post/colonial discourses seriously within political science because they reveal differing histories and relations of power amongst peoples and states. Yet, many who have engaged with these literatures or who have attempted interdisciplinary work have found many forms of resistance to this practice. Political science can no longer afford to ignore these knowledges, in fact, it is
crucial to the survival of political science to work through their resistances. Although critical collaborative work is difficult because it forces one to constantly be aware of, and at times compromise, one's thoughts and actions within many spaces of the unknown, it is only through collaborative work that multiplicity of being can be expressed. Not only should those who take the intellectual risk of destabilizing the mainstream continue to contravene the borders of political science, but the mainstream also needs to do the work of opening its borders of understanding if political science is to remain a useful site of knowledge re/production.

It is through the above discussions of interdisciplinarity that I begin to build my argument and purpose of this paper. I argue that an understanding of interdisciplinarity needs to be recognized and supported within the discipline of political science, while at the same time taking seriously the knowledge re/productions within other social science and humanities disciplines in an effort to bring multiplicities to the knowledge re/productions of Africa-west relations. I see this argument also speaking to larger global relations as processes such as capitalism, politics, and education continue to affect all areas of the world (and beyond). The way that I conceive of interdisciplinarity seriously is through the re/configurations of power within methodology and theory. This paper seeks to re/configure methodology through a layering process that keeps an understanding of interdisciplinarity at its core. I will articulate my methodological layering through two ways of understanding, utilizing, and supporting interdisciplinarity: (1) through an extensive methodological discussion that analyzes a range of social science and humanities methods; and (2) through textual interdiction that reviews the literature of political science, post/colonial discourse, and African(a) studies. The purpose of this articulation is to lay the groundwork for my dissertation, where I plan to discuss knowledge re/productions and multiplicities of knowing petroleum politics differently within the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria through innovative methodological layerings that reveal forms of both epistemic and material violence.

First, interdisciplinarity can be conceptualized and practiced through methodological re/constructions. Methodological boundaries and disciplines are in constant movement and this push for expansion and/or reformulation of methodological boundaries is crucial to the applicability of their frameworks. The world in which we live is not static nor should the approaches to examining and conceptualizing this world be, rather there needs to be a level of morphability in order to address multiple shifts and changes. This paper reviews and critiques a
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lineage of methods in the social sciences and humanities in an effort to illuminate the strengths and limitations of different approaches to research questions. From classical sociological and political methods that rigidly examine particular structures and agents, to interdisciplinary methods of transnational feminist cultural studies\textsuperscript{10} that judiciously examine the fluidity of the social imaginary as well as the social reality, this paper attempts to push disciplinary and intellectual boundaries in an effort to offer “new” conceptualizations of doing research that is critically relevant to the continual shifts of thoughts and actions both inside and outside of academia. Each methodology that I will be discussing informs the other and it is through this discussion that I would like to highlight aspects of their utility and detriment within my own layering method.

Secondly, interdisciplinarity can be conceptualized and practiced through reviewing literature that speaks to similar subject matter but through multiple lenses of analysis. Here I choose to discuss and complicate the re/productions of academia, political science, ideas of Africa, and the west through political science, post/colonial, and African(a) studies texts. Reading one body of literature provides only a partial story, but when placing these literatures into conversation with one another a more comprehensive analysis about the knowledge re/productions of Africa, the west, and so forth begins to unfold and provides a more complex and heterogeneous meanings to the theories and practices of academics, policy makers, and personal and collective being. A discussion on the texts within mainstream political science is important to lay out the boundaries of what is considered mainstream in this instance. The discussion of ‘marginal’ political science is critical to the understanding of how post/colonial discourses can influence re/productions of meanings and move the discipline towards more interdisciplinary work. Post/colonial literatures challenge predetermined and accepted understandings of location through discussions of both space and the body, which has multiple meanings within the forms of the literal body and collective bodies such as the nation and academia. Through these discussions, interdiction provides space for the growth of an interdisciplinary space known as Africana studies. Africana studies literature helps to illuminate the importance of interdisciplinary work by bringing together numerous methodological approaches to the study of Africa, the west, and global interaction. By definition, \textit{Africana} is meant to explore the ways in which Africa surfaces within current disciplinary formations, encourages dialogue between scholars working on other areas in the global south, and makes
scholarship on Africa and its diasporas available to larger academic and policy institutional discussions. Precisely because of its interdisciplinary approach to research and knowledge production, Africana Studies fosters the development of an intellectual community that provides participants with the ability to push against the grain of disciplinary formations and challenges forms of epistemic and material violence that have been naturalized within conventional knowledge frameworks. Thinking and speaking Africa across disciplines and geopolitical locations furthers the development of transnational methods, theories, and practice. These modes of analysis are crucial to understanding the complexities of relations of power within academic and geopolitical sites. In short, studying the Africana Studies challenges the sovereignty of knowledge and puts the connections of struggles and contestations within academia into conversation with other spaces of the world. Utilizing the research and writings produced within, throughout, and about the African Diaspora generates multiple ways of seeing, being, and knowing the world in which we live. By highlighting the constitution of Africana literatures through textual interdiction and methodological layering, one can see how multiple re/productions of knowing and being have existed, continue to contribute, and can enhance the knowledge frameworks of political science. Textual interdiction will show that all of these literatures overlap and develop within, beside, and because of each other, meaning they are already interdisciplinary and pertinent to one another. Closed disciplinarity is a result of power relations between disciplines and individuals, which become restrained and contained within particular spaces of being because of the lack of desire and acceptance to work collaboratively with those who speak knowledge and experience in multiplicity. This discussion attempts to boost the desire to accept and recognize what already exists and what could possibly be within a commitment to interdisciplinary work.

The above two analyses will enable further dissertation research that focuses on the concepts of interdisciplinarity, diasporic relations, transborder politics, and knowledge re/productions within academia, state policy formation, and global petroleum production. More specifically, I examine petroleum relations within and between the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria, the Nigerian State, the US, and the UK as a way to flesh out meanings and productions of international security and international rights discourses, which have been racialized, sexualized, and gendered to target some bodies for protection and othered bodies for discipline. In the case of the Delta Region, petroleum protestors have been declared international terrorists
by the US, UK and Nigerian State, and have been subjected to numerous forms of official and interpersonal violence. I question this myopic determination of petro-protestors through the interdisciplinary works, such as those found within Africana Studies, which helps to reveal the relations within the Delta Region are far more complex and connected to larger epistemological questions. I plan to explore the impacts of colonialism and oil production on the organization and institutions of local societies, all within the context of the colonial and independent state and will also examine the way in which the petroleum industry, embedded within the larger contexts of the Nigerian state, and international politics and economy, has responded historically to opposition to and violence against its activities. Through methodological layering, one can see that the history of opposition and response in the Niger Delta has not only been racialized, sexualized and classed through processes of neo/colonization and neo/imperialism, it has also been highly-gendered, an aspect of petro-politics that is often overlooked by mainstream political science. The purpose of my research, therefore, is to provide possibilities for creative engagement with these questions in hopes of disrupting the normalization of theory and praxis that produces violent material implications for particular people in particular places by provide a completely different understanding of petro-politics than political science typically produces. I feel this project necessitates the importance of methodological re/configurations and interdisciplinary work to provide spaces for multiple ways of knowing and being to avoid the continuance of particular humans either falling out or becoming targets of theoretical and policy discussions which determine their existence, usually in considerably violent ways. This methodological groundwork provides a possibility that interdisciplinary work can and does offer a level of accountability within academic re/productions that political science so desperately needs.

Methods

For isn’t it odd that the only language I have in which to speak of this crime is the language of the criminal who committed the crime? And what can that really mean? For the language of the criminal can contain only the goodness of the criminal’s deed. The language of the criminal can explain and express the deed only from the criminal’s point of view. It cannot contain the horror of the deed, the injustice of the deed, the agony, the humiliation inflicted…

--Jamaica Kincaid

I would like to start my analysis through a discussion of Spivak’s methodology within Death of a Discipline because it best exemplifies the structuring and goals of this paper—
creating and practicing interdisciplinary work that is more critically aware of the knowledges it re/produces and more accountable to the people these knowledges affect. As previously mentioned, the construction and utilization of a layering method is a foundational step in producing interdisciplinarity. Spivak is essential to this assemblage and I will discuss her at length in an effort to articulate the desire and meaning behind my own methodological critiques and formulations. Spivak enables my utilization of methodological layering and strengthens my call for interdisciplinary work. In order to highlight the complexities of the issues that I am discussing, I will be critiquing and layering different forms of methodology to illustrate heterogeneity within the knowledge re/productions of political science, ideas of Africa, and the west. In order to make relations of power and forms of epistemic violence visible within these productions, I will cross boundaries, analyze assumed collectives, and construct new imaginative ways of being through words and experiences of those before, around, and after me. Materially, this entails a review, critique, and utilization of a few current methods within the social science and humanities disciplines.

Spivak

The most pertinent understanding of methodology I received from Spivak was her useful way of layering and collaborating methods. While it is apparent that she is using the methods of comparative literature, particularly close reading, she expands her use of textuality so that it includes both a complexity and multitude of methods. Part of Spivak’s close reading is to take language and language training seriously. She speaks of the genealogy of and approaches to language, cultural idioms, hybridities of language, colonization and translations of language, and the political economy of language to make visible the contradictions and inadequacies within the methodologies, theories, and praxes of academic disciplines (her examples are of comparative literature, area studies, ethnic and cultural studies, but are easily writ large on all of academia and state practices), which have failed to recognize and be accountable to the forms of violence they un/wittingly contribute to by using the west as the ruler of measurement within the world while the rest of the planet is viewed and exotified as otherness. Spivak deconstructs texts in a multitude of ways, many times using one text to deconstruct and read through another text and other times using theory to read through literary texts or using the literary text to utilize particular theories. She does this to illustrate forms of epistemic violence within writing that contributes to material violence and to call for new methodologies (and new understandings of
methodologies) that enable imaginative possibilities for producing and existing within academia and the world accountably. Her layering of methods systematically builds throughout the text and has three main points (chapters of her book): crossing borders, collectivities, and planetarity. These three concepts each have a series of components that help to explain the construction of her methodology matrix that enables heterogeneity and imagination within method and theory, thus promoting hopeful ideas of future humanness through multiplicities in knowing and being.

In “Crossing Borders”, Spivak discusses at length the importance of language and the usefulness of literature. Spivak stresses the necessity of comparative literature crossing disciplinary and intellectual borders to incorporate historical, sociological, and political methods as a contribution to breaking down structures of fear that inhibit the possibilities of interdisciplinary work and imaginative methods and being. One example of her collaborating methodologies is seen when she discusses Maryse Condé’s *Heremakhonon*. Here Spivak illustrates how tracing differences in language translation can speak to the “history of the movement of peoples” by putting the historical text and literary text into conversation with one another. This method is important because it draws attention to the contradictions of knowledge re/productions that recognize certain forms of being while silencing (making illegible) other forms of being within processes of colonization. Specifically in this example, this method traces how differing African languages translate into English and French languages which produce different meanings of the particular language. She points out that only certain translations are picked up and continue to be replicated and this is done in relationship to hegemonic productions of knowledge that coincide with state interaction and more specifically state colonial control, thus producing Africa in singularity. Spivak explains how the colonizing language created divisions amongst people that were previously unrecognized as such, thus creating different histories and different locations of people. She does this through utilizing texts from different disciplines (literature, area studies, and history) to inform one another and offer differing views of Africa. The literary text itself does not reveal the tracing of language translations within multiple spaces, but neither does the history text provide multiple meanings of particular groups of people, but when placed together one can read the gaps and larger trajectories. These gaps and trajectories that she highlights transform the previous knowledge constructions of what it means to be a particular ethnic group within this particular example. Through her analysis an undifferentiated Africa is unable to exist with this new insight because
she located another meaning, another way of being that was previously unrecognized. What is most powerful in Spivak’s ‘crossing borders’ component is the illumination of how narrow and problematic one’s scope can and will be when wedded to one lens of methodological analysis. The imaginative is made impossible because the road is already created before you without any questioning of its existence, establishment, and other pathways. Crossing disciplinary borders enables this critical inquiry and more importantly it refuses disciplinary hegemony, rather it opens up possibilities of multiplicity within meaning and possibilities for interdisciplinary work. Through interdisciplinary collaboration, a broader and differentiated picture appears illuminating previous silences that harbor both epistemic and material forms of violence. These illuminations enable further accountability of the researcher because they open up multiple understandings, not “The” understanding that could potentially be harmful.

