

WEBVTT

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Okay, it's one hour one.

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I'm feeling Fitzsimmons, the,

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the host here.

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We're going to introduce Matt, good one. And Are you ready to go.

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Sir, this is by the way, I don't know who started the recording but this is it's not designated as a recorded session.

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Do you want it to be recorded.

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Oh, I just, I just heard the little session is being recorded. So is designated as being recorded. Yeah, my sheet says, Okay, so I'm.

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I'm fine. For everyone by being here and you're, it's assumed that you are it's a you're okay with being recorded.

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Okay. Shit. are you ready to start.

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Yeah, I'm ready.

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You can know.

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Did you want me to start or did you did you want to do an introduction, yes please start.

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Okay. Okay.

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Um, so, I think. Thanks so much everyone for coming.

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My name is Matthew David Good one, I'm going to be in the two kinds of studies program here at UNM.

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And so today I'm talking about an artist, a doll.

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And he's one of my favorite artists and this this essay is actually dedicated in friendship to the past into the spirit realm.

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This past year.

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Alright so I'm going to be talking about a doll and his art installation blueprints for nation.

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I'll explore some of the key works in the installation the map, passport, and in particular the photo series of the citizens, out of focus New Year weekends, and ultimately I want to show how adult adult engages the history of the US and in Puerto Rico

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to build a fantastical realist installation, with an alternate utopian sensibility,

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very briefly about a dog, a doll, or. So he goes by the one name thing like bondo or India.

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But his name is Alberto Maldonado. He was born in 1948, and voila Puerto Rico, moved to New Jersey with his family at an early age, he studied at the Art Center College of Design in Los Angeles.

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And then, San Francisco, Art Institute.

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He moved back to New York, and had a long career in the arts, he opened a gallery with Robert Mapplethorpe, for example. And all the while he supported himself by working as a graphic designer for the New York department, transportation, blueprints for

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a nation comes like in the 1990s and and sort of expresses some of that longing for home and connecting to home. Through this kind of creation of a new world.

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In 2010 he retired from the city and move back to Puerto Rico.

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Okay.

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So, when it were a little figure or conceptual artist and play director founded the new Rican village in 1976 down the block from the New York and poets cafe in New York City, he dubbed the village and embassy.

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The new Rican village was a venue for experimental salsa Afro Latin jazz poetry performance and framing it as an embassy referenced, its function as a site of cultural exchange.

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After fingers, passing into the spirit realm, a doll, along with the new year we can put together a ps3 expanded the embassy into a more mobile space for art performance so then they started doing performances using that kind of framework, on the Internet

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at Hunter College in Puerto Rico, various places.

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1994, a doll created the multimedia installation blueprints for a nation, which displays artifacts from the embassies nation which is a spirit Republic, dirty, uncle.

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Brother, I'll just say a spirit Republic.

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This nation is a it's a fantasy world. It's a, it's a conceptual world.

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And there is no land claim behind it and no aspiration to become a nation state of the United Nations.

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And as I said, its citizens are the out of focus do your weekends.

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The Embassy remains the operating center of the nation altering the position of Puerto Rico, as colonized to a level of equality, since only sovereign nations direct embassies

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consistent with the framework of an embassy.

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A doll developed a passport, designed to be similar to the US passport, but with images associated with Puerto Rico, new ricans and any Puerto Rican who comes to the US may not have the obstacle of immigration status however the US passport is at the

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same time, a marker of colonization, as it is for many indigenous groups, full dimension dimensionality of a passport is articulated through the

performance of filling the passports out it shows, as well as a passport functioning in the bureaucratic systems

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of nation states for example.

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Citizens of the Spirit Republic have used a passport to get into, Italy, Columbia, South Florida.

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And this example of the artwork functioning as an official document is important but it's definitely the exception. the majority of the passport performances and interactions are housed in the art world.

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And so we can describe this kind of appearance of the fantastical document, and the funk, and the workings of government with this kind of a general genre of like fantastical realism and a variation on magical realism.

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The name of the nation itself also expresses something of this fantastical realism.

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A spirit Republic that Puerto Rico first of all makes clear to distinguish itself from the political nation of Puerto Rico.

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It's been the spirit of the nation, and that's such it evokes culture.

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But spirit also implies a living culture. So it's.

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In other words, like, it's the spirit of the culture, not the letter of the culture

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is important because the spirit of the Spirit Republic is Puerto Rican culture in diaspora. That is, it's, it's a kind of free floating spirit, and it's inclusive of whatever variations are at play, and the dynamic culture of New York weakens.

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At the same time, it is the spirit organized into a republic and uses governmental language bureaucratic language.

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And in this way the fantasy of the nation is embedded in the realism of nation state systems.

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And I want to show you a couple of funny little moments.

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So, if you had something called a Puerto Rican embassy online and there is a website, then you're going to get sort of intertwined with all these various institutions amalgamations of nation states so for example here.

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This is from a website that sells documents online.

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I don't know how they got a copy of a Puerto Rican passport.

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I think it's actually probably a scam. They're asking a lot of money for it.

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If you know it's actually not a legal document.

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But at any rate, I think it's a scam but it gets sort of like, you know, maybe it's bots collecting this stuff.

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But, but it gets a meshed into these systems of nation states so here's one.

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You know, Puerto Rico embassy list and United States of America.

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So I mean there is no there is no Puerto Rican embassy because Puerto Rico is part of the United States, but it gets it gets involved and intertwined with these systems online.

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Okay. Um.

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All right.

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We can further explore the nature of the of the nation by looking at a map of the nation map.

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So the map looks like a typical map with a scale, kind of longitude and latitude contour lines, and the island has, has a mountain that's topography. But what's, obviously striking is the rectangular Domino structure.

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So it's a Fantasy Island on a realist map.

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It's not a functional map, but an aesthetic conceptual one and expresses the spirit of a spirit Republic, and importantly the fantastic element that Domino.

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tied to Puerto Rican culture that it's the fantasy element that's correlated with Puerto Rico is significant. That is New York weekends.

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And often, often have Puerto Rico alive in this sort of fantasy of memory.

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And here the fantasy realism distinction breaks down for, for what feels more real than your own spirit your own memory and and so we can see a spirit Republic, as a kind of positive response to the loss of home, culture, language.

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At the same time, though the spirit Republic is not Puerto Rico, this element, this mixing is also an expression of Puerto Rican culture, which is itself a kind of hybrid of Latin America and the United States and the Caribbean.

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So, we can from one perspective, described the nation, as, as, and this installation as fantastical realist from another perspective it's just Puerto Rican.

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So, a doll tells the story.

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Where was actually when he went to art school in San Francisco.

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And he was just beginning and he was in class and one of the teachers was commenting on his work in front of the class and he said, Wow, that's really surrealist, and an adult said no no I I'm Puerto Rican, and the clouds laughed and, later, you know

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adult learned about surrealism and. But, but the point is that the categories, the categories we use can be really helpful and important, but at times they can obscure the colonial origins, you know, especially you know we're talking about something like

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surrealism, which has connections to Africa and the Caribbean.

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Right, so this dialogue with colonialism also appears with the maps relationship to the concept of utopia.

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At the bottom of the map it states that spirit Republic, it's situated at 10 degrees latitude west of Eden.

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This cartographic language begins in a realistic kind of formulation then ends with the supernatural element of Eden.

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Since its west of Eden, it's not even perfect utopian space.

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I'm not sure you can see this part as well but there's this kind of subtitle on the map.

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UBOTOAOPU also kind of indicating its divergence from the utopian ideal.

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Now, just briefly there's a little bit of context to kind of put this in this this divergence is important because there's long been this connection between the Caribbean and paradise eaten utopia lameness thought he arrived at Eden.

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When he came to the Caribbean.

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More his utopia is is sort of described as being off the coast of South America, and the Caribbean.

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And then the colonization of Puerto Rico by the Spanish, and then the US also make clear that the islands riches and tourists potential were desired.

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That's how Puerto Rico was originally kind of sold to the American public. That would be the sort of tourist spot it, so the Caribbean has been seen as this kind of utopian space from the outside without acknowledging that people live there in a colonized

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state.

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And most recently, this is happening with the pandemic. And after Hurricane Maria and people go into the US going to Puerto Rico to try to buy up cheap land in this quote unquote utopia.

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So, in addition, as most instances of creating a perfect human, the perfect space, human violence arises.

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So and more as utopia the inhabit inhabitants of utopia slaughter the nearby native people, because they're not using the land enough to to like farm and cultivate the land.

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So, this, this very connection, creates a tween utopianism and colonization creates a dystopia. Yeah, it's pretty destructive system that that is still alive today.

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This is bomba and in paradise.

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This kind of Paradise scene but then showing the kind of reality of the military presence and put the people.

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So that's fear of the public sees the dangers of utopian thinking it itself is tries to get away from being described as a utopia.

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But it's also not a nightmare or a bad place, it's, you know, 10 degrees west of Eden is also twist on on Kane's leaving garden or Steinbeck's East of Eden so East being where you go to evoke violence and depravity spirit, Republic goes the other way

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it's West.

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At the same time, a spirit Republic is close to Eden. Yeah, it's not halfway around the world it's 10 degrees, close at meaning it's shared something with it, you know this this fantasy world, and and and maybe not something perfect but something good.

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And then that leads to the question what is good about this world.

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Okay.

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Now, I think one way into that question is to just to think about the, the general kind of thrust of this installation, which is to express authentically.

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The experience of a doll and other New York beacons, as opposed to kind of like what it's supposed to be. According to the United States, and Puerto Rico.

