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#### Somaliland is the ultimate privatized state---its search for sovereignty is an investment into capitalism to secure the ruling class.

Zireau 03 [Tabea Zireau, professor @ University of Hanover, xx-xx-2003, "State Building without Sovereignty: The Somaliland Republic," *Mondes en développement* vol 31 no 123, https://shs.cairn.info/revue-mondes-en-developpement-2003-3-page-57?lang=fr, DOA 12-5-2024] JH

Several weeks after the Somali state collapsed in 1991, the Northwestern region declared independence. The Somaliland Republic has since reasserted the separate existence it had as the colony of British Somaliland before independence and union with the former Italian Somalia in 1960. While in Southern Somalia the restauration of peace is still a long way, Somaliland has created a state from the combination of traditional elders’ councils and a modern parliamentary system. A relative peace prevails among hiterto hostile clans, and observers appreciate the political system as a Somali innovation. In fact, observers consider the country as an unusual example for endogenous post-war peace-building. However, the international community has so far failed to extend any recognition to the Somaliland experiment. Short of an international legal status, the political future of the “quasi-state“ of Somaliland is doubtful. The absence of recognition of Somaliland is part and parcel of the international community’s attempts to suppress the decentralizing processes that are ongoing in the Horn of Africa and favor instead the restauration of centralized states. **Why did Somaliland declare independence** from Somalia ? And why does it hold on to independence ? I do not believe in a so called “ethnic“ conflict in Somalia : The civil war in Somalia is a social conflict, with roots dating back several decades. The secession of Somaliland does not mean a growing ethnicity of the Northwestern Somali people. **Behind nation-building processes,** one often finds instead **hidden interests**. Which social groups profited from the declaration of independence ? The economic decay of the Somali state during the 1980s led to political repression and to an informalization of the Somali economy – some call it “shadow economy“. The reorientation of the Siyaad Barre regime at the beginning of the 1980s – from communist to capitalist ideology – went astray with his attempt to deprive the counter-hegemonic elites from their power in Northern Somalia (Samatar 1989). Because of the nationalization of the most important markets there, the Northern Somali opposition party “Somali National Movement“ (SNM) received significant financial assistance from the export traders who were impeded in their economic activities by the Barre policies. This paper argues that the **declaration of independence** of the Somaliland Republic, as a counterhegemonic project, was a direct result of the **formation of elites** during the **commercialization of pastoralism** under British colonial rule. **Separation** from Mogadishu and limitations on Somaliland state power are both in the very interest of the **dominating traders**. To secure these economic interests, much **effort is invested into keeping state power marginal**. Main actors in Somaliland are **holding on to independence**, knowing that the international community nowadays favours the model of the European nation-state. **Donors are only attracted by state-like structures** – even though it may be nothing but a façade. Decay of state institutions and structural adjustment programs lead to the formation of **parallel markets**. This “informal“ sector helps the little man to survive but is also used by elites to enhance their prestige and monetary wealth. Many argue that in Africa nowadays **only the informal sector affords endogenous economic development**. It is expected that from this economy comes the power to rebuild the state (Kappel 1999). However, the idea of a dichotomoy between state and civil society is a European artifact. **In Somaliland**, it is obvious that **the main economic actors are the formerly disenfranchised state elites who saw no opportunity to profit from the state system** (Chabal and Daloz 1999). They concentrated on the parallel economy to reap the benefits from these structures in a fully deregulated economy of a new state, Somaliland. For, indeed, the economy of Somaliland is **completely deregulated** despite state institutions that were rebuilt after independence. Informal economic activities are not seen as illegal but are “legitimate informal“ – to use Chabal and Daloz’s terminology. The former president of Somaliland who died in May 2002, Maxamed Xaaji Ibrahim Igaal, introduced a national currency and a national bank. However, the main actors do not trust Somaliland’s financial policy : national and international companies prefer to change money on the parallel market (Mubarak 1997). The government‘s attempts to support the national financial system failed. For example, in 1995, the government tried to support the Somaliland Shilling by sanctioning foreign exchange operations and by fixing the exchange rate, which caused strong public protest. Many traders threatened the government with moving their activities to Puntland in Eastern Somalia, where there are no restrictions on export trade. Even though the parliament dropped this unpopular decree in 1996, the economy is still very suspicious to state policy (Mubarak 1997). The main economic actors blame the government for extreme inflation in 1996 as well, when the state tried to compensate enormous budgetary deficite by printing money. The public revenues of the Somaliland state total about 30 million US$. This amounts to only 60 percent of actual expenditures. One reason for this shortfall lies in the difficulties the administration encounters in taxing its nomadic population, like all of its Somali predecessors. Shortly after the Somali state collapsed in 1991, the port of Berbera in Somaliland was reopened. This allowed for he reactivation of foreign trade relations which confirmed Somaliland’s economic orientation on trade. Livestock account for the majority of exports, with cultivation and trade of khat an upcoming business. Since the late 1960s, livestock trade via Berbera has increased constantly (Samatrar 1989). Close to Arab markets, livestock prices have been high. In 1978, about 80 percent of livestock exports left the country through Berbera. After the port reopened in 1991, this trend continued. Today, Somaliland export traders are successful in controlling the majority of all Somalia‘s livestock exports (Marchal 1999). Northern Somali descendants of the **first national elite** are benefitting thereby from Somaliland, as **independence pushed them from periphery to the core of power**. To some extent, export traders have their own state now. They **no longer compete** with southern rivals or need to fear Mogadishu‘s hegemony. Furthermore, they exert **great leverage** over their fiscally weak government in the north. Threats to move their activities out of Somaliland, which would shatter state revenues, are usually sufficient to keep the state complacent. Khat is a mild narcotic, mainly cultivated in the highlands of Ethiopia. Its active substance evaporates within days. Its increasing consumption in the Horn of Africa and in Yemen makes its cultivation and trade a boom industry – especially in Somaliland. Khat chewing is a relatively new phenomenon in Somaliland (Gesheketer 1983). It started along with urbanisation and the rise of an indigenous elite under British colonial rule. Improvement of transportation led to an increase of consumption by the uprooted youth of urban areas. “Nowadays, it seems that everybody is chewing khat all day, everyday“ (Nair 1999). A few wholesalers make a large profit from khat, but increasing consumption means a serious danger for society and the national economy. Chewing khat is indeed an expensive activity. It is estimated that the costs of chewing amount to 1,500 US$ per person per year – about the same as per capita income. Some argue that chewing khat slows down the productivity and leads to an erosion of working morale (Green 1999). This may not be accurate as its consumption actually rises with unemployment figures. Whether one stigmatizes the chewing of khat or call it the “food of the holy man,“ there is no doubt that the narcotic‘s trade is one of the most productive economic sectors in Somaliland. This claim is supported by an UNDP study from 1997 (Nair 1999). Khat is not criminalized in Somaliland, and the administration even imposes a tax on its import. But taxes on khat are lower than any taxes levied on luxury goods in similar states. The UNDP recommended therefore a higher taxation which may be difficult in reality. The wholesalers are members of the Habr Awal clan which is quiet successful in controlling the government. This lobby is setting limits to the power of the state. Now, **what is exactly the role of Somaliland state** ? Let us think of the European ideal. There, the state guaranteesits citizen‘s legal protection. The monopoly on the use of force means protection against personalized power. **Sovereignty means security for economic actors**. The internationally recognized nation-state is a **fund-raiser who provides access** to the markets. The division of the ruler‘s person and the institution of his rule means that all citizens are equal in law and equally good. Such concept of the state is pure fiction in Somaliland. The state is **not** institutionalized at all, nor does it claim the monopoly on the use of force and full control of its territory (Piguet 2000). The power of the president is fully legitimated inside the country, but he does not enjoy any legal status beyond the borders of Somaliland. Yet, **missing international acknowledgment is not the only factor that weakens the state**. Its power is actually **meant to be marginal**, as its legitimacy comes from a combination of clientelism and lineage-dominated organisation, based on networks. This **clientelistic system favours a weak state** who has no administrative control of its territory. **The Somaliland state is thus completely privatised**. The political class favours its clients in taxing, assigning goods, placing public orders. And the clients make available money for demobilization. But the **most important role** of the state in Somaliland is to **maintain an unequal access to the market**. “Economic tensions have an clan dimension” (Bradbury 1997). The clan next to Igaal, Habr Awal, keeps control over the Berbera port and the trade in khat, while the clans of Garxajis and Habr Jeclo control the most important parts of livestock trade. Trade in Somaliland is such a profitable business, because the administration is used to maintain the balance of the clans‘ economic power (Marchal 1999). Trutz von Trotha once said that in Africa, places of power are always places of petitioners (Trotha 2000). Yet, in Somaliland, one notices the opposite. High government officials only draw symbolic salaries. Their real income are donations from members of their own clan (Piguet 2000). The donors know very well that the recipients are obliged by the donation. In return for it, the officials speak up in parliament for their friends‘ tax exemption or turn a blind eye on wildlife trophy traffic. So, in Somaliland, few economic tycoons are interested in building a state system whose power is **easy to control**. This behaviour does not encourage the state‘s consolidation but weakens it in the long term. For the donation cements given inequalities between the different clans. In fact, a national identity or even a polity cannot be constructed because the conditions of reproduction do not fall within the state‘s abilities. In Somaliland, it is a small and influential part of the society which **captures the state**, and **not the opposite**. The following illustration provides an example of this. A big success for the wholesalers of former president Igaal‘s clan Habr Awal was a change of the main trade route for khat. Every day, ten tons of Khat leave Ethiopia for the Arab peninsula. When Somaliland was still a part of Somalia, the narcotic en route to Yemen was always shipped via Djibouti. Nowadays, Berbera is the port of choice. For, in the quasi-state of Somaliland, taxes and duties are lower, and legislation is more vague than in Djibouti (Piguet 2000). The question now is **whether a state like Somaliland can claim its independence** on a **long-term basis**. Will Somaliland ever be a full member of the international community ? The construction of national institutions and the nearly successful demobilization, the creation of democratic structures like parliament and national elders council make Somaliland look like a stable and secure partner. The government wants to show that the country is ready for international donors, and suffers from the lack of international interest. Although there are many reasons for Somaliland’s institutional marginalization, two deserve to stand out in conclusion to this paper. First, Somalia is still a full member of the United Nations, even though its membership is suspended for the moment. As long as there is no government in Mogadishu that accepts Somaliland as independent, there will not be any international recognition. Today, there is only little hope that the actual provisionary government of Mogadishu will move in this direction. Abdoulkassim Salat Hassan, interim president of Somalia, is fully accepted by the international community. He will not let Somaliland go its own way, because Mogadishu needs its tax revenues. In fact, the independent status of Somaliland and the hope for a long-term solution of the Somali conflict along the lines of a federal system, is likely to be sacrificed in favour of an ad hoc installed provisionary government which certifies for the world that African borders remian sacrosanct. Besides, the international community still favours the European model of the nation-state. There is a great fear in Europe and the United States of so called “failed states“. The world faces them with suspicion and helplessness, rejecting endogenous political developments as processes of “re-traditionalization“ who do not fit with modernity. Time will tell, if the world will one day accept human political systems and societies that differ from the European model.

#### Capitalist AI causes extinction.

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In terms of the avoidance of existential threat in AI research, despite alluding to capitalism in every determination of AI (as capital and as labour) in terms of existential threat, Bostrom (2014) does not consider the capitalist nature of the development of AI. In other words, that AI might appear differently in a capitalist universe than one where production is determined in a different way. There are three elements of this which might impact Bostrom’s existential hypothesis, and any attempts to construct an ‘ethical’ framework for AI research and existential threat in Universities.

The first of these is that capitalism produces fixed capital for reasons of profit, rather than for any other determination. AI would, therefore, be produced primarily with the axiological aim of profit rather than the aim of producing an intelligent and friendly AI (unless it can produce an intelligence or friendliness which is also in the interests of capital). Speculatively, University research programs to produce AGI might make slow progress as the creation of an intelligence that serves inhuman interests (capital) is unlikely to adopt recognisably human intelligence or characteristics. An AI is less likely to possess any human characteristics such as morality or ethics if it is built for the purpose of producing profits, particularly if these objectives would constrain profitability. It is highly unlikely, for example, that a commercially orientated research programme for AGI would introduce it to the concept of ‘Communism’ and the work of Marx so that it might think about its own historical destiny in relation to that of the human working class. Relatedly, producing for profit and the race to increase relative surplus value, is less likely to produce a situation where AI is likely to be controllable.

Secondly, the current arms race to produce AI between authoritarian capitalist regimes (particularly between the US and China) could most likely produce a hostile form of intelligence rather than one that wishes to work co-operatively and globally. Lenin (2010) considered that the concentration of capitals, including the growing domination of finance capital, would manifest as ‘monopoly capitalism’. As part of the process of capital accumulation, this would in turn lead to imperialist conflict over resources and territory. This was not just in terms of geographical territory but also ‘…territory in general’ (Lenin, 2010, p.103). Although Lenin was not thinking of AI, this notion could easily be expanded to consider non-geographical territories such as cyberspace, virtual battlefields, and ‘unlocking’ online security through quantum supremacy (the development of quantum computing and AI systems). Simbulan (2018) has applied Lenin’s theory of imperialism to the mapping of both geographical and cyber-territory in the ‘AI battlefield’. The origins of AI research were in military applications such as ‘command and control’ and its advancement was supported through military funding (Berman, 1992). Despite the apparent autonomy of universities and their ethical principles, they are not only a component of the academic-military-industrial complex (as described above) but are an integral, and often integrated, part of that complex. In institutional terms, Leydesdorff and Etzkowitz (1996) consider that universities are not an independent part of military and corporate power but rather their structures and partnerships develop structurally as part of a coherent whole. Cuong (2018) describes the current state of imperialism as ‘institutional international monopoly capital’ whereby international institutions and trade relationships are used as instruments of monopoly capital. In such relationships universities, and consortia, are an integrated part of this world system. It should be noted that such integrated and imperialist systems result from the ‘parasitism and decay’ (Lenin, 2010, p.124) of capitalism and its tendency towards stagnation (Baran and Sweezy, 1966, p.108) and is a strategy that arises from decline. Whilst avoiding teleological explanations (and theories of monopoly capital and imperialism can tend towards over-interpretation of tendencies in capital), it is important not to reify University research in AI as arising from values independent of capital. This involves not only the imbrication of AI research in universities in long-standing, historical, military, and industrial relationships but inevitably resistance to these forces as academic labour comprises capital but is also resistant to it. Just like all academic labour, AI researchers and research can resist capitalism and develop prefigurative AI projects.

Thirdly, as humans already exist, capitalism will probably be concerned with creating ‘alien’ minds which are less like human brains, particularly in terms of resistance to labouring under capitalist conditions, as long as those minds generate profit. According to Rikowski (2003) in capitalism, we are already transhuman beings who are capital (as labour power and as human capital) as part of the expanding social universe of capital (rather than as subjects of any particular technology such as AI) whose only principle is value (negating all other ethical principles) and its accumulation:

The development of capitalism coincides with the capitalisation of humanity. Humans increasingly become something Other than human: a new life-form, a ‘new species’. This is because capital is a progressive movement towards totality. Its development on this basis ‘consists precisely in subordinating all elements of society to itself’ for ‘this is historically how it becomes a totality’. This includes the ‘human’ – there are no exceptions. With the deepening and strengthening of capital as social force within its own social energy domain, we evolve as capitalist life-form: human capital. (Rikowski, 2003, p.151)

Conclusion: Science Fiction and Capitalist Realism

‘Capitalist Realism’ (Fisher, 2009) means that we can’t realistically consider an existential threat of AI that exists outside of capitalism. We often relegate attempts to do so as utopianism or science fiction. As has been explained, existential threat is based on a fear (or a fantasy) that AI will displace humanity as a species. However, this view of existential threat still emphasises how we can contain AI and use it to capitalist ends as labour, if humanity is displaced or as ‘pure capital’ – an uncontrollable, alien entity that expands eternally with a single perverse purpose. This is no existential threat, or even speculation, as we already exist in these terms in capitalism. If we saw ourselves as a form of ‘meat AI’, then we have already lived through those specific consequences through human generations under capitalism! Marx, in the Grundrisse (1993) was a wonderful science fiction writer in considering the future of labour where humans become conscious linkages or attendant labour or social labour. At some time in capitalism, there could conceivably be a polarity shift with a new species-being (AI) at which point humans become raw materials or commodity stock. At this point labour power would be dispossessed from humans. AI would become the species being literally ‘dripping with blood’ as humans become completely destroyed which would (in Bostrom’s, 2014, term) need to be controlled through (in Land’s, 2018, terms) ‘AsimovROM’ (referring to Asimov’s ‘laws of robotics’) so that it would be able to sell labour power through the formal subsumption of AI labour as wage labour (or in Land’s terms aim for a total capitalisation of the universe). This is Land’s ‘garbage time’ (for humans and the natural) where the anthropocentric world is destroyed. This is more barbarism than capitalism.