Another important layer in Spivak’s methodology is the use and understanding of “collectivities”. A critical analysis of collectivities begs the question of humanism—“who are we”?—because it complicates the often accepted and assumed formulations of collectivities and constructed binaries of us/them. This methodological layer does more than cross borders into ‘other’ territories, it is about questioning the collectives (territories and borders) we construct around ourselves and apart from ourselves within our differing locations. Most importantly, it is about imagining and constructing new collectivities, ones previously rendered illegible, to learn from and build upon methodologically. For example, the classroom is a collectivity that could be methodologized, read like a text, rather than just conceived of as a space that dictates already known knowledge. The classroom re/configures knowledges that are shared within it. The point is to think and locate collectivities in spaces previously unrecognizable to acknowledge other ways of being and knowing. Collectivity as method is about acknowledging the possibilities of a questionable “we” that critically analyzes the knowledges re/produced through these processes, while always striving to keep visible the morphability of collectives and their seemingly arbitrary boundaries. In short, collectivity questions the ways in which categorizations have become normalized. Part of this method is to question historical assumptions of collective being. For example, Spivak critiques ideas of humanism and violent disciplinary manipulation of assumed collectives through her discussion of culture as collective and bringing up the critique of metalepsis, where effect is substituted for cause. She does this to put into question assumed knowledge formations that continue to be replicated and promoted as normalized ways of being.
This is important because it interrogates naturalized knowledge re/productions that normalizes some and ‘others’ others. Collectivity as method is another step towards revealing to academics their accountabilities in forms of epistemic violence because it illuminates our role in re/producing the same regardless of applicability.

Through the combined use of literary text and political text (building an argument for how social sciences and humanities should supplement each other), Spivak traces conceptualizations of collectivity within multiple meanings/spaces to illustrate their unpredictabilities and epistemological shifts. She does this in an effort to destabilize naturalized social ordering and make the question of power explicit. Methodologizing collectivities transforms possibilities of “imaginative making” (poises) within knowledge re/production because it refuses to legitimate knowledge re/produced through singular ideas. For instance, the knowledge re/produced within political science is not expert nor the only knowledge. Again, this points to the methodological re/configuration from singularity to multiplicity necessary within the discipline of political science. The question is not about how to recognize a collectivity of “friend”, “democracy” or political science, rather it is a question about why are we concerned with collectivities and why they are monopolized and promoted in particular ways. Collectivities are not sameness, they are imaginative multiplicities that require multiple readings through interdisciplinary work to make sense of their knowledge re/productions and how these knowledges affect people’s daily lives. When Spivak methodologizes presumed collectivities, such as “democracy”, she is opening up the space to question assumptions and naturalizations that have taken place through their creation. Spivak discusses collectivity as method as a way to denaturalize the method of insertion of collectives within collectives (i.e. feminist international relations’ adding women and stir to make women visible to mainstream international relations) and inversion (i.e., focus on women through micro credit programs to enhance development—the target becomes women’s development, but it is still about development) because it demystifies the solidification of homogenized power relations within knowledge re/productions. Insertion and inversion are mere replications of the norm. In an effort to denaturalize these processes, Spivak methodologizes collectivities through the critical use of (1) specificity of language; (2) open-plan fieldwork; (3) self questioning/reflection; (4) interdiction, where there is speaking between both sides (this includes textual interdiction); and (5) narrative sequences and interruptions. These processes provide multiplicities of historical context that illuminate
replications of frameworks and disenable assimilation of being by using social science and humanities texts together (naturalized as separate collectives but, in fact, do cross borders into each other). When you look at what is happening during the writing of the literature, collectivities are not only produced differently, they contribute to and are part of institutional re/arrangements. In Spivak’s use of collectivity as method, her examples of Tayeb Salih’s, *Seasons*, and Mahasweta Devi’s, *Pterodactyl*, illustrate the structural shifts of meaning within the collectivities of colonization. Colonization is produced differently within the textual conversation between ‘third world’ literary texts, western literary texts, and political and historical texts giving space to multiple and ‘new’ understandings of the collectivities of colonization, the west, and ‘third world’. Collectivity layered with crossing borders importantly denaturalizes generalizations of identities, humanness, borders, and territory. In Spivak’s example, it is impossible to produce a singular meaning of colonization and of colonial space because of the shifting relations of power through multiple spaces of knowing and being. There is no longer a normal way of knowing and being within the perceived collective. Taking this methodological layer seriously requires approaching the subjects and objects of study in new imaginative ways.

The third and most challenging aspect of Spivak’s layering method is “planetarity”. Planetarity provides the space and the beginnings of ‘new’ language that enables further imaginative methodological and theoretical possibilities. According to Spivak, “global” is symbolic of the fixed and replicated systems of praxis, but planetarity is fluid and imaginative. It is difficult to articulate because of its complete reconfigurations and possibilities that extend beyond the realms of current language formations. Spivak describes planetarity as it “is in the species of alterity, belonging to another system” that “we inhabit on loan”—there is no predetermined method of being within planetarity. Planetarity as method enables the layering of methods because it gives the space of open morphability; it is new ground that has yet to be captured through academic language. Through an idea of planetarity, Spivak records differences in the figurations of literary texts to illustrate the undoing of the polarizations of collectivities’ (i.e., us/them) meaning, which creates another method of denaturalization because it highlights assumed ways of being and defamiliarizes them through a “forced reading” that utilizes a combination of literary methods. Spivak highlights differences and similarities of multiple literary texts that are produced at different moments and which discuss “a” question of
colonialism. The figurations of the texts speak to an idea of planetarity because while apart they exhibit particular literary structures, but putting them together in conversation Spivak explains their rearrangement illustrates a different set of structures (or collectives). These new conversations (figurations or structures) force a new understanding of language that is often described as occupying the spaces of “structures of feeling” (that which has no recognizable language and therefore is left to be understood through other means, i.e. feeling). Spivak explains that these re/configurations are viewed as the “narrative of the impossible” because the language that currently exists to explain this methodological maneuvering does not exist or exists inadequately creating easy targets for critique. However, these re/configurations are not impossible. It merely takes time to develop both a layering process and languages that can grasp new meanings when they embody what already exists. Spivak attempts to begin the process of creating ‘new’ languages and “new” understandings of language by mapping planetarity methodologically different. Spivak reinscribes language in new ways through a method of displacement—“reverse and displace globalization into planetarity” in order to avoid replication and solidification of being. For example, Spivak reads through José Martí and W.E.B. DuBois for signs of planetarity under a method of displacement, the undoing of singular epistemological thought and the diversification of knowledge re/productions that were apparent for their time. Spivak traces their literature for language that speaks to ideas behind planetarity to further give words to its meaning. Planetarity has always existed, but has not been recognized and Spivak seeks to highlight the formations of planetarity through the tracing of multiple trajectories of thoughts through multiple spaces, time and literatures, particularly on the periphery. Planetarity opens up collectivities and processes of crossing borders to forge new formulations of methodology through the close reading of the multiplicity of texts that we, as academics, have inherited in an effort to reach for the imaginative possibilities of being without the necessity to map its singularity.

As seen in this discussion, methodological and disciplinary boundaries are in constant movement despite their attempts to solidify themselves. I agree that a singular replicated form of methodology does injustice to the re/productions of knowledges. The world we live is not static nor should the approaches to examining and conceptualizing this world, rather there needs to be a level of mobility and multiplicity within methodology that addresses shifts and differences within being, as well as more accountability by the researcher for their role in the re/productions
of knowledge. The following discussion is both a critique and an exercise on methodological approaches that could possibly build towards multiplicity and interdisciplinarity.

**Scientifically Quantitative**

There are numerous methodological approaches within the study of political science. Each approach attempts to provide a framework that offers meaning, testability and validity to the research topic, they attempt to provide historical truth. However, as methods try to create the means to an end, many falter by excluding critical areas of analysis that bring forth differing meanings. For example, Jane Parpart and Kathleen Staudt (political science) discuss in length that social scientists have failed to properly incorporate “gender conflict or male domination of the state” within state analysis.\(^{19}\) Parpart and Staudt make an important intervention into mainstream political science by calling attention to the lack of gender analysis, but they, too, participate in mainstream exclusion because they fail to interrogate the meanings and constructions of their categorizations (collectivity) of ‘gender’. For Parpart and Staudt, gender conflates into woman, whom is constructed very narrowly. Partpart and Staudt’s way of incorporating an analysis of gender is through the methods of insertion and inversion that Spivak has warned against. Methodologizing gender is further complicated when one steps out of the political science realm and looks at differing insights on questions of gender. Theorists, such as Sandra Harding (philosophy), Joan Scott (social science), Gayatri Spivak (comparative literature), and Robyn Wiegman (cultural studies), explain that “gender as a category” is not simply “adding women and stirring” to mainstream methodological applications, rather utilizing the category of gender requires categorical interrogation and re/configuration that actually problematizes what gender may mean within the contexts of differing complex historical, political, economic, and social relations.\(^{20}\) Taking gender seriously is to critically evaluate gender as “within every class, race, and culture…[and] so, too, are class, race, and culture always categories within gender”,\(^{21}\) while at the same time avoiding a collapsing of categories into one another that creates gender, race, and class\(^{22}\) that silences differentiations and multiplicities of knowing and being. It is also critically important to take into consideration Chandra Mohanty’s (women’s studies, third world studies) discussion that gender as a category of analysis is assumed to be applicable cross-culturally and universally, that there is some sort of universal “sameness” among wo/men throughout the world. Mohanty’s point illustrates Spivak’s concern that gender as a category of analysis without critical reflection is problematic through the
replication of western domination over “third world” constitutions of gender.\textsuperscript{23} According to Oyèrónké Oyewùmí (sociology, black studies), gender is a western construct and import, which had no relevance within certain ontological and epistemological frameworks (she is speaking of the Yoruba in Nigeria). It was a collective that was forced upon ways of being and knowing within Nigeria by the neo/colonial west. It was not that gender relations were ‘different’ in Nigeria, the ideas of gender discussed in the west did not exist, but now Nigerian society has been re/colonized by gender analysis.\textsuperscript{24} This one example of gender speaks to the importance of seeking methodologies that systematically analyze categories from multiple positions because it puts into question the knowledges that are re/produced as fact. Multiple lenses are crucial to the development of a layering method precisely because they value the question of multiplicity and difference, which re/produces knowledge in extremely different ways making room for the consideration of multiple truths rather than the Truth.

Much of political science methodology is concerned with quantitative analysis, an important but highly problematic approach to understanding non/human existence. While numbers and statistics are informative because they can provide illustrations of certain arguments, rarely are there interrogations into how numbers and statistics are formed, assumed and re/produced as collectives that represent particular peoples within policy formation. The combining of political theory, rational scientific thought, and foreign policy objectives develops out of 17\textsuperscript{th} and 18\textsuperscript{th} century western theories and literature, but is strongly demarcated in the 19\textsuperscript{th} century where language becomes tied to a construction of objectivity often articulated through the use of statistics as a means to promote rational unity of mankind. Theory and practice became valid and recognizable only through its testability and production of Truth.\textsuperscript{25} As Bruno Latour explains, science has become accepted Truth and its formulations and categorizations have become both naturalized and institutionalized and their points of origin are rarely scrutinized.\textsuperscript{26} The epistemic shifts that enabled scientific Truth produced a break between the individual/collective group and the ‘expert’, thus reinforcing binaries between social and scientific.\textsuperscript{27} These scientific binaries promoted a naturalization of self/other. This process also normalized the west as the yardstick of comparison, creating binaries of west/nonwest that determine peoples’ status amongst each other.\textsuperscript{28} Western rationality became the driving force of state interaction. The experts of the west conducted research, made theories, and produced policies about others, which significantly affected people’s lives in a multitude of violent ways.
Ian Hacking importantly points out, “Statistical information leads to the discovery of statistical laws. We who collect the information change the boundary conditions and thereby change the laws of society. Such a control of a human population seems to diminish its freedom.”