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So for example, you know the, what is the official language of the Spirit Republic, it's Spanglish why because that's that's the sort of authentic cultural element here again I'm not sure you can see it very well but there's a kind of tabloid hover states

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alien backs bush for President.

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But superimposed in the background

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is a reporting of extra Alonzo.

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And he so he was part of the Puerto Rican independence movement and he was going back to Puerto Rico after being in prison.

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So I sort of connect this to the idea and men and black that the tabloids often express the real truth of what's going on in the nation.

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Rose and been Spanglish sandwich.

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Yeah, it may not be the sort of like perfect appetizing thing, but it's a kind of authentic expression of the mixing that goes on.

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Okay.

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So,

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the most fascinating part of the installation for me is the out of focus New York weekends.

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So this is a series of 20 out of focus black and white portraits, primarily of New York and artists, but also some community members, and he created the series when he was taking pictures of the New York weekends to put into the the passports.

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And when he was doing that he was also reading Ellison's Invisible Man.

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And it sort of kind of like was connecting all these different things about expressing race and ethnicity and.

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So, social position, through, you know, optics through visibility or non visibility.

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So, similar to the invincibility.

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The out of focus expresses a lack. And through that lack the prejudices whites and mainstream society.

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However, the out of focus.

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Like invisibility in the novel is also given complex layers of multiple meanings. The joke is first of all points to the colonial status of Puerto Rico, as Petro Petro begins and they exhibit catalog, quote, congratulations you've been out of focus for

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100 years and quote referencing the United States, takeover of political at the same time, the individuals depicted in the photos are not a group of just Puerto Ricans that, but near weekend so these are the migrants, children to migrants.

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Children of migrants. Were in a particularly ambivalent situation marked by race and language.

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Furthermore, their migrant status separates them from the island rating, at times and sometimes, kind of like tense relationship. So adult describes it as quote treated as outcast by the dominant Puerto Rican culture to ethnically and linguistically challenged

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by the United States and quote.

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Finally, though most of the portraits depict artists unrecognized by the mainstream media.

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There are some like like Mark Antony who are more well known and and in this case, I sort of interpret the out of focus as Mark Anthony's connection to the other individuals in the series.

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This is out of focus, New York weekends, it's a collective, and it's kind of expressing the New York and Arts Movement.

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So the upshot is that the out of focus new ricans are out of focus from a lot of different perspectives.

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Okay, so it's the out of focus that's correlated with truth. Well clear side is correlated with false.

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Just as a fantasy of memory is correlated with the truth of spirit Republic.

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At such these words express the idea that becoming aware of one's own out of focus state, it's significant in itself. So ps3 rights quote, you can go to hell if you can't see that adults camera is telling you the truth about who you are and what you are

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seeing is what you are not seeing and quote the irony of Petris declaration is it that it's the, you know, out of focus that demonstrates the truth.

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And this is sort of working against the common thinking about photography, where the focus is correlated with truth, the you know the autofocus function of a camera.

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You know, in addition to the social convention of photography as a documentary device, means that camera, cameras, almost always function to create images that are in focus, with the out of focus, providing the background to turn against this technical

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and cultural convention. By presenting out of focus portraits, is to bring the out of focus to the foreground,

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the autofocus also has its own kind of, you know, unique aesthetic property. So it's it is a visible image, as opposed to the invisible.

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And it's one that appears blurred, or mixed.

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And this then can express the richness of New York and culture that it's formed from the combination of Rican African American Anglo Spanish indigenous cultures and so on.

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Our focus is not only a way to describe something that is not clear but something that is rich and complex can of paint that contains a mixture of various paints to use a metaphor from Invisible Man is not a lesser form of those individual paints, but

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the creation of a new a new color, a new culture.

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The photo series can be seen in this respect as working in opposition to what Susan Sontag calls colonization through photography.

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And some of the more realist.

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And exploitative words example exemplified by the Farm Security Administration photography program.

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So out of focus into your weekends combats, the potential exploitative realism by adding elements which filter and affect the status of these words as realist adores experimental photography and this sense plays with program of the technology as inclusive

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rights experimental photographers create works that quote went out against the cameras program in the sense of their human intention. That is, they subordinate the camera to human intention, unquote, adult winning out against the program of the camera

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is to win out against the program colonization.

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Ultimately what adult intimate, is that it's not just the subjects who are out of focus.

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It's the entire world world of spirit Republic, that is out of focus.

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And this aspect is made clear with the inclusion of a pair of metal eyeglasses.

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It's an artifact from spirit Republic.

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And the caption of the under the image of the glasses in the in the catalog reads, quote, ultimate weapon, created by Dr Akila to topple the out of focus state of those spirit Republic depart the vehicle and quote.

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Now, Dr Arkema is described this way.

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Okay, so here's a kind of long description of in the cat from the catalog. So Dr ocular is an eccentric optometrist during his student days. I've been a member of most bodega bombers, a paramilitary dissident group that set off explosive cans of boost

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yellow coffee to protest against anything, the out of Phuket state stood for. And, and he began a series of experiments to see what made beyond the field of restricted site in this out of focus world and developed an out and optic apparatus he called

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eyeglasses. This new development allow the were to bring blurred objects and focus.

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There is a can of cafe bestow exploding.

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So, in the world of those spirit Republic. The bodega Obama's or this fictional terrorist group that seems to support making Puerto Rico the 51st state.

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And that ocular was part of this group indicates that he supports the assimilation of Puerto Rico into the United States, post to embracing the out of focus.

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Therefore, the doctor has a goal of resolving this visual condition.

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Being able to see in focus and out of focus world corresponds to promoting assimilation, thereby violently resolving the political and existential dilemmas that new your weekends experience and extinguishing its political potential.

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So in addition adult here reverses the US perspective, which associates, Puerto Rican independence movements with terrorism, and instead correlate instead correlates terrorism, with cultural and economic violence of simulation.

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Now, adult also makes very clear that, including ocular in his fantasy world is really important.

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So here's, here's another quote from the catalog I don't feel these worlds that I create are utopians, even though I feel comfortable in them.

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They're not intended to be utopians.

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I don't consider them my attempt to go back to the Garden of Eden, I feel that whenever more than two people are in an environment. There's going to be a difference of ideas and differences of ideas, it's going to bring some kind of conflict.

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So I think this difference of opinions and tolerating difference of opinion, is what this journey should be about and learning from that shared experience, and not try to be like anyone else to solve this.

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So that's why I introduced the Buddha bombers into my imaginary world.

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Ultimately, this is the the political aesthetics of out of focus new wrekin's, it's adding and layering multiple political views, rather than developing a kind of pure politics.

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Embracing blurriness and and being out of focus, rather than the singular vision of one political group.

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So I'd like to conclude by kind of looking a little bit outward, so I've kind of described the the world of spirit Republic.

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The nation.

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Elsewhere Republic.

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I've described the kind of government artifacts, the blue, the blueprints for the nation.

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That kind of like come out of that world.

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But I want to kind of move out a little bit and just make a couple of very quick connections and maybe it's something we can talk about think about later.

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But, um, so I think spirit republican is a good model for us, of the speculative to to delve into the complexities of colonialism and migration, and a world in which your particular culture is is oppressed, the creation of a world that creates and contains

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an honest view of your own culture. It's highly empowering and and there are there are many forums and and pitfalls to world building.

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But when it's done right i think it can be very powerful and I think a doll is working to that.

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And I think that when we talk about representation and fiction film that that I think world building is just as important as as character, you know, and.

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And this is what a doll is doing you know he has these sort of characters but really they they're sort of.

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It's sort of like again in the backdrop, like what comes to the fore is the world. That's the spirit Republic, the nation.

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So you know you can you can have a very superficial Gioconda character but you can also have a superficial world, and a novel or a film.

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And I think this is why it's important when we talk about like that we need it next writers, directors, producers media executive publishers, so on and so on.

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At to sort of make the world building stronger rather than just popping in a character

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and and that that expansive presence.

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Can't can help build a compelling world, and not just a compelling character, there are exceptions.

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You know I think of Edward James Olmos character gas in Blade Runner, and you know this is you've got one this one, kind of,

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kind of, post your kind of character.

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And, but he really sort of created this whole that he created this language for this character. He created all these different elements that sort of been added on to the world so that's a case where kind of character got this one character, but it sort

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of expands out into the to the world building.

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So I think that, you know, this doesn't mean that you have to have an adult's case he's, he's expressing a very clear, you know, new Rican culture. But, you know, that it doesn't have to be one's own kind of very specific ethnicity.

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row building is multi ethnic, you know, and, and here I'm thinking about smoking mirror blues by Ernest Hogan.

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One of the first two comics writers to write, multiple science fiction novels, and his, his world is is like a wildly multi ethnic, he does have to conduct characters but the world is multi ethnic and that's kind of the idea is like a doll is explaining

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for his world. That's the world he's comfortable in and and so an authentic world doesn't have to follow some no idea about what a culture should be, you know, inauthentic cultural expression is not cannot be pre ordained, it's, it's what it is it's whatever

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the artist or a writer is trying to express.

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Maybe some of you have already thought of this but there are interesting connections between the the concept of epsilon, which is also this kind of sort of nation spirit nation.

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Important to, to kind of Chicanos.

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The key difference there is the land element, which which outline gets into some trouble with.

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Also, there is important connections to Afro futurism.

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And this kind of creation of worlds that

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African Americans are comfortable in.

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And so, you know, a long time ago, when I was a graduate student at UMass.

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I adult came to campus and gave a talk, and one of the things that we organized was for him to do a studio critique so when we went to the art department.

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And there is a, an artist who, a student artist who was Asian, and he was, he was having trouble. You know how to express being Asian in the United States.

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This is a long time ago.