Either way, capitalism still continues following an existential threat, if an entity can become both the species being and the seller of the specific commodity in capitalism that can create value (labour power) as long as there is also a ruling class of capitalists (and one can imagine even a single human or a single AI as the entirety of the capitalist ‘ruling class’). Commodities (material wealth, paper clips) would continue towards infinite production in this AI-centric universe but the reset value (Socially Necessary Labour Time) would inevitably start to fall as capitalism heads towards another crisis which would result in increased investment in technologies. Bostrom’s (2014) book is about the question of how such new labour might be formed. It is our first guidebook to primitive accumulation of a new form of AI labour, which will in time become a historical relic just as books and guides on factory discipline were a common feature of the early days of capitalism. At this point, all of Marx’s works become subject to a ‘replace all’ function with AI replacing humans. Humans join the other sentient parts of capitalist society to be either disposed of (rats in the kitchen) or used as raw materials (steak on the chopping block) in ‘garbage time’. AI embodies the reductionist nature of capitalism itself to commit all matter and forms of appearance to a social form.

This is simply part of the primordial primitive accumulation of labour and labour power, and the containing of that labour power within the fetters of capitalist production. Additionally, this is part of the capitalist classification of other forms of sentience as either commodities (such as chickens, cows, and sheep for farming or bears for big game hunting), as the ‘natural forces’ of production (pollinating bees) and as barriers to production or entities of zero value (coral reefs). Uniquely, labour power, in its capacity as the unique commodity which can create value, is potentially a dangerous commodity for capitalism, not merely in terms of its emergence from the bodies of extant workers, but also as through creating value it has the capacity through escalating waves of growth and expansion to change the universe into nothing but value (the feared ‘grey goo’ of AI). Bostrom’s (2014) inability to see outside of capitalism, and a capitalist universe, means that the fantastic miracle of another mind is seen as a threat unless it can be subdued through a primitive accumulation of the sort that first brought human labour power into being. Interestingly, Bostrom slips between treating AI as a sort of selfvalorisation machine and as a source of labour which, just as in value critique, is tragically the source of its own demise when it exists in the form of dead labour (capital).

This AI species-being is not a Darwinian classification but a socially determined one through the possibility of ‘…a market driven transformation of humanity’s very species being’ (Dyer-Whiteford et al, 2019, p.7). According to value critique (Kurz, 2014), capitalism displaces living with dead labour and ultimately undermines the basis of value production itself. There is no teleological end to this process, although commodification of all existence and the complete depletion of the resources of the universe (one world being insufficient), barbarism, or total war are all possibilities. Even these possibilities do not foreclose a rebooting of capitalism. For example, a nuclear war with the destruction of the majority of humanity and fixed capital might allow for a ‘rewinding’ of capitalism or a ‘restarting’ with further rounds of primitive accumulation.

In terms of Higher Education (HE), AI is imagined as both a ‘threat’ and a ‘treat’ in common discourses, but in the capitalist university there are few areas of AI research that allow much in the form of prefiguration as funding and direction are largely determined by military and commercial purposes. The work of Bostrom and Land presents the extremes of such possibilities. In terms of Bostrom, one can imagine a future HE landscape where all humans and universities are simulated in an AI and the same conditions remain as before in a capitalist virtuality (perhaps an extension of the virtual lecturing that was considered in Chapter 5). Similarly, through Land we can imagine a HE landscape where AI beings or consciousnesses upgrade themselves through education-like AIs. These are transhumanist fantasies, but as a prelude to this moment, we are currently in a stage of crisis where the descendent species (humans) whose labour power represents a source of value are in competition not just with machines but those machines are being trialled by capitalism as alternative species for an asynchronous system of value production following the elimination of humanity. We are in the first stage of what might be termed species management in capitalism, a period where the human species might come to an end to be replaced by a ‘new species’ AI, whilst capitalism continues as usual. It is bizarre that we are discussing how to control the existential threat of an AI, whose powers are to be trapped and rewarded only by a proxy-wage, without making the leap to consider how we (as humans) are subjects of an alien form of life (capital) in the here and now. However, in the cracks in capitalism is an already existing communist future in which education (particularly universities of a new determination) can play a role. I will consider this in the next chapter, by reviewing specifically Marxist approaches to AI, the pitfalls in giving AI a central role in a prefigured communist society, and the implications of this for struggle and pedagogy in the capitalist university and beyond.

#### Causes disease---extinction.

Ian Angus 24. Editor of the journal Climate & Capitalism, a frequent contributor to Monthly Review, and a founding executive member of the Global Ecosocialist Network. “Capitalism’s New Age of Plagues, Part 1: An Existential Threat.” Climate and Capitalism. March 5, 2024. https://climateandcapitalism.com/2024/03/05/capitalisms-new-age-of-plagues-1/

Unlike previous pandemics, COVID-19 is part of a wave of new infectious diseases that scientists say mark the arrival of a “qualitatively distinct” period in human health,[6] that will “reverse many of the 20th century’s advances in the control of lethal infectious disease. … [and] return humanity to an earlier health pattern characterized by high mortality from lethal infectious disease.”[7] Contrary to optimistic 20th Century predictions, infectious diseases have not been conquered. New diseases are proliferating, and many thought to have been wiped out have returned as major threats to human health.

The list of new arrivals incudes chikungunya, Q fever, Chagas disease, multiple influenzas, swine fever, Lyme disease, Zika, SARS, MERS, Nipah, Mpox, Ebola, and many more, on top of resurgent enemies like cholera, anthrax, polio, measles, tuberculosis, malaria and yellow fever. According to the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, at current rates the annual probability of extreme epidemics could triple in coming decades.[8]

As David Quammen writes, the simultaneous emergence and re-emergence of multiple contagious diseases is no coincidence.

“Make no mistake, they are connected, these disease outbreaks coming one after another. And they are not simply happening to us; they represent the unintended results of things we are doing. They reflect the convergence of two forms of crises on our planet. The first crisis is ecological, the second is medical. As the two intersect, their joint consequences appear as a pattern of weird and terrible new diseases, emerging from unexpected sources.”[9]

In mid-2020, while scientifically illiterate politicians were still insisting that COVID-19 was no worse than flu and would soon fade away, the UN’s Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) convened a multidisciplinary scientific panel to summarize the state of scientific knowledge about COVID-19 and other diseases that spread from animals to humans.[10] The experts’ report — which had the singular advantage that it was not watered down or edited by politicians and bureaucrats — offered a very different account of the dangers posed by zoonotic diseases in our time. Some excerpts:

“Pandemics represent an existential threat to the health and welfare of people across our planet. The scientific evidence reviewed in this report demonstrates that pandemics are becoming more frequent, driven by a continued rise in the underlying emerging disease events that spark them. Without preventative strategies, pandemics will emerge more often, spread more rapidly, kill more people, and affect the global economy with more devastating impact than ever before.”

“The risk of pandemics is increasing rapidly, with more than five new diseases emerging in people every year, any one of which has the potential to spread and become pandemic. The risk of a pandemic is driven by exponentially increasing anthropogenic changes. Blaming wildlife for the emergence of diseases is thus erroneous, because emergence is caused by human activities and the impacts of these activities on the environment.”

“The underlying causes of pandemics are the same global environmental changes that drive biodiversity loss and climate change. These include land-use change, agricultural expansion and intensification, and wildlife trade and consumption.”

In short, the global ecological destruction that Earth System scientists have dubbed the Great Acceleration is driving humanity into an age of Great Sickening. Unless radical changes are made, we can expect that COVID-19 will not be the last global pandemic — or the most deadly.

#### Modern capitalism relies on permanent war---militarized accumulation to avert stagnation outweighs geopolitics and guarantees world war

William Robinson 22, distinguished professor of sociology, global studies and Latin American studies at the University of California at Santa Barbara, 4/24/22, “Global Capitalism Has Become Dependent on War-Making to Sustain Itself,” https://truthout.org/articles/global-capitalism-has-become-dependent-on-war-making-to-sustain-itself/

The Russian invasion of Ukraine has sparked fierce political debate on the geopolitical consequences of the conflict. But less noticed and equally as important, the war has paved the way for a more sweeping militarization of what was already a global war economy mired in deep political and economic crisis. Geopolitical tensions and international conflicts may be tragic for those caught up in conflagrations such as in Ukraine — but advantageous for those seeking to legitimize expanding military and security budgets and open up new opportunities for capitalist profit-making in the face of chronic stagnation and social discontent.

In late March, the Biden administration, citing the Russian invasion, called for a $31 billion increase in the Pentagon budget over the previous year and on top of an emergency appropriation weeks earlier of $14 billion for Ukraine’s defense. Prior to the invasion, in late 2021, the U.S. government approved a nearly $800 billion military budget, even as, in the same year, it ended the war in Afghanistan. Almost overnight following the Russian invasion, the U.S., European Union, and other governments around the world allocated billions of dollars in additional military spending and sent streams of military hardware and private military contractors into Ukraine.

Shares of military and security firms surged in the wake of the invasion. Two weeks into the conflict, shares of Raytheon were up 8 percent, General Dynamics up 12 percent, Lockheed Martin up 18 percent and Northrop Grumman up 22 percent, while war stocks in Europe, India, and elsewhere experienced similar surges in expectation of an exponential rise in global military spending. Russian President Vladimir Putin, in the words of the managing director of AeroDynamic Advisory, a Pentagon contractor, is “unquestionably the best F-35 salesman of all time,” in reference to a spike in U.S. government funding for the Lockheed Martin jet fighter. Said one consultant to Boeing, General Dynamics, Lockheed Martin and Raytheon Technologies: “For the defense industry, happy days are here again. When the defense budget rises it tends to lift all boats in the industry.”

Militarized Accumulation

The Russian invasion — brutal, reckless and condemnable by any standard — has sparked debate on NATO’s proposed expansion into Ukraine and the role that it played in motivating the Kremlin. U.S. officials were keenly aware, in fact, that the drive to expand NATO to Russian borders would eventually push Moscow into a military conflict. “We examine a wide range of nonviolent measures that could exploit Russia’s actual vulnerabilities and anxieties as a way of stressing Russia’s military and economy and the regime’s political standing at home and abroad,” notes a 2019 study by the RAND Corporation, a Pentagon-affiliated think tank. “The steps we examine would not have either defense or deterrence as their prime purpose,” it states, but rather, “these steps are conceived of as elements in a campaign designed to unbalance the adversary, leading Russia to compete in domains or regions where the United States has a competitive advantage, and causing Russia to overextend itself militarily or economically.”

But the provocation could not be reduced to geopolitical competition, however important, as most observers were keen to do. Missing from the larger picture was the centrality of militarized accumulation — of endless low- and high-intensity warfare, simmering conflicts, civil strife and policing — to the global political economy. Militarized accumulation refers to a situation in which a global war economy relies on the state to organize war-making, social control and repression to sustain capital accumulation in the face of chronic stagnation and saturation of global markets. These state-organized practices are outsourced to transnational corporate capital, involving the fusion of private accumulation with state militarization in order to sustain the process of capital accumulation. Cycles of destruction and reconstruction provide ongoing outlets for over-accumulated capital; that is, these cycles open up new profit-making opportunities for transnational capitalists seeking ongoing opportunities to profitably reinvest the enormous amounts of cash they have accumulated. There is a convergence in this process of global capitalism’s political need for social control and repression in the face of mounting popular discontent worldwide and its economic need to perpetuate accumulation in the face of stagnation.

Wars provide critical economic stimulus. They have historically pulled the capitalist system out of accumulation crises while they serve to deflect attention from political tensions and problems of legitimacy. It took World War II to finally lift world capitalism out of the Great Depression. The Cold War legitimated a half century of expanding military budgets and the Iraq/Afghanistan wars, the longest in history, helped keep the economy sputtering along in the face of chronic stagnation in the first two decades of the century. From the anti-Communist fervor of the Cold War, to the “war on terror,” then the so-called New Cold War, and now the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the transnational elite, led by Washington, have had to conjure up one enemy after another to legitimate militarized accumulation and deflect crises of state legitimacy and capitalist hegemony onto external enemies and contrived threats.

The events of September 11, 2001, marked the start of an era of a permanent global war in which logistics, warfare, intelligence, repression, surveillance and even military personnel are more and more the privatized domain of transnational capital. The Pentagon budget increased 91 percent in real terms between 1998 and 2011, while worldwide, total state military budget outlays grew by 50 percent from 2006 to 2015, from $1.4 trillion to more than $2 trillion. (This figure does not take into account the hundreds of billions of dollars spent on intelligence; contingency operations; policing; bogus wars against immigrants, terrorism and drugs; and “homeland security.”) During this time, military-industrial complex profits quadrupled.

However, focusing just on state military budgets only gives us a part of the picture of the global war economy. As I showed in my 2020 book, The Global Police State, the various wars, conflicts and campaigns of social control and repression around the world involve the fusion of private accumulation with state militarization. In this relationship, the state facilitates the expansion of opportunities for private capital to accumulate through militarization, such as by facilitating global weapons sales by military-industrial-security firms, the amounts of which have reached unprecedented levels. Global weapons sales by the top 100 weapons manufacturers and military service companies increased by 38 percent between 2002 and 2016 and can be expected to escalate further in the face of a prolonged war in Ukraine.

Said one consultant to Boeing, General Dynamics, Lockheed Martin and Raytheon Technologies: “For the defense industry, happy days are here again.

By 2018, private for-profit military companies employed some 15 million people around the world, while another 20 million people worked in private security worldwide. The private security (policing) business is one of the fastest-growing economic sectors in many countries and has come to dwarf public security around the world. The amount spent on private security in 2003, the year of the invasion of Iraq, was 73 percent higher than that spent in the public sphere, and three times as many persons were employed in private forces as in official law enforcement agencies. In half of the world’s countries, private security agents outnumber police officers.

These corporate soldiers and police were deployed to guard corporate property, provide personal security for executives and their families; collect data; conduct police, paramilitary, counterinsurgency and surveillance operations; carry out mass crowd control and repression of protesters; run private detention and interrogation facilities; manage prisons and participate in outright warfare. Now, these same private military and security firms are pouring into Ukraine, with some mercenary companies offering between $1,000 and $2,000 a day for those with combat experience.

The Russian invasion has accelerated but did not originate the ongoing surge in military spending around the world. It is notable that state military spending worldwide skyrocketed in the wake of the 2008 global financial collapse even beyond the post-9/11 spending hike, rising from about $1.5 billion in 2008 to over $2 trillion in 2022. The fact that this explosion in spending coincides perfectly with continued worldwide stagnation following the Great Recession suggests that the heightened militarization of the global economy is as much or more a response to this chronic stagnation than to perceived security threats. If bursts of militarized accumulation (such as that unleashed by 9/11, then by the 2008 financial collapse, and now by the Russian invasion) help offset the overaccumulation crisis further into the future, they are also high-risk bets that heighten worldwide tensions and push the world dangerously towards all-out international conflagration.