Hacking’s statement testifies to the idea that academics can alter state society relations through their claims of Truth within research and statistical analysis. Can academics afford to let this form of power go unexamined? What does it mean to produce types of people that are then easily mapped onto the state apparatus? Can the researcher truly be objective within this relationship of power? Is methodology about creating Truth and experts? Where do the accountabilities lay? These are just a few of the questions that quantitative and forms of qualitative methodology bring up for me, leading me to seriously interrogate the utility of mainstream political science methodology.

I would like to say that I am not alone in the process of questioning the applicability of quantitative methods. For years, there have been ongoing ‘wars of method’ within political science that has placed many scholars at odds with one another. Increasingly political science scholars try to balance quantitative methods with qualitative aspects, such as incorporating history and social change into their analyses, or try to quantify qualitative methods to make them more ‘reliable’ and ‘acceptable’ to the mainstream. Theorists also try to diversify their critical unit of analysis, the state, by taking into consideration state-society and intersocietal relations. For the next few moments, I would like to discuss a few of the mainstream political science quantitative approaches to understanding foreign policy objectives in an effort to highlight the singularity involved within these constructions that inevitably silence other ways of knowing and approaching foreign policy.

According to Michael Brecher, the way that state decision-makers perceive threats to their basic values determines the manner in which the state will act or react within the international sphere. Once there is a change in the existing environment of the state and a threat is perceived, regardless of internal or external origination, a crisis point is triggered. During crisis, decision-making becomes time sensitive and reliant on the perception of the probability of war. Brecher created a model to explicate the processes decision-makers conduct during crisis and how this affects policy outcomes. Once basic core values (determined by the state) are threatened, the decision-makers seek information about the threat, consult with others in the decision group, analyze alternatives, and decide on a choice. There are three stages to this
Brecher attempts to validate how choice patterns and coping processes are affected by changes in perceived stress levels. Using examples from Israel’s 1967 and 1973 crises, he concludes that as crisis induced stress rises, the search for information about the threat and alternatives increase, while the decision-makers become more concerned with immediate results and use ad hoc forms of consultation. According to Brecher, the empirical analysis of the model produces particular traits of decision-making in crisis situations that can be explored universally, offering common insight on international crisis behavior of states. Although it may be important to analyze the actions of states during periods of crisis to understand the possibilities of policy choices, Brecher recognizes only what is predetermined as a state and a crisis. Crises can be perceived in a multitude of ways that are not easily contained within his general categories: political-diplomatic, economic-development, cultural-status, and military-security. How are these categories defined? Could a crisis involve a combination of these categories? How does this model speak to crises over time? How does it explain the silencing of crises or state induced crises, such as racism? It seems only specific forms of crises are acknowledged within this discussion, ones that are recognizable through the international sphere as affecting the strength of a state. It is also unclear what information gathering is taking place during crisis. How would this gathering speak to the increasing daily surveillance of people throughout the world in the name of terrorism? Brecher’s model also privileges the state and decision-makers as a group, rather than questioning the role of individuals or societal influences. Whose stress level matters in this discussion and how is it understood? Stress becomes categorized and universalized to make generalizations of state interaction. Brecher’s explanatory model is merely an exercise that seeks to create scientific fact about foreign policy decisions. This solidification and universalization of crises decisions excludes other possibilities, perhaps possibilities that would provide ‘better’ outcomes. What happens to the lives of people (when people are not even thought of) if policies are decided upon through a mapping of past experience that may or may not address the current crisis?

Another example of quantifying interstate relations as a means to control societal relations is Neil Richardson’s attempt to measure the validity of the argument that economically dominant nations extract foreign policy compliance out of economic dependent nations. Building on theorists such as Kenneth Waltz, Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, Richardson believes that the economic measurement of interstate relations reflects the “sensitivity” and
“vulnerability” of both types of economic states. Richardson claims that social scientists can measure and generate dyadic expressions of states’ foreign policy decisions by looking at foreign aid and international trade and then correlating the status of a country’s economic context to its ability to make and influence international policy. He develops a “concentration measurement” for economic dependence through analyzing the capacity for economic substitution, supply opportunities, external reliance, current partner concentration, and unexploited market opportunities. An economic vulnerable state has either no or limited access to secure markets and is dependent upon those states that do have access to secure markets. Power is a result of influence. A state is compliant if it relies on the issues that are salient to the dominant country. Utilizing the example of the United Nations General Assembly roll-call voting (most mainstream political scientists tend to be fascinated with voting procedures) during the Cold War, Richardson explains that vulnerable states would vote the same way of the state they were dependent upon because of the financing they received from these economic dominant states. His mapping of voting behavior suggests that decision-makers base their decisions on economics, that access to secure markets determines political landscape. Economic dependent states are at the mercy of the economically strong. While the economy is a major factor within interstate relations, it is not the determining factor nor is it the only variable for foreign policy decisions. Richardson’s strict market determination ignores any influences other than economic. His methodology does not account for factors such as political ideologies, particularly splits and alignments that took place between ideas of communism and democracy during the Cold War. His methodology also does not account for historic economic, political, and social relations, such as colonization, that contributed to the vast inequalities within the structure of interstate relations.

The two prior examples fail to critically interrogate the meanings that make up their categories. They fail to question who their numbers affect and how. They privilege the state without questioning who and what makes up the arbitrary boundaries of the state and why it is their methods continue to promote state security. All aspects of qualitative analysis are void from their discussions, but can the claim of qualitative analysis transform quantitative sterility? In the following example, Gary King’s, Robert Keohane’s, and Sidney Verba’s positivist method claims to push methodological boundaries by stating qualitative and quantitative research do not have to be distinguished independently of one another. A seemingly good attempt to do
collaborative work, however within mainstream political science it is necessary to keep in mind Spivak’s warning against replication. KKV’s main point is that qualitative work can be measured statistically. Although providing interesting formulations of questions, hypotheses, and how to strengthen theory, their approach only accounts for information that can be explained statistically and “scientifically” through predetermined and assumed knowledge frameworks. Again, as Latour suggested, there is no questioning of the quantitative processes, rather just the inference that qualitative research is not enough unless it can be quantified. There is a focus on the necessity to construct formal models of descriptive and causal inference, but this process undermines the concept of change over time and possibilities of multiplicities because the model requires given and fixed categories. For example, one of their guidelines is “all data and analyses should, insofar as possible, be replicable” for purposes of reliability.\textsuperscript{40} Replication excludes the ability to have and see other possibilities and if other possibilities are seen, they are disregarded or seen as abnormal. Their use of algebraic models is an attempt to enhance pre-existing verbal productions of descriptive inference contained within qualitative research, but in doing so data becomes manipulated into static and reliable categories that construct large generalizations that arguably exclude multiplicity in experience. The categorical selection is biased, meaning the researcher chooses how to fit the data into the model, which narrows the result patterns. An example of this can be seen in their statement “good historians understand which events were crucial” and ultimately which events are deemed worthy for modeling—the expert is in charge of the knowledge re/productions.\textsuperscript{41} This dangerously affects the re/constructions of peoples’ histories and existence because it narrowly predetermines the meanings and understandings of social, economic, and political relations. Eric Wolf is one of many critics of this linear social science explanation. Through his discussion of multiplicities and interrelationships within historical social developments, his critique rests on the inability to scientifically separate and categorize social relations in linear and predetermined ways because societies are deeply interconnected and constantly shifting.\textsuperscript{42} To approach social relations through singularity (regardless of how many variables you construct) creates a mirage of universal history, which in reality excludes a number of societies’ experiences. Despite the illustrative power statistics and charts produce, without critical interrogation into how numbers and categories became assumed as fact proves to be inadequate to the understandings of social phenomena.
Historical Sociology

According to Fernando Cardoso and Enzo Faletto, “social change depends on historical alternatives” and political institutions are “structures of domination” that allow one to “follow the process of change at the political-institutional level”. Political science’s use of historical sociological methods is an attempt to bring the methods of history and sociology into the discipline’s framework. Historical sociology can bring important analysis to the discipline of political science when it is critically assessed. Theda Skocpol’s ground breaking text, States & Social Revolutions, has become a fundamental text within political science and gives an example of cautious interdisciplinary work (Skocpol is a sociologist who is often cross listed with political science). Her historical-sociological methodology claims to be a continuing and renewable approach to research that is devoted to “understanding the nature and effects of large scale structures and fundamental processes of change”. It analyzes “patterns and effects of social structures and group action” over time to bring about understandings of the relationships between the state and society. Skocpol describes historical sociological characteristics as the following. First, it focuses on questions about social structures (processes) within particular time and space. Second, it analyzes processes over time taking into account the sequence of events and how this may affect outcomes. Third, it questions the interplay of actions and structural contexts. Finally, it highlights the specific kinds of social structures and patterns of change. Skocpol illustrates the historical significance of method, promotes the importance of historical analysis when studying political, economic, and social change, and reveals its versatility by showing its use within other disciplines. According to Skocpol, when researching a historic question of social change, the method of historical sociology provides “an historic scope of conception and a full use of historical materials”. But what does this mean? For starters, her first approach to historical sociology is the application of a general model to history. She claims this use is important when the researcher wants to demonstrate the “inner logic of a general theoretical model”. Skocpol recognizes that this use can be problematic because the model is “taken as given prior to the historical instance” causing its application to be arbitrary, but believes that overtime arbitrariness will diffuse itself through multiple case studies, though it is not entirely clear how this diffusion happens. The second approach, interpretative historical sociology, analyzes cultural and political intentions of actors in particular historical settings to
search for conceptual reorientation and clarification and causal validity through comparative case studies. It is important to remind one that the interpreter of ‘others’ intentions is the researcher. The third and final approach, analytic historical sociology, “assumes causal regularities” and studies historical cases and “alternative hypothesis” in order to justify those assumptions. According to Skocpol, the analytic historical sociologist asks the “why” question and “look[s] much harder …for answers based on valid causal connections” by building upon John Stuart Mills’ comparative methods of “method of agreement” and “method of difference”. To produce agreement and difference, researchers need to use secondary sources comparatively. This analysis then will lead to ‘finding’ existent (alternative) hypothesis for causal explanation across case studies. However, this approach becomes about fitting data into little black boxes.

Skocpol’s work is important to the understanding of comparative historical methods and is beneficial on many levels, but there are limits. Her discussion of historical sociological methodology offers insight to state structures and social action beyond strict and conservative quantitative methods that conceivably ignore cultural and historical aspects of political, economic, and sociological change within a state. The idea that the method and research develop as it goes depending on what the researcher seeks to accomplish, rather than following rigid rules that over-structure the research agenda, pushed the boundaries past sanitized notions of research that dominated social science disciplines for years. However, in her attempt to loosen the reigns of rigidity of methodology, each of her examples is bounded by particular geographical locations, narrow and privileged categories, and knowledges of revolutions. Concise charts and models with algebraic variables justify a structured relationship between bounded state and empty society. Skocpol’s discussion and definitions are inadequate because in an effort to avoid universalizations, she generalizes notions of identity, meaning, and knowledge. Again, little or no interrogation of categories is done on her part. Categorical analyses such as gender, race, and sexuality that would provide differing understandings of society and social change are subsumed under a dominant homogenous construction of society. Skocpol makes little distinction of what “culture” is, who “society” is, what “history” consists of, or which “structures” are included in change. More importantly, she vaguely attempts to show how a researcher addresses broad categories in an effort to explain state-society relationships and change over time. There is an assumed notion that each case study would have a distinct culture different from the other, but it is not clear how she would discuss the “subcultures” within one state compared to another state.
Nor does she address the notion of an international culture, international society, or international structure, which surely would have an affect on a given society, state, culture, and structure depending on their subjective and objective understandings. For instance, how would Skocpol’s analysis be understood differently if she followed Caren Kaplen’s and Indepal Grewal’s suggestion of “question[ing] the patriarchal construction of culture or cultural difference”?  

Skocpol’s comparative framework and analytic approach addresses the idea that there are alternatives out there that need to be acknowledged when researching historic problems or questions, but her methods of agreement and difference only produce preconstructed understandings (controls) between cases that predetermine revolutionary “success”—again, failed/success. Who is defining successful and how? If we choose cases with specific functions in mind to prove or disapprove, how is this not a manipulation of evidence? Most importantly, how does this methodology affect the conceptualizations of social action in those countries that were deemed unsuccessful? Does it not map certain states as strong and others as weak? The point of this methodology is “not for the purpose of fully explaining their own patterns of political conflict and development, but instead for the particular purpose of strengthening the main line of argument about social revolutions in the three [original] major cases”.