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And the problem is that it's really sort of puts you in a bind you know you've got to take this kind of reactive stance. You know how do you how do you be Asian in a world guided by white supremacy, and a dog kind of explained to him the spirit Republic.

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And this idea that you don't have to kind of be locked in this, this thing that glory ends will do also talks about which is this, you know, cross border fighting.

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You know, this against that, You know that might be important in certain cases and.

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But, you know, you can't you can't live a culture entirely in that way.

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You've got to create your own space and that's what a doll was expressing to the student. And it's sort you know it's sort of clicked and he sort of gave him a new kind of direction.

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And, and so I think that that's it has this really kind of wider applicability of, you know, thinking about world building, and in cases of colonialism, or migration, where, you know, There's a loss of home.

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And, you know, all you need to do is simply create one.

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And so I'll stop there.

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And we definitely have a little bit time for questions.

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Do you have time for questions.

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Does anybody want to see any of the other images that I showed

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or more than what you've already shown.

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Oh, It's this one. Yeah, to colonize brain.

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Yeah, I mean, So part of the colonized brain one, you know is

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I think it's a it's a good way of thinking about the distinction between epsilon, which is the kind of Chicano fantasy nation, you know, and and spirit Republic because it's line has a very clear like land claim that it's about the southwest of the United

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United States, which has overlapping land claims with indigenous groups.

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And so there's been that kind of like instability.

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Like in that, in that nation for me insurgent, its insurgent nationalism.

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And there's been this instability in that insurgent nationalism, whereas an L spirit Republic remains pretty clearly in the conceptual realm.

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And it's it's in a kind of, um, I mean I think both offline and elsewhere Republic, have a goal of healing.

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Yeah, they're both sort of like combating the oppression and sort of conflict, violence, but a spirit Republic definitely has this idea of D colonizing the mind and coming to some healing through being in this fantasy world, or you know touching it.

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I don't have so much of a question just to comment I just love the idea of Elsevier Republic becoming real in a way because people are literally traveling on those passports.

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I just I love that crossover between our, you know influencing reality kind of thing and coming, sort of coming full circle like that and yeah it's just such a cool.

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Such a cool concept.

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Yeah Yeah it is. It's it, it makes it makes the the kind of what's happening with the art installation, kind of like breaking outside of the art world, and sort of just functioning in the real world.

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And that's, you know, there's a lot of things behind that because they're also not everyone knows that there isn't a Puerto Rican passport.

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You know, so the people that took me probably the people in Cuba, new.

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You know 10s of even Americans that don't understand you know exactly how Puerto Rico relates to the rest of the United States even right. Yeah, exactly.

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Exactly.

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Yeah, so, yeah, it could be, you know, in some cases where you know the the like border guard agent, you know like doesn't know doesn't know. But you know i.

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If they're going into cool bar code so you know it very well may be are kind of like act of solidarity. Like, I see what you're doing here, and it's cool I'm with you.

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Yeah. It'd be interesting to see how many Americans you could put this you know theoretical, you know, thought world in front of and say this is what Puerto Rico is actually like, and how many, how many of them would just accept it as true.

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Oh yeah, so, I'm good. Yeah, I'll tell you a little case where.

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So, this was this was a quite a long time ago, maybe five something years, and I was showing.

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Part of this to a class of students.

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And the Spirit Republic actually has a space program coconuts in space.

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And basically the idea is the coconuts.

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got to the moon first.

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And so when NASA, got to the moon they were like, oh my gosh.

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And that's, you know, Houston, we have a problem was not about technical stuff but about finding Puerto Ricans. I've got there first, and you know it evokes all kinds of, you know, the land and colonization, you know, putting the flag on on the land.

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And I was showing it to a group of students, and one of the students.

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It's sort of immediately was like, Wow, I didn't know about this you know I I had never heard that, that Puerto Ricans have got to the.

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Got to the moon first and so I mean, and part of that is coming from.

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Again that like what you're pointing to it it's moving over into a realist mode, because the photos from coconuts and space are like official NASA photos of the moon, and then he put he puts in, you know, Puerto Rican flag, a kind of different you know

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pod, with the spirit Republic logo on it. And, and I I didn't tell her that it was false.

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I So, you know that person somewhere believes that that Puerto Ricans got to the moon first.

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That was not in a, in a north, like a like a Latino lead class. It was just a kind of intro to lit class, I think.

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So anyway, yeah, it does sort of, it creates a whole different dynamic. When you bring in the realist photography or kind of realized structures of government.

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Yeah.

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I'm sorry, a Rivera son Do you still have a question.

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Sure, uh, just briefly.

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You know the realism element is really fascinating in this because it, I was thinking about, you know, how does this compare to say like Avalon and the, the yearning to return to some golden age.

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That is a motif throughout many both folklore traditions and fantasy traditions.

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Yeah, I mean it's a great, it's a great.

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It's a great direction for thinking about

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just world building in general. And what does it do in terms of, you know, migration migration is is a constant human endeavor. Know leaving one place and going to another.

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And that some sometimes that gets kind of like reified, and you know becomes a kind of sacred space in the past, you know, the golden age of the past.

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And I think that, you know, that, in a way, you're sort of with, with a spirit Republic, you're kind of seeing, you know that sort of world building.

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Kind of like in time like in the moment, like he's doing it right now.

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We are going to the kind of worlds that we think about from the past. Yeah, we probably should move this discussion on Discord.

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Okay, we need to make room for the next session. I actually don't have the discord okay but we do need to make room for. Yeah, that's one group.

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So let us, you can talk until the next muttering comes in, I guess, great time. Thank you so much.

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Yeah, thank you.

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I was just I was going to ask about more about about teaching these texts and teaching this art, and any other examples that you have or experiences or or things that are really successful for teaching classes yeah like in the intro led classes that sort

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of thing.

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Um, well, yeah I mean, so, my, my general approach with, like, literature is to sort of bring in whatever whatever I find interesting. Yeah.

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And, you know, they students now need to learn the techniques of interpreting literature, but they also need to be able to interpret photography, which they're exposed to constantly.

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So, You know, learning about some of the history of photography a little bit and bringing those elements in I me it's part it's my job now, like, yeah, I can't just leave that out some sort of way to have them take a step back from the continual flood

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of images that they have.

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So that that's.

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You know the one, the one student who believed that, you know, that's she, she was, you know, from from the US doesn't know anything about Rico.

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But in a lot of my classes you have, you know, a very diverse group of students, and said kind of going back to what I was saying I think this general model of, of, kind of shifting toward role building, as opposed to thinking about representation just

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in terms of character. And then also in terms of what sort of virtues of that world building are in terms of migration colonialism healing.

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Then, then I'm able to sort of pass that on as well. I hope, like personally I always feel a sense of, of liberation from adults work.

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You know, it's kind of like we

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thinking about like the passport system.

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You know, we're so sort of like,

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kind of like engaged in that system so deeply now that it's hard to get out of it. And so this this kind of artwork helps you get out of that system in a way that's kind of tactile.

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As you know, I'll bring one of the passports and give it to students to, you know, hold and and and and to sort of like be able to give it, you know, he's liberated at least for a second.

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Sure, from the systems. Yeah, yeah. That's awesome. Thank you so much for your talk. I passed on to Kate Caitlyn is now the host. Okay, thanks so much.

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Yes, presentation.

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Think I'm modding, the next session in another room. So, Are you are.

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Hello. Yeah. All right, bye.

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Okay. Well, Thank you. Hello. yeah.

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I'm excited for this one I specifically asked to tech mode this one because I def, I was like, I need to, I was at least going to be here so I was like, you know, I might as well tech mode, I'm going to be here anyway.

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What you working on me. Yeah, this is, it's a first sampler for my friend who's having a baby in like three weeks.

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I'm working on. That's the upper part of it and then I'm working on the bottom part but she's more mountains.

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And I'm doing the hard parts, and then a mutual friend of our, ours is doing the name and place and weight and all that, the easy stuff because she hasn't stitched since, since she was 12, so we'll see how all that works out.

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me I'm knitting, so cool yeah don't have to set it down once.

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Probably once it starts just in case I have to do anything for tech.

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But I yeah I do my.

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Yeah I keep my, my video off because it tends to interfere with the having enough power to see the whole thing.

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Yeah.

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I think better when my hands, your movies.

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I like I've enjoyed the only thing I've enjoyed about zoom conferences has been the ability to sit there and cross stitch, when people are talking without appearing that I'm not listening.

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you yes Graham that's definitely my connection.

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Um, it's not even windy. Come on girl internet work with me.

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If it gets really bad. Y'all let me know and I'll switch to my phone.

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Yeah, it's not really bad so far but switching the phone is something I've done before it's a good idea.

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Yeah.

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My big problem with mine is that at one point, I have to hold the stitch marker in my mouth.

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It's real hard to talk when you're doing that.

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Yeah. That's impossible.

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Caitlin What do you got your hands.

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Oh, we're just talking, I'm doing. It's a person that's upside down. It's a. Yeah, it's a first sampler for my friend who's having a baby in like less than a month.

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I'm doing all the hard parts and then a mutual friend of ours is doing then like the name and the date of birth and like weight and everything. Oh, This is not, not him machine but it's my water bottle cover

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its hand machine, and I just I love it so I'm like, Oh no, we need a hot water bottle today, it's a fox time.

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I love boxes, I have loved boxes for many years. But do you know what the fox says, Ah, Yes, but I'm not going to repeat it.

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No my I put I put my niche, my projects that I'm currently knitting in the pic spam on good people can look at it, because I just keep my video off, because otherwise my channel gets my reception gets messed up.