#### Capitalism is terminally unsustainable and drives irreversible global warming---extinction.

Sultan 23—UET graduate, holds Master’s degrees from Sargodha University and Allama Iqbal Open University Islamabad (Muhammad Wajahat, “Capitalism and climate crisis,” https://tribune.com.pk/story/2394571/capitalism-and-climate-crisis, dml)

In the 21st century, humanity is facing the insurmountable challenge of ecological collapse emanating after the rise of industrialisation as a result of capitalism. Capitalism and climate change are two sides of the same coin. Climate change is killing the cedars of Lebanon. Not just that. Since 1998, extreme heat has killed more than 160,000 people, and could kill millions more if climate change goes unchecked. The free market is the greatest invention of human beings. But here is the catch: markets only work their magic when prices reflect real costs. And current prices are out of whack. We are letting the firms that sell fossil fuels and, indeed, anyone who emits greenhouse gases cause enormous damage for which they don’t have to pay. If capitalism is not controlled and reimagined for the sake of humanity, it will result in horrendous fallout for the earth and its inhabitants. Capitalist-driven climate change could cause some unyielding fallouts that are potentially hazardous to society.

The world is failing to limit global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels — and the consequences are dire. Due to the capitalist mode of production, the emission of greenhouse gases causes record heatwaves and droughts which adversely affect not only the human ecosystem but also food production. Ocean acidification threatens coral reef ecosystems and fish populations, which provide food for billions of people around the world. Furthermore, the warm seasons will last longer, as disease-carrying insects will become more prevalent and occupy larger areas, infecting countless people with life-threatening illnesses. Farming regions will be at tremendous risk of crop failure as local weather behaves erratically or changes completely. In the developing world, it will create massive water and food shortages, resulting in unspeakable death tolls.

Capitalism is beholden to the philosophy of extractivism — a non-reciprocal approach. Capitalist countries extract natural resources — oil, gas, minerals and coal — from every corner of the world. During the process, the sites are poisoned, drained or otherwise destroyed. As capitalist economies do not reciprocate by adding greenery, this will emerge as a potential threat to human survival in the coming days. Additionally, it must abandon “free market fundamentalism” in order to regulate nature and prevent the fallout.

According to the IPCC’s special report on Climate Change, Desertification, Land Degradation, Sustainable Land Management, Food Security and Greenhouse Fluxes in Terrestrial Ecosystems, the earth’s landscape, soil patterns and ecosystems will suffer due to unregulated growth and modes of production under capitalism. We need to implement comprehensive early warning systems for extreme weather as well as other observational programmes to monitor land use, the degradation of biodiversity and the spread of disease-bearing insects. Capitalism is driven primarily by the desire for ever-increasing profits and the accumulation of capital, and such a structure is incompatible with long-term planning. Large multinational corporations — Exxon, for instance — make decisions primarily based on short-term profit. In the 1970s, when Exxon was at the forefront of climate research, their scientists discovered just how harmful fossil fuels are. Instead of making this info public and working with policymakers to find a solution they marked those documents confidential and launched a decade-long propaganda campaign to sow doubt on the effects of GHG emissions. To maximise their short-term profits, they sacrificed the long-term survival of millions of humans.

The hidden costs of doing things like burning oil and gas are unbearable. Everyone who is trying to build a clean economy has to compete with firms that are heavily subsidised by the government. Eventually, these firms will destroy our health and contribute to the degradation of our climate. If we want to ensure a livable future for the human race, we must move past capitalism, which is incapable of solving the problems it creates. We should adhere to ethical consumption in order to preserve our atmosphere for future generations.

#### The NEG is an alternative imagination of society via anti-capitalist commons---collectives should refuse commitments to competitive principle and the straitjacket of what’s “realistic.”

Rose ’21 [Nick; March 31; PhD in Political Ecology from RMIT University. Executive Director of Sustain: The Australian Food Network; International Journal of Health Policy Management, “From the Cancer Stage of Capitalism to the Political Principle of the Common: The Social Immune Response of “Food as Commons,” DOI: 10.34172/ijhpm.2021.20 ]

Silvia Federici provides a longer historical perspective, noting that ‘commoning is the principle by which human beings have organised their existence for thousands of years;’ and that to ‘speak of the principle of the common’ is to speak ‘not only of small-scale experiments [but] of large-scale social formations that in the past were continent-wide.’87 Hence a commons-based society is neither a utopia or reducible to fringe projects, and the commons have persisted despite the many and continuing enclosures, ‘feeding the radical imagination as well as the bodies of many commoners.’87 Federici acknowledges that commons and practices of commoning are diverse, that many are susceptible to cooptation and many are consistent with the persistence of capitalism; indeed some, such as charities providing social services (including foodbanks) during the years of austerity budgets in the United Kingdom (2010-2015), reinforce and stabilise capitalism.87 What matters to Federici is the character and intentionality of the commons as anti-capitalist, as ‘a means to the creation of an egalitarian and cooperative society…no longer built on a competitive principle, but on the principle of collective solidarity [and commitments] to the creation of collective subjects [and] fostering common interests in every aspect of our lives.’87

Federici’s analysis resonates with the political thought and proposals developed by Dardot and Laval in their 2018 work, ‘On Common: Revolution in the 21st century.’11 For Dardot and Laval, the common is likewise understood as a principle of political struggle, a demand for ‘real democracy’ and a major driving force behind the emerging articulation of a political vision and programme that transcends and overcomes the straitjacket logic of neoliberal ideological hegemony and its ‘policy grammar’ which appears to foreclose all alternatives and lock us forever into a capitalist realism in which ‘it is easier to imagine the end of the world than it is to imagine the end of capitalism.’89 Eschewing Bollier’s ‘triarchy’ of a market/state/ commons coexistence, Dardot and Laval argue for a politics of the common based on an engaged citizenry that directly participates and deliberates in all decisions which impact it, and in the process not merely transforms the institutions responsible for the management of services and allocation of resources, but creates new institutions and new ways of being in the world.11

Dardot and Laval describe this form of politics as ‘instituent praxis’: the common, they argue, is ‘not produced but instituted.’11 This acknowledges the conventional understanding of Ostrom, Bollier and others of ‘the commons’ as residing in the rules – the laws – that a community establishes for the collective management and use of shared resources, but extends it much further and in a more radical direction. The essence of the commons, they argue, is not in the goods per se such as land or a forest or a seed bank ‘held in common,’ but rather in the process of their establishment as well as the ongoing negotiation that will surround their use and governance. Hence, Dardot and Laval distinguish the commons from the ‘rights’ tradition of property, arguing that ‘the commons are above all else matters of institution and government…the use of the commons is inseparable from the right of deciding and governing. The practice that institutes the commons is the practice that maintains them and keeps them alive and takes full responsibility for their conflictuality through the coproduction of rules.’90 To ‘institute’ in this context should not be misunderstood as ‘to institutionalise [or] render official;’ rather it is ‘to recreate with, or on the basis of, what already exists.’ 90 This messy, conflictual and evolving process is what Dardot and Laval insist will ultimately bring about a revolution, not in the form of a violent uprising or insurrection, but rather through the ‘reinstitution of society’ via the transformation of politics and economy from its current state of ‘representative oligarchy’ to full participatory and deliberative democracy.11 Such a vision is premised on a mass politicisation of society; in effect a return of mass popular political contestation and a turn away from the postpolitical era of the neoliberal consumer.91-92

### Framing

#### Interpretation: Weigh the aff against links to the plan’s philosophical investments in capitalism and a solvent alternative. To clarify, no permutation.

#### 1. Academic Responsibility---if the 1AC is capitalist, they should defend capitalism, otherwise greenlights swathes of lazy research and the ability to sever out of investments they made in the constructive.

#### 2. Academia is a site of struggle. Be unfair to arguments that further capitalist instrumentality, slating them for annihilation. It’s the only way to decouple the university from its complicity in violence.

Joshua Moufawad-Paul 20. Professor of Philosophy at York University. “War of Position and Academic Freedom.” http://moufawad-paul.blogspot.com/2020/10/war-of-position-and-academic-freedom.html.

Following this discussion, I pointed out that the annihilationist practice of philosophy should lead us to realize that there is no point in continuing to debate positions that have already been revealed, logically and historically, as erroneous: "whereas Frederick Douglass worked hard to prove that the African slave was a human being, Malcolm X's militancy in thought, parallel to his militancy in concrete action, already understood this assumption as a priori and thus treated any theory that would say otherwise as meaningless." (166) Reactionaries, no matter what they might say, do not care about reasonable debate and in fact ignore all of the literature that has disproved (over and over and over) their positions. Humouring them is in fact unreasonable, and a, waste of time because they have proven themselves incapable of recognizing reason. And yet liberal academics, who want the university to be a debate club (well only the humanities, since most tellingly recognize that debate clubbing in the so-called "hard" sciences is silly) rather than an institution invested in seeking truth from facts, are still under the impression that we should still "give them an argument", avoid "cancel culture", and treat every outmoded and disproven argument with respect.

As I also noted in Demarcation and Demystification, even the annihilationist practice of philosophy is not enough. At best, since the demolition is conceptual, it can only suggest why certain regions of thought should be obliterated. On the ground struggle performed by social movements is what is actually needed, with philosophy serving such movements, because backwards ideas and theories do not easily die if the social formation is still determined by predatory class relations. Like the Freudian return of the repressed, all of the disproven and decrepit ideas can slink back into academia if this academia remains within an oppressive and exploitative social-historical context: physiognomy, phrenology, and white nationalism are being mainstreamed yet again––with their partisans demanding scholarly platforms––despite the fact that they were discredited and even slated for conceptual annihilation. But because they were slated for the latter, there is no rational reason why we should treat them as meaningful. We do not have to give them an argument because arguments were already given; rather we need to recognize them as a threat against thought itself and treat them with an annihilationist attitude. On the political-ethical level this attitude is completely justifiable: why should anyone ever take white nationalist arguments seriously, especially after scholarship has demonstrated the monstrosity of what such positions result in? Only people who will not be harmed by such arguments can afford to treat them as abstract debate points; such an abstract approach to reality is a despicable idealism that also shows little care in what has been established historically.

All of this is relates to the concerns behind a recent open letter I was involved in that sought, and succeeded, to terminate a pro-colonial book series co-edited by the charlatan Bruce Gilley. I was invited to write about my thoughts surrounding this letter in the American Association of University Professors blog, so I won't say much about it here except to indicate that this is an expansion of germinal notions contained in that small article. It is noteworthy that Gilley, upon discovering his book series was slated with cancellation, ranted about a Maoist conspiracy, comparing it to the Taliban, as if his own scholarship had not been thoroughly demolished already. This is because Gilley wanted scholars to treat his work as worthy of engagement, when it was not, because he knew such an attitude would allow it to persist and thus aid in the mainstreaming of racist positions that had already been disproven. All of his complaints about "cancel culture" and censorship, the reactionary version of virtue signalling that seeks to entice liberals, were delivered like the temper tantrum of a toddler who cannot accept reason. He should be pushed out of publication in this area because he is wrong, and because a wealth of scholarship he cares nothing about has proved him wrong, and we have no reason to humour racist nonsense. Especially in these times. In any case, my thoughts on this specific manner are in the aforelinked article.

But I want to go further than my thoughts about that affair, reflecting on the war of position in academia and scholarship. In The Undercommons, Fred Moten and Stefano Harney discuss how, at first, the university appears as "a place of refuge." (26) I have seen more than one reader (including some of my students) mistake this rhetorical statement regarding the appearance of refuge as a statement about the concrete truth of universities, but this is not what they meant. Just a paragraph later, after all, the write: "the subversive intellectual came under false pretenses, with bad documents, out of love. Her labor is as necessary as it is unwelcome. The university needs what she bears but cannot bear what she brings. And on top of all that, she disappears." (26) Bounded by capitalism, but still invested in a concern for truth (because of the myth of Enlightenment), universities are institutions in which the "general antagonism" functions. They may allow some refuge, or the appearance of refuge, but in the end they are machines that seek to pull scholars into governance or make them disappear. Such disappearance may allow these recalcitrant scholars to find "maroon communities" within academia, and it is here that a refugee truth procedure is generated, but the point is that these are spaces of struggle. Or as the authors openly proclaimed in an interview on Millenials Are Killing Capitalism podcast: universities are like factories, subversive intellectuals are like workers organizing for a wildcat, and those involved in the wildcat do not see the factory and its management as something that can be reformed but rather something that should be taken over.

My point, here, is that when we recognize that academia is a space of struggle, and one that is still managed by dominant power, then treating it like a neutral debate club is a mistake. While it is the case that "subversive scholars" have been able to enter the university and, connecting with "maroon communities" have generated the kind of necessary scholarship that has rigorously unsettled dominant narratives, these scholars (and I place myself amongst them) always have to deal with the institutional boundaries that, while celebrating such scholarship because its quality cannot be denied, seek to defend the university's class basis. To appropriate the best thinkers, to turn their work into policy and governance, and to preserve the university's relationship with capital. In such a space we thus encounter scholars who, despite the quality of their research, are politically neutralized and cut off from the broader political struggle (or what Moten and Harney romantically call "the surround"), and we also encounter the ways in which concepts and perspectives derived from this radically meaningful scholarship are appropriated by professional programs. Indeed professional social worker programs, designed to transform students into institutional policy pursuants, often bake radical concepts into liberal reformist doctrine––including the work of Moten and Harney!

So is it any wonder that within these "maroon communities" of academia––which are the academic fugitive communities that have generated most of the useful scholarship for nearly a century––there has resulted a subjectivity that is largely divorced from social struggle, that doesn't know how to apprehend it or carry it out? That this subjectivity, now largely isolated from the surrounding spaces of activist organizing, is stymied when it comes to dealing with reactionary attempts to challenge and marginalize this scholarship, to return universities to the days when it did not have to worry about capturing and isolating the best and the brightest of the oppressed and exploited populations?

Going back to the open letter regarding Gilley's bullshit, it's worth noting that within twenty-four hours that the open letter was live, I was forced to engage with at least one academic who, despite despising Gilley, thought that an open letter was useless because it would allow Gilley to play the victim. The argument was that backwards and erroneous scholarship should not be directly combatted but should instead be subjected to vague ridicule. Such an attitude reveals the ways in which academia has pacified even elements of its "maroon community". Because how do we interact with reactionary scholarship that seeks to ignore and marginalize rigorous scholarship––how do we ridicule it if even open letters suggesting it should be ridiculed are deemed inadmissable? Even recalcitrant maroon scholars are brought into the fold of a vague liberal debate club logic; they don't know how to organize anymore, if they ever did, especially if they cannot see the lowest level of organization (an open letter) as something they can unite with. The university, as an ideological state apparatus, fragments and isolates. Gilley and his ilk count on this fragmentation while, at the same time, they work to build reactionary unity that takes advantage of university liberalism.

The dominant liberal perspective of the university thus conditions the way leftwing scholars act; it partially determines academic subjectivity. For liberal scholars this perspective makes sense since it is part of their ideological outlook, so let's examine those whose personal ideology align with this dominant perspective first. Such liberal scholars often rely on clever sounding maxims such as the one misattributed to Voltaire: "I may not agree with what you have to say but I will defend to the death your right to say it"––as one commenter on my aforelinked article wrote. The emptiness of such slogans reveals that the strength of this perspective is more ideological than logical. After all, someone having the right to say or write erroneous things is not obliterated by not being able to say or write such things in a university setting, nor does it imply that anyone should have whatever academic platform they wish simply because they want it. Even Mill wasn't that naive in his conception of free speech. Nor would most of these liberal scholars, as noted above, extend the same argument to other disciplines: they would not argue that an astrologer should be given tenure in astronomy departments, or be allowed to publish a book series celebrating astrology and claiming that anti-astrology was wrong, in an academic press. At least I hope we are not at that point. In point of fact, since liberal scholars are usually quite enamoured by the prestige of the university, they would be horrified by such assaults on scholarship. So why are they not similarly horrified when it comes to pseudo-scholarship in the humanities? Why do they think that in these disciplines the university is synonymous with a debate club and that any and every perspective, even ones that have been discredited and are tied to reactionary anti-people agendas, are part of what makes the university the university?