Giving privilege to only certain understandings of revolution denies the existences of multiple possibilities within social realities and explanations. Comparative historical sociological work is important because it begins to question social relations within history, but it fails methodologically when it sets up cases in binary formats that lack the multiple possibilities of being, knowing, and experience within historical social change.

Many scholars in both political science and sociology were and still are influenced by Skocpol and further built upon her methodological constructions. For example, Stephen Hobden developed an ‘international perspective’ within comparative historical sociology methodology that argues that although there have been valid historical accounts of state formations, the method lacks historical accounts of “global structures”. Hobden’s approach uses aspects of Michael Mann’s multi-logic that suggests there are multiple forces involved nationally and internationally, and combines it with Buzan, Jones, and Little’s sectoral approach that requires a structural analysis on economic, social, and political sectors historically. Hobden emphasizes that historical and social analysis of global systems would enrich the understanding of the “links between units and the system” and would give both international relations theorists and historical
sociologists further validations on their research. While Hobden’s approach further opens the boundaries of historical and sociological methodologies to enter discussions within political science, it continues to lack an interrogation of structures, categories, and history. For purposes of my layering methodology, historical sociology is a useful beginning to discuss interdisciplinarity and how structural change has been conceptualized over time but only if it is done so through the critical lens of historical and categorical questioning. There are many unexplained gaps within this method that require additional discussion, which can be aided through a discussion of historical and cultural methods.

Making History

The historical and cultural methodological critiques and constructions put forth by theorists such as Vicki Ruiz, Bonnie Smith, Angela Woollacott, and John Wrathall are useful in beginning to open up categorical rigidity and historical fact making that historical sociological methods inevitably construct. These theorists put into question the academic as expert by analyzing the ways in which the historical archive is constructed and how it can be manipulated in favor of those who have the power to voice history. Part of the problem within social science methodologies is that they rarely question how histories are constructed and maintained within disciplines. For example, Smith critiques the unequal power relations of “find[ing] truth in the process” of institutionalizing the practices of seminars and archival research into the discipline of history. This process institutionalized a certain way of ‘doing’ history that would be recognized by the academic community. If the history did not fit the framework, it was not considered historical work, which has resulted in numerous histories being dropped from the history books. In another example, Wrathall explicitly reveals manipulations and omissions of history by historians’ interpretations, who in this particular argument were ‘protecting’ the sexuality of a renowned YMCA creator from possible societal scorn by omitting from his memoir documentation of the writings that addressed his sexuality. This example illustrates that facts are interpreted through the eyes of a constructed ‘expert’ and therefore are always only a partial picture of historical experience, never a Truth, but merely someone’s un/truth. Ruiz’s and Woollacott’s critique put into question academics reading back into history through current cultural categories and language. Reading from our position today, always-already transforms the possibilities of past knowings and beings (think again of Oyewumi’s critique on gender
discussed earlier in this paper). Both of these theorists warn against the re/constructions of history through predetermined frameworks that may or may not address the events and beings of the past. All of these examples are important because they put into question the ideas of historical truth by illustrating how history is a construction. Yet, political science continues to be concerned with ideas of historical facts prompting me to ask, what is historical fact?

Jerome Bruner claims that facts are located within human contexts and these contexts make up narratives. According to Bruner, facts change and are situated within some preconceived ‘structure’ of human arrangement. If someone is unable to make ‘sense’ of fact, it becomes irrelevant until someone can place it within an existing conception or category. Facts are historically created and catalogued and these resources provide “connective tissue in the story of factually what happened”. These resources enable “new interpretations” of the story. Depending on the researcher’s pre-conceived questions, theory, or acknowledgment of a story, they will find ‘different’, maybe even ‘contradictory’ facts to fill in and “justify” their perception of the “whole”, thus creating new interpretations of the story and ‘new’ facts. Bruner uses Vladimir Propp’s argument on folktales to discuss how narratives are created and considered fact through the ‘fitting of facts’ within particular contexts (and arguably power dynamics) to create a ‘whole’. The sequence of facts, or “arrow of time”, is key to creating/justifying the ‘fitting of facts’ to establish expected ‘truth’, that is the ability to ‘fit facts’ so “the illusion of reality is working”, much like the fact that “seemingly” shapes itself. It is the ‘fitting of facts’ into “narrative cohesion” rather than logic that makes the narrative real and the facts take their own form. According to Bruner, “humans entertain about how reality really is” and go so far as to share common canonical lore on both cultural and ‘humankind’ levels because social action is a construct of purpose by human agent(s). Humans have the ‘power’ to shape their experience. This ‘presumption’ “cuts the world up into categories appropriate to it” in order to establish patterns of belief—knowledge, fact, narrative, and truth. Bruner’s two claims of humans, fact and narrative are: perceptions of the world may vary culture to culture, but this variance “reflect[s] certain natural ways of using the mind” and “particular cultural systems for representing reality...become memorable and passed on from generation to generation”. In short, humans have different constructions of facts or reality throughout the world, but at the same time they have the ability to recognize a higher generalized narrative that they can relate to and it is these interactions that are replicated throughout time. Bruner leaves us with a further
thought of human constructions by arguing that facts by themselves do not do much, it is the
writer (speaker) who brings them to reality through contextualization.\(^7^1\)

Bruner’s article highlights possible constructions of facts, how they are stored and how
they contribute to narratives that produce meanings, specifically fixations with truth that underlie
struggles for the explanations of human experiences and existence. Fact in itself means nothing
until we, humans, create a place for its existence. However, this methodological tracing of
narratives to produce historical fact lacks an in depth analysis. Bruner’s categorizations (for
instance, human) are problematic because they are naturalized and homogenized creating
particular experiences and ways of producing what a fact may be within a given society.
Bruner’s narrative framework fails to account for hybridities within culture and a subject other
than the unitary European subject, rather Bruner further justifies an ‘otherness’ within history,
truth and fact. What does culture constitute? What are the “appropriate categories” that humans
use within the creation of facts and narratives? There are dynamics of power at work between
different groups of people and the re/construction of knowledge throughout time is a process of
power. Bruner acknowledges that everyone has certain perceptions or questions in mind when
analyzing facts, but he does not adequately address how that perception or question is
constructed through the exposure to (or lack of) global facts, narratives, or knowledges.
Different positionalities produce different stories, but theorization continues to be produced and
acknowledged through the western gaze. Grewal and Kaplan, in a discussion of postmodernism,
begin to break open the self contained sphere of western cultural production by explaining that
the operations of transnational culture, termed “scattered hegemonies”, are the “effects of mobile
capital as well as the multiple subjectivities that replace the European unitary subject…mak[ing]
possible a critique of cultural relativism”.\(^7^2\) Examining the operations of transnational culture
acknowledges multiplicities of diasporic populations and the trade of commodities (this includes
the trading and migration of peoples) that highlight hybridities in constructions and
understandings of facts and narratives because it recognizes that which has been made silent
through neo/colonial discourses and practices. Discussing transnational linkages is an attempt to
problematize binary relations of power such as global/local or core/periphery that continue to
produce knowledge through western frameworks and time constructions. If we begin to think of
our theoretical and methodological constructions as the production of truth, fact, and narrative
we may begin to see more clearly not only the fragility of our constructions, but how when they are put into larger contexts of the transnational or planetarity they may not even hold at all.

For example, taking a cultural studies approach to this discussion offers differing cultural understandings of history, truth, and fact. According to Clyde Taylor, the political, social, and historical contexts of a society are rooted within the various cultural productions of that society.73 Speaking specifically about the “Black Aesthetic”74 and notions of “Black Power”,75 Taylor explicates that the Black Aesthetic was an ethnic discourse that provided a critical intervention of the traditionally dominant “White aesthetic” because the “unspeakable” was spoken as a strategy of resistance against a form of political, social, and historical censorship. Taylor reads through Eurocentric cultural domination.76 Taylor explains that European cultural productions dismiss African American forms of production as primitive and inferior in comparison to European forms, thus African American cultural productions were marginalized by European discourses and their practices were considered mere “protests” against the existing dominant forms. Hegemonic ideas of politics and culture are perpetuated through the invalidation of differing articulations of power and culture.77 However, this is not to say “differential forms of consciousness”78 have not existed or have not affected the construction of dominant discourses and practices. It is the relationships of power within the discursive formations that have produced notions of hegemonic and subjugated knowledges and culture. Paulo Freire’s conscientização encourages one “to learn to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality”.79 While Saidiya Hartman’s methodological approach to reconceptualizing dominant discourses of law and body80, perceives empirical evidence as a cultural product of colonization. One must read the dominant story (empirical evidence), pull it apart, locate possible contradictions at the point where the dialogue between the subjective formations of the colonizer and the colonized come together and then read through these contradictions to find articulations of resistance, nation building, subjectivity, and cultural production. Hartman does just this through her reading of nation building within the US and its institution of law during the period of slavery. Hartman discusses the formation of the American nation in the historical context of the tensions involved in black enslavement and white privilege/domination. She raises questions on the boundaries of “desire”, “rights”, and authenticity through the relations of sexual violence and social regulation. She brings to the table a questioning of how particular women’s bodies become the place of
For Hartman, bodies are not just empty bodies of production and reproduction. The raping of black enslaved women by white free men had a multitude of differentiated implications both in consciousness and practice. Hartman’s method problematizes understandings of the body politik, of race, of feminism, of what it means to be American, of issues of propriety, discourses of protection, and places and spaces of exposed and internal power that challenge the normativity and naturalization of whiteness. Hartman’s methodologically reads the contradictions of US law discourse and practice and questions the gaps within knowledge re-productions and what that may mean for gender, the nation, and the individual. The above examples of US history produce radically different historical truths that make up the facts of our historical pasts, presents, and futures.

Michel Foucault’s discussion on the “document” and history is an important addition to this analysis. According to Foucault, the historical document has been endlessly questioned for truth (facts) of the past in an attempt to create a true historical narrative (the memory) from the document. Foucault explains, “history is trying to define within the documentary material itself unities, totalities, series, and relations”.

Foucault brings methodological insight to the discussion because he questions the process of constructed facts that develop narrative re-productions of knowledge which are in search of truth or explanation. I am specifically interested in his discussion on the “determination of relations that make it possible to characterize a group” because it is in conversation with Spivak’s analysis on collectivities. How do you begin to characterize a group within pre-existing categories that may pre-determine its power capacities and thus construct a narrative that reproduces a hegemonic norm that subordinates the other? How is it possible to accountably re-produce knowledge differently, if ideas of difference are a result of otherness and constructed reality exclude other conceptions of reality—how does one get out of the structural constraints of pre-existing constructions? As previously discussed, the placement of facts in narratives is highly questionable because there are multiple social constructions. The questioning of facts and narratives could lead one to perceive that there are no facts; there are only ideas about what facts are. People subscribe to particular narratives that contain their conceptions of facts. I understand that I am studying the ideas and constructions of facts that have a particular historical context and I, too, have a particular historical context to the material. This is not Truth, but rather forms of truth and power that I participate within and it is critical to be consistently conscious of the relations of power that
enable this participation. Foucault’s “archeological” method is useful within these lines of questioning because it forces one to acknowledge power dynamics within a process rather than just within bounded regions of a structure, agent, time, and place. His process-oriented framework enables further demystification of naturalized historical truths and facts because he reads through the fingerprints of historical documentation, there is a constant interrogation of what makes it possible to determine relations that make it possible to characterize a group. In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault peels away the layers of assumptions around punishment and penal institutions to reveal naturalized collectives of punishment that have shifted throughout space and time from the body to the soul, but have always depended upon the re/productions of otherness in the form of criminality.84 Foucault’s archaeological method exposes patterns of meaning and the randomness of accepted truths, including the problematization of history as a linear path of development, in an effort to denaturalize relations of power that re/produce multiple forms of violence within people’s lives. It is crucial to keep in mind Dipesh Chakrabarty’s question “how we might find a form of social thought that embraces analytical reason in pursuit of social justice but does not allow it to erase the question of heterotemporality, the multiple spaces of being within the world, from the history of the modern subject?”.85 Ideas of history within methodological re/productions necessitate the researcher’s accountability towards silenced, unrecognizable, and multiple forms of temporality that can speak to the intricacies of social thought and interaction. There are multiple modalities of history, it is not linear, it is not progressive, it is heterotemporal. Political science has failed to acknowledge an understanding of heterotemporality. It cannot afford to accept linear understandings of history and social interaction as truth. Plugging in unquestioned data will not explain social phenomenon beyond how political science works. Understandings of history(ies) are subject to and part of the methodological interrogations that inform our categorizations and formulations. The methodological questioning that I have discussed above does not deligitimate ideas of history, rather it gives multiplicities to the meanings and constructions behind histories, as well as draws attention to the role and accountability of the academic within methodological re/constructions.

