# Afro-Pessimism Kritik – Michigan

## 1NC – Toolbox

### Framework – 1NC

#### FRAMEWORK – The role of the ballot is to vote for the best theoretical lexicon for understanding Black suffering if we demonstrate that the 1AC’s conceptualization of power or material praxis generates a series of contradictions when it approaches the problematic of racial Blackness, that is a sufficient reason to reject them AND comes before weighing the aff.

Jones ’16(Dalton Anthony Jones, Associate Professor of African American Studies at Bowling Green State University, “Northern Hieroglyphics: Nomadic Blackness and Spatial Literacy”, Rhizomes Issue 29 (2016), [SG])

[19] How, then, does one develop a working genealogy of a conundrum such as Afro-pessimism? Where does one begin? How is it possible to chart the history of something as polymorphous, as generative of and yet so abjectly banished from the life of Western modernity as the phenomenon of blackness-as-negation and negation-as-blackness? How does one narrate a story whose most poignant expressions have never been made with the written word or debated forthrightly in the public transcripts of civil society? How does one develop a functional vocabulary of silence? How does one paint a portrait of the unseen? And, most gravely perhaps, how does one do this crucial work while remaining sane in the face of a million commonplace and pitiless deferrals?

[20] The first challenge one confronts when trying to develop a theory and practice of black study is the problem of scale. That is, accepting the daunting task of **conveying the sheer magnitude**, the confounding depth and breadth of the topic **at hand. Elaborating the slave's capture and subordination, establishing the relationship between the violence** entailed by this process and the most essential **and** seemingly inessential formations of **the modern** (on the one hand, the nation, the state, civil society, the regime of value and its accumulated surplus and so forth; on the other, the minute protocols that organize our affiliations and disaffiliations with these meta-dispositifs of power), is itself enough to test the most stable psychology and blackness, we must remember, is born just a little bit crazy. But elaborate them we must, for **without this effort** all subsequent **theorizations of blackness fail**. Lindon Barrett's posthumous and tragically incomplete masterpiece, Racial Blackness and the (Dis)continuities of Western Modernity, serves as a case-point for the almost maniacal lengths a brilliant mind such as his must go through in order to demonstrate with precision (for anything less than precision will be dismissed outright on a technicality) the emergent circumstances of racial blackness, to show the centrality of trans-Atlantic plantation slavery to this formation, to catalogue the means by which slavery was a constituent element in the development of capitalism and is thus a constituent element of the contemporary global distribution of wealth and European territorial hegemony, of tracing the historical transition away from European feudal and monarchical forms of consolidated power to the more elusive, flexible forms of capitalist authority we live under today, to call attention to the consequent unstable formation of the human as a normative subject, to assemble an encyclopedic catalogue of the philosophers, historians, psychoanalysts, revolutionary anti-colonialists and social scientists of the more tame type who buttress these truths in order to show how and why we can and must see the extraction, consolidation, and distribution of resources in the creation of the Atlantic economies as not just foundational to but an ongoing process in the formation of the modern world, to emphasize, finally, the relation between the materiality of power and the "discursive grammar" by which subjects are composed and imagined, and all of this as prelude to say something else, something as simple as "I am" and "I am here." Reading Barrett's exhaustive résumé one can feel the frenetic energy expended upon the project and the almost perceptible slide into madness as he attempts to elaborate the elaborated, to prove the proven, to speak what has already been spoken, to be heard in a world where blackness lives in and is defined as vacuum: A living black hole pockmarking the face of modernity.[8]

[21] Capitalism and Schizophrenia, Civilization and Its Discontents, Madness and Civilization: all of the classic exegeses on mental illness and modernity express the dementia of blackness in its stable form. To be black, is to be mad. To be sane in a world of repetitive violence against one's body and soul is to be mad. **Blackness is an unstable delirium that sucks the very light out of Enlightenment**.[9] If Afro-pessimist thought forces us to make an accounting of the past, its imperative, its impetus for being, the persistence of its assertion as a destabilizing injunction, is driven by decidedly contemporary concerns. It is the effort to make an honest accounting of the question, "where does my body stand in relation to my flesh and how can they both, one without sacrificing the other, find a stable place to stand in this world or, in the meantime, how can I at least find a way to speak the contradiction and violence of that displacement?" It assumes the task of **answering this question by delving into the past not for the sake of melancholy**, the right to sing the blues or wallow in self-pity, **but in order to elaborate the mechanics of a wound that still festers**. It is an exhaustive project that demands willpower and invites sanction at every step. It entails not cutting a truce between the past and the present, not accepting a plea-bargain that leaves our accumulated grievances and the perpetual expendability of our lives off of the negotiating table in exchange for the dubious right to join the legions of alienated and exploited citizens struggling to find coherence in an insane and abusive new world order that has evolved, seamlessly and coercively, from the old. To hazard the consequences of not raising the white flag is an act of courage. But one look out of the window at the America I am traversing across tells me that I do not want to join the rank and file I see. **And with that decision**, for better or worse, **begins a struggle that cannot rely on the power of affirmation alone. It demands that one produce a string of negations as persistent and unrelenting as the steady repetition of deportations that promote one's exile, and it requires one to challenge, ruthlessly, the unethical stability and indefensible centrism that has been the operational status quo of modernity since its inception.**

[22] For this reason, Jared Sexton, who provides a concise overview of the objections mounted against Afro-pessimism, asserts, following Wilderson, that Afro-pessimism is as much a structural position as a school of thought or collection of ideological dogmas. (Sexton, Afro-Pessimism: The Unclear Word, 9) **Rather, it is a (dis)position of embodiment that is deployed and asserted at key junctures**. **While the encounter may not always be willful, it inevitably emerges of its own accord** with a predictable yet spontaneous regularity. **It disrupts the flow of social discourse**, particularly **at** those **moments of convergence between the black body and its "institutional inscription**."[10] More than a unified polemic, although it can be this too, **Afro-pessimism is an extended meditation upon a set of accumulated negations growing out of the contradictions of Western thought and practice**. Sometimes these can be moments of catharsis, appearing as a productive intervention, creating levity and release in unexpected places at unexpected times, but their (re)appearance and (re)iteration occur with such frequency, and always in a mode that replicates the grievance of blackness, that **even** such **affective solidarities become a structural disposition bound by a relation of violence and a posture of negation.**

### Framework – Education

#### Social death and ontology must be challenged in academia and education

Lopez and Jean-Marie 21 (Dr. Ann Lopez is Professor of Educational Leadership and Policy in the Department of Leadership, Higher and Adult Education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto, Gaëtane Jean-Marie is the Dean and Professor of Educational Leadership at Rowan University, “Challenging Anti-Black Racism in Everyday Teaching, Learning, and Leading: From Theory to Practice”, Sage Journals, Vol 31, 16 February 2021, https://doi.org/10.1177/1052684621993115)//ameya