#### 3. “Fairness” is a red herring. The liberal culture of debate does not meaningfully interrogate the violent ideological assumptions from which it emerges.

Joshua Moufawad-Paul 21. Professor of Philosophy at York University. 5/24/21. “Liberal Academia and Free Speech Absolutism in the Shadow of Imperialism,” http://moufawad-paul.blogspot.com/2021/05/liberal-academia-and-free-speech.html.

In the wake of the recent violence in Palestine, of the ongoing ethnic cleansing that is yet again patently evident, I cannot help but reflect on the state of academia and the discourse of free speech that normalizes this ethnic cleansing while at the same time demonizing anyone who names it for what it is. Especially in the discipline of philosophy which, for so long, has pretended that it is the guardian of truth and critical thinking. Why is it that scholars who challenge dominant politics––who, to cite the old adage, “speak truth to power”––are maligned as being political whereas scholars who either explicitly support ethnic cleansing or implicitly support it with liberal “both sides are wrong” discourses are treated as rational? And why do scholars who are critical of this ethnic cleansing also defend their liberal and conservative colleagues who are not? The free speech absolutism of the liberal university not only stands in the way of rigorously thinking thought and challenging the state of affairs; it tends to capture critical scholars who should know better.

Without naming names I think I can indicate a tendency of free speech absolutism by way of an anecdote that many of us will find familiar. Somewhat recently, I noticed more than one self-proclaimed academic “leftist” decrying so-called “cancel culture” within academia by complaining that an “ideological monoculture” will hamper the development of even anti-capitalist research. The point was that a vibrant culture of debate is required for even anti-systemic work to be actualized, that if we eliminate reactionaries from academia our ideas will be impoverished because we require such debate to make our ideas stronger. While I do agree that line struggle makes anti-systemic ideas stronger, I think it is both illogical and egregious to claim that sanctifying the marketplace of ideas within academia is beneficial to the anti-capitalist left. In fact, it speaks to a general myopia that is a result of the “common sense” of liberal ideology. We can benefit from line struggle without valorizing this liberal notion of academia.

But let’s first examine why I claim this liberal position of an academic “open society” is illogical for anyone who calls themselves a “left” scholar. If we are communist or anarchist then we believe that, if we aren’t just treating our ideological commitments as abstract objects of research, the goal is a classless and non-heirarchical society. In such an imagined society liberal, conservative, and reactionary ideas would cease to exist because the class commitments behind these ideas would have also ceased to exist. Does this mean we would have created a society where intellectuals would become stupid since they would no longer, by the very definition of such a society, have to debate reactionaries so as to have “better” ideas? If the liberal marketplace of ideas no longer exists, as it would not in a communist/anarchist future society, would this mean that society would become stupefied? If the answer is yes, then we should not struggle for such a society and thus the entire reason for the existence of anti-systemic theory and philosophy would vanish overnight because the liberals would be correct: only in a liberal capitalist society could we ever have social evolution, through the mechanism of the marketplace of ideas, where in fact a liberal monoculture would mediate debate. Hence, anti-systemic progressives would have to reject the very end goal of their research commitments, unless they are prepared to argue that a communist society would, for some bizarre reason, retain racists, sexists, transphobes, and every other backwards commitment that the goal of their politics is meant to supersede.

The logic becomes even stranger when we look at the so-called hard sciences. Does an academic “mono-culture” result from treating Six Day Creation Theory as equal to Evolutionary Science in biology? Does such a “mono-culture” result in Astrophysics if we don’t keep revisiting the debate between the Ptolemaic and Copernican hypotheses? In these venues, when we recognize that academic investigation has to do with the process of truth, consistently revisiting perspectives that have been proven wrong and treating them as somehow “equal” actually gets in the way of academic investigation. In fact, it is entirely illogical to treat a reactionary who believes that Ptolemaic worldview as correct since this worldview contributes nothing to academic investigation and in fact stands in the way of such investigation. How can such voices can contribute to an “open society” of scientific debate when in fact they function to hold science back? They cannot. Their elimination from such investigation is not evidence of a “mono-culture”, since scientific investigation remains open and lively, but only that this investigation has shaken off the past.

So it should be with other disciplines: simply because those of us in humanities seek to eliminate backwards thinking (i.e. such as the idea that the Bell Curve has been widely disproven and we should no longer pay attention to it) does not mean we are justifying a “mono-culture” since multiple other ideas, beyond those that have been proven to be false, will be in operation in the future. It is entirely weird, and in fact anti-intellectual, to presume that we need to entertain and justify disproven ideas so as to make our own insights stronger, as if there won’t be other and future debates that have progressed further beyond what we are expected to retain––as if there cannot be a heterogeneity, always open to the future, that leaves conservative and liberal thinking behind us. This is, of course, utopian thinking because liberal thought is normative in academia: it is what is directing us to retain backwards ideas and treat them as equal in the first place. It’s why we even have to think this question.

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Now let us consider why this question about such a supposed academic “mono-culture” is morally egregious. If a student or teacher from an oppressed population is in an academic community with people whose work denies their humanity then this is not a simple manner of critique and dialogue, it is an assault on their existence. At the very least it informs them that they are not fully welcome in the community (for how can you be “in community” with people whose work denies your right to participate fully as an equal), at worst it is an assault on their survival. If it is in the interest of “debate” or the “diversity of opinions” or some other such nonsense that scholars who argue that Western Civilization is superior to all other civilizations, or who argue that colonialism and slavery were also beneficial for human progress, or that patriarchy is good, or some other discredited nonsense… How does this outweigh the lack of safety and security that these opinions will necessarily generate? These are not merely neutral arguments that exist outside of social relations simply for the sake of an argument; they generate the ideological scaffolding for noxious anti-people organizations and politics.

Indeed, the normative way in which politics are discussed by liberal humanities departments, especially mainstream philosophy departments, should be treated as suspect. It is in fact quite common for utilitarian arguments concerning genocide, population control, and the Bell Curve to be tolerated in philosophy classrooms “for the sake of argument”––and thus for the sake of “the marketplace of ideas”––as if these are not political but merely abstract debate topics. To be clear, most professors who tolerate these arguments are liberals whose intention is to play devil’s advocate and perhaps show the virtue of critical thinking in overcoming these backwards positions. The problem, however, is that these same academics––along with their departments––are less likely to entertain arguments that challenge the status quo from a position of radical anti-communism. That is, when their students or colleagues teach that, for example, Israel is an Apartheid State guilty of ethnic cleansing, the US and Canada are settler-colonial formations that are structurally racist, or that communism is superior to capitalism, they immediately accuse these students and colleagues of being “political” and not “rational”. The fact that entertaining reactionary thought is treated as apolitical whereas entertaining progressive thought is treated as political should demonstrate that mainstream academia has a problem with thinking politics. Which, ultimately, is a failure in critical thought.

Within the discipline of philosophy this failure is especially egregious: despite the fact that liberal champions of the western canon have emphasized the Socratic maxim of “the examined life”, this failure to examine common sense liberal commitments, to interrogate the political decisions that determines their understanding of reality, should be treated as hypocritical. Instead they persist in this banal approach to philosophy, imagining that they are above politics when in fact they function according to unexamined ideological commitments. In fact, this illusion that they are above politics is licensed as neutral and thus “rational” because it is somehow free from “bias” when it is anything but. Those who express anti-systemic politics openly, especially if it is tied to their living existence, are often branded as being “biased” and thus irrational, whereas those who argue for liberal neutrality (or, worse, conservative reaction) pass as being rational and objective even though they are merely replicating different shades of the ruling ideas of the ruling class. The decision about what counts as neutral, rational, and free from bias is often an a priori political decision. It is a decision that happens well before class begins, before the university opens its gates, even before the vaunted marketplace of ideas. It is a decision that structures these spaces. What is truly irrational––in the broader sense of reason, in the sense of reason that even the ancient philosophers (despite all of their problems) understood––is the inability of scholars who police the liberal marketplace of ideas to recognize their own political decisions. That is, to examine their lives. Rather, they would prefer to examine what has already been examined, permit the repetition of tired debates that militate against thought and reason itself, and rarely perform the very first act of examination: a deep and thorough self-examination and criticism, a rigorous interrogation of the ideological assumptions they mistake as common sense. The result is an eclipse of the pursuit of truth by the regime of opinion. And this regime masquerades as rational even though it is ideological opinion, which is the very definition of irrationality. Indeed, the liberal marketplace of ideas upholds a terrible pseudo-truth: that opinions and truths are identical, the very definition of the irrational.

In any case, we are given departments and programs that are committed to this abstract and pseudo-rationality of the liberal marketplace of ideas. Such spaces cannot help but alienate students and scholars who come from oppressed and marginalized backgrounds, especially since the terms of their oppression/marginalization are transformed into abstract arguments whereas their own arguments are treated as “political” and thus biased and irrational. Those who have the privilege of absenting themselves from these struggles imagine they are rationally outside of them; their lives are not impacted by these politics even though their lives, and their opinions, impact politics. Those who do not possess this privilege––who are impacted but are not allowed to impact––are asked to subordinate themselves to the “diversity” of the liberal marketplace of ideas that has deemed them to be irrational.

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If the aim of this liberal regime of thinking is diversity of opinion in an idea marketplace, we need to ask what sort of “diverse” community will result from a department or program where scholars from oppressed groups are largely excluded from the vaunted liberal dialogue? They are excluded because they either refuse to be part of these communities (since they feel unwelcome), are forced to leave these communities (from the stress of being made unwelcome), or just fall silent because every time they challenge their conservative and reactionary colleagues for being incorrect or wrong they are told it’s part of their duty as an academic to inhabit this kind of “dialogue” as part of being a proper scholar. For, despite all of the hyped-up panic of “cancel culture” it is rarely the conservative academic who is in danger of losing their job for their ideas––such academics are only punished when they break academic decorum, either refusing to play the liberal game of the marketplace of ideas or assaulting/harassing their students or colleagues. And whenever they are held to account for violating liberal norms they usually rant about political correctness, cancel culture, “wokeness”, and drum up the sympathy of their reactionary friends and even the liberal media as if it is “political correctness gone mad” that they are being disciplined for sexual assault, targeting colleagues with hate mail, or calling students racial slurs––to cite just a few common examples.

The truth, however, is that it is the left-wing scholars who are normally under threat, whose jobs and funding are targeted, for daring to call their colleagues racists and sexists, by publicly taking stances against state power, and for publishing work that funding bodies and university boards find threatening. George Ciccariello-Maher was fired from a tenured position at Drexel University because he mocked the notion of “white genocide” (i.e. the idea that there was a genocide against white people because of miscegenation) and faced a backlash of reactionaries calling the university and demanding his removal. Valentina Azarova’s tenured candidacy at the University of Toronto’s Faculty of Law was terminated because she was a supporter of Palestinian human rights. These are simply two examples in a long list of left-wing scholars whose job security has been rendered precarious because of right-wing pressure, often from non-scholars and conservative student groups who also complain about “free speech” when their ideas and actions are criticized or censured. This is less an example of hypocrisy and more of an example of partisans who understand that they are involved in a war of ideas and will use every mechanism, even the liberalism they pretend to despise, to achieve victory. They know that the marketplace of ideas, like the real world market, means enforcement and war; that it is always regulated even when––and especially when––it pretends it is not. This is why right-wing scholars such as Bruce Gilley complain about their free speech being violated when their credentials are questioned, while arguing that right-wing scholars should unite like NATO to push left-wing scholars out of academia. They know they are playing a game that liberals allow them to play, that they are invited participants in the faux-diversity of academia, and that they can feign victimhood when they are criticized while simultaneously working to marginalize and muzzle those scholars who challenge their backwards worldviews. The tactic is quite effective: when challenged or criticized they get to write opinion columns in the Wall Street Journal (or other similar periodicals) where they complain about being cancelled and wax eloquently about free speech, they are handed book deals by publishers keen to prove they care about free speech, their critics are marginalized as “illiberal” (a sin for progressives but not for conservatives), and the imaginary marketplace of ideas moves further rightwards.

All of this is to say that the end result is precisely the kind of mono-culture that liberal ideologues religiously believe the marketplace of ideas is meant to prevent. That is, all of the claims that we need to have ideologically diverse departments and programs because there would be a mono-culture otherwise ignore the fact that there already is a mono-culture. That mono-culture is a liberalism that permits reaction. Such a mono-culture works to largely stifle political debate while sometimes, by necessity because of its vaunted claims about critical investigation, allowing radical scholarship that it can eventually profit from. This allowance is always precarious because of the admission of reaction: when the conservative scholars come for “critical theory” or “critical race theory” or whatever they choose to target, the liberal university will sacrifice those scholars than can be sacrificed. The university is a site that can generate radical theoretical investigation because it permits the study of history and society and everything. At the same time, though, as an ideological state apparatus the university attempts to bind this investigation to the limits of the marketplace of ideas, neutralizing and profiting from radical scholarship. Hence, every radical scholar who has passed through academia and retained their radicalism––sometimes even contributing to work that will later be studied in university courses––knows that in reality the university systems of the imperialist metropoles are, as a whole, overdetermined by liberal ideology. And due to this fact, this overarching actual mono-culture, radical scholars either find themselves in an “undercommons” relationship to the university, as Moten and Harney put it, or become assimilated to and captured by the liberal mono-culture.

#### 4. Reciprocity---our advocacy is equally utopian to the AFF’s fantasies about averting extinction.

Richard Falk 21. Professor Emeritus of International Law at Princeton University and Fellow of the Orfalea Center of Global Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara. “Global Solidarity: Toward a Politics of Impossibility.” Opening Essay for a GTI Forum. https://greattransition.org/gti-forum/global-solidarity-falk.

We must start by rejecting conventional foreclosures of the imagination. We cannot accept that politics is “the art of the possible” if the “possible” remains circumscribed by the play of current forces of stasis, confining the idea of change to policy shifts at the margin or—at the most ambitious—elite-driven national revolutions. The structures of state and market remain essentially untouched and continue to run the show. As long as these constraints are not removed, the Great Transition will be stymied. The first challenge is to find effective ways to subvert and transform these primordial structures. Meeting this challenge starts with liberating the mind from ingrained conventions that solidify the ideological biases of modernity.

If we carefully consider our own lives, we are likely to appreciate how many epochal public happenings had been previously deemed “impossible,” or only seemed possible after the fact. A potent illustration of the tyranny of a status quo bias is Winston Churchill’s derisive attitude toward Gandhi during the early stages of the rise of Indian nationalism. Dismissive of any threat to Indian colonial rule, Churchill described Gandhi as a “malignant subversive fanatic” and “a seditious Middle Temple lawyer, now posing as a fakir of a type well known in the East, striding half-naked up the steps of the Viceregal palace.” The great British war leader displayed his attachment to a Western understanding of power that had little insight into historical circumstances vulnerable to anti-colonial nationalism.

Similar patterns of the seemingly impossible happening are evident in contemporary history, such as the peaceful ending of the Cold War followed by the collapse of the Soviet Union; the American defeat in the Vietnam War despite overwhelming military superiority; China’s half-century rise from mass impoverishment and backwardness to prime geopolitical challenger, including threatening Western mastery of innovative technology such as AI, G5 connectivity, robotics, and genetic engineering; and the abandonment of apartheid by South Africa in the face of nonviolent resistance from within and anti-apartheid solidarity from without.