*Memory, Performances, Objects & the Imaginary*

In an effort to understand why and how specific social “realities” and identities perpetuate throughout time, the historical memory approach offers multiple ideas of individual
and collective perceptions of facts, narratives, structures, agents, power, and processes through a different methodological process.

Since the making and reception of memories, personal and collective, are embedded in a specific cultural, social, and political context, we can explore how people construct a past in which they did not take part individually, but which they share with other members of their group as a formative sense of cultural knowledge, tradition, and singularity. A number of scholars comment on the recent use of historical memory in understanding identity formation of a given society, state development and the relationships between the two over time. According to Eric Hobsbawm, *invented tradition* is socially constructed through notions of memory in an effort to instill “values and norms of behavior by repetition” inferring a connection and continuance with the past. Hobsbawm explains individuals or collective groups use *invented tradition* to substantiate particular power claims or identity within societal structures. This process is sometimes a reconstruction of actual events and other times a new invention of events that could coincide with historical moments. Hobsbawm warns that “the strength and adaptability of genuine traditions is not to be confused with the ‘invention of tradition’… where the old ways are alive, traditions need be neither revived nor invented”. This highlights assumptions of *authenticity, tradition, and invention*, which are critical to the analysis of discursive formations, narratives, and produced truths of discourse that have material and imagined implications for the construction and reconstruction of the social world. However, Hobsbawm fails to critically analyze the implications of discussing ideas of tradition in an enclosed manner. The “politics of tradition formation” are constructed through official knowledges of power that then become normalized through discourse, law, and actions. What purpose does it serve to construct a binary of tradition—genuine/invented? Whose memory does Hobsbawm’s analysis serve?

Marianne Hirsch and Valerie Smith take memory as methodology a step further when they build on Paul Connerton’s idea of *cultural memory* as an “act of transfer” where individuals or collective groups create identities through the basis of a shared past. Acts of transfer transport events, symbols, thought processes, and identity throughout time to create a history of action and an understanding of the past, present, and conceivable future.
According to Hirsch and Smith, these transactions produce “narratives” with multiple interpretations that can align with hegemonic or counter hegemonic constructions of history. Hirsch and Smith claim a feminist approach to memory because they assert that these narratives need to be analyzed for the dynamics between gender and power. However, one cannot merely claim a feminist praxis without the critical reflection of what gender analysis means within their formulations. Per my previous critique of Parpart and Staudt, Hirsch and Smith also need to interrogate the meaning of gender within the re/configurations of memory. By going this one step further in categorical analysis, the use of memory studies framework could provide further understandings into how larger narratives are manipulated and misinterpreted by western scholars, as well as elucidating previously misrecognized or silenced histories that inform our ways of being and knowing within the world.

For example, it is important to acknowledge certain aspects of external identity invention and memory of the “other” particularly in a case where colonialism has been imposed and historical memories of ‘otherness’ have been constructed upon specific people within society. I am referring to the re/constructions of stereotypes that inform social interaction. Aline Helg reaffirms the use of memory to re/construct unequal relations of power within the dimensions of racialized, sexualized, gender within a global political economy that re/produced justifications for violent acts against perceived others. There are a number of important tasks Helg touches upon through the historic comparative analysis of racial stereotyping and violence. Using the case studies of the US and Cuba, Helg attempts to navigate power relationships between categorical identities by analyzing the production of the “image”, which created a narrative of truth and had implications for the practice of social relationships. Helg argues the construction of the stereotypes “black male rapist” and “black male witch” were used to protect white male dominance over politics, economics, and society. These narratives justified violent actions and discrimination against black men by white men and white women. These stereotypes were produced out of economic, political, and social power challenges to white male-hood during particular time frames and reinforced the hegemonic social relations that subordinated ‘otherness’. Helg is interested in how these stereotypes began and were reinforced throughout time and by analyzing stories (memories). Helg shows how the production of fear is transpired
and how structural changes and contradictions take place differently within society. Addressing similarities and differences between the cases, Helg dances around notions of “essential-hegemonic” relations of power that support the idea of “a” subject formation hierarchy institutionalized out of the production of fear. However, by illuminating the complex matrix of relations between memories, action, and people Helg explains the implications of images and narratives placed upon different people will either construct new stereotypical images or reinforces old ones. In short, Helg’s analysis is a story of social control through the production of mnemonic fear that solidified through images and narratives.

Although memory as a methodology importantly questions historical constructions and offers an articulation of multiplicities of being and knowing within the world, it too needs an analysis of its accountabilities within knowledge re/productions. A number of scholars have questioned the reliability of memory construction, issues of misremembering and the manipulation of memory, as well as the potentially painful affects of continued re-opening of violent memories. The concern of memory as method coincides with the concern for the methods of ethnography and oral history. How is the researcher positioning herself within the relationship of the interviewer-interviewee? It is critical to be aware of the relations of power at work when the researcher enters someone’s space and makes it their own place through processes of question asking and constant presence. Do people act ‘differently’ for the researcher or tell a ‘different’ story they want to be heard? Is the researcher obtaining truths and facts within the narratives they are soliciting? Could the story that the researcher obtain potentially harm the person or community that offered the information? How is the researcher interpreting information, merely plugging it into their predetermined framework or creating spaces for other ways of knowing and being? These are important reflective questions that are necessary to think about and critique before the researcher re/produces knowledges about certain people and societies that could potentially inform state policies because these knowledges will directly affect people’s lives. Importantly, the researcher should be clear that their published works are very much part of themselves, their re/productions are a product of their own social relations. Two examples of scholars who take the above questions seriously and critically use memory as part of their ethnographic method to provide a different way of seeing and knowing knowledge re/productions within spaces of Africa and themselves are anthropologists Rosalind Shaw and Paulla Ebron.
Rosalind Shaw’s, *Memories of the Slave Trade*, critically assesses “other ways of remembering the past” through processes of memory and divination. Shaw is concerned with the moment in which knowledge is claimed because she is interested in mapping other ways of knowing beyond the discursive. Knowledge is more than the written form, memory and history may take the form of nondiscursive practices such as divination images. Methodologically, Shaw is challenging the “oversimplified dichotomy between the verbal and the nonverbal”. According to Shaw forms of discursive and practical memory are “directed to the experiences, understandings, and intentions of cultural actors themselves”. This is significant because it emphasizes the importance of knowing and remembering through social practices and embodiments. Social practice and embodiment, in the form of divination, enables Shaw to re-produce possible knowledges about and within the slave trade. Shaw explains that the “slave trade is forgotten as history” because the violences of the process produce awkward, painful, and silent discursive memories. However through Shaw’s methodological examination of practical memory (social practice and embodiment within divination rituals) and analysis of discursive memories, she illustrates how the “slave trade is remembered as spirits, as a menacing landscape, as images in divination, as marriage, as witchcraft, and as postcolonial politicians”. Through this analysis, she illustrates how the slave trade is not merely a process of the past, rather it continues to inform people’s daily lives. Shaw is critically reflective throughout her methodology by paying close attention to larger anthropological epistemology debates, by re/producing memory and the slave trade as heterotemporal rather than only coming from the past, by challenging ideas of modernity through highlighting the connections of the violences of the slave trade with Sierra Leone’s civil war, by renegotiating ideas of agency that have always been re/produced through neo/colonial documentation, and by locating power within both discursive and nondiscursive locations that give rise to multiple ways of experiencing resistance and freedom. Shaw’s unique method of tracing a “history of moral imagination” enables a different mapping of history where previously silenced ways of knowing become recognizable understandings of social interaction. Importantly, Shaw is reflective about her re/constructions of memory and the imagination when she explains that there is a moment in which the practical may be impractical through her writing due to the complexities of knowledge capture that lies symbolically and materially close to the practices of the slave trade. Shaw views memory as a
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“moral and social practice”, thus negotiating her role within the capturing of knowledge as a process of her own memory within the heterotemporal spaces of her locations.

Paulla Ebron’s, *Performing Africa*, uses memory and performance as a method to explore how “Africa” is re/produced, circulated, and consumed through performance and how encounters through performance create the place of “Africa” within the world, as well as within the academic disciplines of anthropology and African(a) Studies. Ebron’s research provides useful material for critically questioning how the researcher writes herself into or out of the narrative of the research. Through her examination of the performer, *jali*, within The Gambia, she reflectively details her relationship to particular *jalis* and her perceived ‘otherness’ within her geographical locations of Africa and the US. Ebron acknowledges differences within the social complexities of her multiple locations through the numerous visits to and time frames within The Gambia, as well as attending performances within the US, which enabled her to question the utility of existing academic categories meant to explain social relations because they failed to address her experiences within these differing locations and temporalities. Ebron’s ‘desire’ to create a different object of analysis that speaks to the complexities of her questions, blurs existing categories and forges different spaces for methodological analysis. According to Ebron, *jali* performance is a “social encounter and practice” that informs the heterotemporality of memory, history, and ideas of the present and future that gives meaning to multiple understandings of Africa. Ebron critical challenges ideas of modernity, “tradition”, the writing of culture, commodification, and global imaginations through the “multilayered site of cultural negotiation”, *jali performances*. Ebron’s work reimagines Area Studies geography as more connected by dynamic flows of exchange and ideas, rather than Africa developing through neo/colonialist projects. Ebron is also concerned with the capturing of knowledge that re/produces Africa in linear ways and thus she traces memory within *jali* performances to discuss how the practices of recognition and the theoretical debates around representation that the *jali* and their audiences perform are closely related to the social, political, and economic interactions and policies within the international system. This methodological tracing importantly expands anthropological conversations into the disciplines of political science, sociology, and cultural studies because it critically questions the knowledge re/productions within the west about the west and Africa by asking different questions around different objects of analysis that exist within similar sites of research.
Utilizing different objects of analysis within one’s research enables a different construction of knowledge within research areas. The methodological construction of the object helps to inform ideas surrounding the social imaginary. For instance, Andrew Apter uses the photograph as a methodological approach to describe and understand power relations and interactions within colonial Nigeria. According to Apter, objectification is a part of the colonial crafting of the state and photographs can be analyzed as snapshots of ‘differently discursive’ memories and performances that inform spaces of knowledge re/productions.110 Analyzing photographs within differing historical moments enables multiple perceptions of actors and cultural embodiments, and produces differing (and multiple) categories of analysis that can be analyzed and discussed in relationship to the object, thus creating visual interdiction. The object becomes the focal point or the space where the political, economic, and social relations are fleshed out. The photograph provides images of multiple possibilities within knowing and being, however it is another form of a collective that should be questioned. How is the object selected? As the researcher, am I privileging particular objects within society that I think are significant? What effect do these objects have on various locations of societies? Although the method of the object incorporates further analysis of a larger picture by illustrating multiple relations around the object, it is inevitable that those who do not have access or understanding to the object will have differences of position within the narrative and framework the object produces. Will that reify boundaries of power or continue to keep people spatially located by the researcher, thus determining the possibilities of being? For example, does Apter realize that by following the object of the picture he is determining the visual through his perceptions? Although the interpretive field is writ larger, the researcher continues to be the interpreter of culture through what he perceives as an image of Nigerian or English culture.