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So, yeah, I've noticed a couple people meeting, while they've been in sessions which is cool.

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Yeah. But yesterday I was sitting in my chair with my with my Fox.

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They got to know if you like boxes, would you.

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It's, it's, it's no longer.

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It's no longer in the land of the living.

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It's one of these stuff, you are.

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This kind of 20s passion you have this aha around your neck like this. Yeah. But, but I have it on my kombucha.

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Ah, adornment.

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Because my room is too small to have a beer. Beer fell on the floor, since that I have a box on my on my chair.

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Yes. Well, those things are handy if, if your temperature drops you know they're they're Posey.

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It wouldn't last long in my house because my dog would definitely decided it was for him.

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You can hang your dog around your neck to, you know, there even though I actually do that sometimes Vicki was 55 pounds so it's not easy for both for either of us but yeah when I have to carry in, I usually carry him over my shoulders instead of in my

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arms just because it's easier and he's, he's fairly used to it but I, you know, I can't do it for long. I guess toxins would be better for that, you know.

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Yeah, toxins are like my cats. Any one of my cats.

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Oh yeah, cut straight, not during summer but like during the winter the littlest one the Tabby, um, she likes to be a pirate and social sometimes pro up over my shoulders which is lovely and warm

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cuddly wants a mouse.

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A.

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Oh great hates being held so I don't even try.

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I have one like that the other three are all okay with being held for one of them like.

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Yes, my one of my littlest Siamese cries incessantly anytime you pick her up, but sad for her she's nine pounds and I'm 210 so I get to pick her up if I really need to so works out for me.

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I tell her great Look, you're short.

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I've heard that Siamese can cry exactly like human babies and in fact I'd like to use that as a plot point in one of my stories. So, is that true.

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I don't think it sounds like babies, but it does activate the exact same limbic system panic response that baby crying does so it doesn't sound like a baby, but it really it, they've trained us to have that strong reaction.

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They're very talky any cat. Meow. Isn't it societies. Yeah, particularly if you've grown up with them there. But I'm rabbits sound like screaming babies the worst.

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That's the 101 rabbit scream it sounds like a woman being stabbed. It's the worst or donkeys.

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If you're okay with a larger animal I was camping in Arizona, and I was staying in an area where a large number of web photos were there and they were hunting coyotes for sport, all night and speak screamed like dying women the whole time so if you're

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okay with a larger animal donkeys are sorry the donkey hunting.

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Yeah, they like to kick the coyotes. Oh, yeah, they're not very nice. I thought humans were.

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That's very interesting. I thought humans were that were like the only animal that would actually. They're not, you know, they're not hunting hunting but you can use them as guard dogs on your flock because they'll kill ya kicking today yeah okay many

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bend against against, but to actually track. Now, they weren't tracking. Okay, fine, fine, fine, fine, but there was a large heard of them. this playing against it.

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Are you interested coyotes Okay, sure.

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It's graphics so don't look it up unless that if don't look it up, it'll bother you but there's a video online of a pack mule.

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Grabbing a puma by the neck and slamming it against the ground until it's dead so like they're, they're not kidding around.

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When I visited Yosemite Park, some years ago the Ranger told us that nobody in the park had ever been killed by a bear, but a few dozen people have been killed by dear.

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Okay. Oh yeah, you go up the path the deer rears up and puts it through you.

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Yeah, not that I don't love this discussion of vegetarian animals becoming murderers but is this the Snickers need any testing or ready to get going.

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Hello. Can you all hear me clearly.

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Perfect. Yes.

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And yeah, I haven't heard that job at being tech Mom, you're doing an awesome job I just got us off on a donkey murder tangent, I wanted to take us back off of the donkey murder tangent to benefits.

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Yeah, it was kind of incredible. Thank you for breaking the ice.

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It's a very good thing. Um, yeah.

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All right. Well, um, Hi everyone, I'm Sofia, and this is also my first myth con, so thank you very much to all of the organizers the moderators the tech support, everyone who has clearly put in a lot of effort to make this amazing online event that I

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can attend from my home and Canada.

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So, yeah, thank you. I'm going to be talking about the personhood of nature and jr tokens legendary one, which I have subtitled all where the things.

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In a letter to his publishers in 1955 Jr Tolkien wrote, I am obviously much in love with plants and above all trees and have always been. And I find human maltreatment of them as hard to bear some find ill treatment of animals tokens love of plants, often

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Tolkien's love of plants, often lead him to discuss them in lively and individual terms in telling the story of a tree he was acquainted with in his youth Tolkien wrote, there was a great tree a huge popular with vast limbs visible through my window,

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even as I lay in bed. I loved it and was anxious about it. It had been savagely mutilated some years before but had gallantly grown new limbs, though of course not with the unblemished grace of its former natural self.

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And now a foolish neighbor was agitating to have it felled every tree has its enemy few have an advocate too often the hate is irrational fear of anything large and alive and not easily tamed or destroyed, though it may close itself in pseudo rational

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terms tokens letters show his fascination and humility towards other living beings and his memory for plants is individual acquaintances, the level of detail into Wilkins descriptions reveals his deep care for variation and individuality in the natural

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world. So does his word choice which emphasizes the equal footing between himself and trees or flowers. And another letter to Christopher Tolkien asked his son.

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Are you still inventing names for the nameless flowers you meet meeting flowers or loving a particular tree places these relationships in the same conceptual space as relationships between humans.

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Tolkien's famous love for trees has long been discussed by his biographers fans and critics, if there's that part of his writing both critical and fan based is any indication tokens love for the non human world has been infectious Tolkien is one of the

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the few writers accorded critical pop cultural and political attention. According to James the avatar tokens anti materialistic worldview, in which he extolled the wonders of growing things and of the ordinary has inspired hippies and fascists and many

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in between.

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Justin Edward Everett rights of incorporating Tolkien into his science curriculum to foster critical thinking and moral responsibility. He writes that the Lord of the Rings pushes students to consider perspectives they had not otherwise considered that

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breaking free of scripted views, they develop perspectives that appeal both to evidence and to systems of morality ethics and cultural value. The Lord of the Rings makes this possible and its journey through a secondary world where the strangeness of

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the setting allows students to see their own world more clearly.

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In his essay on fairy stories Tolkien has a strong argument for the value and applicability of fantastic fiction to real world dilemmas secondary worlds reintroduce us to our primary world which has been told by familiarity Tolkien calls this process

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recovery. The regaining of a clear view. According to Tolkien good fairy stories deal with simple or fundamental things untouched by fantasy, but these simplicities are made all the more luminous by their setting.

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When fairy stories invest everyday things with wonder, they renew their real world equivalents in the eyes of the reader.

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Tolkien's affirmation of the power of fairy story is especially relevant to the many green movements and critics who cite him as inspiration, Michael droughts Tolkien encyclopedia lists some of Tolkien green influence.

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Tolkien was enthusiastically taken up by the same counterculture beginning in the 1960s that gave birth to the ecology movement. Later generation of environmentalists took nonviolent direct action to resist new motorways running through green places in

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England in the 1990s for them Tolkien's work was a perhaps even the principal inspiration. All of this surely gives light to the accusation that Tolkien encourages a reactionary escapism or political quietism on the critical side books like Susan Jeffers

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is Arda inhabited and Matthew Dickerson and Jonathan Evans is no elves and area door have turned to Tolkien looking for practical and inspirational environmental ethics.

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How then does Tolkien's writing reorient readers to the natural world, with a renewed appreciation for the diversity and individuality of the life that contains.

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In the first part of this talk, I will examine Tolkien's endowment of plants, animals stones mountains, rivers, lakes fields etc with a sense of individual character, a personhood in the sense of the possession of an individual identity distinct from any

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A personhood in the sense of the possession of an individual identity distinct from any other being and worthy of being treated as such, my three primary arguments for the personhood of plants, animals Earth and rock and Tolkien's work are firstly nature's

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capacity for relationships on an interpersonal level, both positive and negative. Secondly, the naming and the individuality of natural features and Tolkien's legendary them.

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And lastly the protectionism of tokens landscapes. And the second part of this talk, I will argue that the personhood of nature and Tolkien work interacts with but does not compromise tokens monotheistic environmental ethic, ultimately shaping it into

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a form not adequately described using exclusively the framework of Catholic stewardship, typically applied to talk in part one, natural creatures and features as people and tokens legendary.

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The Lord of the Rings frames its examples of friendship between humans or humanoids elves hobbits wizards and nature, plants, animals and stones, as normal bonds between moral and feeling individuals in the Fellowship of the Ring Tom Banville sometimes

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mount his his four legged friend and Gandalf matches mentioned his friendship with his horse shadow facts. In fact friendship and conversation across species lines are apparently so common in Middle Earth, that when Aragorn says certain histories come

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from so long ago that the hills have forgotten them Pippin asks him. Where did you learn such tales if all the land is empty and forgetful. The birds and beasts, do not tell tales of that sort.

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In addition to friendship grief across the traditional boundaries of species or even if sentience is common. After narrowly escaping a cracking like horror by fleeing into morea Gandalf takes a moment to grieve for the two ancient Holly trees that he

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fears were uprooted by the monster saying, I am sorry for the trees were beautiful and headstones so long legless relates to the rest of the fellowship the grief of the land of Oregon for its previous elven inhabitants, the trees and the grass do not

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now remember them only I hear the stones lament them deep they Delve just fair they brought us high they build it us, but they are gone.