In society at large as well as institutions, Black people are subject to oppression in the form of anti-Black racism, perpetuated through antiblackness within spaces. Dumas (2016) argues that **antiblackness does not signify a mere racial conflict that might be resolved through organized political struggle and appeals to the state and to the citizenry for redress. Instead, antiblackness marks an irreconcilability between the Black and any sense of social or cultural regard**. The aim of theorizing antiblackness is not to offer solutions to racial inequality, but to come to a deeper understanding of the Black condition within a context of utter contempt for, and acceptance of violence against the Black. (p. 13) Wilderson (2010) suggests that the question of being Black revolves around two fundamental questions: “What does it mean to suffer?” and “How does one become free of suffering?” (p. 126). As Black scholars who embrace the embodiment of Blackness, claim to the fullest of our African ancestry, walk in the spirit and light of our ancestors as descendants of the enslaved, live and work in spaces that continue to harm and traumatize Black people, we understand what it means to suffer. In this article however, we focus on ways to become free and more specifically ways for Black students to become free in the spaces that they learn. **In the ontological polarity of the West, antiblackness draws its energy from the positioning of Blackness situated at the bottom of the polarity** (Kline, 2017). In many ways, Black people are positioned as having no history prior to slavery and this myth is perpetuated through pedagogy and curriculum, thereby cutting off Black students from the rich history and knowledge which they come from. Kline (2017) argues further that antiblackness is also about power and is revealed through practices, forms, and apparatuses; and ways that “antiBlack racism have historically developed, changed, and reassembled/reterritorialized in relation to state power, national identity, philosophical discourse, biological discourse, political discourse, and so on” (p. 66). Some scholars argue that as discourses of equity, inclusion, and diversity abound in the United States and other Western countries trying to grapple with their racist histories and current demographic shifts, there is a strain against the dark (Busey & Coleman-King, 2020; Sexton, 2008; Wilderson, 2010). In this social and political contexts, Black youth, families, and communities struggle to make sense of what are widely regarded in Black cultural spaces as cases of (anti-)Black suffering and death are on the rise (Dumas, 2016). The killing of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery in 2020 in the United States, as well as the killings of Black people in Canada and other countries is furtherance of the fear that Black people experience in these spaces. Over 400years of injustice in the United States, Canada, and other Western countries there is a collective rage about social injustices that continue to plague society. The world has been transfixed by the unrest in the United States amid video footage of brutal clashes between the police and protesters during marches and vigils in Mr. Floyd’s memory. Dumas (2016) argues that **while most educational researchers and practitioners acknowledge and lament the killing of and violence against Black people as examples of racism or (multi)cultural insensitivity, or the enactment of white supremacy, there has been little theorizing in education on the specificity of anti-Black racism, or the broader terrain of antiblackness.** **Tackling antiblackness is about challenging the position of Black person as socially dead**, in other words, denied humanity thus ineligible for full citizenship and regard within the polity (Patterson, 1982). Anti-Black racism is a form of racism that is directed against Black people and their resistance to such oppressions (Benjamin, 2011). The legacy of anti-Black racism and the ongoing denial of Black people of their basic humanity reflects the “afterlife of slavery” that continually situates Black peoples as objects of fetish and force (Sexton, 2010, 2015). Dumas (2016) argues that analyses of racial(ized) discourses and policy processes in education must grapple with cultural disregard for and disgust with blackness. Doret and Gordon (2018) suggest that the fear of Blackness is implicated in the day-to-day practices of education and schooling. Dumas (2016) notes: **theorization of antiblackness allows one to more precisely identify and respond to racism in education discourse and in the formation and implementation of education policy**…. I contend that deeply and inextricably embedded within racialized policy discourses is not merely a general and generalizable concern about disproportionality or inequality, but also, fundamentally and quite specifically, a concern with the bodies of Black people, the signification of (their) blackness, and the threat posed by the Black to the educational wellbeing of other students. (p. 12) The continued fear of Black youth reveals the persistence of anti-Black racism that continues in the new millennium to plague the socio-political body (Doret & Gordon, 2018). Anti-Black racism is not limited to particular time periods or projects. AntiBlack racism is systemic, pervasive, and productive (Feagin, 2013). As we examine the impact of anti-Black racism Sexton (2010) calls for the disruption of the Black/White binary and suggests that anti-Black racism is not just about White on Black racial oppression, but also includes the relationship that other groups have to Black people. Education and schooling continues to be site of antiblackness and anti-Black racism. Black students and families are often constructed as the problem, pathologized, students bear the brunt of harsh school discipline, and families are not perceived as resourceful and knowledgeable. In the United States, some fought against integration of schools; and most recently we have witnessed the under-resourcing of schools in predominantly Black communities.

#### Their education offense is non unique – the academy is not a neutral space for deliberation but is always structurally oriented in antagonism with blackness where “without intentional efforts to disrupt these systems, they will undoubtedly continue”

Lopez-Littleton et al 22 (Vanessa Lopez-Littleton is Department Chair of Health, Human Services, and Public Policy at California State University, Monterey Bay, Carla Jackie Sampson, PhD, is a clinical associate professor of healthcare management and public service in the Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service at New York University, Brian is a Corpening Associate Vice President for Inclusive Excellence and Chief Diversity Officer at California State University, Monterey Bay, “ADORE: A Framework for Community Building to Dismantleanti-Black Racism in Academia’, Taylor & Francis Online, Vol. 25, No. 3, 29 August 2022)//ameya

Anti-Black racism is a form of systemic racism that methodically marginalizes Black people, devalues Blackness, and dehumanizes those who are Black (University of California San Francisco,n.d.). According to the Council for Democratizing Education, anti-Black racism voids the value of Blackness (including Black culture and identity), and marginalizes Black people and their concerns (Portland Means Progress,n.d.). Anti-Black racism encapsulates both overt and covert forms of structural racism and is carried out by individuals who fail to act and respond in ways that disrupt policies, practices, and ideologies that disregard or objectify Blackness (Heckler,2017). In a society gripped with nervousness, apathy, and ignorance surrounding racial realities, campuses are often ill-equipped to address anti-Black racism (Zambrano,2018). Faculty often fail to teach culturally responsive curricula and administrators lack the skill and will to make substan-tive changes to meet the needs of diverse learners (Hammond,2015).There is a culture endemic in higher education that centers on whiteness. These power struc-tures continually elevate white individuals to senior leadership positions and allow white students to outperform students from historically underrepresented backgrounds and divested commun-ities (Hammond,2015; Zambrano,2018). The result of **anti-Black racism in higher education translates into Black people not being hired into the academy**, not being selected for tenure or tenure-earning positions, hired as temporary lecturers, and experiencing various forms of oppres-sion and retaliation (Niemann et al.,2020; Zambrano,2018). Anti-Black racism appears among the faculty ranks in student evaluations and during tenure and promotion processes (Zambrano,2018). Studies have shown that students rate white faculty higher than Black faculty (Drake et al.,2019; Smith & Hawkins,2011). **Poor performance by white faculty is explained away, while simi-lar performances by Black faculty are equated with poor teaching skills** (Bridgeman,2020). Black students learn in classrooms led by teachers who purport color-blind pedagogical approaches(Hammond,2015). These faculty design and deliver course content through a white racial frame(Zambrano,2018) using approaches where Black students fail to see themselves reflected in the material, fail to develop connections with the faculty, and fail to perform well in the course(Douglas et al.,2008; Love,2019). The burden for Black faculty shows up as cultural taxation, devalued research, heavier teaching and service loads, and suffering under the burden of per-ceived “affirmative action”work (Zambrano,2018). This burden culminates in Black academics experiencing difficulty achieving tenure and promotion (Bridgeman,2020; U.S. Department ofEducation,2020) In the classroom, the experiences of students of color are influenced by the pedagogical approaches combined with the context in which the education occurs (Hammond,2015). Studies have shown that “students of color routinely receive less instruction in higher order skills devel-opment than other students...Their curriculum less challenging and more repetitive. Their instruction is more focused on skills low on Bloom’s taxonomy”(Hammond,2015, p. 12).Students of color must also contend with the existence of the hidden curriculum (i.e., aspects of the learning environment—lessons, norms, attitudes, values, and perspectives—that are transmit-ted to students through actions, interactions and social norms created by academic personnel;Small,2020). The lack of connections and sense of belonging in these environments contribute to negative self-image and poor interactions with teachers and peers and resultantly affects their learning outcomes (Hammond,2015). Combined, the structure and experiences associated with the learning environment are a manifestation of the perpetuation of anti-Black racism that con-tributes to differential outcomes. While the K-12 system is critical to socialization and establishing the foundation for learning, it is the collegiate experience where Black students grow their capacity for building agency to become well-informed citizens. It is the college experience that far too often hampers that pro-gress. **Black college students across the US report having negative educational experiences in com-parison to other racial and ethnic groups** (Harper et al.,2009). Black students report greater disconnection from faculty and often do not feel empowered to learn in the classroom(Hammond,2015). They are also more likely to report incidents of bias, discrimination, harass-ment, and microaggressions (Ancis et al.,2000; Fries-Britt & Griffin,2007; Pascarella &Terenzini,2005). Teachers often believe they can create and transfer knowledge free from racial or other oppressive influences in academic spaces. Their desire to overlook or dismiss race thwarts any attempt at equity. Levchak suggests, **“Oppression thrives in silence”(2018, p. 3) and without intentional efforts to disrupt these systems, they will undoubtedly continue.** Academic environments, much like other public institutions, tend to purport a culture com-mitted to neutrality, objectivity, and technical rationality (Blessett & Gaynor,2021). These cul-tures are hallmarked by institutional fragility (similar to white fragility) where fear and trepidation prohibit an active integration of Blackness for fear of backlash from white and other groups who find comfort in the status quo. **An antiracist culture requires a deep understanding of critical concepts, such as anti-Black racism, systemic racism, structural racism, microaggres-sions, (the myth of) white supremacy, and white fragility** (Blessett & Gaynor,2021; Gaynor &Lopez-Littleton,2021; Kendi,2019). Cultural shifts are driven by critical conscious leaders who are capable of acknowledging historic and contemporary issues around racism are inspired to act(Waite,2021). In this regard, campus leaders must be committed to the active opposition of racism through dialogue, social action, and the concurrent pursuit of social equity as a means of achieving justice for all (Kendi,2019). These inclusive leaders will need to prioritize the resources necessary to effect change for Black individuals at all levels of the institution. Their ability to combine their knowledge with the theoretical lens of CRT, in effect, actualizes social equity as a tangible institutional goal capable of addressing anti-Black racism through mechanisms that pre-vent discrimination and protect those who would be harmed by anti-Black racism (Berry-James et al., 2020).