Another important reflection necessary when utilizing photographs is how to negotiate the terrain of re/producing visual violence, meaning how does one make visible the violent acts performed on the sites of people’s bodies without relegating certain people to realm of victimhood or perpetual violence at the hands of the researcher? Two examples of scholars who take this question seriously and begin to negotiate through the use of painful images in an accountable way are Dora Apel in Imagery of Lynching and Zine Magubane in “Which Bodies Matter?”111 Both of these theorists take the time within their writing, albeit differently, to discuss the difficulties of reifying violence for methodological and theoretical critique. Apel’s
discussion illuminates the racist brutality within the US since the beginning of the early 1900s. Apel explains,

…[there is a] need to study these traumatic photographs. Despite the residue of sadistic voyeurism they carry, which may feed the appetite for sights of mutilation and degradation, they also powerfully evoke revulsion and outrage, which not only remind us of what horrors people are capable of visiting on each other, but of a specific history that must not be forgotten. Although the photos display the vulnerable black body and risk reproducing the prurient interest and humiliating effect of racist violence, we, as a nation, cannot afford to be innocent of these photos. The loss to historical understanding incurred by refusing to see them would only serve to whitewash the crimes of white supremacy.\textsuperscript{112}

Similarly, Magubane explains that the fetishization of Sarah Baartmann’s (Hottentot Venus) photographs by academics speaks directly to the dangerous “ways in which she has been constructed as a theoretical object”.\textsuperscript{113} Magubane’s discussion reveals that it is not the photographs per se that exhibit the violence, but rather there is a historical specificity of violence in the ways in which the photographs are theorized and how knowledge is re/produced around Baartmaan and displaced upon African and African-American women. In short, the theorist re/produces epistemic and material violence through the use of photographs when they fail to unpack the processes and set of relations that produced the image through heterotemporal moments. The photograph is not merely an image, it is a form of knowledge that speaks to the multiplicities of un/recongnizable social relations. The use of memory, performance, and the photograph are all critical components of my archive. Their strength develops out of the conversations that they have with one another and with other forms of methodology that helps to reveal both bridges and gaps within knowledge re/productions. By layering these methods, articulations of interdisciplinarity and accountable research begin to develop and forge ‘new’ understandings of social imaginaries and planetarity that inform both discursive and embodied beingness within the world.

Conceptualizing the multiplicities of social imaginaries requires taking an intellectual risk because its articulations are constantly fluid and open for interpretation. There are no preexisting charts to map its meanings and predictions. Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar provides five conceptual understandings of social imaginaries that aid in its possible theoretical and methodological formulations.

1. Social imaginaries are ways of understanding the social that becomes social entities themselves, mediating collective life.
2. Modernity in its multiple forms seems to rely on a special form of social imaginary that is based on relations among strangers.
3. The national people is a paradigmatic case of modern social imaginary.
4. A national people lives amid many other social imaginaries, penumbral to them.
5. The agency of modern social imaginaries comes into being in a number of secular temporalities rather than existing eternally in cosmos or higher time.\textsuperscript{114}

According to Gaonkar, social imaginary as method “occupies a fluid middle ground between embodied practices and explicit doctrines”.\textsuperscript{115} Conceptualizing social relations through the social imaginary offers “new possibilities and challenges at the crossings of globalization and multiple modernities”.\textsuperscript{116} For purposes of a layering method, the social imaginary is a critical step in pushing methodological boundaries and practicing interdisciplinarity because it approaches the complexity of the issues and actors involved through the creation of space for multiple political, economic and social discussions. The social imaginary has aspects of all the methodologies that have been discussed and thus it recognizes multiplicities of knowledge re/productions. Through the space of the social imaginary, the researcher can discuss the relations of power within capturing knowledge by putting differing methodologies in conversation with one another. Importantly, the social imaginary is not only about methodological interdiction, it is about theoretical interdiction that gives multiplicity to meaning. While theory and method are constitutive of each other, they produce differences within meaning. For instance, I foresee the layering of methodology as providing me with a space to discuss understandings of epistemic violence which will enable my development and articulation of a theory of epistemic violence, hence the importance of this methodological discussion. However, there is another crucial step in my layering methodology that requires theoretical interdiction in an effort to bring the constitutive process of method and theory, interdisciplinarity, and accountability of the researcher into forefront of academic conversation and debate around knowledge re/productions. The following section will be an exercise of textual interdiction that highlights bridges and gaps within the knowledge formations around the ideas of “Africa” and the west in an effort to illustrate the importance of interdisciplinary work within political science.

**Theoretical Interdiction**

I know of
A mad geo-political professor
Whom no one listens to:

Who says
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Over population.

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For
The Earth has land to hold
More than twice the exploding millions
And enough to feed them too.

But
We would rather
Kill
than
Think
or
Feel.

My brother,
The new game is so
Efficient,
Less messy-

—Ama Ata Aidoo

As previously mentioned in this paper, political science’s re/productions of Africa are always focused around the ideas of weak and strong states that are defined through western conceptualizations of security, violence, health, global capital, and democratic structures. Due to its singularity of method, mainstream political science rarely critically questions how the theories they produce about Africa and Africa-west relations significantly affects how “Africa” discursively and materially exists within academic, policy, and social discourses. The following discussion is an attempt to highlight the gaps within mainstream political science literature by putting it into conversation with postcolonial, Africana, and those theorists who re/produce political science literature differently. The point of this exercise is to draw attention to the interdisciplinary work that is necessary to re/produce constitutive theoretical and material understandings of Africa and the west if we, political scientists, are going to be accountable to the knowledges we re/produce. This interdictation questions the political economy of the State and political science. In short, I am interested in the ways in which knowledge about states is re/produced to justify the theories and methods of both political science and the west and how this logic contributes to forms of epistemic and material violence.

**Violence, Binaries, and the State**

Violence is both a material act and a discursive framework of beliefs, practices, and structures that disrupts, destroys, and/or alters social relations without the consent of those affected. A violent act may arise as a result of beliefs, theories, and structures that enable physical disruptions on and to the body, as well as from those processes that silence these
disruptions. Violence also manifests within the re/productions of knowledge. Knowledge frameworks may not physically mark bodies with violence, but they mark bodies as legible or illegible within methodological and theoretical frameworks determining certain ways of knowing and being within the world. Epistemic multiplicity threatens and disrupts hegemonic epistemic norms. A reflection upon the processes of colonization illustrates this point. The colonial project was a project of legibility, where the colonial episteme (based on western knowledge frameworks that have been discussed at the beginning of this paper) was both disrupted by and created disruption within the epistemes of those they came into contact. The colonial project sought to know, name and subsume illegible bodies into their frameworks, which resulted in numerous forms of physical and epistemic violence. In short, my concern with violence is with the violences that are produced through knowledge re/productions. An explicit example of this will be discussed through Wambui Mwangi’s discussion of blood money momentarily, but first it is necessary to lay some groundwork about states and violence.

States and state policies are the manifestations of violence. According to Max Weber, “the relation between the state and violence is an especially intimate one,” it is one that goes beyond overt discipline and punishment. State violence is represented not only in the “monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force,” it is also found in those illegible forms of violence that result from the daily practices of state institutions, including academia. In this instance, legibility is about social order and control and the way in which social relations are read through and from different bodily locations that wield various levels of power. Location is central to the understanding of legibility and violence because it refers to the construction and production of differently gendered subjects, both human and non, that have been named and put into categories of perceived understandings such as gender, race, class, and sexuality. Systems of domination are replicated through the struggles of social relationships and the contradictions within the ideology of freedom. Importantly, epistemologies and states are produced and reproduced through the unequal relationships of differently gendered bodies. Differently gendered bodies refer to the multiple categorical formulations that are embodied within, upon and outside the body. It is an attempt to acknowledge the inability to be one type of body but also to recognize that the legibilities of bodies are always contested sites of power, which has different meanings and dis/embodiments within differing epistemological frameworks. To think of differently gendered bodies is to seriously question the constructions of bodies, categorical formulations and
the interplay of these constructions. Foundational to an understanding of differently gendered bodies is the formulation of Otherness because ‘differently’ already assumes an understanding of multiple categorical formulations which are only made possible because of an understanding of Other. “State legibility” described by James Scott involves the state and its rulers ordering and categorizing society and the environment so as to make its subjects “readable” for purposes of discipline and control, that is making differently gendered bodies legible to the state.120

As previously discussed, the modern “normal” emerged from the desire for progress and “scientization” of life. This epistemological framework led to the erasure of multiple legibilities making other bodies and locations (spaces and places) illegible to the western state system, and thus benefiting western society.121 The modern state system has been built upon social, political, and economic structural and interpersonal violence, which has enabled the production of the liberal individual. State and system rely on racialized, sexualized, classed, and gendered practices that enable the powerful to be the architects and protectors of the nation through the use of force. Theories of the State perpetuate binary and violent relationships of power. According to Val Plumwood,

[A] dualism is a relation of separation and domination inscribed and naturalized in culture and characterized by radical exclusion, distancing and opposition between orders constructed as systematically higher and lower, as inferior and superior, as ruler and ruled, which treats the division as part of the natures of beings construed not merely as different but as to belonging to radically different orders or kinds, and hence as not open to change.122

Dualistic constructions have a history in western rational thought and colonial and imperialist practices.123 I am not interested in a discussion of western origins,124 but rather political science’s continuance in utilizing dualisms and binaries built upon the Hegelian dialectic of self/other. Theorists reproduce the dialectic in a multitude of forms for explanations and justifications of why some people dominate and others do not within politics, economics, and society. For instance, John Meyer questions “how is it that certain attitudes become dominant in public decision making, while others are seemingly relegated to the private sphere”?125 The implication has been a privileging of the dialectic and dualistic forms of domination (weak/strong states), particularly where the west dominates over other differently gendered subjects that are territorially defined. This dialectic has been naturalized within western political theory and rational scientific thought to explain the processes behind practices of war, structures such as colonialism, and theories of development. Western security policies adopt and utilize the
naturalization of the dialectic to support a notion of rationality within the contradictory and oppressive approaches of domination and governmentality. What does the dialectic suggest?

According to G.F.W. Hegel, the self is not self-conscious until he comes into contact with the other and partakes in the struggle for recognition.

Self-consciousness is simple being-for-self, self equal through the exclusion from itself of everything else…what is “other” for it is an unessential, negatively characterized object. But the “other” is also a self-consciousness; one individual is confronted by another individual.126

The struggle for recognition is an active life-death struggle for survival. The presentation of the self as self-conscious means to negate oneself as an object, as well as display a lack of attachment to existence (willing to risk death to ensure life). The action of struggle is two part: seeking the death of the other and staking the self’s life simultaneously. Developed within this process of struggle are opposed consciousnesses, where one becomes independent and the other becomes dependent— a consciousness for-itself and a consciousness for-another.127 According to Hegel, lordship is “bound up” in thinghood because of his desire to objectify the other. It is the bondsman who does the action of the lord— lord exists for-self and bondsman for-another. Hegel explains, “the outcome is a recognition that is one-sided and unequal”. The conscious of the bondsman is the “unessential consciousness” that is based on fear.128 The vulnerable are constructed through their inability to dominate over an ‘other’, while the protectors are constructed through their ability to assert dominance over the other. They both need each other to exist, but one becomes inherently stronger than the other, thus in control over the other.

This dialectic is furthered by Alexandre Kojéve’s use of it to explain the “possibility of a historical process” of why battles and wars take place between states.129 According to Kojéve, “man was born and history began with the first fight that ended in the appearance of a master and a slave”.130 His employment of the dialectic not only naturalizes war, it naturalizes understandings of race, gender, sexuality and class within a dualistic power dynamic where one group must dominate over the other group. For Kojéve, the interpersonal struggle, based on desire and between master and slave, is the original social relation and interaction that determines social and political behavior. According to Kojéve, humans are only humans if at least two desires confront one another, that is recognition of two valued desires of recognition meet one another and “fight to the death” to have their desires recognized, realized, and revealed. This fight is a fight of human realization (“recognized reality”). Violence is necessary for human
survival, yet the fight cannot end with death of either adversary because the struggle is purposeless if one or both of the adversaries die. Each needs one another in order for “human reality [to] come into being as recognized reality”. Humans constitute themselves as unequal from their first interaction to avoid death. In short, social inequality is a necessity for human existence. The Kojévian explanation of the dialectic naturalizes the existence of violence, war, and systems of domination.