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It is not clear whether legless is translating a language spoken by stones or putting words to a wordless lament, but all of the ends protagonists, take is granted nature's capacity for emotion and friendship is friendship with plants, animals and natural

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features on an individual level as possible, then enmity on an individual level ought to be possible as well tokens exploration of these enmities further emphasizes that every being sentience or not has personal moral agency Aragorn warns the hobbits

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approaching whether top, not all the birds are to be trusted and there are other spies more evil than they are. Well Gandalf direct route a guest to send out messages with all the birds and beasts that are your friends.

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The implication is that animals have freedom of moral choice and personal loyalty. If animals can be good. They can also be evil.

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And if they can be friends. They can also be on friends like the nature antagonists Crowther us and old man Willow her address is said to have deliberately prevented the fellowship from crossing his path past using targeted boulders and snowstorms.

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When boroughmuir speculates that sour on could be causing the mountains, ill will. Kimberly points out corralled Ross was called the cruel even long years ago when rumor of sour on had not been heard in these lands Aragorn adds, there are many evil and

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unfriendly things in the world that have little love for those that go on two legs and yet, are not in league with sour on the chapters last sentence correct address had defeated them suggests that the mountains actions belong to it as an independent

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old man Willow has clear motivations for his cruelty from Tom Banville, the hobbits learn of trees in their thoughts which were often dark and strange and filled with a hatred of things that go free upon the earth, nine biting breaking hacking burning

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destroyers and user first, it was not called the old forest without reason for it was indeed ancient a survivor of vast forgotten woods, but none were more dangerous than the great Willow his heart was rotten but his strength was green and he was coming

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into master wins and his song and thoughts ran through the woods on both sides of the river.

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Tolkien scholar Berlin Pflieger interprets the old forest and old man Willow is indicative of quote, at least a double standard if not a fundamental contradiction to Tolkien tree loving perspective.

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She contrasts the old forest and old man Willow two finger and forest and the ends, whose march to war and destruction against our man and his orc armies is presented as righteous and good.

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Well the old forests attempt to revenge on the hobbits for the same thing. The felling of trees is evil.

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If the forest is presented as dangerous and threatening, old man Willow is shown is worse for he is beyond threat, he is simply evil. Pflieger argues, citing the attempted murder of the hobbits, she adds Frodo and Sam seriously considered dropping him down

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or burning him up and there was no suggestion in the text that either action is ecologically insensitive, it is fair to call old man Willow evil for ultimately has active revenge in spite or misplaced against innocent beings, but I believe flickers argument

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argument here sees a contradiction where there is none. Frodo and Sam's attempts to threaten the willow with fire are enough, are ineffective. They only cause the willow to hurt Pippin and Mary.

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What does free Mary and Pippin is the intervention of Tom Banville, despite his blustering threats Banville does not hurt old man Willow he simply tells the willow to be a willow again, you should not be waking eat Earth, dig deep, drink water, go to

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sleep Banville is intimately familiar with the worst feelings and instincts of the trees and as evidenced by his ability to tame old man Willow into compliance has enormous power over the forest, he could end the willows life but he does not that Barnardo's

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approach succeeds where the hobbits fails suggest that Tolkien would prefer a non violent approach to trees, even trees that hunger for revenge.

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But more importantly, old man willows portrayal is the black hearted cunning thirsty ruler of a forest dominion is not as Pflieger argues a fundamental contradiction in Tolkien's portrayal of trees, but an important element in establishing their personhood.

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The statement I love humans does not erase the fact that some humans do terrible unlovable things. The statement I love trees can be taken similarly provided that trees are understood to be persons. Tolkien's portrayal of wilderness is not a transcendental

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lyst construction of the kind eco critic, Greg Garrard would describe as a space of purity contrasting with fallen civilization, but it's rather

complex moral space inhabited by individuals capable of both goodness and evil friendship and cruelty.

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Throughout all his works Tolkien shows the individuality and character of natural features. Tolkien does not refer to rivers for example in the way that we would say the North Saskatchewan or the Nile, he admits the article as one word when referring

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people and doing not the end doin or Syrian galleon and Nara, the three most prominent rivers in the Sumerian tokens rivers possess animate pronouns he him his and play a significant role in the summer alien alongside human and Elvis characters in the

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the chapter of malaria and and its realms, the rivers take over the active narrative role, the chapter follows the rivers courses, beginning with Syrian flowing through his past hastening towards malaria and tokens narration twists and flows with the

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waterways follows their tributaries conferences and journeys and names the land and the order that they touch the rivers rivers not personified but each has his own character and unmistakable dynamism, loud to Syria and falls from the north and mid fall

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below the mirrors, and then he plunges suddenly underground into great tunnels, the weight of his falling waters delved, and he issues again three legs southward with great noise and smoke through rocky arches at the foot of the hills which were called

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the gates of Syrian.

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In contrast, galleon had neither fall nor rapids throughout his course but was ever swifter than Syrian uomo the god creator of water is shown to differentiate between his rivers, and just described as loving Syrian and galleon best of all the waters

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of the Western world, not as a creator taking pride in a finished work, but as a being loving another being as Tolkien loved the huge popular with vast swims outside his bedroom window.

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Though the rest of the summer alien is more anthropocentric than of malaria and and its realms. In the books narrative of the long defeat the defilement of water and the ravaging of lands are always carefully noted in the aftermath of battles, alongside

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other major events, such as the fall of cities or the deaths of kings.

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The later defilement of ever in the source of Syria and also receives attention to quote glower on the HR Loki passed over and fog lifts and events came into the North veils of Syrian and they're did great evil.

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Under the shadows of arid Weprin he defiled the eighth 11 and then he passed into the realm of Naga frond and burn to the last direction and the guarded plane between our org and take one for glower on the rise with the elephant city of Naga throwing

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wait. The following of water is also far from the only significant hurts done to the land in the film or alien.

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and it becomes a burned and desolate waste full of a choking dust barren and lifeless tokens choice of the word perished as well as as his vivid descriptions of the aftermath of the tortured landscape leaves no doubt that the death of every river or field

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is a unique and singular tragedy. It is the death of a person, not the destruction of a set of resources in the Lord of the Rings as well plants and landscapes participate in the wars that rock Middle Earth, the more personal and less sweeping lens of

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the Lord of the Rings shows many instances of nature fighting actively against evil, the ends are many critics quintessential example of token animating nature and giving it the power to fight against abuse.

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Tolkien wrote that in his school boy days he was filled with a bitter disappointment and discussed at the shabby use made in Shakespeare of the coming of great Burnham would to hide Dunsinane Hill.

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He longed to devise a setting in which trees might really march to war.

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And he speculates arose out of that longing.

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Andrea den account considers ends to be demonstrations of Sylvan bio centrism and Tolkien a speculation on what a complex Sylvan centric culture independent of human and human like creatures might look like tokens and in doubt trees with agency self interest

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and political power.

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I can read are also picks up on the end agency for him and its represent an attempt to give power and to allow for a newly ordered literary ecology that forces the characters in the story, and thereby for identification, the reader to consider the trees

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his agents and Middle Earth. He points out that ants were originally created out of a need for defense and a need for advocacy to protect all living non speaking entities from the domination of the walking, talking creatures there that's given the abilities

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to speak into move as trees cannot, it makes sense that Tolkien would emphasize the ns independence particularly considering his disappointment in the anthropocentric appropriation of major in Macbeth, but there are also instances of mute plants showing

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agency in the Lord of the Rings limited though their power may seem by human standards to an audience of custom to anthropocentric narratives Frodo and Sam's journey through affiliate alongside numerous other passages might read as a tedious catalog of

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flora. Susan Jeffers sites critic Christine brick rose who argues that tokens descriptions of nature, way down the narrative and interfere with the war story cheating, it will break rose accurately dubs The Lord of the Rings a war story.

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Her assumption that war is the exclusive domain of humanoids is mistaken. Tolkien consistently shows how all life suffers and even rebels undersell runs tyranny.

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If the alien the contested borderland between Ghandour and Mordor is an occupied country resisting domination photo and Sam remark upon the difference between affiliate which has only been for a few years under the dominion of the Dark Lord, and the barren

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and ruinous Land of the enemy they are leaving. Since Frodo and Sam project DK to be the inevitable fate of lens fallen under sour on resistance to decay is resistance to sour ons power, and just fighting evil life flowers defiantly an affiliate an affiliate

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there's new life here spring was already busy about them.

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grammatically Tolkien's descriptions of the affiliate in place its plants in the subject position of the sentences in one example criminals and

anemones were awake in the filbert breaks and asked Fidel and many Lily flowers nodded their half open heads

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and the graphs. The flowers subject status and their wakefulness hinted affiliations willfulness, as do active even violent verbs, such as a riot in the description of trees, falling into untended age, amid a riot of careless descendants.

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Life's perseverance contrasts with the effects of war Frodo and Sam witness scars of old wounds and the newer wounds made by orcs and other fellow servants of the Dark Lord trees hewn down wantonly and left to die with evil rooms are the fellow sign of

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the cutting room strokes on their bark.

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This visceral description of the trees mutilated bodies paints affiliate is capable of suffering and develops empathy for non human and non sentience bodies.

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By the time the hobbits leave affiliate regretting the thinning of the trees and plants Sam's adage where there's life there's hope it goes with wider implications about the growing life and if the alien.

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When contrasted with sour ons ongoing efforts to pervert or destroy beauty, if aliens resistance to decay is direct defiance of the enemy and enemy who wages war against all life not just human life.

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After all sound is known to torture and destroy the very hills. The blasted and barren wastes he leaves behind show that his war is one waged against plants, as well as sentience life.

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Furthermore, in the chapter journey to the Crossroads images of affiliations resilience and resistance comedy in small moment of triumph.

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Within a circle of trees, still towering high their tops were gone and broken Frodo sees the following seen in the last night of sunset.