### Framework – Libidinal Economy

#### Second is the libidinal economy – it’s the best metric.

#### **Chico et al 11** (A Primer on "Libidinal Economy" in Relation to Black Folks. Cosmic Hoboes: An Afropessimist Meditation (No)Space. <https://cosmichoboes.blogspot.com/2011/08/primer-on-libidinal-economy-in-relation.html> //shree)

People who are interested in struggle need to understand the "libidinal economy." Coalition politicos like Al Sharpton like to tell us to put the unique experiences of black folks in the backseat to the interests of poor folks more generally. Such politicians expect us to submerge our interests as black people on the assumption that if poor people in general benefit from a political concession, poor black people will share equally in such benefits. Such politicos will continue to ignore the repeated evidence that a lot of nonblack people hate black people, even if doing so costs them money. If someone tells you that the problems black folks face are really just the problems that poor people face, they are telling you to ignore the libidinal economy. They are telling you that the political economy of capitalism is more important than the libidinal economy of antiblack racism. What is "libidinal economy"? In Red, White, and Black: Cinema and the Structure of U.S. Antagonisms (2010, Duke University Press), black political theorist Frank Wilderson highlights the distinction between political economy and libidinal economy (p. 9): Jared Sexton describes libidinal economy as “the economy, or distribution and arrangement, of desire and identification (their condensation and displacement), and the complex relationship between sexuality and the unconscious.” Needless to say, libidinal economy functions variously across scales and is as “objective” as political economy. Importantly, it is linked not only to forms of attraction, affection and alliance, but also to aggression, destruction, and the violence of lethal consumption. He emphasizes that it is “the whole structure of psychic and emotional life,” something more than, but inclusive of or traversed by, what Gramsci and other marxists call a “structure of feeling”; it is “a dispensation of energies, concerns, points of attention, anxieties, pleasures, appetites, revulsions, and phobias capable of both great mobility and tenacious fixation.” What does all this mean? Let's interpret this elaborate definition and get to how it thinks of "economy." When we think of economy, we usually think of something having to do with money. Wilderson uses the term political economy to refer to economy in the ways that we usually think of it: the ways people exchange materials and decide on how things are valued. Economy doesn't just mean the economy in the sense of the stock market or banks, but also any means of determining whether something is worth doing or possessing based on how much capital and labor power it yields. In struggle, we see over and over that money talks and bullshit walks. Economy has to do with what they value moves people to act. Economies are therefore very important to political action. But can there be an economy that exchanges something other than money or capital? Yes. To understand "economy" as Wilderson and Sexton use it, we have to think of economy in a more general way as things of all kinds that we can trade or save. You can accumulate not only cash or material items, but also fears and desires. Certain people accumulate more fear (the black athlete) and desire (the blonde cheerleader) than others. The term libidinal economy refers to the systems of exchange and valuation for fantasies, desires, fears, aversions, and enjoyment. Economy is about exchange and accumulation. Everyone feels fear and aggression, but where is it directed? The libidinal is about both people's desires, fantasies, and pleasures AND their phobias, fears, and violent consumptions. A libidinal economy has to do with which groups a subject is attracted to, which groups it is willing to form alliances with, and which people it is willing to provide affection to. Where can we see this libidinal economy? How can we illustrate this distinction? The libido is the collection of things like phobias and desires that are unconscious and invisible but that have a visible effect on the world, including the money economy. Some examples: We see libidinal economies at work any time there is a response by state that is out of all proportion to the material effects of any practice they are regulating. The USA incarcerates three million people, despite the fact that doing so has an adverse impact on US financial security. Hence the libidinal economy of the fear of black and brown people (who together comprise the overwhelming majority of inmates) trumps the political economy of the cost-benefit analysis of maintaining prisons. Let's take another example of the powder - versus crack-cocaine distinction, in which the same drug is punished differently at the federal level. Because the two drugs are chemically identical, there shouldn't be any distinction between how their use and sale is punished. In 2010, the law made it so that these two drugs were punished the same, although the Obama administration isn't in any hurry to make the abolition of this distinction retroactive so that the mostly black and brown people who are locked up because of it will get released. But the legal abolition of this distinction is not essential for us to look at. What is essential is why that distinction was made in the first place. Wilderson's work suggests that, for civil society, black people pose a threat that has nothing to do with the chemical content or the social and cultural effects of crack. Simply by being associated with black people, crack is seen as 100 times more threatening than is powder cocaine. The financial and social costs of locking all those black and brown people up and the financial and social costs of allowing all those white people to go free and continue to sell does not really matter to civil society. What the powder- versus crack-cocaine distinction shows is the desire to contain the threat that blackness symbolizes. This is the mark of libidinal economy. Cops, soldiers, firemen are considered sexually desirable because they become the heroes of civil society. The Oscar Grant shooting. Amadou Diallo was a victim of a extreme kind of violence because of the phobias that converged on his body. What is the exchange? Civil society has an anxiety about crime, and crime is always attached to black in urban areas. Police don't have to get a monetary award, but they get the gratitude of civil society. How does this play out in ways that don't have to do strictly with money? The desire for them may not show up in the amount of money they make. Cops get rewarded for their aggression. When the cop slammed dude into the glass at BART. Prison guards, thought of as having the toughest beat on the planet. They get rewarded for being the last line of defense against George Jackson. Oscar Grant was an accumulation of aggression and phobias. Why are the black people in Prince George's County, Maryland, segregated from white people in their same socioeconomic bracket with the same kinds of high-value real estate, and the same kinds of political-economic values? Living around white people has a value that cannot be explained in strictly monetary terms. AFDC benefited mostly white single mothers, and enjoyed a long history of support from 1936-the 1960s. It initially excluded black people. By the 1960s, when black people started getting it, attitudes changed toward it, making it seem like it was undeserved and a drain on national prosperity, and by 1984, when Ronald Reagan referred to "welfare queens in Cadillacs," it was clear that AFDC was "a black thing." In actual statistical terms, it was still used mostly by white women. But once it became associated with poor black women, it was seen as in need of drastic, radical reforms. But is this "libidinal economy" really that important? Frank Wilderson is using the distinction between a money economy and an economy of desire over and over again throughout this book. Wilderson talks about this by talking about the difference between word and deed. This is not the hypocrisy of the system. It IS the logic of the system. So Europeans tried to resolve the lack of labor power by passing laws that reduced homeless white people to the status of slaves. In the end, however, they never really enforced these laws. Wilderson quotes David Eltis, an economic historian, who says that the costs of settling the "new world" would have been significantly reduced if Europeans has simply enslaved other Europeans. But, Wilderson points out, "what Whites would have gained in economic value, they would have lost in symbolic value; and it is the [symbolic value] which structures the libidinal economy of civil society." In other words, the symbolic costs of Europeans enslaving other Europeans would have been too great. Instead, they went to Africa for their slaves, even though the financial cost of doing so was much, much greater. The radical left doesn't make this distinction. Cornel West and Tavis Smiley say they want to organize a new Poor People's Campaign, but they won't be able to explain why this is a failed project from the start. This is because they won't think about the aspects of coalition building that have nothing to do with money or the lack of money. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the so-called "Reagan Democrats" were poor and working-class white people, many of them in unions, who voted overwhelmingly for Reagan against their own economic interest. The white left mistakenly thinks about the Reagan Democrats as people who were duped. They view them as an example of what Marx called "false consciousness" and they see it as their duty to inform the white poor and working class of why they should vote left. But there were all kinds of signs that white poor and working-class folks simply hated black people and didn't want to live anywhere that there was a large community of black people, even if those black people are of the same or higher socioeconomic status. The Reagan Democrats were excited by Reagan's antiblack rhetoric of law and order, a rhetoric that was in response against the activities of the Black Liberation Army, Weather Underground, Black Panthers, and Black Guerilla Family. Marxists think a person is in a state of false consciousness if her political or social interests go another way than her material or financial interests. If you adopt this view, then you probably think that the Reagan Democrats just need to be educated correctly about what they have in common with the black poor and working class. You have to think that their hatred of black people is somehow "false" simply because it runs counter to their financial interests. But this would be to ignore their interest in maintaining white supremacy and antiblack racism. One of the things white men would lose would be access to black bodies for sexual pleasure and amusement. These examples are not just isolated cases of false consciousness, ignorance, media manipulation, or some mystical thing called "prejudice." They are all of those things, but they are also something much, much greater that any student of struggle needs to be aware of. These examples reveal the contours of an economy of desires that is not primarily concerned with money. It's not that the political economy isn't