The Hegelian dialectic is problematic because it uncritically reproduces theoretical violence against the other, in the form of dualisms, and it is adopted by state security discourses not only to explain, but to justify war and acts of domination over other states and groups of people. Vulnerability can mean exposure, helplessness, defenselessness, susceptibility, weakness, openness, and interestingly liability - its opposite is resistance. While protection can mean defense, guard, strong, resistance, security, shield and safety— its opposite is attack. The one who is constructed as vulnerable lacks the ability to resist and the one who assumes the location of protector has the ability to defend against attack. It is important to note that the protector is not protecting the desires or needs of the vulnerable, but rather protecting the desires of the self from the potential liabilities of the vulnerable. Therefore, the protector too falls into the paradox of needing the vulnerable to recognize its desires- and the vulnerable ceases to be vulnerable without the protector. Neither can be ‘killed’: the protector because he has to be able to resist, nor the vulnerable because s/he must be protected from death and the possibilities of other protectors. The construction of the vulnerable becomes the subjective reality for the protector. These dualistic ideas of vulnerability and protection have become embedded within the US and are proving extremely difficult to denaturalize. Throughout multiple locations of history, the US consistently incorporated the vulnerable/protector dualism within its inter/national security policies. A sample of examples are protecting vulnerable states from communism, protecting Afghani women from Afghani men, and protecting, ensuring, and establishing the structures of democracy within Africa, Latin America, Iraq and Haiti while “getting rid of” the revolutionary other. All of these examples necessitate US military intervention as a means to protect the vulnerable based on the constructions of racialized, sexualized gender within a global political economy. The US adoption of vulnerable/protector enables the US to re/produce images of vulnerable differently gendered subjects and itself in stark contrast to the other. The vulnerable are inferior and to be dominated by the protector
under the argument of ‘everyone’s’ own ‘good’ and survival. Hence, the US bombs Afghanistan to liberate Afghani women and ensure human rights and democracy. The discourse of self/other conceptualizes the ‘other’ to be less than the self as a means of a security mechanism for the self. Through these security mechanisms, the protector becomes both the privileged and desired location for state elites. It has become naturalized within US society that the its military and state leaders protect its citizens (vulnerable) from those who have the potential to attack (protectors) or who are liabilities (other vulnerable) to the west’s dominant subjectivities.

According to Iris Marion Young, the logic of masculinist protection is not necessarily the aggressive, dominance seeking and selfish attitudes of men, but rather the “benign image of masculinity, once more associated with ideas of chivalry”.132 Young discusses that US foreign policy after 9/11 has focused on the notion of the ‘good’ masculinized state that requires the deferment of judgment to this protector by ‘good’ feminized citizens “in return for the promise of security that he offers”.133 Following the Hegelian dialectic, Young quotes Judith Stiehm’s description of the protector being dependent upon the vulnerable because of his expected act of protection. An important aspect of masculinized protector-feminized vulnerable process is the fact that “often a protector tries to get help from and also control the lives of those he protects—in order to ‘better protect’ them”.134 The self/other and protector/vulnerable binaries reinforce governmentality. Despite seemingly moral roles of chivalry, the role of the protector is about acts of domination and self-interest. Rather than discuss chivalry separate from domination, as Young does, it must also be seen as a form of domination that actively seeks subordination from the feminized other. I argue that there are no forms of Young’s “benign masculinity of protection”, nor “pastoral power”.135 Through the use of the dialectic and Stiehm’s description, protection is an act of dominance or control for the US. The explanation of ‘good intentions’ fails to recognize the silent forms of violence possible within arguments of morality, ethics, or ‘better’. Again, a discussion on the role of colonial missionaries can highlight the silent and blatant forms of domination that perpetuates within the idea of benign protection.

The use of ‘masculine’ also stirs up hierarchical memories of how bodies are subscribed to particular values. Judith Butler writes extensively on the mapping of bodies through subjective formations of culturally constructed racialized and sexed genders. Butler’s theoretical discussion importantly highlights a historical process of feminization that is essentially valued as weak, less than, in need of protection, and a liability—a devalued body based on its otherness.136
This feminization is only possible through the simultaneous construction of femininity’s opposite, masculinity. The material manifestations of bodies have been normalized (naturalized) as the dualism male/female, but also in the form of weak-feminized and strong-masculinized states. It is critical to note that these essentialized dualisms contain both misrecognized and unrecognized forms of domination. Mohanty highlights the power differentials of bodies in geopolitical hierarchical locations of the world that are discursively constructed as the “first” and “third” (dualism) through historical processes and structures of domination—colonialism, capitalism, and democracy.\textsuperscript{137} The first/third dualism corresponds in western thought and practice as male/female, masculine/feminine, protector/vulnerable, and strong/weak. In short, the locations of people within the third world are ‘othered’ through the discursive formations of western theory and practice. This is not to say that this is the reality of people’s lives within locations outside of the west, rather it is discursive construction by the west to invoke and justify its violent practices within these states. Within this dualism are further ‘othering’ processes that produce multiple forms of western superiority and protection. These discursive formations have been practiced through acts of domination exemplified in neo/colonialism, neo/imperialism, development, and war. As Thomas Kuehls explains, sovereign territories are socially constructed around state authority that territorializes both bodies and nations through ‘management’ discourses.\textsuperscript{138} The theoretical determination of a state’s position and how it is managed within the international sphere has violent implications for the people who become marked as ‘other’. For much of political science Africa is other, is third world, is weak, is feminized and the theories and solutions around political science’s ‘crises’ of Africa are framed either through the west aiding Africa or the west as perpetrator of Africa’s demise—another binary that maintains the west’s status as strong/first/success and Africa as victimized and weak.

Mainstream political science and African studies produces a particular understanding of “Africa” that fits into pre-existing theoretical understandings of states. According to Christopher Clapham, state formation and development focuses on the political and economic management by the elite of the state within an international system. He claims Africa’s tragic encounter with the west inhibited its true conception of statehood, placing importance on the international system for the African State’s identity.\textsuperscript{139} Clapham points to issues of western development policies, the breakdown of the Soviet Union, international sovereignty conventions, and the dominant value system of western liberalism as influential factors in African State formation.
Clapham argues that it is irrelevant if state leaders agree with these concepts or not because they are ultimately affected and forced to respond to them through their positioning within the international sphere. Clapham’s state formation is constructed through the international system, where the political and economic elites define the political and economic system. Similarly, Crawford Young explains that African state structures fail because of their exclusionary position as a postcolonial state within the formulations of the international economic structure. According to Young, the state is an “historical actor and a collective agent of macropolitical process”. The state is strong when it has hegemonic control of its territory and legitimation in “upholding external interests” while meeting “some expectations” of civil society. According to Young, the crisis of the African state is three-fold: state-society disengagement, overconsumption, and low development. This crisis is rooted in the insecurities and abilities of postcolonial African states to emerge into the international economic structure as powerful and influential agents. The exclusion of African states from the formation of the international structure resulted in weak African states because they fail to uphold external interests (overconsumption and low development) and fail to meet the expectations of society (state-society disengagement). While both these theorists importantly discuss processes of unequal development and politics within the international system, their theories continue to strengthen predetermined understandings of the State. States and the international sphere are a given, neither of these theorists interrogate these categories for further insight into how it is there is such understanding of an African state and how this understanding came into existence. Both theorists reinforce the idea that African states were produced by the west, which fails to acknowledge “Africa’s” participation in collective formations. This theorization denies any participation of Africa within the world system. Africa becomes a static empty category. Africa must fit into a preexisting framework that political science has worked to solidify through its tenure as a discipline, rather than being seen as actively participating in even this singular construction of “Africa”. According to mainstream political science and political African studies, there are no possible spaces for other ways of being for “Africa” within the interstate system, rather “Africa” remains subject to western articulations of knowing and being within the world.
Reconceptualizations of the Post/Colonial State

There are ways of critically questioning the west’s role in the construction of the post/colonial African state which illuminates the violence of the west without relegating Africa into perpetual victimhood. For instance, Walter Rodney explains that “development in human society is a many sided process, it is a series of social relations that can be expressed individually and collectively”\(^{145}\). His statement reflects that ideas of social relations are neither linear nor uni-dimensional, rather there are multiple possibilities of being and interacting within the world and people materially make this visible through processes of slavery, migration, and transnational capital flow. Western understandings of state development have struggled to make themselves the normal way of being and relating within the world by trying to naturalize their knowledge re/productions. However, these productions are fluid and multifaceted. Rodney’s political project challenges the normalized understandings of the social relations within international political economy, ideas of development, military structures, cultural formations, and the State because he questions the normalization of location. Rodney has made it impossible to discuss an idea of Africa without reflecting upon the question: Where is Africa located? Is Africa contained within a geopolitical understanding of continental geography or can we see Africa within different spaces of being? Rodney is not only exemplifying the necessity to acknowledge the material and theoretical work that diasporic African populations participate in throughout the globe, but he is also highlighting the idea that the globe as we know it would not and could not exist without the dramatic and subtle flows and exchanges of ‘Africans’ and African ways of knowing. V.Y. Mudimbe further supports the crucial impacts of African knowledge re/productions traveling the globe. Mudimbe importantly illustrates that there has been a historical and geographical invention and idea of Africa that has been constructed through western methodology and theory. However, he importantly points out that the west does not exist within a vacuum, but rather the knowledge re/productions within Africa and through its diasporas significantly contribute to the west’s desire to recognize or delegitimate that which is considered “African”. He does this by questioning what constitutes “African”, African ways of knowing, and ways of knowing Africa?\(^{146}\)

Rodney and Mudimbe necessitate the questioning of ideas on geopolitical boundaries constituting a contained state of being both in the nation state and the body. Western intellectual thought conceptualizes movement, exchange, and the relations of people, land, and ideas as
knowledge and interaction that produce Africa as ‘over there’ rather than recognizing Africa as part of westerners’ daily lives that enable westerners’ past and future existences. Through Rodney’s and Mudimbe’s theorization, the state is reconceptualized through flows and movement of people and ideas. Françoise Vergès, who writes on the “remapping of the Asian-African world of exchanges”, contributes to the reconceptualization of ideas on bounded territories through studying trade routes and cultural connections that re-produce knowledges about Africa and Asia and south-south relations differently through the site of movement on water that produces different understandings of exchange and “new cartographies of possibilities”. All three of these theorists’ provocations produce entirely different maps of the world than those produced by mainstream academia because they do not rely on set understanding of center, periphery, or geographically contained territory of Africa. Their theorizations disrupt the border politics that encapsulate academic disciplinary frameworks because they read through the fingerprint of the state to see other ways of being within the world. Rodney, Mudimbe, and Vergès make it necessary to be critical of the multiple relations of power that produce Africa and the west in monolithic ways by offer differing methodological constructions that put into question exchange and territory.

The modern state is not a single homogenous entity, rather it must create particular policies, practices, and ideas in an attempt to achieve this idealized status of homogeneity through ideas of sovereignty. As Achille Mbembe explains “in modern philosophical thought and European political practice and imaginary, the colony represents the site where sovereignty consists fundamentally in the exercise of a power outside the law (ab legibus solutus) and where “peace” is more likely to take on the face of a ‘war without end’”. Mbembe is referring to the ways in which the colonial project sought to territorialize (a remapping of spatial and social relations) their sovereignty upon other geographical locations through declarations of war or through the service of civilization, both of which are violent acts. According to Mbembe, “the sovereign right to kill is not subject to any rule in the colonies” nor is “colonial warfare subject to legal and institutional rules” and thus the “intractable paradoxes of war captured by Kojève in his reinterpretations of Hegel” is futile. In short, “sovereignty means the capacity to define who matters and who does not, who is disposable and who is not”. Colonization proliferated sites of violence to the spaces of everyday life. For example, the institutionalization of colonialism was the British state’s attempt to make Africa legible to the modern state system for
Britain’s national benefit. The various formulations of African states and African bodies were illegible to the British self and state and thus it sought to reconfigure “Africa”. Britain’s act of violence was not only against African bodies, nor within their production of denigrating theories on Africans, but also within the reinstitutionalization of power based on racial and ethnic identities. Agents of Great Britain (missionaries, merchants and military) went into African space and plotted out the boundaries of states they randomly named while looking for familiar economic, political, and social practices that matched their own in an effort to understand and control these “new” surroundings. When they came into contact with illegible practices, these were either discredited or incorporated into the colonial framework, through an act of translation enabled by physical, structural, and epistemic violence. As Mahmood Mamdani has argued, the institutional segregation and territorial separation established during the 19th century illuminates the racialized violence imposed upon Africa during colonization for the purposes of capital accumulation and economic growth. The variegated political forms and formulations of pre-colonial African communities and bodies were illegible to the British state. To make the illegible visible for re-territorialization, Britain sought to order and control African bodies through the dual institutionalization of racial separation and ethnic pluralism. Violence was directed not only against African bodies, but also inflicted by the imposition of power structures based on newly-inscribed racial and ethnic distinctions. Through these processes of segregation the colonial state intended to ensure economic and racial stability and to secure its domestic political order. At the same time, however, stability in Britain was achieved only through the disruption of social relations within Africa. The imposition of British order was violent because it reinstitutionalized dualistic social relations—the creation of a “bifurcated state” split between a racialized civil society and an ethnicized communal society of “natives”.  