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Suddenly caught by the level beams Frodo saw the old King's head, it was lying rolled away by the roadside looks down he cried startled into speech, look, the king has got a crown again.

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The eyes were hollow and the carbon beard was broken, but about the high stern forehead, there was a Coronel of silver and gold, a trailing plant

with flowers like small white stars had bound itself across the brows as if in reverence for the fallen King,

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and in the crevices of his stony hair yellow stone crop gleamed, they cannot conquer for ever said Frodo

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the trailing plant with flowers like white stars stands out both in the mystery of its name aimlessness, as well as in its action, the description bound itself suggests will and choice on the part of the plant crowning the king of gone doors and active

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allegiance and an active rejection of occupying rule. It is also an act that reminds us that affiliate is the garden have gone door. And not only do its caves and trees harbor a secret resistance in the form of Captain fair Amir the land itself has chosen

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loyalties that this act of defiance so inspires Frodo reinforces the solidarity between humans and non humans in the war against our on.

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Part Two stewardship, plus the monotheistic environmental ethic of jr Tolkien stewardship is the most common focus for those, trying to draw an environmental ethic from tokens writing.

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The first section of Dickerson and Evans is enter elves and area door. The tides of the world Gandalf Ian stewardship and the foundations of tokens vision is here exemplary critical focus on stewardship is not surprising, as in the summer alien and the

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Lord of the Rings.

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Tolkien works fairly explicitly within a Catholic model of stewardship. However, the ways in which Tolkien dissenters humanity and his stewardship model are significant and are worth expanding upon.

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According to Sarah to Lily stewardship is an option for monotheistic environmental ethics has been significantly criticized, especially since Lynn White's claim that because of humans moral limitations stewardship will exacerbate rather than put a stop

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to the environmental disaster, to really explains that critics of stewardship proto of the stewardship model protests that through its hierarchical paradigm and managerial role, the notion of stewardship continues to place humans above nature, and to

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view nature as a resource to be managed. More practically many believe that humans do not possess the moral or intellectual qualifications needed to perform this task.

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Traditionally understood as the stewardship of the non human world or environment by humans, the stewardship model is inherently anthropocentric, but Tolkien's writing shows his awareness both of the ideal form of Christian stewardship and of the problems

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inherent in focusing on humans as stewards.

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The story all Darian and around us and unfinished tales grapples with the fatal flaw of anthropocentric stewardship, the propensity of humans to view nature as a composite of resources.

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All Darian earns his name, son of the trees for his master ship before us his large scale forestry efforts gave most heed to the future planting always where there was felling yet behind this seemingly wise and responsible action, it is clear to his wife

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around us and to the people of Newman or that he had little love for treason themselves, caring for them rather as timber that would serve his designs, old Aryans and ability to love trees for themselves ensures that he can never be a good steward with

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no compassion and no care for trees beyond their instrumental value, all Darian has no reason to, to let let trees live if they are more useful to him dead as Gerard Hines adds it is actually all Darian with his shipbuilding who's responsible for much

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of the deforestation of the regions of men here yes and ended with in Middle Earth, eventually decimating the forests of which, old man Willow or, and the old forest or the unforgiving remnants old RL Darian story shows that stewardship without true love

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appreciation and respect for other life is doomed to failure.

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In contrast to all dari and Gandalf as positive as the ideal steward.

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According to Dickerson the moral responsibility of those in Middle Earth is to be good stewards of their gifts that is of those things under the authority that has been given them and not to use their popularity that is not there's the passage most regulatory

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The passage most regulatory of what good stewardship is in Middle Earth is the short speech Gandalf gives in the Return of the King chastising Dennis or for his failings as a steward.

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The rule of no realm is mine, neither have gone door and or have any other greater small, but all were the things that are in parallel as the world now stands, those are my care.

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And for my part, I shall not wholly fail of my task, though Ghandour should perish. If anything passes through this night that can still grow fair or bear fruit and flower again in days to come, for I also in the steward.

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This passage emphasizes that stewardship is important for Tolkien as an ethic of responsible humble and selfless leadership. I shall not wholly fail of my task though gone or should perish if anything passes through this night can still grow fair or bear

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fruit and flower again, is a powerful condemnation of dinosaurs narrow vision blinded as he is to the tides of the world by his exclusive focus on gone doors political independence Gandalf counters dinosaurs narrow view by proclaiming that even if the

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entire human population have gone door were to die He would not have wholly failed. if any life including plant life or to survive. Not only just the statement challenge the traditional Catholic hierarchy of being that generally undergirds a Catholic

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stewardship ethic, but it also brings a non human perspective to stewardship and elf tears down dinosaurs conception of humanity's primacy and equalizes the value of human and vegetable life.

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It must be noted that tokens writing sometimes falls close to a hierarchical anthropocentric portrayal of stewardship. In the final end delay, we are told a libertarian tends to be a habitation for his children elves and men, thus elves and men are positioned

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as the pinnacle of creation, with all other things existing for them. However, the duty of tokens elves and men is not as in the parallel in Genesis, to be fruitful and prosper but as instead to seek beauty and peace and to heal art of its hurts.

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The chapter of LA and your vana casts even greater doubt on the children of alluded highest privileged position. When you vana learns that her creations plants and animals will be placed under the dominion of the children of a star.

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She pleads with mon way, would that the trees might speak for all those that have roots and punish those that wrong them.

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Manuel grants her wish after you vana points out that in that it was in the song, and some of her trees saying to a movie star.

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This is Tolkien's creation story for the ends.

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According to Sylvia de Kamp even mostly successful human stewardship will fail in the end because any system which puts humans first is bound to serve human and first tokens awareness of this failing manifests in his choice to cast nature's its own steward

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steward instead of portraying humanity as the exclusive stewards of nature. This is not to say that humanity should not strive to become better stewards Gandalf submission after all is to train all beings in the highest moral responsibility, but to emphasize

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that humanity does not have a monopoly on stewardship and analysis of stewardship and Tolkien remains incomplete without answering one final question.

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Where does the intrinsic value of everything in the world come from any environmental ethic must grapple with this question. Sarah to really summarizes the various approaches to the question of intrinsic value from a religious perspective value is linked

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to divinity, either in a pan theistic sense where natural identity, natural entities themselves are considered divine or in a transcendental sense characteristic of monotheism to really adds that in some discussions, the idea of nature of sacredness comes

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comes to close to the pan theistic model to fit smoothly with monotheistic doctrines and to develop monotheistic Tolkien's ethic is not rooted in pan theism

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to really working within an Islamic tradition offers her own solution to the question of nature's value, a monotheistic environmental ethic that

is not animalistic in the sense of ascribing divinity to nature but still perceives nature as alive.

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The idea that creation is devoted to and warships its creator. According to to lead by ascribing the created realm behavior that is pleasing to God, it becomes possible to argue God doesn't simply value the world because he made it.

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But, by virtue of its possessing a quality that God values devotion to him. This view emphasizes the relationship between a caring God who is tuned to the interest of creation into attends to each creatures needs, and a world full of full of of God's

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majesty and have gratitude for his care. This portrayal results in a world vibrant with life into motion. We're all creatures God consciousness and Dow's them with purposefulness.

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In addition, each beings choices matter since creation earned its right to consider it treatment through its moral uprightness. Well I found no existing case for a chronic influence on Tolkien to Lee's analysis could easily described tokens legendary

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and we're nature without being divine still has personhood, the most direct example of this kind of God's creation relationship occurring and tokens legendary am is when you vana tells mon way that well that worked in the heavens and with all mo built

01:28:37.000 --> 01:28:46.000

the clouds and poured out the rains. I lifted up the branches of great trees to receive them and some saying to allude to tar amid the wind and the rain.

01:28:46.000 --> 01:28:59.000

You've Anna's case for the worthiness of her trees is that they have demonstrated devotion to a live at our overall it is difficult to prove the religious devotion of nature as Middle Earth itself lacks formal religion, but in a letter to a fan Tolkien

01:28:59.000 --> 01:29:15.000

argued that religion exists differently and Arda, since an artist evil is a literal incarnate being in such a world physical resistance to evil is a major act of loyalty to God and good people are concentrated on the negative, the resistance to the false

01:29:15.000 --> 01:29:31.000

within this framework, if aliens physical resistance to sounds occupation is a form of warship as as Frodo and Sam's quest tokens nature exists morally in the same way his humanoid beings do worshipping their Creator by resisting evil in whatever capacity

01:29:31.000 --> 01:29:46.000

their forms allow Tolkien argues and on fairy stories that fairy stories have the power to inspire radical change defending the function of escapism he argues that Escape is rarely without its companions disgust anger condemnation and revolt.

01:29:46.000 --> 01:30:00.000

Tolkien points out the escape of rockism may not be an irrational fugue, but may rather be the rational conclusion that progressive things like factories or the machine guns and bombs that appear to be their most natural and inevitable.

01:30:00.000 --> 01:30:16.000

Dare we say inexorable products are artificial and therefore changeable escapist fiction can therefore help one break free of a socio technological script that has seemed eternal and natural, but is in fact nothing more than the result of continued human

01:30:16.000 --> 01:30:32.000

Choices, choices that once exposed can be changed or opposed the strength of tokens environmental escapism shows in the many critics and activists who drawn his philosophy to defend the non human world grounded in his love of trees and streams and flowers

01:30:32.000 --> 01:30:46.000

and in his insistence upon the individuality of every being tokens eco poetics foster respect and admiration for our real environment long after we have closed the pages of the books as a concluding note to treating nature as a collection of people is

01:30:46.000 --> 01:30:59.000

a tactic that has very recently been gaining ground innovative legal conservation work is being done around the globe to gain person had status for natural features, largely the people fighting for the legal rights of these features are members of indigenous

01:30:59.000 --> 01:31:24.000

groups worldwide, often with the cultural history of knowing these natural features is complete entities, people rather than collected resources. Kennedy warned recorded and National Geographic that as of March 20 2017, the one good Newey river was recognized

01:31:24.000 --> 01:31:41.000

The legislation passed by New Zealand's Parliament declared that the river and all its physical and metaphysical elements is an indivisible living whole and henceforth possesses all the rights powers duties and liabilities of a legal person.

