Summary:
Clyde Woods historizes six transformations of the Mississippi Delta to outline how racialized space is a fundamental element of social control: he analyzes the conquest of the Americas, the Trail of Tears, U.S. chattel slavery (as a capitalist system), technological innovations, and Reconstruction-era politics; ultimately, the common thread between these transformations, Woods argues, are "plantation regimes" – the core of colonialism and racial capitalism (41). Borrowing from Antonio Gramsci, Woods frames his argument through regional and dominant plantation "blocs." These plantation blocs and regimes, then, highlight how governors, regional officials, federal politicians, and state representatives regulate and dictate the mobility of enslaved and free Black people through slavery, sharecropping, Black codes, and gang labor to gain profit and surplus-value. These acts of exploitation and displacement, however, are met with rebellions and mobilization by Black organizers, unions, and communities. This dichotomy between the desire for capital accumulation, cotton, and crops, and political mobilization by Black Americans, lays the groundwork for the spatial developments of the Delta.

Quotes:
"For African Americans, the Delta came to represent a slavery within slavery and oppression of biblical proportions." (40)

"The settler worldview saw the ecosystem in all its biodiversity as isolable and exploitable parts: forests became timber, deer became fur, water became irrigation, and people became slaves" (43)

"the planter bloc in Mississippi [built] a modern police state on top of slavery…that renders the concept 'Orwellian' completely feeble." (58)

"...'freedom, free schools, free ballot box, free jury box, free everything.' … Its growth was initially slowed by conservative officials and the Freedman's Bureau." (69-70)

Questions:
There are clear intersections of Blackness and Indigeneity in Woods' text: the U.S. President's role in removing Indigenous nations from their land has similarities to legislation that displaces Black people from land in the region. Woods, too, shows how the Delta is the "center" of cultural, musical, and political thought for Black Americans, as they "cultivated and tended" the very soil they worked on for their lives (68). What happens to our understanding of racial capitalism when we think of Black Americans as Indigenous to the nation-state?

It can be argued that Woods demonstrates how American democracy and concepts of freedom are antagonistic to one another. Such an understanding of freedom has been explored in crucial Marxist texts (Marx; Federici; Wynter; Hartman; *Sinners*, etc.). How does Woods' analysis of institutional violence via geography, historical transformations, space, and race trouble ideas of American democracy? Trouble ideas of liberal humanism? Of freedom?

To what extent are the Mississippi Delta Plans, and their methods of violence (Indigenous dispossession, American democracy, Reconstruction, biblical/sociological justifications of slavery, organized terror, etc.) gendered? Can Hartman, Federici, Weeks, and McClanahan & Settell help us understand how racial capitalism is inextricably tied to gender/gendered violence?