In this process of territorialization, colonial law became a textual rendering of the illegible; a material practice of epistemic violence. An example is the process of making African bodies legible to the modern state system through systems of justice—the reinstitutionalization of rights that were to be secured by the British state. The creation and implementation of law has played a large role in making forms of violence both legible and illegible to the state. Consider Wambui Mwangi’s discussion of blood money, a cultural practice in which cattle were used as compensation for a violent crime and as a form of re-embodiment for the slain. Britain was unable to identify and control African bodies within this practice of exchange, an inability that
challenged the security and sovereignty of the colonial state. The colonial administration actively sought to disrupt social relations embedded in the practice of blood money because the practice refuted the notion of sovereign authority. It was deemed “uncivilized” and illegible to the state. Mwangi explains that the practice “invalidat[ed] death by resurrecting the value of the dead body.” This threatened the authority of the colonial administration because it implied that the African self could escape the African body. In Mbembe’s analysis it is because the colonial state did not have the sole right to kill. In the modern state system, the body must have limits that are recognizable and controllable, otherwise, how can the state locate its inhabitants? Colonial administrations produced an understanding of “traditional” law and replaced it with western jurisprudence and sovereign rights that were to be protected and punishable by the state. Definitions of sovereign rights to be protected by the state, as well as policies that recognized violators punishable by the state, eliminated contrary practices. In singularizing epistemic multiplicity, the colonial state re/produced both epistemic and material forms of violence. Mwangi explains, “the African world was contrasted to the civilized world not merely as an opposite system of social ordering, but rather more as a system of non-social ordering.” The colonial state was disrupted by African epistememes and practice and sought to stabilize itself through the physical disruption and epistemological negation of African societies. Through the legal text, the colonial state enforced its monopoly on the legitimate use of force. Illegible African practice became legible forms of violence punishable by the state. Law makes life legible. The dualistic nature of western structuring was institutionalized in an effort to order Africa as the weaker ‘other’ and the west as the norm of the modern state system. However, Mwangi’s discussion illustrates that Africans, as well as colonialists, continued to live their lives in multiplicity, despite the attempts of state singularity. As Aimé Césaire explained, “colonization [also] works to decivilize the colonizer.” The British State could not maintain a rule of singularity. Processes and theorizations of postcolonial states illuminate the constitutive social relations that contribute to the desires of territorialization. Through this interdiction, constitutive relations can no longer be silenced within global knowledge re/productions of what a state is and how it interacts with other states. By putting these texts into conversation, new formulations of collectivities and exchange have become apparent. Interdiction enables conversations that are ‘normally’ not put together. These conversations give ‘new’ meanings to that which already exists. It is time that mainstream political science paid more attention to these
multiplicities in an effort to understand their own role in creating “the African crises”. Textual interdiction has showed that this ‘crises’ may or may not exist or it may exist differently within the social imaginary and reality of people and places deemed “African” and “western”.

**Conclusion**

There should be something said for open spaces. And yet what? Nothing. It should be possible that if one can see several miles out in front, into the distance, one should also be able to see into time. All this breeze. These clear skies. Fresh breezes should blow the nonsense from our souls, the stupidity from our minds and lift the veils off our eyes. But it’s not like that. It’s never been like that.

- Ama Ata Aidoo

Chela Sandoval has described social science methodology as “academic apartheid”, meaning disciplinary borders have bounded theories, methodologies, and analyses to their particular locations without the ability to stretch the analyses beyond one another. This paper has been concerned with what it means to do interdisciplinary work. More specifically, I have questioned the politics surrounding academic theorization. This field statement has been a call to political science to participate in interdisciplinary work through a re/configuration of their methodological and theoretical frameworks because its role in knowledge production and state policy formulation has significant consequences for particular people throughout the globe. If political science continues to fail to acknowledge multiplicities of knowing and being, it will further contribute to processes of violence—why would a discipline that claims to provide the theories and methods of how to secure oneself in a conflictual world want to produce violence upon themselves and the ‘others’ it claims to want to help?

I have argued that a commitment to interdisciplinary work can be achieved through the layering of methods that includes textual interdiction because it helps to “blow the nonsense from our souls” and the “stupidity from our minds” by illuminating multiplicities of being and knowing within the world. This paper has been concerned with questions of epistemology and ways of radicalizing the social ontology available within differing academic and geopolitical sites. In particular, it has been about the intersections of knowledge re/productions on, about, and within ideas of Africa because the complexity of social relationships involved within these ideas speak to larger questions of global relationships and policies. The epistemological questions that I raised here are not new, but they are consistently evaded within the discipline of political science. The purpose then has been to provide possibilities for creative engagement
with these questions in hopes of disrupting the normalization of theory and praxis that produces violent material implications for particular people in particular places. Part of these possibilities has been utilizing the research and writings produced within, throughout, and about Africana Studies because it generates multiple ways of seeing, being, and knowing the world in which we live. Thinking and speaking Africa across disciplines and geopolitical locations furthers the development of transnational methods, theories, and practice. These modes of analysis are crucial to understanding the complexities of relations of power within academic and geopolitical sites. In short, utilizing a layering method with textual interdiction challenges the sovereignty of knowledge and puts the connections of struggles and contestations within academia into conversation with other spaces of the world. However, let it be clear that bringing the social sciences and humanities together, alone, is not enough. Methods and theories must make connections between the struggles and contestations in academia as well as within other spaces of the world. An understanding of interdisciplinary needs to question the usefulness of theory and how it allows academics and non-academics to enter into conversations and make connections within certain sites of the world.

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I am following Ayesha Imam’s discussion of mainstream where she states, “to be mainstreamed [is to be] incorporated as a principal element among those issues and considerations that should be automatically considered and taken into account”. Imam, Ayesha. “Engendering African Social Sciences: An Introductory Essay.” Engendering African Social Sciences. Eds. Ayesha Imam, Amina Mama and Fatou Sow. Chippenham: Antony Rowe, 1997: 1-30, 6. I further define “mainstream” as the sets of literatures, methods, and theories that have come to dominate the making of the discipline. Mainstream can be reflected in the canonical texts that get repetitively taught because they are seen as the fundamentals of the discipline, but it is also the epistemological approaches within the discipline. Political science is a social science that actively seeks to be recognized as a hard science causing it to be highly quantitative, as will be discussed further into the paper. Despite critiques, mainstream political science has maintained its hegemony within the discipline by perpetuating the importance of the narrowness of its theories and methods that seek to answer and predict economic and political relations. The political science market continues to pull in students and policy makers who seek “truth” in these productions, thus keeping the mainstream in business.

For an in depth discussion on Africa perceived as contagion as part of the western project of empire see Hardt, Michael and Antonio Negri. Empire. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2000.

The call for proposals states: “Many of Africa’s countries and regions have fallen prey to war and continue to struggle to make the transition to sustainable peace. Although major fighting may have stopped, the security situation is usually fragile, governance functions of the state may have failed, and social bonds upon which civil society depends may have been broken. A fundamental part of the transition to stable peace is to establish, or renew, respect for the rule of law, including revision or adoption of a constitution, and creation or renewal of effective police and judicial systems that protect human rights. Yet progress on building, or rebuilding, legal institutions alone is not enough. Popularly supported methods of transitional justice that hold perpetrators accountable of atrocities can add legitimacy to the rule of law in the eyes of people who have witnessed extreme violence and the breakdown of legal, moral, and social codes. Countries that fail to establish the rule of law and popular support for it are more likely to be further weakened by violent conflict in the future.”

This includes a range of literary texts, anthropological texts, anti/feminist texts, and philosophy texts from within both the west and Africa.


58
28 Hacking, Ian. “Suicide is a Kind of Madness”. Taming of Chance. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1990: 64-72. Here Hacking suggests there was a shift in the categorization of particular types of behavior to a categorization of particular types of people. This not only creates new types of people it enables a process of marking, mapping and tracking these new entities.
30 Political science journals such as American Political Science Review, International Studies Quarterly and PS: Political Science and Politics will reveal, in any given journal edition, the struggle within the discipline to produce ‘The’ methodological answer.
32 One particularly interesting discussion is Carpenter, R. Charlie. “Gender Theory in World Politics: Contributions of a Nonfeminist Standpoint?”. International Studies Review (2002): 4(3), 153-165, where Carpenter argues feminism (undefined) could be useful to nonfeminist constructivists if (1)”the international system became the dependent variable” for feminism and (2) there were “distinctions between different causal and constitutive pathways by which gender (undefined) affects world politics”. In short, if we quantify gender within world politics then there is a use for gender theory. See also Alker, Hayward. Rediscoveries and Reformulations: Humanistic Methodologies for International Studies. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996; King, Gary, Robert Keohane, and Sidney Verba. Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1994.
36 I conceive of stress as an emotion. It may have external causes, but it is processed through the emotive qualities of the human affecting both mental and physical capabilities.
38 Ibid 94-103.
39 King et al (1994). Any further reference to these theorists will be KKV.
41 Ibid 49-54.
48 Ibid 19.
50 Op cit.
51 Ibid. 374.
52 Ibid. 375-76.
53 Ibid. 378. For a complete discussion of the Skocpol’s methodology see Skocpol (1979).
54 Kaplan and Grewal (1999): 352. Here Kaplan and Grewal discuss at length the problems with producing understandings of culture and academic theory without accounting for the multiple intersections of interests within cultural formation. They explain the reproduction of paternalistic theories and methods that do not account for gender, race, and sexuality provide the theorist with status and prestige within the academy, but does not properly discuss the complex historic relations of power (see 351-355).
57 Ibid 269-270.
58 Ibid 270-71.
64 Ibid. 2-3.
65 Ibid. 4. The Annales school distinguishes between 3 types of ‘catalogue-zation’ for categorized facts and/or potential facts (‘resources’) as: annals, chroniques, and histoires. What is catalogued are those ‘things’ that fit into what the ‘cataloguer’ perceives as possible/potential facts that make up a story.
66 Op cit.
67 Ibid. 7-8
68 Ibid 10.
69 Ibid. 9.
70 Ibid. 10
71 Ibid. 11.
74 Ibid. 3-4. Taylor describes the Black Aesthetic as a “critical, theoretical manifestation of the Black arts movement” where aestheticians call for “more elaborate vocabularies of Black cultural production”.
75 Ibid. 4. Taylor considers Black Power as a parallel concept to Black Aesthetic.
70 Ibid 4-5.
71 Ibid. 6-7.
77 Ibid. 11
83 Ibid 2-12.
84 Ibid. 8.
86 Hirsch and Smith (2002): 5. See also Confinos and Fritzsche (2002) for further discussion on memory and identity.
87 Op cit.
92 Ibid 4.
93 Ibid 7.
94 Shaw is specifically drawing upon Pierre Bourdieu’s work on habitus in The Logic of Practice (1990).
95 Ibid 9. Shaw is referring to the discursive accounts within Edward Ball’s Slaves in the Family (1998) and Richard Baum’s Shrines of the Slave Trade (1999).
96 Op cit.
97 Ibid 22.
98 Ibid 264.
100 Ibid vii-xv. For a detailed discussion on her reflectivity of research and methodology see chapter five.
Ibid 10-17. For case illustration see chapters six and seven.


Ibid. 11.

Ibid. 18.


Ibid 78


Ibid 88.

Plumwood (1993): 47-48

Ibid. 48-68.


Ibid 32-33.

Ibid. 34.


Ibid. 5.


Ibid. 6.

See Butler (1993).


Ibid 10-25.


Ibid 32.

Ibid 26-27.

Ibid 57-60.