What these examples demonstrate is that our understanding of the scope of the possible has been artificially circumscribed in ways that protect the interests of various elites in the maintenance of the status quo, making it seem reckless and futile to mount structural challenges however justified they may be morally or bio-politically. Such foreclosures of imagined futures have been key to the protection of institutions like slavery, discrimination, and warfare but often remain limited in scope to specific locales or policy areas. The uniqueness of the Anthropocene is to restrict the possible to unsustainable and dysfunctional structures and modes of behavior, while bringing to a head the question of finding more viable ways of organizing life on the planet and living together in a manner that protects future generations.

Such foreclosures of the imagination inflict damage both by shortening our temporal vision and by constraining our understanding of useful knowledge. Despite what science and rationality tell us about the future, our leaders—and, indeed, most of us—give scant practical attention to what is needed to preserve and improve the life prospects for future generations. Given the scope and depth of the challenges, responsible anthropocentrism in the twenty-first century should incorporate a sense of urgency to temporal axes of concern. We now need a “politics of the impossible,” a necessary utopianism that stands as an avowal of the attainability of the Great Transition. We must begin by interrogating the semantics of the possible as a cultural, political, economic, and ideological construct binding humanity to a system that is increasingly bio-politically self-destructive for the species and its natural habitat.

Closely connected to this foreclosure of our temporal vision has been a scientifically conditioned epistemology asserting the limits of useful knowledge. Within the most influential epistemic communities, an Enlightenment ideology prevails that sets boundaries limiting productive intellectual inquiry. The positive legacies of the Enlightenment in grounding knowledge on scientifically verified evidence rather than cultural superstitions and religiously guided prejudice and dogma are real and important, but there have been costs as well. Notably, a bias against subjectivity discourages normative inquiry and advocacy, which is dismissed as “non-scientific.” The noted Confucian scholar Tu Wei-Ming has powerfully criticized the impact of what he calls “instrumental rationalism” on the capacity of Western civilization to embrace the value of empathy, which he views as integral to human dignity and humane governance.

We need a moral epistemology to achieve responsible anthropocentrism, exploring right and wrong, and distinguishing between desirable and diminished futures, not as matters of opinion, but as the underpinnings of “normative knowledge.” Universities, split into specialized disciplines and privileging work within the Enlightenment paradigm, are largely oblivious to the need for a holistic understanding of the complexities and solidarities with which we must grapple in order for humanity to extricate itself from present structures that divide and fragment the human experience, strangling possibilities.

It may be helpful to distinguish “the feasible,” “the necessary,” and “the desirable” to further illuminate “the pursuit of the impossible.” In short, “the feasible” from the perspective of the status quo seems incapable, under the best of circumstances, of achieving “the necessary” and “the desirable.” We will need to pursue “the desirable” to mobilize the capabilities needed to engage effectively in realizing “the necessary.”

If existing conditions continue, the bio-political destiny of the human species seems destined for dark times. In the past, before the Nuclear Age, we could ignore the future and address the material, security, and spiritual needs of bounded communities, and success or failure had no ramifications for larger systems. Now we must find ways to attend to the whole, or the parts will perish and likely destroy one another in the process. St. Francis found some fitting words for such an emancipatory path: “Start by doing what is necessary, then what is possible, and suddenly you are doing the impossible.”

#### 5. Predictability---it’s a cap k, probably the most popular argument ever.

#### Capitalism is unsustainable.

Fraser 21 — professor of philosophy and politics at the New School for Social Research, interviewed by Martín Mosquera, (Nancy, 9/10/21, “Nancy Fraser: ‘Cannibal Capitalism’ is on Our Horizon,” https://www.jacobinmag.com/2021/09/nancy-fraser-cannibal-capitalism-interview)

As you point out, the COVID crisis is a dramatic example of how these externalities interact in complicated ways with capitalism, leading to the kind of capitalist crises that you’ve described as “multidimensional.” Elsewhere, you’ve also suggested that, at least since 2008, the current stage of financialized, neoliberal capitalism is undergoing a crisis — perhaps terminal — that could eventually mean a historical shift to a different form of capitalist accumulation. How do you evaluate the current crisis?

NF I want to underline several points that are already implicit in the way you pose the question. One is that we should distinguish between sectoral crises and general crises. A sectoral crisis means that there is one significant area in a given capitalist regime of accumulation or phase of capitalist development that is overtly dysfunctional, while others appear to be more or less okay. We often tend to think of economic crises as sectoral in just this way. Historians could point to numerous examples of such sectoral crises, which pertain to one realm of society only. But that’s different from a general crisis of the whole social order. The concept of a general crisis suggests a convergence or overdetermination of several major impasses and strands of dysfunction. Not just one sector, but all or nearly all major societal sectors are in crisis and are exacerbating one another. That was the case in the 1930s, for example.

I suspect that we are living through a general crisis of this sort now. Certainly, we have seen severe forms of economic crisis, like the 2007–8 financial near-meltdown. And although it may have looked as if our rulers found a way to patch that up, that crisis is not really solved. Pervasive financialization remains a ticking time bomb. But, as the recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report shows, our economic woes have converged with another very severe, even catastrophic crisis: namely, global warming. This ecological crisis has been brewing for a long time and is now becoming palpable. More and more segments of the global population, including segments that have been relatively insulated from its worst effects, are awakening to it.

There is also, as I said before, a crisis of social reproduction, which is stressing or depleting our capacities for creating, caring for, and sustaining human beings: childcare and eldercare, education and health care. As states disinvest from public provision, and as depressed wage levels force us to devote more hours to paid work, the system gobbles up the time and energy needed for care work. So, that sector too is in crisis, especially in pandemic conditions. One could say that COVID has greatly exacerbated the preexisting crisis of social reproduction. But it would be just as true to say that the preexisting crisis of social reproduction (including disinvestment from public health infrastructure and social provision) has greatly exacerbated the effects of COVID.

Finally, we also face a major political crisis. This is, at one level, a crisis of governance, meaning that even powerful states like the United States lack the capacity to solve the problems the system generates. They are depleted, ~~paralyzed~~ by gridlock and outgunned by megacorporations, which have captured virtually all regulatory agencies and engineered huge tax cuts for themselves and for the rich. Deprived of revenue for decades, states have allowed their infrastructures to crumble and have depleted their stockpiles of essential public goods, such as personal protective equipment (PPE). They are, by definition, unable to deal with questions like climate change, which are not containable within any jurisdictional borders. The upshot is an acute crisis of governance at the structural level. But there’s also a political crisis at another level, a crisis of hegemony in the Gramscian sense: the widespread defection from politics as usual, from the established political parties and elites who have been tarnished by association with neoliberalization, and the appearance of previously unthinkable populisms — some potentially emancipatory, others decidedly not.

The upshot is that we now face a tangle of multiple crises: an economic crisis, a crisis of social reproduction, an ecological crisis, and a two-sided political crisis. To my mind, this adds up to a general crisis of capitalist society. Its effects pop out all over, first here, then there, then somewhere else, like a metastasizing cancer. Every effort to patch up one outbreak only leads to others, afflicting other sectors, regions, populations, until the whole social body is overwhelmed. The experience of general crisis has become palpable for many people, but that doesn’t mean that it will produce a total breakdown or revolutionary climax any time soon. Capitalist crises can go on for decades, unfortunately. One could say that the whole first half of the twentieth century up until the defeat of fascism at the end of World War II was just one long, roiling general crisis of liberal-colonial capitalism. So, we might be in for a long slog.

#### They must respond in the next speech. Otherwise they concede they link in and the impacts of capitalism. Pushing clash on the K off to second rebuttal prevents deep engagement which boosts education and better interrogates assumptions.

# 2NC

### OFF

**Interpretation: the 1AC must propose and defend an instance of resolutional action.**

**They violate each of the above words’ requirements for government action.**

**Two impacts:**

**1---FAIRNESS. Non-topical advocacies allow the aff to unilaterally determine negative positions and create an incentive to minimize viable contestation. Debate’s a game---competition precedes pedagogy because it’s a procedural question.**

**2---CLASH. Boundless topics spread neg prep thin, making focused research and innovation impossible. Debates with depth of contestation make us better scholars and advocates, which turns their impacts. Prioritize debate’s potential to forge a techne of argumentative refinement because that’s its only unique benefit.**

**TVA solves—read topical argos about how recognition good for black people**

#### Evaluate competing models of debate. Alternative frames for judging T are arbitrary and encourage intervention.

### OFF

Interp: teams defending a critical position must accept open cross

Staandards

1] engagement

2] f

### OFF

#### The 1AC’s atomized and identity-based approach to political organizing precludes a class struggle---that causes extinction through environmental degradation, imperialism, and the collapse of human civilization---the alternative is to build an economic democracy.

Chris **Wright 23**, Ph.D. from the University of Illinois at Chicago, author of *Worker Cooperatives and Revolution* and *Popular Radicalism* and *The Unemployed In Chicago During The Great Depression*, 2/22/2023, "How to Rebuild the Left," https://dissidentvoice.org/2023/02/how-to-rebuild-the-left/

One might as well state the matter clearly: given the realities of **global warming**, rampant **environmental destruction**, escalating **imperialistic clashes**, and a **crisis-prone** global economy, there is no hope for the world unless an **international left** can be **resurrected**. A left at least as powerful as the one that created social democracy in the wake of World War II. As complex in their origins as the world’s ills are, they can be expressed and explained in a single sentence: internationally, there is a political right, a proto-fascist far-right, and a stagnant though tenacious center, but, in effect, no left. That is, there is no real force that authentically represents the interests of the exploited and immiserated majority. No wonder things are so bad. The burning question is: **how to build** such a left?

How **not** to build it is **clear**: devote **inordinate attention** to issues of **race**, **gender**, and **sexuality**. Indeed, a major reason the left is so [**deficient**] weak today is that for decades it—or something that has claimed the mantle of the left, in academia, the media, and politics—has focused **disproportionately** on such issues, neglecting grievances that **unite people** across boundaries of race, gender, and sexuality. The ineffectual nature of such a “left” should be obvious from one consideration alone: “**universal**” issues—which affect workers **whatever their identity**—of wages, working conditions, income and wealth distribution, scarce housing, unemployment, public health, student and consumer debt, ecological destruction, the shrinking and starving of public goods, murderous imperialism, hypertrophying militarism, and the very **survivability of human civilization** are scarcely touched by **discourses** and **activism** around racial and gender disparities. (“We want to have it **as good as white cisgendered men!**” Okay, meanwhile you’ll **still be dealing with all the crises I just mentioned**.) If you want to **build a new world**, you don’t go about it by **ignoring working-class grievances** as such, attending only to matters that affect, say, women, gays, and black people; you target the very **structures** of capitalism, the class-defined **exploitative institutions** that have oppressed **billions** (of white men too, even heterosexual ones!) for centuries.

It has been fashionable among liberals and “leftists” for years to ridicule this so-called “**class reductionism**,” but thankfully **resistance** is finally **building** to reactionary **po**st**mo**dern **shibboleths** about the **equivalence** of **different types of oppression**, or even the priority of racial and gender oppression over class! Norman Finkelstein, for example, who is widely known as the courageous and academically martyred advocate of Palestinian rights, has just published a book called I’ll Burn That Bridge When I Get to It!: Heretical Thoughts on Identity Politics, Cancel Culture, and Academic Freedom. I’ve written a lengthy review here; suffice it to say that Finkelstein is fearless, and ruthless, in his exposition of analytical and political common sense. Adolph and Touré Reed are well known for exposing the follies of what they call “**race reductionism**”—for example, the **gloomy** and **ahistorical** academic school of **Afro-pessimism**—and their colleague Cedric Johnson has published a book called The Panthers Can’t Save Us Now: Debating Left Politics and Black Lives Matter that eviscerates the current faddish nostalgia for Black Power. (Again, for anyone who would prefer a summary and critique, I wrote a review of the book that also goes into some depth in defense of Marxism against its postmodern critics.)

Examples could be multiplied, but Musa al-Gharbi has already performed this service in a recent article titled “Woke-ism Is Winding Down.” If it is true that wokeness has passed its peak and is, or soon will be, on the decline, this is likely not something to be uncritically celebrated. Nevertheless, it may **open the space** for a more **serious left politics** that tackles agendas such as rolling back American **imperialism** and rebuilding **social democracy**. Or even, perhaps, advancing the distant goal of **economic democracy**, i.e., **workers’ control of the economy**. Somehow, this traditional **lodestar of the left** has been almost totally **forgotten** and **abandoned**.

**Left academics** have honed the art of **“problematizing” political common sense**, for example by inventing a concept called “**racial capitalism**” and using it to argue that “**white supremacy**” is a **pillar of capitalism** **no less** foundational than **class exploitation itself**—as if Shanghai or, say, Lagos, Nigeria, not being ruled by “whites,” aren’t capitalist cities—but people with a modicum of analytical intelligence will see through these woke gambits. The **more** you talk about how **racist all whites are** and how much **more oppressed** all blacks [black people] are, the more you’re serving the **business class** by **dividing** the **working class**. Why else would the New York Times, quintessential outlet of liberal business, have invested enormous resources into the 1619 Project if not that it understood the profoundly non-radical implications of such racialism? Better to talk about racial capitalism than simply capitalism—racial exploitation than class exploitation—reparations (at the expense of white workers) than socialism. The **reparations discourse** is a **brilliant way** to destroy **working-class solidarity**.

With a kernel of political rationality, one can see that it’s **necessary** to reach out to **white workers**, not **alienate** them or **ignore** them. Leftists could learn a thing or two from (of all people) Ralph Waldo **Emerson**, of whom a woman who frequently heard his lectures said, “Whatever else it might be that I cannot understand, he tells me this one thing, that I am not a God-forsaken sinner. He has made me feel that I am worth something in the sight of God, and not a despised creature.” The contemporary “left,” from feminists to critical race theorists, tells **white men** (and the women who identify with them) that they’re **despised creatures** worth nothing in the sight of God. It shouldn’t be a surprise when people take this message to heart and turn to a Republican Party that cares not a whit about their well-being but at least tells them it does.

As surprising as this might sound, **empathy**, rather than demonization, can be a **useful tool** for **organizing a movement**. If, like most liberals and leftists, one doesn’t live among the **mythologized** and **despised “white working class,”** one can at least read about their **experiences**, thus undermining one’s own prejudices and finding **common ground** on which to educate and **organize**. Take a book like Arlie Hochschild’s Strangers in Their Own Land: Anger and Mourning on the American Right, published in 2016. She makes it clear that, however misguided are most supporters of Donald **Trump’s** Republican Party, the large majority are not **neo-Nazis**, **virulent racists**, or **wealthy cynics** eager to **crush the working class**. “Blue-collar” white men across the South, and the communities they represent, are “victims” no less than the victimized groups celebrated by liberals. **Neoliberal capitalism** has left them **behind**, as they suffer from (at best) **stagnating wages**, environmental **pollution** and destruction, decaying infrastructure, decaying communities, and poor public health outcomes. Meanwhile, they’re conscious of their low status: “we’re seen as backward and poor.” Hochschild’s exercise in empathy, as in the following passage, is sadly lacking among most liberals and leftists today:

You [an average white man in the South] are a stranger in your own land. You do not recognize yourself in how others see you. It is a struggle to feel seen and honored…

You turn to your workplace for respect—but wages are flat and jobs insecure. So you look to other sources of honor. You get no extra points for your race. You look to gender, but if you’re a man, you get no extra points for that either. If you are straight you are proud to be a married, heterosexual male, but that pride is now seen as a potential sign of homophobia—a source of dishonor. Regional honor? Not that either. You are often disparaged for the place you call home. As for the church, many look down on it, and the proportion of Americans outside any denomination has risen… People like you—white, Christian, working and middle class—suffer this sense of **fading honor demographically** too, as this very group has declined in numbers.