01:31:41.000 --> 01:31:55.000

The new sorry have like two sentences. The new legislation according to warn achieves recognition that the river is the invisible and living whole of Mallory understanding and not the fragmented inanimate components of water bed banks tributaries and

01:31:55.000 --> 01:32:09.000

that has been the European approach the birthplace of the wind canoeing river isn't our hallway, better known to some thanks to Peter Jackson's cinematic adaptations of Lord of the Rings as Mount Doom.

01:32:09.000 --> 01:32:14.000

Thank you.

01:32:14.000 --> 01:32:17.000

Thank you so much Sophia.

01:32:17.000 --> 01:32:27.000

Um, we've been having a. Hopefully not distracting to you, discussion over in the chat as well.

01:32:27.000 --> 01:32:39.000

Um, I'm gonna try I'm going to save that. So if you and all hang out here for a little while, I think I can I don't think I have anywhere to mod next, if you want to read some of that over there.

01:32:39.000 --> 01:32:56.000

Um, I'm not even sure if I can find any questions that have been asked because we just started kind of file going on, but I'm.

01:32:56.000 --> 01:33:14.000

Okay, I'll be quick. Um, so we do have besides humans, being a de escalating or devastating factor in in tokens books we also have dragons and spiders, that are non human forces.

01:33:14.000 --> 01:33:37.000

But even so are the dragons in in the similarly on they're actually a domesticated animal they were created by, by, more grace, and the, the goalie at the the original spider, that kind of suck the life out of the two trees.

01:33:37.000 --> 01:33:41.000

She was like the personification of the sour note by.

01:33:41.000 --> 01:33:45.000

Of course, you know corrupted song.

01:33:45.000 --> 01:33:56.000

Isn't that you know so so evil is is kind of introduced or invading nature where nature itself is good. What do you think they can you comment on that.

01:33:56.000 --> 01:33:58.000

Does that make sense.

01:33:58.000 --> 01:34:09.000

Um, I think it does. Although, to me personally, the idea of evil as an outside force rings a little bit false with Tolkien's theology.

01:34:09.000 --> 01:34:26.000

I've seen it argued quite compellingly that Tolkien's understanding of evil is Augustinian not Manichaeian so it doesn't see evil as a as an equal and opposing force to good it sees evil as arising from the corruption of good.

01:34:26.000 --> 01:34:29.000

There's that yeah there's that quote in the fellowship about how.

01:34:29.000 --> 01:34:37.000

Nothing is evil in the beginning. Um, so yeah that's what I'm saying, including Nick, go ahead.

01:34:37.000 --> 01:34:59.000

Yes. So, what I would argue, I'm sorry. Sorry, could you restate the crux of your question. Well okay, that, that there are some non human evil forces in the world but even those can be either traced back to human intervention or humanoid, you know, free

01:34:59.000 --> 01:35:17.000

willed fallen creatures, in some way, it Tolkien and one of his letters, said, all, all stories have to do with, with the fall, something like that. So, I mean would make sense, he would he would include that in the zone in that way.

01:35:17.000 --> 01:35:38.000

If he did, for sure. Yeah, I think so spiders. Yes, dragons and spiders, I would hesitate to define them entirely as the result of humanoid actions, simply because they are I think so ambiguous, there's this really interesting description of glowering

01:35:38.000 --> 01:35:47.000

and children of her in where there's a spirit animating him or almost a spirit possessing him almost like oh so he's up. He's like a Maya.

01:35:47.000 --> 01:36:06.000

Yeah. So one of the one, so one theory I've seen is that glower on is kind of a corrupted Meyer who more golf, put into this constructed body of a dragon and goalie and similarly goalie and I think lives on ambiguity.

01:36:06.000 --> 01:36:21.000

Okay. I personally, I know that whenever and goalie is discussed in the summer alien. It's always through a lens of we cannot say for sure, or some have said or others have said, um, yeah.

01:36:21.000 --> 01:36:40.000

That's fitting, you know, dark force is hard to see, it is yeah so I wouldn't necessarily argue that Tolkien's universe is perfectly consistent, but I would argue that is composed of a series of beings that whether they're humanoid are not all make moral

01:36:40.000 --> 01:36:44.000

decisions about how they're going to interact with other beings.

01:36:44.000 --> 01:36:45.000
Thank you.

01:36:45.000 --> 01:36:53.000
Thank you for the question.

01:36:53.000 --> 01:37:00.000
I'm not calling you in the order that you're on my screen so it looks to me like William is next.

01:37:00.000 --> 01:37:02.000
Can you hear me.

01:37:02.000 --> 01:37:05.000
Yes we can. Oh good.

01:37:05.000 --> 01:37:10.000
Thank you, Sophia that was a fabulous paper, very wide ranging it was excellent.

01:37:10.000 --> 01:37:22.000
So I have one quick question one longer question my quick question is you managed to sneak in a reference to the North Saskatchewan River.

01:37:22.000 --> 01:37:24.000
Are you in Alberta.

01:37:24.000 --> 01:37:26.000
Yes, I

01:37:26.000 --> 01:37:31.000
live in Edmonton. Oh, you are well that's where I am too.

01:37:31.000 --> 01:37:33.000
Oh my gosh.

01:37:33.000 --> 01:37:40.000
When I heard when I, when I thought nobody else is going to get this reference.

01:37:40.000 --> 01:37:51.000
So my other question has to do with Mark with so in you know in your very wide ranging and very interesting paper you don't really talk about Mark what how do you read Mark would.

01:37:51.000 --> 01:38:06.000
Thank you. That's a really good question. I think a lot of the darkening of Merck would at least drawing on what I remember from the dependencies is attributed to sour on sort of corrupting influence in dog will door.

01:38:06.000 --> 01:38:20.000

So, in understanding Mark would I go back to the idea that Sal Ron desires domination over all wills and what he can't dominate he will be destroyed.

01:38:20.000 --> 01:38:34.000

So perhaps Merck would is basically it's also living under the oppression of sour on sour on might even be feeding on the malevolence of the trees and urging them towards their darker thoughts like the way that the ring urges Frodo and Sam toward their

01:38:34.000 --> 01:38:53.000

darker thoughts. Yeah, yeah, of course it's interesting because the, you know, it's also the, it's also the home of the, of the Elven King and the what else right so it's so it's less, it's less sort of cut and dry than a lot of the other references to,

01:38:53.000 --> 01:39:01.000

to, to nature in the book, it seems, in both the Hobbit and Lord of the Rings.

01:39:01.000 --> 01:39:03.000

Excellent. Thank you.

01:39:03.000 --> 01:39:07.000

Thank you,

01:39:07.000 --> 01:39:10.000

Jessica your next.

01:39:10.000 --> 01:39:21.000

Thank you so much for the talk, we were all having a lot of fun riffing off of it in the comments section and it was a delight to listen to. My question is about the use of fire and the narrative.

01:39:21.000 --> 01:39:35.000

The. I'm a California person and we use fire a lot in a lot of our native ecologies it's part of the 300 linguistically separate indigenous groups that are from California use fire in a lot of different ways.

01:39:35.000 --> 01:39:39.000

But fire like you said is often portrayed and token as an inherent evil.

01:39:39.000 --> 01:39:53.000

So do you think that that came from tokens experience living and working within an environment where fire is not part of the regenerative and restorative practices that are common on that landscape.

01:39:53.000 --> 01:40:15.000

I think you might be right that there would be a powerful emotional effective fire on Tolkien particularly as someone who fought in the First World War.

01:40:15.000 --> 01:40:28.000

there's also Aryan a spirit of fire who's basically an on the fallen Bell Rog and she becomes the driver of the sun. So there's that little acknowledgement that the sun is a good form of fire.

01:40:28.000 --> 01:40:43.000

I'm also thinking of the I know Linda lay were more golf, more golf is said to invent fire but the important thing about more often venting fire is that everything he invents only contributes to the greater beauty of the whole.

01:40:43.000 --> 01:40:52.000

So he invents horrible heats that they create clouds clouds are beautiful, he invents blistering cold but he couldn't have foreseen the beauty of the snow.

01:40:52.000 --> 01:41:06.000

So from a token theological perspective, fire might be something devised by more golf, but more golf is powerless to prevent fire also being used for good.

01:41:06.000 --> 01:41:11.000

Awesome, thank you so much I appreciate it.

01:41:11.000 --> 01:41:17.000

Look like Eric was right after me. Yeah, Eric, do you want to go next.

01:41:17.000 --> 01:41:27.000

Yeah, thank you once again that was a great paper highly enjoyable brought up lots of conversation, which is the sign of a great paper.

01:41:27.000 --> 01:41:41.000

I have a book you may want to look up if you're not aware of that it's called fire and snow by Mark the polio came out a couple years ago it's a study of climate science fiction, he calls it flying, flying.

01:41:41.000 --> 01:41:47.000

In it he makes a really fascinating.

01:41:47.000 --> 01:42:03.000

Joining of not only the destruction of the environment, but he links it with fascism, which I think you'd really like to look at me But think about who is destroying the forest that Solomon.