### Thesis – General

#### The only ethical demand available to modern politics is that of the Slave and the Savage, the demand for the end of the world itself. This cry, born out of the belly of slave ships and the churning vertigo of constitutive genocide, exposes the grammar of the Affirmative’s \*\*Insert Demands of aff\*\* as a fundamental fortification of White Settler and Slave Master civil society by its diversionary focus on the ethicality of the policies and practices of the United States as opposed to the a priori question its very existence. Thus the silence of the Affirmative’s assumptive logic renders them unaccountable to the revolutionary political ontology of Redness and Blackness and thereby sets the stage for the various dramas of conflictual relationships i.e. class struggle, gender conflict, immigrants rights, etc. that are made possible by the antagonism between Settler and Savage, Master and Slave.

Wilderson, ’10 [2010, Frank B. Wilderson is an Associate Professor of African-American Studies at UC Irvine and has a Ph.D. from UC Berkeley, “Red, White & Black: Cinema and the Structure of U.S. Antagonisms,”]

Leaving aside for the moment their state of mind, it would seem that the structure, that is to say the rebar, or better still the grammar of their demands—and, by extension, the grammar of their suffering—was indeed an ethical grammar. Perhaps their grammars are the only ethical grammars available to modern politics and modernity writ large, for they draw our attention not to the way in which space and time are used and abused by enfranchised and violently powerful interests, but to the violence that underwrites the modern world’s capacity to think, act, and exist spatially and temporally. The violence that robbed her of her body and him of his land provided the stage upon which other violent and consensual dramas could be enacted. Thus, they would have to be crazy, crazy enough to call not merely the actions of the world to account but to call the world itself to account, and to account for them no less! The woman at Columbia was not demanding to be a participant in an unethical network of distribution: she was not demanding a place within capital, a piece of the pie (the demand for her sofa notwithstanding). Rather, she was articulating a triangulation between, on the one hand, the loss of her body, the very dereliction of her corporeal integrity, what Hortense Spillers charts as the transition from being a being to becoming a “being for the captor” (206), the drama of value (the stage upon which surplus value is extracted from labor power through commodity production and sale); and on the other, the corporeal integrity that, once ripped from her body, fortified and extended the corporeal integrity of everyone else on the street. She gave birth to the commodity and to the Human, yet she had neither subjectivity nor a sofa to show for it. In her eyes, the world—and not its myriad discriminatory practices, but the world itself—was unethical. And yet, the world passes by her without the slightest inclination to stop and disabuse her of her claim. Instead, it calls her “crazy.” And to what does the world attribute the Native American man’s insanity? “He’s crazy if he thinks he’s getting any money out of us”? Surely, that doesn’t make him crazy. Rather it is simply an indication that he does not have a big enough gun. What are we to make of a world that responds to the most lucid enunciation of ethics with violence? What are the foundational questions of the ethico-political? Why are these questions so scandalous that they are rarely posed politically, intellectually, and cinematically—unless they are posed obliquely and unconsciously, as if by accident? Return Turtle Island to the “Savage.” Repair the demolished subjectivity of the Slave. Two simple sentences, thirteen simple words, and the structure of U.S. (and perhaps global) antagonisms would be dismantled. An “ethical modernity” would no longer sound like an oxymoron. From there we could busy ourselves with important conflicts that have been promoted to the level of antagonisms: class struggle, gender conflict, immigrants rights. When pared down to thirteen words and two sentences, one cannot but wonder why questions that go to the heart of the ethico-political, questions of political ontology, are so unspeakable in intellectual meditations, political broadsides, and even socially and politically engaged feature films. Clearly they can be spoken, even a child could speak those lines, so they would pose no problem for a scholar, an activist, or a filmmaker. And yet, what is also clear—if the filmographies of socially and politically engaged directors, the archive of progressive scholars, and the plethora of Left-wing broadsides are anything to go by—is that what can so easily be spoken is now (five hundred years and two hundred fifty million Settlers/Masters on) so ubiquitously unspoken that these two simple sentences, these thirteen words not only render their speaker “crazy” but become themselves impossible to imagine. Soon it will be forty years since radical politics, Left-leaning scholarship, and socially engaged feature films began to speak the unspeakable. In the 1960s and early 1970s the questions asked by radical politics and scholarship were not “Should the U.S. be overthrown?” or even “Would it be overthrown?” but rather when and how—and, for some, what—would come in its wake. Those steadfast in their conviction that there remained a discernable quantum of ethics in the U.S. writ large (and here I am speaking of everyone from Martin Luther King, Jr., prior to his 1968 shift, to the Tom Hayden wing of SDS, to the Julian Bond and Marion Barry faction of SNCC, to Bobbie Kennedy Democrats) were accountable, in their rhetorical machinations, to the paradigmatic zeitgeist of the Black Panthers, the American Indian Movement, and the Weather Underground. Radicals and progressives could deride, reject, or chastise armed struggle mercilessly and cavalierly with respect to tactics and the possibility of “success,” but they could not dismiss revolution-as-ethic because they could not make a convincing case—by way of a paradigmatic analysis—that the U.S. was an ethical formation and still hope to maintain credibility as radicals and progressives. Even Bobby Kennedy (a U.S. attorney general and presidential candidate) mused that the law and its enforcers had no ethical standing in the presence of Blacks. One could (and many did) acknowledge America’s strength and power. This seldom, however, rose to the level of an ethical assessment, but rather remained an assessment of the so-called “balance of forces.” The political discourse of Blacks, and to a lesser extent Indians, circulated too widely to credibly wed the U.S. and ethics. The raw force of COINTELPRO put an end to this trajectory toward a possible hegemony of ethical accountability. Consequently, the power of Blackness and Redness to pose the question—and the power to pose the question is the greatest power of all—retreated as did White radicals and progressives who “retired” from struggle. The question’s echo lies buried in the graves of young Black Panthers, AIM Warriors, and Black Liberation Army soldiers, or in prison cells where so many of them have been rotting (some in solitary confinement) for ten, twenty, thirty years, and at the gates of the academy where the “crazies” shout at passers-by. Gone are not only the young and vibrant voices that affected a seismic shift on the political landscape, but also the intellectual protocols of inquiry, and with them a spate of feature films that became authorized, if not by an unabashed revolutionary polemic, then certainly by a revolutionary zeitgeist. Is it still possible for a dream of unfettered ethics, a dream of the Settlement and the Slave estate’s destruction, to manifest itself at the ethical core of cinematic discourse, when this dream is no longer a constituent element of political discourse in the streets nor of intellectual discourse in the academy? The answer is “no” in the sense that, as history has shown, what cannot be articulated as political discourse in the streets is doubly foreclosed upon in screenplays and in scholarly prose; but “yes” in the sense that in even the most taciturn historical moments such as ours, the grammar of Black and Red suffering breaks in on this foreclosure, albeit like the somatic compliance of hysterical symptoms—it registers in both cinema and scholarship as symptoms of awareness of the structural antagonisms. Between 1967 and 1980, we could think cinematically and intellectually of Blackness and Redness as having the coherence of full-blown discourses. But from 1980 to the present, Blackness and Redness manifests only in the rebar of cinematic and intellectual (political) discourse, that is, as unspoken grammars. This grammar can be discerned in the cinematic strategies (lighting, camera angles, image composition, and acoustic strategies/design), even when the script labors for the spectator to imagine social turmoil through the rubric of conflict (that is, a rubric of problems that can be posed and conceptually solved) as opposed to the rubric of antagonism (an irreconcilable struggle between entities, or positionalities, the resolution of which is not dialectical but entails the obliteration of one of the positions). In other words, even when films narrate a story in which Blacks or Indians are beleaguered with problems that the script insists are conceptually coherent (usually having to do with poverty or the absence of “family values”), the non-narrative, or cinematic, strategies of the film often disrupt this coherence by posing the irreconcilable questions of Red and Black political ontology—or non-ontology. The grammar of antagonism breaks in on the mendacity of conflict. Semiotics and linguistics teach us that when we speak, our grammar goes unspoken. Our grammar is assumed. It is the structure through which the labor of speech is possible. Likewise, the grammar of political ethics—the grammar of assumptions regarding the ontology of suffering—which underwrite Film Theory and political discourse (in this book, discourse elaborated in direct relation to radical action), and which underwrite cinematic speech (in this book, Red, White, and Black films from the mid-1960s to the present) is also unspoken. This notwithstanding, film theory, political discourse, and cinema assume an ontological grammar, a structure of suffering. And the structure of suffering which film theory, political discourse, and cinema assume crowds out other structures of suffering, regardless of the sentiment of the film or the spirit of unity mobilized by the political discourse in question. To put a finer point on it, structures of ontological suffering stand in antagonistic, rather then conflictual, relation to one another (despite the fact that antagonists themselves may not be aware of the ontological positionality from which they speak). Though this is perhaps the most controversial and out-of-step claim of this book, it is, nonetheless, the foundation of the close reading of feature films and political theory that follows.

#### The 1AC is a redaction of blackness through a downward spiral into the specificities of the political economy which obscures its libidinal investments and exacerbates the maximum captivity of the Slave.

**Wilderson 10** (Frank is a professor of Drama and African American studies at the University of California, Irvine. He received his BA in government and philosophy from Dartmouth College, his Masters in Fine Arts from Columbia University and his PhD in Rhetoric and Film Studies from the University of California, Berkeley. Red, White, and Black. Cinema and the Structure of U.S. Antagonisms. p 12-19//shree)