To begin to wrest power from a depraved **Republican** and **Democratic elite**, a corporate sector that cares about literally **nothing but profits**, it is necessary to appeal to “white America” no less than “black America” (to use race-reductionist metaphors implicit in identity politics). As always, you start by **emphasizing** what you have in **common** with people, for instance that you care deeply, as they do, about community, family, economic security, a healthy natural environment, and that you resent no less than they do **impersonal government bureaucracies** that tax your hard-earned money to wage wars abroad and in fact—here’s an opportunity for education—redistribute income upwards, to wealthy investors and big business. You don’t talk about how **racist** these people are—after all, everyone is a little racist (including against whites), a little sexist (against men too: “Men are arrogant, stupid, misogynistic!”), and has numerous prejudices and unappealing traits—but instead you argue that people of **all races** are being **exploited** and **victimized**, and that ostensibly “lazy” black people work just as hard as whites to get ahead but are just as burdened by taxes and bills and debt. It doesn’t require much imagination to find **common ground** with struggling whites. Over time, using the “class reductionist” strategy of Bernie Sanders, you **educate people** and build a **movement** that promises to **transform society** **much more radically** than little **identitarian programs** of **reducing disparities** will.

**None of this requires that you sacrifice the interests of minorities**. It is rather the **only way** to **fully realize those interests**, given both the necessity of a **broad popular movement** and the (in most respects) **shared interests** of minorities and working-class white men. Through **common struggle**, not through woke **demonization**, you’ll succeed in reducing the incidence of racism, sexism, homophobia, and other such **vices**.

In short, as Finkelstein argues in his eloquent new book, it’s urgent for leftists to shed their race obsessions and gender obsessions and remember the Marxian lesson that **class solidarity**—albeit incorporating identitarian goals—is the **sine qua non** of a revolutionary movement. **Hardly anything** is **more important** today than organizing to make **class struggle** the **defining issue** of, for example, the **left wing** of the Democratic Party.

**Objective economic structures, not subjective identities**, are the **fundamental evil** to be combatted. **Until they are**, the left will remain, in effect, **nonexistent**.

#### The 1AC’s value stands on its own---responding to it with judgement and the ballot is a hollow validation that siphons off political energy and draws them into the oppressive gaze of the academy---vote neg to decline affirmation.

**Phillips 99**, Professor of Communication and Rhetorical Studies at Syracuse University. (Kendall R., “Rhetoric, Resistance, and Criticism: A Response to Sloop and Ono,” Philosophy & Rhetoric, Vol. 32, No. 1, p. 96-101, Penn State University Press, https://www.jstor.org/stable/40238019)

My concern with this movement centers around an issue that Sloop and Ono seem to take as a given, namely, the role of the critic. On one hand, calling for the systematic investigation of existing marginalized discourses is a natural extension both of critical rhetoric (see McKerrow 1989, 1991) and of the general ideological turn in criticism (see Wander 1983). On the other hand, the ease of transition from criticism in the service of resistance to criticism of resistance may obscure the need to address some fun- damental issues regarding the general function of rhetorical criticism in an uncertain and contentious world. Beyond licensing the critic to engage in political struggle, Sloop and Ono advocate the pursuit of covert resistant discourses.

Such a move not only stretches our understanding of rhetoric and criticism, but also alters significantly the relationship between critic and out-law. Critical interrogation of dominant discursive practices in the service of political/cultural reform is supplanted in favor of positioning covert out-law communities as objects of investigation. Invited to seek out subversive discourses, the critic is positioned as the **active agent of change** and the out-law **discourse** becomes **merely instrumental**. Rather than academic criticism acting in service of **everyday** acts of **resistance**, everyday acts of **resistance** are put into the service of academic criticism.

Rhetorical resistance

That we are "caught within conflicting logics of justice that are culturally struggled over" (Sloop and Ono 1997, 50) and that rhetoric is employed in these struggles seems an uncontroversial statement. Despite the theoretical miasma surrounding judgment, Sloop and Ono accurately note, the material process of rendering judgments (and of disputing the logics of litigation) continues in the world of actually practiced discourse. In the materially contested world. rhetoric is utilized both by those seeking to secure the grounds of dominant judgment and by those seeking to undermine or supplant dominant cultural logics with some out-law notion of justice.

The distinction between these two cultural groups, "in-law" and out- law, however, deserves some consideration prior to any discussion of the role of the critic as implied in the out-law discourse project. The discourse of the dominant or those within the bounds of superordinate logics of liti- gation is reminiscent of Michel De Certeau's (1984) strategic discourse. For De Certeau, strategies are utilized by those who have authority by vir- tue of their prOper position. Strategies exploit the institutionally guaran- teed background consensus by which power relations (and litigations) are maintained and advanced. In contrast, tactics are utilized by those having no proper place of authority within the discursive economy who must seek opportunities whereby the discourse of the dominant might be undermined and contested. To extend 8100p and Ono's definition, out-law discourses are those that can (and, by their analysis, do) take advantage of situations (e.g., race riots) to disrupt the regularity of dominant cultural groups.

The ongoing struggle between strategically instituted cultural dominants and the "out-law always lurk[ing] in the distance" (66) is acknowledged, even celebrated, by Sloop and Ono. What their acknowledgment fails to provide, however, is a clear need for critical intervention. Indeed. quite the reverse is presented: It is the critic (particularly the left-leaning critic) who needs out-law discourse. While the struggles over justice, equality, and freedom have gone on, the left-leaning critics are those who have theoreti- cally excluded themselves from the disputes. The study of out-law discourses, then. provides a means to reinvigorate the intellectual and re-in-stitute (academic) leftist thinking into popular political struggles (53—54).

Thus, Sloop and Ono's project incorporates three types of rhetoric: the rhetoric of the in-law. presumably the traditional object of critical attention; the rhetoric of the out-law, the study of which may transform our understanding of judgment as well as reinvigorate leftist democratic critiques; and the rhetoric of the critics who, having lost their political potency. can exploit the discourse of the out-law to promote ideological struggles. It is to this critical rhetoric that I now turn.

Resistance criticism

Sloop and Ono (1997) clearly state the relationship they envision between the rhetorical critic and out-law discourse: "Ultimately, we will argue that the role of critical rhetoricians is to produce ‘materialist conceptions of judgment.' using out-law judgments to disrupt dominant logics of judg- ment" (54; emphasis added). Here the critic seeks out vernacular discourse (60), focuses on the methods and values embodied in these communities (62), listens to and evaluates the out-law community (62-63), and chooses appropriate discourses for the purpose of disrupting dominant practices (63). Essentially, it is the critic who seeks out marginalized discourses and returns them to the center for the purpose of provoking dominant cultural groups (63).

Despite acknowledging the efficacy of out-law discourses, Sloop and Ono assume that the critiques generated and presented by the out-law com- munity have only minimal effect. The irony. and indeed arrogance. of this assumption is evident when they claim: "There are cases, however, when, without the prompting of academic critics, out-law discourses serve local purposes at times and at others resonate within dominant discourses. dis- rupting sedimented ways of thinking, transforming dominant forms of judg- ment" (60; emphasis added). Sloop and Ono seem to suggest that such lo- cally generated critiques are the exception, whereas the political efficacy of the academic critic is the rule. This seems an odd claim. given that the justification for their out-law discourse project is the lack of politically viable academic critique and the perceived potency of out-law conceptions of judgment. Their suggestion that out-law communities are in **need** of the academic critic **contradicts** not only the **already disruptive nature** of **existing out-law discourses** (the grounds for using out-law discourse), but also the impotence of contemporary critical discourse (the warrant for studying out-law discourse).

By this I do not mean that the critiques and theories generated by academically instituted intellectuals have not been incorporated into subversive discourses. Just as out-law discourses inevitably mount critiques of dominant logics. so. too. the perspectives on rhetoric and criticism generated by academics are used in resistance movements. Feminist critiques of patriarchy, queer theories of homophobia, postcolonial interrogations of race have found their way into the service of resistant groups. The key distinction I wish to make is that the existence of criticism (academic or self-generated) in resistance does not necessitate Sloop and Ono's move to a criticism of resistance.

What Sloop and Ono fail to offer is an adequate **arg**ument for "taking public speaking out of the streets and **studying it in the classroom**, for treating it less as an expression of protest" (Wander 1983. 3) and more as an **object for analysis** and reproduction within the political economy of the academy. Philip Wander made a similar charge against Herbert Wicheln's early critical project. and this concern should remain at the forefront of any discussion aimed at expanding the scope and function of criticism. Sloop and Ono offer numerous directives for the critic without addressing whether the critic should be examining out-law discourses in the first place.

While it is too early to suggest any definitive answer to the question of criticism of resistance. some preliminary arguments as to why critics should not pursue out-law discourses can be offered:

(1) **Hidden out-law discourses** may have **good reasons to stay hidden**. Sloop and Ono specifically instruct us that "the logic of the out-law must constantly be searched for, brought forth" (66) and used to disrupt dominant practices. But are we to believe that all out-law discourses are prepared to mount such a challenge to the dominant cultural logic? Or, indeed, that the members of out-law communities are **prepared** to be brought into the **arena of public surveillance** in the service of reconstituting logics of litigation? It seems highly unlikely that all divergent cultural groups have developed equally. or that all members of these groups share Sloop and Ono's "imperial impulse" (51) to promote their conceptions and practices of justice.

(2) Academic critical discourse is not transparent. Here I allude to the overall problem of translation (see Foucault 1994; Lyotard 1988; Lyotard and Thebaud 1985: Zabus 1995) as an extension of the previous concern. Critical discourse cannot become the medium of commensurability for di- vergent language games. Are we to believe that the "use" of out-law dis- course by critics to disrupt dominant practices can fail to do violence to these diverse/divergent logics? Are out-law discourses merely **tools to be exploited** and **discarded** in the pursuit of returning leftist academic dis- course to the center?

(3) Perhaps the academic translation of out-law discourse could be true to the internal logic of the out-law community. And, perhaps the re-presentation of out-law logic within the academic community will bestow a degree of legitimacy on the out-law community. Nonetheless, the effect of **legitimizing** out-law discourse is **unknown** and **potentially destructive**. In an effort to siphon the political energy of out-law discourse into academic practice, we may ultimately **destroy** the dissatisfaction that serves as a cathexis for these out-law discourses. It seems possible that **academic recognition might take the place of struggle for material opportunities** (see Fraser 1997). But, will academic legitimation create any material changes in the conditions of out-law communities? I mean to suggest, not that it is better to allow the out-law community to suffer for its cause. but rather that incorporating the struggle into an (admittedly) impotent academic critique does **not offer a** prima facie **alternative**.

(4) Criticism of resistance denies the practical and theoretical impor- tance of opportunity. Returning to De Certeau's notion of tactics. the cru- cial element of these discursive moves is their use of opportunity to disrupt the proper authority of the dominant. The kairas of intervention provides the key to undermining "in-law" discourses. But when is the "right mo- ment in time" for the academic reproduction of out-law discourse? Map- ping the points of resistance (a la Foucault and Biesccker) entails interro- gating "in-law" discourses for their incongruities and contradictions, not turning the academic gaze upon those communities waiting for an opportu- nity. Out-laws do not lurk in the forefront (66), hoping to be exposed by academic critics; they wait for the right moment for their disruption. Rheto- ricians can provide rhetorical instructions for seeking opportunities and for exploiting these opportunities (literally making the culturally weaker argument the stronger), but this does not justify interrogating (intervening in) the cultural logics of the marginalized.

The concerns raised here are not designed to dismiss Sloop and Ono's provocative essay. The divergent critical logic they outline deserves care- ful consideration within the critical community, and it is my hope that the concerns I raise may help to further problematize the relationship between resistance and rhetorical criticism.

Rhetorical criticism

As I have suggested, my purpose is to use the provocative nature of Sloop and Ono‘s project to extend disputes regarding the ends of rhetorical criti- cism. Diverging perspectives on the ends of criticism have been categorized by Barbara Warnick (1992) as falling along four general lines: artist, analyst. audience. and advocate. Leah Ceccarelli (1997) discems similar categories around the aesthetic, epistemic. and political ends of rhetorical criticism.

The out-law discourse project presents clear ties to the notion of critic as advocate. For Sloop and Ono. the critic is an interested party, discerning (and at times disputing) the underlying values and forces contained within a discourse. Additionally. however, the out-law discourse critic is an ana- lyst focusing on the hidden, aberrant texts of the out-law and "**render[ing] an** incoherent or **esoteric text comprehensible**" (Warnick 1992, 233). Now, I am not suggesting that a critic must serve only one function or that the roles of advocate and analyst are mutually exclusive; rather, these entanglings of power (political ends) and knowledge (epistemic ends) are inevitable. My concern is that we not neglect the complexity of these entanglements. Turning covert out-law discourses into objects of our analyses runs the risk of **subjecting them** both to the **gaze of the dominant** and to the **power relations of the academy**. As the works of Michel Foucault (es- pecially 1979, 1980) aptly illustrate, practices presented as extending such noble goals as emancipation and humanity may **endow institutions of confinement** and **objectification**. Any justification for studying out-law dis- course because doing so may extend our political usefulness in the pursuit of emancipatory goals must not obscure the already existing power relations authorizing such studies. Our attempts to extend our domains of knowledge and expertise (authority) must not be pursued unreflexively.

#### 2. Capitalism is the root cause of anti-Blackness – upholding cap propagates the subjugation of Black communities globally