01:42:03.000 --> 01:42:17.000

Right. And think about who's destroying the rest of the world it's saara, these are fascist Empire so at the book describes more than just poking and I think you would really enjoy it I think it came out in 2019.

01:42:17.000 --> 01:42:21.000

It's called fire and snow.

01:42:21.000 --> 01:42:39.000

Second point, you mentioned the deforestation of malaria and thinking about jumping on trees to build ships and most people think that's crazy.

That's not crazy it's been estimated that to build a ship of the line during the Napoleonic times.

01:42:39.000 --> 01:42:48.000
trips to build one ship. So, once again, great paper

01:42:48.000 --> 01:43:01.000
thing yeah thank you very much and thank you for the recommendation I wrote that down because I am really interested

01:43:01.000 --> 01:43:14.000
and looks like our last question at the moment. at least, is Anders Anders. Yes.

01:43:14.000 --> 01:43:21.000
Yes, it's actually first first observation, and and the comment.

01:43:21.000 --> 01:43:27.000
The observation is that when talking writes about rivers.

01:43:27.000 --> 01:43:33.000
He doesn't he does. Sometimes he uses the definite article.

01:43:33.000 --> 01:43:39.000
So it's not, it's not just one, he writes in different ways.

01:43:39.000 --> 01:43:56.000
I did a thorough investigation on that. But, but, but I have forgotten most of it but I remember, I think I remember that he that he berries.

01:43:56.000 --> 01:44:03.000
The other thing is, comment, this is more kind of philosophical comment, and what I think.

01:44:03.000 --> 01:44:10.000
I would love to think that talking would have agreed, but I don't know.

01:44:10.000 --> 01:44:22.000
You talked about the problems of, of, where from where it comes to the value of things if it if every single thing has its own value, what, what does it come from.

01:44:22.000 --> 01:44:26.000
I think that the problem is the concept of value.

01:44:26.000 --> 01:44:31.000
I think that if I'm if I'm in a house that is on fire.

01:44:31.000 --> 01:44:40.000
I would like people to think, oh there's somebody in the house, we must save him. I don't want to do think there's somebody, somebody in the house. that's it.

01:44:40.000 --> 01:44:54.000

How does he have about you. Yes, yes. Now I will say that that intermediate concept is is bad, I think,

01:44:54.000 --> 01:45:03.000

um, thank you. That's really interesting. your, your investigation of rivers Is there anywhere where I could like look into it and read that.

01:45:03.000 --> 01:45:18.000

No no I haven't written that written down, I did that. When I was, I was polishing or looking over the, The old Swedish translation opposite.

01:45:18.000 --> 01:45:33.000

They made a new additions, say they wanted me to look over it and see that everything was proper. So I changed some things, and when I did did that I also studied that, but I haven't written written up.

01:45:33.000 --> 01:45:35.000

Well that's.

01:45:35.000 --> 01:45:42.000

I'm really impressed that you worked on the Swedish translation that's fascinating and has a really interesting history.

01:45:42.000 --> 01:45:46.000

But thank you.

01:45:46.000 --> 01:45:52.000

So we have one question

01:45:52.000 --> 01:45:59.000

is Will your paper be published somewhere that we can read it.

01:45:59.000 --> 01:46:02.000

Um, I don't know.

01:46:02.000 --> 01:46:08.000

Okay, because I think a ton of people would like to be able to read to read it again.

01:46:08.000 --> 01:46:21.000

Since we were having discussions in the chat at the same time, I know I would let everyone in the chat is

01:46:21.000 --> 01:46:23.000

submitted to miss war.

01:46:23.000 --> 01:46:25.000

Okay.

01:46:25.000 --> 01:46:43.000

So do that. Otherwise, people will probably, I don't know, come find you and demand demanded. Um, if there's people, people really really liked your paper.

01:46:43.000 --> 01:46:51.000

I'm Leah says in all caps that that will not politely on your door.

01:46:51.000 --> 01:47:13.000

So there you go, and then it's, it's 248. So, um, we do have to start getting ready for the next group. um, I know Nancy and Eric Still have questions, would you to be able to ask in Discord.

01:47:13.000 --> 01:47:30.000

Well, I was just going to make a quick comment about the disparity of mere code remember that Birchwood was started in the hobbit before he got into the whole Middle Earth so deeply so inherits a lot of stuff into the Lord of the Rings that was not worked

01:47:30.000 --> 01:47:36.000

out in the grand plan.

01:47:36.000 --> 01:47:39.000

That's all.

01:47:39.000 --> 01:47:41.000

Okay.

01:47:41.000 --> 01:47:42.000

Thank you.

01:47:42.000 --> 01:47:49.000

And I had a question for you but I'll just dig

01:47:49.000 --> 01:47:59.000

into you so much for such a good talk, and I think it was my favorite talk so far. And I really want to talk to you more about it and everything else.

01:47:59.000 --> 01:48:03.000

I'm going to save the chat transcript.

01:48:03.000 --> 01:48:12.000

And I will put that in. Yeah, and I'll put that in the room so that other people who were in it, and trying to follow everything at once can also reread it.

01:48:12.000 --> 01:48:18.000

And so that other people can just see how great the discussion was in here thank you guys so much, much.

01:48:18.000 --> 01:48:24.000

Thank you, Sophia. Thank you.

01:48:24.000 --> 01:48:50.000

And I don't know what's up next up, let me look, there's something happening in this room. Next, I have so many links open right now. Okay, next in this room is your lower third is fairy reality in the spiral dance by Rodrigo Garcia, he Robertson.

01:48:50.000 --> 01:48:54.000

And I have to run to yellow.

01:48:54.000 --> 01:48:58.000

I'm presenting that paper and I am here.

01:48:58.000 --> 01:49:10.000

Perfect. Um, I am switching host. Maybe I, who is the host after me just a minute, so bad at this game right now.

01:49:10.000 --> 01:49:11.000

I'm here.

01:49:11.000 --> 01:49:16.000

I'm here to Holly Oh, great. you're here, purpose, I'm going to give you.

01:49:16.000 --> 01:49:20.000

Gosh, that's a pretty picture. Thanks, that's our backyard.

01:49:20.000 --> 01:49:26.000

Where is that it's mount Blanca near the sand in the national Sand Dunes National Park.

01:49:26.000 --> 01:49:31.000

And we see that from our back window.

01:49:31.000 --> 01:49:32.000

Yeah.

01:49:32.000 --> 01:49:36.000

Okay. do you want to have in my backyard.

01:49:36.000 --> 01:49:45.000

Yes. Oh my gosh. I'm okay I'm gonna have you co host now. Yes.

01:49:45.000 --> 01:49:48.000

Okay.

01:49:48.000 --> 01:49:55.000

I'm there they're having quite a good session with Lee Smith, telling stories from.

01:49:55.000 --> 01:50:06.000

So, yeah, I'm headed over there to hear about fairy tales. Yeah, I think that's what I'm there to hear about. they'll be a little bit 113 because of this best thing.

01:50:06.000 --> 01:50:14.000

So, yeah, yeah, yeah I need to make sure that I saved this chat transcript real quick.

01:50:14.000 --> 01:50:19.000

Okay, done that. All right, bye. Okay, bye Thanks.

01:50:19.000 --> 01:50:22.000
Yep.

01:50:22.000 --> 01:50:30.000
Okay, So we're here for

01:50:30.000 --> 01:50:35.000
the fairy reality and Robert Are you here yet.

01:50:35.000 --> 01:50:40.000
I am. Yay. Oh sweet. I don't have to wait for you.

01:50:40.000 --> 01:50:46.000
Do you have any like sharing stuff we're just going to be reading.

01:50:46.000 --> 01:51:00.000
I do not I'm just going to be reading from old fashioned piece of paper,
my kind of guy. We must be from the same past century. Okay. We'll wait a
few minutes while people check in.

01:51:00.000 --> 01:51:06.000
And what time is it now 152 Okay so we've got several minutes to wait.

01:51:06.000 --> 01:51:08.000
Italy, Spain.

01:51:08.000 --> 01:51:26.000
Yeah.

01:51:26.000 --> 01:51:29.000
Do you know him, Rob.

01:51:29.000 --> 01:51:32.000
I don't.

01:51:32.000 --> 01:51:54.000
He's been involved at all Well, yeah, like his stories begin, like, two
years after it started in the 70s or something. So, it was pretty, pretty
gripping material very drama filled in those early days, so.

01:51:54.000 --> 01:51:57.000
Yeah, I thought about going through that.

01:51:57.000 --> 01:52:06.000
I'm glad I heard and forgotten her name already

01:52:06.000 --> 01:52:09.000
on paper.

01:52:09.000 --> 01:52:13.000
What was the topic.

01:52:13.000 --> 01:52:18.000

And

01:52:18.000 --> 01:52:36.000
was really rather wide ranging. The personhood I guess you'd say not personification but the personality of maker in donkey.

01:52:36.000 --> 01:52:46.000
That it was divided into two Brighton, very complex, and I hope she publishes that because I really like to read it.

01:52:46.000 --> 01:52:48.000
Yeah.

01:52:48.000 --> 01:52:56.000
That's how I feel about a lot of, there was a distracting sided conversation going on and chat.

01:52:56.000 --> 01:53:03.000
Oh dear.

01:53:03.000 --> 01:53:29.000
Literally, we're talking about

01:53:29.000 --> 01:53:37.000
They talked a little bit about that at the session about strongholds cities and strongholds.

01:53:37.000 --> 01:54:07.000
How the nature of the cities that got built in the early days of the Elves carried stories.

01:54:07.000 --> 01:54:20.000
Yeah, the banquet thing I do, social interaction is at least for me, a really important part. Oh, Miss God or any event.