The difficulty of a writing a book which seeks to uncover Red, Back, and White socially engaged feature films as aesthetic accompaniments to grammars of suffering, predicated on the subject positions of the “Savage” and the Slave is that today’s intellectual protocols are not informed by Fanon’s insistence that “ontology—once it is finally admitted as leaving existence by the wayside—does not permit us to understand the being of the black man [sic]” (Black Skin, White Masks 110). In sharp contrast to the late 60s and early 70s, we now live in a political, academic, and cinematic milieu which stresses “diversity,” “unity,” “civic participation,” “hybridity,” “access,” and “contribution.” The radical fringe of political discourse amounts to little more than a passionate dream of civic reform and social stability. The distance between the protester and the police has narrowed considerably. The effect of this upon the academy is that intellectual protocols tend to privilege two of the three domains of subjectivity, namely preconscious interests (as evidenced in the work of social science around “political unity,” “social attitudes,” “civic participation,” and “diversity,”) and unconscious identification (as evidenced in the humanities’ postmodern regimes of “diversity,” “hybridity,” and “relative [rather than “master”] narratives”). Since the 1980s, intellectual protocols aligned with structural positionality (except in the work of die-hard Marxists) have been kicked to the curb. That is to say, it is hardly fashionable anymore to think the vagaries of power through the generic positions within a structure of power relations—such as man/woman, worker/boss. Instead, the academy’s ensembles of questions are fixated on **specific** and “unique” experience of the myriad identities that make up those structural positions. This would fine if the work led us back to a critique of the paradigm; but most of it does not. Again, the upshot of this is that the intellectual protocols now in play, and the composite effect of cinematic and political discourse since the 1980s, tend to hide rather than make explicit the grammar of suffering which underwrites the US and its foundational antagonisms. This state of affairs **exacerbates**—or, more precisely, mystifies and veils—the ontological death of the Slave and the “Savage” because (as in the 1950s) cinematic, political, and intellectual discourse of the current milieu resists being sanctioned and authorized by the irreconcilable demands of Indigenism and Blackness—academic enquiry is thus no more effective in pursuing a revolutionary critique than the legislative antics of the loyal opposition. This is how Left-leaning scholars **help civil society recuperate** and **maintain stability**. But this stability is a **state of emergency** for Indians and Blacks. The aim of this book is to embark on a paradigmatic analysis of how dispossession is imagined at the intersection of (a) the most unflinching meditations (metacommentaries) on political economy and libidinal economy, (e.g., Marxism, ala Antonio Negri’s work, and psychoanalysis, such as the work of Kaja Silverman, respectively), (b) the discourse of political common sense, and (c) the narrative and formal strategies of socially/politically engaged films. In other words, a paradigmatic analysis asks, What are the constituent elements of, and the assumptive logic regarding, dispossession which underwrite theoretical claims about political and libidinal economy; and how are those elements and assumptions manifest in both political common sense and in political cinema? Charles S. Maier argues that a metacommentary on political economy can be thought of as an “interrogation of economic doctrines to disclose their sociological and political premises…in sum, [it] regards economic ideas and behavior not as frameworks for analysis, but as beliefs and actions that must themselves be explained. “vi Jared Sexton describes libidinal economy as “the economy, or distribution and arrangement, of desire and identification (their condensation and displacement), and the complex relationship between sexuality and the unconscious.” Needless to say, libidinal economy functions variously **across scales and is as “objective” as political economy**. Importantly, it is linked not only to forms of attraction, affection and alliance, but also to aggression, destruction, and the violence of lethal consumption. He emphasizes that **it is “the whole structure of psychic and emotional life**,” something more than, but inclusive of or traversed by, what Gramsci and other marxists call a “structure of feeling”; it is “a dispensation of energies, concerns, points of attention, anxieties, pleasures, appetites, revulsions, and phobias capable of both great **mobility and tenacious fixation**. “vii Red, White, & Black: Cinema and the Structure of U.S. Antagonisms interrogates the assumptive logic of metacommentaries on political and libidinal economy, and their articulations in film, through a subject whose structure of dispossession (the constituent elements of his/her loss and suffering) they cannot theorize: the Black; a subject who is always already positioned as Slave. The implications of my interrogation reach far beyond Film Studies, for these metacommentaries not only have the status of paradigmatic analyses, but their reasoning and assumptions permeate the private and quotidian of political common sense and buttress organizing and activism on the Left. In Leftist metacommentaries on ontology (and in the political common sense and the radical cinema in fee, however unintentionally, to such metacommentaries) the subject’s paradigmatic location, the structure of his/her relationality, is organized around his/her capacities: powers the subject has or lacks, the constituent elements of his/her structural position with which s/he is imbued or lacks prior to his/her performance. Just as prior to the commencement of a game of chess, the board and the pieces on it live in a caldron of antagonisms. The spatial and temporal capacities of the queen (where she is located and where she can move, as well as how she can move) articulate an irreconcilable asymmetry of power between her and a rook or a pawn for example. Vest the rook with the powers of the queen (before the game begins, of course) and it is not the outcome of the game that is jeopardy so much as the integrity of the paradigm itself—it is no longer chess but something else. And it goes without saying that no piece may leave the board if it is to stand in any relation whatsoever (asymmetry aside) to its contemporaries; this would be tantamount to leaving the world, to death. Power relations are extant in the sinews of capacity. For marxists, the revolutionary objective is not to play the game but to destroy it, to end exploitation and alienation. They see the capacity to accumulate surplus value embodied in one piece, the capitalist, and the embodiment of dispossession as being manifest in the worker. But the worker’s essential incapacity (powers which cannot accrue to the worker, suffering as exploitation and alienation) is the essence of capacity, life itself, when