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Global capital and its effects Expressions of violence are often the result of structural arrangements. Much of the routinized violence of the present day is tied to localized manifestations of global capitalism. These manifestations have resulted in new social and spatial relations, labor regimes, and specific practices of organizing and managing built and “natural” environments, as well as the populations therein. Regarding Afro-descendant populations, these changes result in new manifestations of violence. Cowen and Lewis (2016) argue that anti-Blackness takes on specific characteristics based on “shifts in the social order.” These shifts are part of emerging global political economic trends. Phenomena like white flight, urban renewal, and Black spatial displacement—which have affected the lived experiences of Black populations in the United States—are examples of how urban spaces in the United States have shifted in their social, economic, and material makeup over the past five decades. While capitalism has always had a global reach, the late 20th century saw capitalist power achieve unprecedented levels of influence. This consolidation of capitalist power occurred, in part, as a response to the struggles of racialized populations and workers’ unions which, in the mid to late 20th century, demanded dignified employment, livable wages, social programs, and land reform, among other things (Gilmore, 2007: 39–40; Harvey, 2007: 7; Kaufman, 2013; Woods, 2017: 188). As a result of the organizing capabilities and political demands made by those in labor movements, the Civil Rights movement, the Black Power movement, and land reform activists, new manifestations of capitalism emerged that worked to reverse and appropriate the gains made by these movements and reify the influence of capitalist actors. Huey Newton diagnosed this phenomenon in 1971, noting that capital (specifically within the United States) has not only expanded its territorial boundaries but also shifted its forms of control such that there exists a global capitalist power that controls “all the world’s lands and people” (Newton, 2002: 186–187 emphasis in original). According to Newton, one effect of the expanding reach of global capitalism is that the roles of nation-states fundamentally change. While previously nation-states maintained greater control of the political and economic aspects of their territory, the increased power of capital now means that nation-states’ “self-determination, economic determination, and cultural determination have been transformed by the imperialists of the ruling circle” (Newton, 2002: 170). More specifically, the governing role of the nation-state has become subordinated to the agenda of capital(ists), so that corporations’ actions “directly structure and articulate territories and populations. They tend to make nation-states merely instruments to record the flows of the commodities, monies, and populations that they set in motion” (Hardt and Negri, 2000: 31). In addition, sovereign state actions such as policing, military interventions, state and municipal funding, and taxes (or lack thereof) are increasingly influenced by, and manipulated for, the propagation of global capital. In short, expressions of state sovereignty are co-opted to benefit capital. As global purveyors of capital increasingly replace the nation-state as controllers of sovereign space, the various populations within these formerly bounded territories become subject to a number of shifts. In order to counter labor organizing, capital uses the “spatial fix” to find labor pools and regulations that it can more profitably exploit (Harvey, 2001). This manifests in phenomena like capital flight and “outsourcing,” in which production moves to new locations. It is, in part, through such arrangements that the deindustrialization of cities like Detroit, Milwaukee, Baltimore, and Pittsburgh occurred, as the owners of the means of production moved manufacturing facilities to areas with cheaper sources of labor and less stringent financial and environmental regulations (Boggs, 1968). A result of this geographic rearrangement of production is that labor practices which previously provided stable, 10 Environment and Planning D: Society and Space 37(1) long-term, unionized jobs are replaced by “flexible” arrangements defined by temporary, low-paid, insecure, and nonunionized employment. Simultaneously, precarious laborers, now under- and unemployed, occupy neighborhoods where land precipitously drops in value. With time, these undervalued locations become sites of real estate speculation and urban renewal (Marable, 2000; Taylor, 2016). These effects often take on both class and racial characteristics. Newton (2002), for instance, notes how globalized capital leads to increasing numbers of Blacks falling into the category of the lumpen proletariat (196; 210). Classed subordination is not the only (nor necessarily the most fundamental) form of oppression Black people face, however. Indeed, in the modern epoch, anti-Blackness does not simply “follow” global capitalism. Rather, through perpetual and multifaceted enactments of violence, anti-Blackness makes possible the accumulation necessary for capitalist reproduction. Violent forms of domination accompany (and make possible) the reproduction of global capitalism. This violence targets all manner of people, specifically those who do not exhibit a form of humanity normalized under Western modernity (e.g., lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) and gender nonconforming folk, Muslims, Latinx, and undocumented immigrants) or a manner of spatiality that adheres to the tenets of capitalist notions of individual ownership (Mitchell, 2003). Under this new phase of capitalism, ever-expanding groups of people are subjected to precarious life (Mbembe, 2017). Still, experiences of anti-Blackness remain unique, as the openness of Black people to violence and the assumed a-spatial nature of Black populations remain constitutive factors of the modern world. The logics underpinning anti-Black violence are inheritances of chattel slavery. These logics cast Black geographies as empty and threatening, open to occupation, and subject to surveillance and assault. Indeed, capitalism’s perpetuation relies as much on anti-Blackness as it ever has. The following section seeks to clarify the ways in which antiBlackness makes capital accumulation possible. Colonial ethics reverberate in the present The increasing globalization of capital and spatial marginalization of “superfluous” populations is fundamentally tied to the negation of Black life and assumptions of Black nonbeing. The treatment of Black lives as the embodied absence of value, or, “the very condition of existence and the determination of value,” underpins Black non-being and the assumed lack of Black cartographic capacity in the dominant spatial imaginary, making global capitalism possible (Ferreira da Silva, 2017: 1). The interconnected nature of capitalism and race is a well-worn topic. Scholars have theorized race as an ideological outgrowth of the economy (Hall, 1996); as an apparatus used to facilitate flows of people and commodities (Lowe, 2015); as a central component of capitalist maturation (James, 1989); and as a phenomenon necessary for the establishment of the world system (Robinson, 2000), among countless other approaches. Geographers, too, have unpacked the ways in which regimes of capitalism employ racialized concepts to reproduce. Geographic interrogations of racial capitalism have analyzed the role of racist assumptions in implementing neoliberal reforms in the wake of a natural disaster (Derickson, 2014); the manipulation of racial distinction to prevent labor organizing (Wilson, 2000); how resistance to Black landownership underpinned early 20th-century industrial agriculture (Williams, 2017); the role of capitalism in perpetuating environmental racism (Pulido, 2017); and the centrality of plantation relations to numerous variations of capitalism (Woods, 1998). Nonetheless, we must push further to explicate the ways in which capitalism is actually dependent on anti-Blackness to realize itself, instead of understanding anti-Black racism as a Bledsoe and Wright 11 secondary effect of the economy or a phenomenon that emerges periodically. That is to say, reflections on the interlinked nature of race and capitalism must move beyond an assumption of economic causality and grapple with the ways in which anti-Blackness is actually an always-present precondition for capital accumulation. In explicating anti-Blackness, we draw on an Afro-Pessimist framework, as Afro-Pessimism makes distinct claims about the nature of Blackness in the modern world. An Afro-Pessimist analysis of antiBlackness does not treat anti-Black racism as a contingent phenomenon (Wilderson, 2011: 3–4) but rather as a global, ever-present factor that exists as the basis “for expansion and unending space within the symbolic economy of settlement” (King, 2014). Such an approach forces us to recognize how anti-Blackness punctuates the modern epoch by identifying the underlying logics that inform concrete manifestations of anti-Black racism around the world. In this way, Afro-Pessimism adds new dimensions to already-existing work on the connections between anti-Blackness and political economy by recognizing that, while capitalism exploits all of the world’s populations, it does not dominate all of them in the same way. With regard to the question of space, anti-Blackness helps us understand how the afterlife of slavery (Hartman, 2007: 6) leads to Black populations being conceptually unable to legitimately create space, thereby leaving locations associated with Blackness open to the presumably “rational” agendas of dominant spatial actors. Black populations, then, serve as the guarantor of capitalism’s need to constantly find new spaces of accumulation. In this section, we offer an explanation of how capitalism relies on anti-Blackness by foregrounding anti-Blackness as a phenomena with its own internal logics and concrete expressions. Capitalism is rooted in violent forms of captivity and murder unleashed on indigenous and Afro-descendant populations the world over (Ferreira da Silva, 2004; James, 1989; Rodney, 1972; Williams, 2014; Wynter, 1995). At its origin and in its contemporary manifestations, then, capitalism is systemically related to slavery and its various global permutations (Robinson, 2000: 313–314). The assumption that Black populations lack both humanity and “space, that is ethno- or politico-geography,” defines the treatment of enslaved Black peoples. Today, the assumed a-spatiality that defined conditions of chattel slavery continues to imprint the socio-spatial relations that reproduce global capital (Robinson, 2000: 81, 200). Black populations are deemed a-spatial as a result of the fact that modern notions of space and practices of spatial production are rooted in specific relations of power (Massey, 2005: 64, 100–101). These power relations are themselves organized around logics that have particular historical roots (Santos, 2008: 21). In the colonial epoch, chattel slavery—the social, legal, and political reduction of Africans to the status of nonhumans—produced the figure of the Black, which had a nullified spatial capacity (Wilderson, 2010: 279), was disavowed as a human being (Ferreira da Silva, 2015: 91), and was a priori structurally prevented from enacting “rational” spatial expressions (Santos, 2009: 24). Locations associated with Black populations became wholly “unhallowed” spaces, which would never receive recognition as legitimately occupied (Wynter, 1976: 81). This is not to suggest that Black peoples were or are understood as not physically present. Black bodies are certainly recognized as existing in exteriority (Raffestin, 2012: 129). Still, this recognition of physical presence does not signify that Black populations’ are understood as establishing legible space. Despite physical presence, Black populations nonetheless remain rendered “ungeographic” in dominant understandings of space (McKittrick, 2006: x). Hence, the geographic locations in which Black populations reside are treated as open to the varied agendas espoused by dominant spatial actors. 12 Environment and Planning D: Society and Space 37(1) Capitalism’s new rounds of accumulation require access to spaces that previously had different relations to capitalist practices. The assumed a-spatiality of Black populations often leads to purveyors of capitalism treating locations inhabited by Black people as available for emerging modes of accumulation. Put another way, spaces that were once marginal or peripheral to the perpetuation of capital accumulation become sites of appropriation precisely because the (Black) populations occupying them receive no recognition as viable spatial actors. The spaces necessary for new forms of accumulation are thus conceptually open because of this assumed a-spatiality and subsequently physically opened via the spatial removal and dispersal of Black residents. This dispersal entails violent actions that are a priori legitimate because of the assumed lack of Black spatial agency. In other words, new spaces of “investment have been mapped onto previous racial and colonial (imperial) discourses and practices” evidencing an inextricable relationship between anti-Black notions of space, capitalism’s logic of perpetual expansion, and the acceptable subordination of Black physical presence (Chakravartty and Silva, 2012: 368). This is what Frank Wilderson terms the “deterritorialisation of Black space” (2003: 238) that is necessary for accumulating capital vis-a`-vis emerging political economic practices. Katherine McKittrick similarly notes that Black geographies are cast as “the lands of no one” and “emptied out of life” in order that “suitable capitalist life-support systems” be put into place and globally propagated (McKittrick, 2013: 7). A number of present-day practices demonstrate the reliance of capital on this notion of empty, lifeless, Blackened spaces, such as capital disinvestment, white flight, gentrification, urban renewal, incarceration, and policing. These spatial arrangements identify Black peoples as inhuman and locations associated with Black populations as lacking a legitimate form of occupation and usage. Such assumptions contribute to the subordination of Black populations and spaces to dominant notions of “appropriate” uses of space, while “illegitimate” spaces of Blackness remain under siege by purveyors of capital. As this occurs, new spaces of accumulation open in areas formerly peripheral to the capitalist agenda. At the same time that these new rounds of accumulation take place, sovereign expressions of power serve to forcibly remove Black people and ensure they remain separated from these new spaces of accumulation. Subsequently, Black people are routinely harassed for existing in the communal spaces in which they have resided for generations.1 Along with public policy shifts, policing, incarceration, and extrajudicial killings simultaneously disqualify Black spatial agency and remove Black bodies from spaces deemed open for appropriation by capitalism’s purveyors, thereby simultaneously spatializing antiBlackness and reproducing global capital. The systemic casting of Black spaces as lifeless and open to appropriation for the continuation of capital breathes new life into “civil society’s political economy: [the Black body] kick-starts...capital at its genesis and rescues it from its over-accumulation crisis at its end—black death is its condition of possibility” (Wilderson, 2003: 238). Put simply, the endless accumulation of capital and its legitimating sovereign practices are, in part, made possible through the continued societal insistence on Black inhumanity and a Black lack of cartography, which casts Black spaces as empty. Hence, there exists an unquestionable connection between the colonial logics inaugurated centuries ago and today’s capitalist agenda. The lack of recognition of Black humanity underpins both projects. Early capitalism flourished thanks to the relegation of enslaved Blacks to the ontological and legal condition of non-humans on the plantations, in the forests, and in the mines of the Americas, while slaveholders and early insurance companies made fortunes off their investments in the transatlantic slave trade. Similarly, real estate speculation (Harvey, 2010), urban renewal (Perry, 2013), the roll-back of social wages (Wacquant, 2009), and the explosion of prisons (Gilmore, 2007)—all of which have allowed Bledsoe and Wright 13 present-day capitalism to continue its agenda of accumulation—are only possible via the understanding of spaces inhabited by Black populations as empty and naming and treating those same populations as abject, inhuman beings. In this way, the anti-Blackness and assumed lack of Black being that originated in and defined the colonial epoch remains present with us today, despite the new material practices and justifications it takes on. Anti-Blackness remains an ever-present condition, defining the modern world. Scholars can and should look to Black thinkers and activists to help make sense of the interrelated phenomena of anti-Blackness and global capital, as Black grassroots actors explicate the linkages between these phenomena (Burton, 2015). Spatial manifestations of capital and anti-Blackness A number of phenomena have resulted in public attention to, a refusal of, and organized action against the violence inherent in globalized capital and its expressions of sovereignty. The need for analysis and resistance is particularly evident regarding Black populations, as global capital and its attendant sovereignty have established new rounds of anti-Black, death-dealing (Gilmore, 2002) realities. In the United States, these realities include the demographic history of Ferguson and white flight in St. Louis; the factors that led to the precarious nature of Eric Garner’s livelihood; and the industrial and political abandonment of the majority Black municipality of Baltimore, to name but a minimum. In each example, the constitutive relations of the locations in question shifted to accommodate, among other things, the changing demands of capital. These relations entailed renewed forms of antiBlack violence which subsequently became flashpoints for Black grassroots organizing. In this section, we take the case of metropolitan St. Louis, Missouri and reflect on how changes in Ferguson’s racial–spatial make up reflect wider societal shifts taking place as a result of global capitalism. Because conditions in Ferguson have pushed conversations around anti-Blackness in the United States, an interrogation of the city’s relation to racial capitalism is appropriate. Following this subsection, we reflect on the ways that Black grassroots organizations diagnose and respond to such violence. Ferguson, MO Alvaro Reyes (2013) contextualizes the murder of Mike Brown by situating the town of Ferguson, Missouri as part of a wider national trend of gentrification, white flight, and policing. Long steeped in anti-Black violence, the St. Louis Metropolitan area, of which Ferguson is a part, perpetuates capital accumulation in part by relying on the disenfranchisement and premature ending of Black lives. Beginning in the 1950s, White residents fled St. Louis’ inner city for presumably safer, whiter suburbs like Ferguson. By the 1990s, Ferguson’s population was roughly 73% White, a demographic reality that began to change due to gentrification trends in the mid-1990s—a practice which coincided with the de-industrialization of St. Louis. Both led to the forced removal of inner-city Black residents and their relocation to now cheaper suburbs, such as Ferguson (Moskowitz, 2017). These trends help explain why today, Ferguson has a majority (67%) Black population, 25% of which is below the poverty line (Reyes, 2013). Black displacement from St. Louis’ inner city opened new spaces of investment for global capitalist actors. St. Louis’ Central West End (CWE) is an illustrative example of the ways in which the city is a site of intertwined anti-Blackness and global capital accumulation. Located south of the racialized “Delmar Divide” (Harlan, 2014), the CWE experienced a significant outmigration of Black residents in the late 20th century and an influx of White residents in the first 14 Environment and Planning D: Society and Space 37(1) decade of the 21st century (Gordon, n.d.a). The displacement of Black populations and increase of White populations in inner-city St. Louis coincided with a late 20th-century explosion of urban renewal mechanisms like enterprise zones, planned industrial expansion, and redevelopment corporations. These phenomena served to classify inner-city spaces populated by Black communities as “blighted” and in need of development, offering tax incentives to a variety of developers while making the locations too expensive for low-income Black communities to remain (Gordon, n.d.b). Today, the CWE is a “trendy” location, replete with hotels, restaurants, bars, and luxury apartments. Complexes like the CWE City Apartments and Citizen Park—both built in the last decade—are examples of how global capitalist actors profit from the systematic displacements of Black communities. CWE City Apartments are owned by Transwestern (2018), a private real estate firm that “assists clients through more than 180 offices in 37 countries as part of a strategic alliance with [French investment bank] BNP Paribas Real Estate.” Citizen Park, on the other hand, is managed by Asset Plus Companies—a real estate management firm that works with global corporations like ING Bank, Mitsubishi, and Bank of America. These two brief examples demonstrate how, in St. Louis, the built environment acts as a means of capital accumulation for global capitalist actors. These spaces are made available thanks to the spatially superfluous nature of Black communities which were displaced from this part of the city through a variety of political economic mechanisms. The mechanisms that pushed Black populations out of the CWE subsequently allowed globally active companies to establish profit-producing sites in the same location, while the displaced were forced to move to suburban locations like Ferguson. These conditions are in no way serendipitous occurrences. Instead, they form part of global political economic realities that entail specific understandings and uses of space. As new forms of accumulation—such as urban renewal and real estate investment—are implemented to perpetuate capitalism, new spaces become “open” for occupation, use, and exchange. Notions of certain spaces being available for appropriation depend on ideas of certain populations being unable to adequately occupy or administer space. In the 1950s, St. Louis saw an abandonment of people and resources from the inner city and a fixing of Black people in the same location. The past two decades have witnessed capital reinvest in some of these same spaces, a practice made possible through the expulsion, dispersal, and policing of Black residents. Thus, as global capital’s role in reshaping metropolitan St. Louis is unquestionable, so, too, is the ethic of anti-Blackness in capitalism’s current unfolding. In Ferguson, Mike Brown was murdered under conditions of induced resettlement, structural poverty, unequal distributions of political influence and police power, and a fundamental understanding that Black populations lack spatial agency. Such realities are a result of both capital’s needs for new spaces of accumulation and the insistence that Black populations cannot occupy space legitimately. These intertwined realities of capitalist expansion and structural anti-Blackness led to the dehumanization and displacement of Black populations in the St. Louis metropolitan area and disinvestment in their lived spaces. These shifts are hardly specific to St. Louis. Indeed, they constitute a global phenomenon in which capitalism requires that spaces take on new qualities and functions. Wider trends Of the many political economic factors effecting Black populations in the United States, neither gentrification, deindustrialization, capital flight, nor any other such phenomenon develop by chance (Lees, 2000, 2012; Moskowitz, 2017; Paton, 2014). Rather, these Bledsoe and Wright 15 processes are all part of a much larger trend within the global economy that results in a spatial, economic, and cultural reorganization of society. This new ordering of our globe happens in accord with ever-innovating forms of capitalism. Gentrification, in particular, has come to comprise “an increasingly unassailable capital accumulation strategy” by weaving “global financial markets together with large- and medium-sized real-estate developers” (Smith, 2002: 443). As capitalism enacts new rounds of accumulation through practices like gentrification, its purveyors (e.g., real estate developers, financiers, and municipal leaders) must find or create favorable conditions for that accumulation. Thus policies, relations, and regulatory identities that once inhibited the free flow of capital (tariffs, unions, Keynesian modes of governance, localized non-capitalist practices, etc.) are increasingly manipulated and done away with to facilitate new rounds of accumulation (Hackworth and Smith, 2001; Moskowitz, 2017). As a result, human and nonhuman beings are increasingly at the mercy of capitalism and its exploitations, expropriations, and expulsions (Sassen, 2014). These oppressive spatial processes continually affect Black populations. The spatial fix—described by David Harvey (2001)—preserves and propagates capitalism and also entails a racial fix(ation) as the continuation of accumulation treats certain places and populations as obsolete, in need of appropriation, removal, and erasure. For example, in the midst of efforts to accumulate surplus value through real estate development via the gentrification of Black communities, municipalities attempt to appease Black communities and capitalize on Black cultural/spatial expressions by hemming Black histories into museums as they eradicate the makers of Black history. The African American Library at the Gregory School in Houston’s Fourth Ward, the Houston Museum of African American Culture in Houston’s Third Ward, and the National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, D.C. are examples of this phenomenon. Each cultural hub emerged as the neighborhoods and cities in which they are located underwent forms of gentrification that dislocated many Black residents and history makers. Whereas in the early 20th-century suburbanization provided a spatial fix for White families fleeing Black inner city spaces, urban gentrification results in the inverse, with mostly white young adults returning to urban spaces and effectively expelling low-income Black inhabitants (Freund, 2007; Sugrue, 1996). This process perpetuates “the same age-old, racist process of subsidizing and privileging the lives and preferred locales of the wealthy and white over those of poor people of color” (Moskowitz, 2017: 117). The dismantling of Black communities via gentrification results in a dispersal of long-time residents to suburbs, like Ferguson, where the White citizenry who once fled their forbearers control political, economic, and judicial apparatuses and hold firm to “an internalized suburban logic” of individuality and racial separation (Moskowitz, 2017: 180). In each of these examples, the purveyors of capital accumulation neither view nor treat Black communities as legitimate spatial actors. Emerging forms of capitalism rely on the ever-present logics of anti-Blackness, which insist on the unviability of Black spatiality. These logics result in the displacement, murder, and disenfranchisement of Black populations. Black social movements and political actors are presently analyzing these realities and formulating alternatives to them. Organic critiques of global capital’s anti-Blackness In recent years, grassroots movements have pointed out the ways in which Black populations have suffered from emerging forms of capitalism and their sovereign expressions both within and outside the United States. A number of instances of life-ending violence experienced by Black men, women, transgendered people, and children have led to organized 16 Environment and Planning D: Society and Space 37(1) efforts to both draw attention to the seemingly routine nature of these realities and to offer explanations for how such phenomena occur. Among the most recognized and vocal groups to address present-day expressions of anti-Blackness is Black Lives Matter (BLM). Started by three queer Black women in the wake of the murder of Trayvon Martin, BLM rose to further prominence by drawing attention to other instances of Black murder such as those of Eric Garner, Sandra Bland, Michael Brown, Natasha McKenna, Marielle Franco, and Freddie Gray. Regardless of the situation to which they respond, BLM takes care to highlight the ways in which materializations of anti-Black violence remain tied to global capitalism. Describing the lived conditions of Black populations within and outside the United States, the founders of BLM assert that the violence Black people face at the hands of police and vigilantes is part of a larger apparatus of state violence. Black poverty, genocide, and incarceration are but a few of the larger issues discussed by BLM—factors the movement identifies with state-sanctioned violence (Black Lives Matter, n.d.a). As previously mentioned, these marginalizing factors identified by BLM comprise different components of global capitalism. For instance, BLM highlights incarceration as a widespread condition of Black life today. As evidenced in the work of Ruth Gilmore (Gilmore, 1998/1999, 2007), incarceration in the United States—which has disproportionately affected Black people— occurs not only as a storage method for “surplus” populations but also as an iteration of globalized capital finding new forms of accumulation. What is more, incarceration remains part of a societal tendency that draws on and legally creates negations of Black people’s human rights. In coding the mechanisms of Black immiseration and physical death as “state violence” while also drawing attention to how global capitalism comes to bear on these situations, BLM shows how the nation-state and its apparatuses are placed in the service of capital. Moreover, by noting that these factors disproportionately affect Black people, BLM creates a dialogue highlighting the interrelations of anti-Blackness and global capitalism. Returning to the murder of Mike Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, we see that BLM not only had a strong presence in the city during the fallout from Brown’s killing but also offered critical analysis regarding the background to the tragedy. While helping lead over 100 days of protests in Ferguson following Brown’s murder, BLM also fittingly pointed out that “Brown’s death was another symbol of years of racial bias by the town’s police against black residents” (Black Lives Matter, n.d.b). BLM’s commentary on “Ferguson Police Department’s sustained history of racial discrimination and bias treatment of black residents” speaks to the legacy of Black displacement and suburbanization that we mention above (Black Lives Matter, n.d.b). In this way, BLM draws attention to patterns of antiBlackness and how they historically manifest, forcing their interlocutors to account for capital accumulation and the role anti-Blackness played in those developments. Thus, the factors identified by BLM as constituting the conditions in which Black populations suffer state violence are central components of present-day global capital, while Black murder at the hands of state and civilian actors embody the sovereign power underwriting such forms of capitalism. In short, BLM’s critiques bring to light the ways that anti-Black violence and global capitalism walk hand in hand. The structural connections highlighted by BLM have found resonance and inspired wider movements on the topic of capitalism and anti-Blackness. The Movement for Black Lives (M4BL) is a coalition of over 50 organizations convened to collectively articulate a vision for the future of Black people both within the United States and abroad. Like BLM (which is one of the Movement’s constituent groups), M4BL frames its analysis and set of demands around the reality of state-sanctioned power. In addition to state violence, M4BL employs an explicit critique of the prevailing economic conditions that Bledsoe and Wright 17 adversely affect Black populations. Clearly explaining that “Neither our grievances nor our solutions are limited to the police killing of our people,” M4BL names a number of political economic realities that come to bear on Black communities. These realities include “systemic underinvestment in our communities, the caging of our people, predatory state and corporate practices targeting our neighborhoods, government policies that result in the poisoning of our water and the theft of our land, failing schools that criminalize rather than educate our children, [and] economic practices that extract our labor” (Movement for Black Lives, n.d.). Like BLM, M4BL highlights phenomena inherently tied to political economic shifts of global capital and the wide scale coopting of sovereign power in the service of global capital. M4BL also touches on the fact that these expressions of global capitalism are possible only through the casting of Black peoples and their spaces as illegitimate entities. In this way, M4BL demonstrates how logics of anti-Blackness enable capitalist reproduction. Struggling against the anti-Black violence that makes global capital accumulation possible requires attention to the organic analyses and activities of those struggling against such phenomena. While BLM and the M4BL offer examples of grassroots groups organizing against the anti-Black expressions of capitalism, other groups outside the United States also evidence how local actors can diagnose and create alternatives to the violence central to accumulation. Putting domestic conversations on capitalism and anti-Blackness together with issues outside the United States is vital given that the space of global capitalism remains always open, subordinating ever-expanding spaces to the governance of a fundamentally anti-Black agenda of capital accumulation. What is more, movements like BLM expressly state that “We see ourselves as part of the global Black family and we are aware of the different ways we are impacted or privileged as Black folk who exist in different parts of the world” (Black Lives Matter, n.d.c). The globally predatory nature of capitalism means that Black communities must find ways to create life across disparate and diasporic locations.