looked at through the eyes of the Slave. Socially or politically engaged films pride themselves on their pro- clivity to embrace what the Left views as the essence of dispossession: the plight of the exploited and alienated worker. Throughout this book, I argue that as radical and iconoclastic as so many socially or politically engaged films are (and they are indeed a breath of fresh air compared to standard Hollywood fare), in their putative embrace of working-class incapacity there is also, from the standpoint of the Slave, a devastating embrace of Human capacity—that which the Slave lacks. In other words, the narrative strategies of films that articulate the suffering of the worker are shot through with obstinate **refusals to surrender** their cinematic embrace to the structure of the Slave's domination, something **infinitely more severe than exploitation** and alienation. I have little interest in assailing political conservatives. Nor is my argument wedded to the disciplinary needs of political science, or even sociology, where injury must be established, first, as White supremacist event, from which one then embarks on a demonstration of intent, or racism; and, if one is lucky, or foolish, enough, a solution is proposed. If the position of the Black is, as I argue, a paradigmatic impossibility in the Western Hemisphere, indeed, in the world, in other words, **if a Black is the very antithesis of a Human subject, as imagined by Marxism and psychoanalysis, then his or her paradigmatic exile is not simply a function of repressive practices on the part of institutions** (as political science and sociology would have it). This banishment from the Human fold is to be found most profoundly in the emancipatory meditations of Black people's staunchest "allies," and in some of the most "radical" films. Here—not in restrictive policy, unjust legislation, police brutality, or conservative scholarship—is where the Settler/Master's sinews are most resilient. The polemic animating this research stems from (1) my reading of Native- and Black American metacommentaries on Indian and Black subject positions written over the past twenty-three years and (2) a sense of how much that work appears out of joint with intellectual protocols and political ethics which underwrite political praxis and socially engaged popular cinema in this epoch of multiculturalism and globalization. The sense of abandonment I experience when I read the meta-commentaries on Red positionality by theorists such as Leslie Silko, Ward Churchill, Taiaiake Alfred, Vine Deloria, and Haunani Kay-Trask; and the meta-commentaries on Black positionality by theorists such as David Marriott, Saidiya Hartman, Ronald Judy, Hortense Spillers, Orlando Patterson, and Achille Mbembe, against the deluge of multicultural positivity, is overwhelming. One suddenly realizes that, though the semantic field on which subjectivity is imagined has expanded phenomenally through the protocols of multiculturalism and globalization theory, Blackness and an unflinching articulation of Redness are more unimaginable and illegible within this expanded semantic field than they were during the height of COINTELPRO repression. On the semantic field upon which the new protocols are possible, Indigenism can indeed become partially legible through a programmatics of—as fits our globalized era—structural adjustment. In other words, for the Indian subject position to be legible, her/his positive registers of lost or threatened cultural identity must be foregrounded, when in point of fact the antagonistic register of dispossession that Indians “possess” is a position in relation to a socius structured by genocide. As Churchill points out, everyone from Armenians to Jews have been subjected to genocide, but the Indigenous position is one for which genocide is a constitutive element, not merely an historical event, without which the Indian would not, paradoxically, “exist.”viii Regarding the Black position, some might ask why, after claims successfully made on the state by the Civil Rights Movement, do I insist on positing an operational analytic for cinema, film studies, and political theory that appears to be a dichotomous and essentialist pairing of Masters and Slaves? In other words, why should we think of today’s Blacks in the US as Slaves and everyone else (with the exception of Indians) as Masters? One could answer these questions by demonstrating how nothing remotely approaching claims successfully made on the State has come to pass. In other words, the election of a Black President aside, police brutality, mass incarceration, segregated and substandard schools and housing, astronomical rates of HIV infection, and the threat of being turned away en masse at the polls still constitute the lived experience of Black life. But such **empirically based rejoinders** would lead us in the wrong direction; we would find ourselves on “solid” ground, which would only mystify, rather than clarify, the question. We would be forced to appeal to “facts,” the “historical record,” and empirical markers of stasis and change, all of which **could be turned on their head with more of the same**. Underlying such a downward spiral into sociology, political science, history, and/or public policy debates would be the very rubric that I am calling into question: the grammar of suffering known as exploitation and alienation, the assumptive logic whereby subjective dispossession is arrived at in the calculations between those who sell labor power and those who acquire it. The Black qua the worker. Orlando Patterson has already dispelled this faulty ontological grammar in Slavery and Social Death, where he demonstrates how and why work, or forced labor, is not a constituent element of slavery. Once the “solid” plank of “work” is removed from slavery, then the conceptually coherent notion of “claims against the state”—the proposition that the state and civil society are elastic enough to even contemplate the possibility of an emancipatory project for the Black position—disintegrates into thin air. The imaginary of the state and civil society is parasitic on the Middle Passage. Put another way: no slave, no world. And, in addition, as Patterson argues, no slave is in the world. 18 If, as an ontological position, that is, as a grammar of suffering, the Slave is not a laborer but an anti-Human, a positionality against which Humanity establishes, maintains, and renews it coherence, its corporeal integrity; if the Slave is, to borrow from Patterson, generally dishonored, perpetually open to gratuitous violence, and void of kinship structure, that is, having no relations that need be recognized, a being outside of relationality, then our analysis cannot be approached through the rubric of gains or reversals in struggles with the state, not unless and until the **interlocutor first explains how the Slave is of the world. The onus is not on one who posits the Master/Slave dichotomy, but on the one who argues there is a distinction between Slaveness and Blackness**. How, when, and where did such a split occur? The woman at the gates of Columbia University awaits an answer.

### Thesis – Psychoanalysis

#### The criminalization of Blackness is not a matter of legal discrepancies or contingent flashpoints of discrimination – the 1AC’s political grammar is only capable of responding to forms of violence that possess a psychological grounding wire, which requires ratcheting-down the scale of abstraction so as to vouchsafe Human community – the collective unconscious of civil society locates Blackness as a phobic object within an external superviolence that exceeds rational utility and exists only to preserve the psychic health and communal well-being of Human subjects

Wilderson 14 (Frank B Wilderson III, associate professor of African American Studies and Drama at UC Irvine, PhD in Rhetoric and Film Studies from UC Berkeley, October 2014, ““We’re trying to destroy the world”: Anti-Blackness & Police Violence After Ferguson: An Interview with Frank B. Wilderson, III,” <http://sfbay-anarchists.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/frank-b-wilderson-iii-were-trying-to-destroy-the-world-antiblackness-police-violence-after-ferguson.pdf>, modified) gz

FW: That was at Haile Gerima’s bookstore in DC, and it was an all- Black audience, so I didn’t have my guard up. I might have said it differently in a classroom, who knows. What I meant there was, well it was a bit tongue in cheek, but of course I hate police brutality. I haven’t been brutalized in the past ten years, but when I was brutalized I did hate that. I hate the harassment However, I feel that what my critical work is trying to contribute is to say that Black people in the US and worldwide are the only people -- and I say this categorically -- for whom it is not productive to speak in terms of ‘police brutality’. I know that we have to, because we’re forced to speak in these terms, and there is a way in which all Black speech is always coerced speech, in that you’re always in what Saidiya Hartman would call a context of slavery: anything that you say, you always have to think, ‘what are the consequences of me speaking my mind going to be?’ The world -- and this goes for Democracy

Now, it goes for our post-colonial comrades, etc. -- is not ready to think about the way in which policing affects Black people. And so what we have to do is ratchet-down the scale of abstraction, so that we don’t present the world with the totality of our relation to the police, which is that we are policed all the time, and everywhere. We have to give the world some kind of discourse, some kind of analysis in bite-size pieces that they are ready to accept, so that they can have some kind of empathy for us, some kind of political or legal adjudication. That is why police brutality becomes the focal point of the problem.

Police brutality has never identified our problem. Our problem is one of complete captivity from birth to death, and coercion as the starting point of our interaction with the State and with ordinary white citizens (and with ordinary Latino, Mexican, Asian citizens, Native Americans). And so when I was in that room and I said ‘I don’t hate police brutality, I hate the police’, I think most of the people in that room immediately understood what I was saying, but also understood the problems with going outside and saying that.

Here’s one little example of how this conundrum or paradox affects the way we can speak to White people and our so-called ‘allies of color’. In Tulia, TX, in 1999, 45 Black people and about two Latinos were arrested in a one-night drug bust. In other words, roughly 10 percent of the Black population were arrested in one night. All of them were convicted. There is a film about this that people can find online. What’s interesting to me is not the celebratory political and emancipatory nature of the film, which ends by saying ‘at the end of the day we were able to get most of the convictions overturned, because the undercover agent did not have evidence’. There was one undercover agent who indicted 45 Black people and two Latinos. But he did not come to court with cocaine. He came to court with this word. And what was interesting to me about that was that when jurors were interviewed about that, and people said to them, ‘So you convicted these kids, some to 200 or 300 years, on no evidence, but on the word of one police officer. Would you want that to happen to your child?’, one of the jurors said—without any sense of irony—‘if it was my child, we’d need evidence’. So the problem then is not where the film situates the problem, or where the media situates it, i.e. in the *rogue actions* of the police. The problem is in the libidinal economy, which is to say in the collective unconscious of everybody else. And if we were to actually understand that better, we’d understand that Blackness is always-already criminalized in the collective unconscious. The only problem for white supremacy and anti-Blackness when it’s happening to Black people in Mexico for example, is one of *logistics*, of *mechanics*, which is to say, ‘how can we make the criminalization stick?’ It’s not a question of something wrong taking place, that these Black people are suffer or exist under police brutality. Policing—policing Blackness—is what keeps everyone else sane. And if we can start to see the policing and the mutilation and the aggressivity towards Blackness not as a form of discrimination, but as being a form of psychic health and well-being for the rest of the world, then we can begin to reformulate the problem and begin to take a much more iconoclastic response to it.

JB - *This idea that there is a sort of necessity, for the quality of life—i.e. that the existence of an anti-Black perspective is life for those who are involved in the mutilating, torturing, terrorizing Black people...what’s preventing Black people from understanding this? Some folks, such as Fanon, Frances Cress Welsing, etc., have attempted to grasp the psychic relation between the terrorizer and the terrorized, but most folks won’t go so far as to say that there is a health and even a sense of pleasure in that libidinal economy for Whites to enact an anti-Black perspective. What’s preventing folks from understanding that?*

FW - Although my work is fine, I would really encourage listeners to read two Black authors, Hortense Spillers and Fanon’s *Black Skin White Masks*, in particular for those moments where they are at a loss to address what they have come up against. What we tend to do -- and I’m not criticizing this, we have to help Black people make it through the day, which is the job of Black psychologists and Black psychoanalysts -- but we also need people like me, who point to the failures of what Fanon called the “healthy infrastructure of the psyche”. And then I’d also suggest moving to the more uncompromising literature of David Marriot and Jared Sexton, who will deal with psychoanalysis but will not offer any cure.