### Case

#### Perm – do the alt and then vote neg – strong alt means that it overcomes the case links and if it cant then bad alt. Have high burden of proof – no reason why spec debate is key

#### Blackness is not ontological – if we win this, we win the debate. Humans don’t have prior-knowledge and systems are contingent.

Lewis **Gordon 15**. Professor of Philosophy and African American Studies at UConn. “What Fanon Said.” Speech at Red Emma’s hosted by former Towson debater Ben Morgan. June 10.<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UABksVE5BTQ&feature=youtu.be>. Transcribed.

Nowhere is there ever a human being who is ever one identity. People know about race;you ever really see a race walking? You see a, you see a racialized man or woman. Or trans-man or trans-woman. Or hermaphro… you see what I’m getting at? You ever see a class walking? Class is embodied in flesh and blood people. And we could go on and on. A man, a woman, a color, so forth. So, if we enrich our philosophical anthropology, we will begin to notice certain other things and one of the other things we begin to realize is that we commit a serious problem when we do political work. And the problem is this. The question about Wilderson, for instance. There is this discussion going on, and a lot of people build it on my early books. I have a category that I call, as a metaphor, an ‘anti-Black world’ – you notice the indefinite article: **AN** anti-Black world. The reason I say that is because **THE** world is different from an anti-Black world. The project of racism is to create a world that would be anti-Black, anti-woman. Although that’s a project, it’s **not a fait accompli.** People don’t seem to understand how recent, how recent this phenomenon we’re talking about is. A lot of people talk about race… they say they know the history of how race is connected into fear naturalism, how for instance, in Andalusia and pushing out the moors, the history of how race connected to Christianity was formed. A lot of people don’t understand that from the standpoint of a species that’s 220,000 years old, what the hell is 500 years? But the one thing that we don’t understand too is that we create a false model of how we study those 500 years. We study the 500 years as if the people who have been dominated have not been fighting and resisting. Had they not been fighting and resisting, we wouldn’t be here. And then we come into this next point, because you see, the problem in the formulation of pessimism and optimism is there both based in forecasted knowledge, a prior knowledge. But human beings **don’t have prior knowledge**. And in fact, what, what in the world are we if we **need to have guarantees** for us to act? You know what you call such people? **Cowards**. The fact of the matter is, our ancestors – think about, let’s just start with enslaved ancestors. The enslaved ancestors who were burning down the plantations, who were finding clever ways to poison the masters, who were organizing meetings for rebellions – none of them had any clue about what the future would be 100 years later, in fact, some had good reason to believe it may have even taken 1,000 years. But you know why they fought? Because they knew it wasn’t for them. One of the problems we have in the way we think about political issues is we commit what Fanon and others who were taught in the existential condition would call a form of **political immaturity.** Political immaturity is, it’s not worth it unless I, me, individually get the pay off. When you’re thinking about what it is to relate to **other generations**, remember Fanon said the problem with the people in the transition – the pseudo post-colonial bourgeoisie – is that they miss the point to fight for liberation for other generations. And that’s why Fanon said other generations, they must have their mission. But you see, some people fought, and they said now I want my piece of the pie. And that means the biggest enemy becomes the other generations. And that is why the postcolonial pseudo bourgeoisie – there not a bourgeoisie proper because they do not link to the infrastructural development of the future. It’s about themselves and that’s why, for instance, as they live higher up the hog, as they get their mediating service oriented racial mediation wealth, the rest of the populations are in misery. The very fact that in many African countries there are people whose futures have been mortgaged, the fact that in this country that very example of mortgaging the future of all of you is there, what happens to people when they have no future? It now collapses the concept of maturation and places people into perpetual childhood. So one of the political things, and this is where a psychiatrist-philosopher is crucial, is to ask ourselves what does it mean to take on adult **responsibility**. And that means to understand in all political action, **it’s not about you**. It’s what you are doing for a world you may not be able to even understand. Now that becomes tricky because, how do we know this? People have done it before. There were people, for instance, who fought anti-colonial struggles. There are people – and I’m not talking about like 30 or 40 years ago, I’m talking about people from day 1, from the 17th century, the 18th century, all the way through and we right now – we have no idea what we are doing for the 22nd century. And this is where becoming, developing political insight comes in. Because we commit the error of forgetting that the systems, the systems were talking about, are human systems. They’re not systems in the way that we can talk about, for instance, the law of physics. A human system can only exist by human actions maintaining them. Which means every human system is like the model of, of reason evaluating completeness. Every human system is incomplete. A human being is by definition incomplete, which means you can go this way or you can go another way. And it’s that fundamental incompleteness that raises the question. The system **isn’t actually closed**. How do we know it? The reason we’re seeing all of this brutality in the world today is because the systems are breaking down. If the systems were working, they wouldn’t have to worry. You know how you have an effective system? You make people mentally be their own prisoners. If the system were really working, you wouldn’t have to have the police, because you all would do it for them. It is the very fact that the system is breaking down that we are seeing heightened brutality.

#### a) Long-term social and economic trends

**Samuelson 16** (Robert, journalist for The Washington Post, “Commentary: Black progress surrounds us, even as we struggle with the racial divide,” 7-14-16, http://www.pressherald.com/2016/07/14/commentary-black-progress-surrounds-us-even-as-we-struggle-with-the-racial-divide/)

Whatever happens – and urban riots cannot be excluded – President Obama is correct on one thing: **This is not the** 19**60s**. Since then, we have become a far more open and tolerant society. African-Americans have made significant economic and social advances, even if almost every gain is qualified by some glaring inequity or shortcoming. • Poverty: Black poverty, as measured by the government official poverty line (a pretax income now of $24,230 for a family of four), has dropped sharply. **In** 19**67**, **the black poverty rate was 39.3 percent**. **By 2000, it was 22.5 percent**; the great recession pushed it up to 26.2 percent in 2014, which was double the white rate of 12.7 percent. • Education: As with other Americans, blacks have received more schooling. **In 1950**, **only 13.7 percent** of African-Americans age 25 or older **had completed high school** or more; **by 2014, this was 86.7** percent, says the Department of Education. Over the same period, **the share of African-Americans with a bachelor’s degree** or higher **went from 2**.2 percent **to 22**.8 **percent**. But 35.6 percent of whites have at least a bachelor’s degree, and among high school graduates, there are stubborn achievement gaps between blacks and whites. • Upward mobility: The black upper middle class – defined here as households with incomes of at least $100,000 in inflation-adjusted dollars – has grown impressively, from 2.8 percent of households in 1967 to 13 percent (one in eight) in 2014. But gains have stalled since 2000, when the rate was also 13 percent. Although the white rate has stalled too, it was 26 percent. Moreover, a Pew Research Center study finds that blacks own fewer stocks and bonds than whites with similar incomes. • Politics: **Black elected officials have made huge gains**, reports the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies. When the Voting Rights Act was passed **in** 19**65**, **five African-Americans served in the** U.S. **House** of Representatives **and** the U.S. **Senate**; **now there are 44** House **members and two senators** (43 Democrats, three Republicans). Over a similar period, the number of black state legislators grew from about 200 to 700. Black officials represent 9.9 percent of U.S. House members and 8.5 percent of state legislators. But that’s lower than their share of the voting age population (12.5 percent), the report notes.