Here’s the deal: in a nutshell, every other group lives in a context of violence which has what I would call a sort of psychological grounding wire, which means that they can write a sentence about why they are experiencing that violence. Native Americans can write a sentence that says ‘I’m experiencing violence because this is an ongoing tactic within a strategy of colonization’. White feminists can say the same, that ‘this is an ongoing tactic within a strategy of patriarchy’. For a Black person to try and emulate that kind of interpretive lens, the problem becomes a lot bigger. For us this is the ongoing tactic of a strategy for human renewal. The violence against us becomes a tactic within a strategy to secure Humanity’s place. It’s not a tactic in an ongoing strategy to take our land away, or to take our rights away. We never had any rights.

The other thing is that our psyche does not obey the objective laws of the structure. The simple way of putting that would be to say that we exist in an external superviolence, and we exist in an internal soup which has self-hatred as one of its main components. One of the things that Marriot and Fanon each say is that, generically speaking, the structure by which human beings are recognized by other human beings and incorporated into a community of human beings, is anti-slave. And slaveness is something that has consumed Blackness and Africanness, making it impossible to divide slavery from Blackness. Even if I say to myself, “I am not a Slave”, we don’t make our own way in the world. So we know every day, before walking out of the house—and I think the American Black knows it quicker, like say at age 3, the Caribbean and African Black might know it a little bit later on in life, like Fanon says, ‘I was 18 when I learned it’—that we cannot enter into a structure of recognition as a being, an incorporation into a community of beings, without recognition and incorporation being completely destroyed. We know that we are the antithesis of recognition and incorporation. And sometimes we build to a point that we can’t even call it political because it’s bigger than politics, a point of mobilization and organization and theorization that is in some way informed by this, and we just set it off, and I think that Harriet Tubman, Nat Turner, and the Black Liberation Army are episodes of that. But the response to these moments, where we recognize that we cannot be recognized and we move on that, the response is so overwhelmingly violent that it doesn’t seek to end the conflict -- say in Algeria or Vietnam -- it seeks to crush us to the point that nobody ever gets that idea in their head again.

Normally people are not radical, normally people are not moving against the system: normally people are just trying to live, to have a bit of romance and to feed their kids. And what people want is to be recognized, to be incorporated. And when we understand that recognition and incorporation are generically anti-Black, then we don’t typically pick up the gun and move against the system, we typically try to find ways to be recognized, to be incorporated, even though that’s impossible. And I think that our language is symptomatic of that when we say that ‘I don’t like police brutality’. Because, here we are saying to the world, to our so-called ‘people of color allies’ and to the white progressives, ‘we’re not going to bring all the Black problems down on you today. If you could just help us with this little thing, I won’t tell you about the whole deal that is going on with us.’

TB: *If we agree with your thesis, then what is the framework of resistance? How do we resist, either physically or psychologically?*

FW: Your question makes me admit something. Whenever a Black person comes to speak to other Black people, it’s incumbent upon the Black people who are listening to decide how useful this person is to me in what they are saying, and what aspects of my problem can what this person’s saying address. I think more specifically, that professors are by and large categorically disqualified or unqualified to make pronouncements on resistance. I think that when Fanon talks about hallucinatory whitening, I think that whether you’re talking like me, or like an afro-centrist, or an integrationist, that this is so much a part of what it means to be a professor. I feel like cussing people out all the time. But if I do that, and I violate University of California’s civility laws, tenure or not I’m out the door, right? And that tempers my speech. So I think that what I have to offer is not a way out. What I have to offer is an analysis of the problem. And I don’t trust me as much as I trust Black people on the ground. So having said that, that’s one part of my answer.

The other part is that, as Saidiya Hartman has said, Black liberation presents us with the prospect of a kind of liberation that is so totalizing (i.e. that it is what Fanon says on page 100, quoting Aimé Césaire: ‘the end of the world’), that it can’t be ratcheted down and put into political language. If I’m right that the problem that Black people are in is not colonial exploitation and not racism but social death -- which is not to say that Black people don’t experience racism and that Black poor people are not exploited, but that once all that’s over, we’re still going to be socially dead -- then I think that we actually don’t have a political framework to deal with that, certainly not in Marxism, Feminism, and post-Colonialism. I’m writing about this now [1]. The beautiful actions of the BLA are bigger than the political discourse of Marxist-Leninism or New Afrikan discourse through which they tried to make sense of that. But as has been pointed out elsewhere, one of the problems that the BLA always had was that they were not only coerced by the police but were at the whims of white radical allies.

When Fanon says that the Black person is a ‘stimulus to anxiety’, and that this is very different from the Jew, since the latter is a stimulus to anxiety because of x, y or z: in the fantasy world of anti-Semitism, he or she is going to do well on all the exams, and there won’t be any space for my kid in the French university; or they’re going to take over the world economic system, etc. All that stuff, where you can put language to their anxiety, makes the Jew, the Native American, the post-colonial subject, a much more malleable phobic object than the Black. The Black is a phobic object because ~~he or she~~ [they] presents me with a problem that is beyond language, that leaves me with no way to redress what this person represents. This person is the antithesis of Humanity. And there are moments in which we have seized that *esprit de corps* even if we are not able to speak to each other in that stark of terms, and we move. I mentioned a couple a few minutes ago. I think that we need to keep with those moments. I also think we need, in our political organizing, to be aware of how impoverished our articulated agenda is in comparison with the suffering that we actually experience.

### Link – Climate

#### Their neutral representations of climate as anthropogenic is antiblack liminality because of their plastic integration of blackness into civil society’s apocalyptic perils – the libidinal desire to maximize labor begins at the level of Human-Black relations, making warming inevitable under their framework

Wynter 07 – Sylvia, Professor Emeritus in Spanish and Romance Languages at Stanford University, “The Human being as noun? Or being human as praxis? Towards the Autopoietic turn/overturn: A Manifesto,” otl2.wikispaces.com/file/view/The+Autopoetic+Turn.pdf – tishu

For if, as Time magazine reported in January 2007 (Epigraph 2), a U.N. Intergovernmental panel of Natural Scientists, were soon to release "a smoking-gun report which confirms that human activities are to blame for global warming" (and thereby for climate change), and had therefore predicted "catastrophic disruptions by 2100," by April, the issued Report not only confirmed the above, but also repeated the major contradiction which the Time account had re-echoed. This contradiction, however, has nothing to do in any way with the rigor, and precision of their natural scientific findings, but rather with the contradiction referred to by Derrida's question in Epigraph 3—i.e., But who, we? That is, their attribution of the non-natural factors driving global warming and climate change to, generic human activities, and/or to "anthropocentric forcings"; with what is, in effect, this mis-attribution then determining the nature of their policy recommendations to deal with the already ongoing reality of global warming and climate change, to be ones couched largely in economic terms. That is, in the terms of our present mode of knowledge production, and its "perceptual categorization system" as elaborated by the disciplines of the Humanities and Social Sciences (or "human sciences") and which are reciprocally enacting of our present sociogenic genre of being human, as that of the West's Man in its second Liberal or bio-humanist reinvented form, as homo oeconomicus; as optimally "virtuous Breadwinner, taxpayer, consumer, and as systemically over-represented as if it, and its behavioral activities were isomorphic with the being of being human, and thereby with activities that would be definable as the human-as-a-species ones. Consequently, the Report's authors because logically taking such an over-representation as an empirical fact, given that, as highly trained natural scientists whose domains of inquiry are the physical and (purely) biological levels of reality, although their own natural-scientific order of cognition with respect to their appropriate non-human domains of inquiry, is an imperatively self-correcting and therefore, necessarily, a cognitively open/open-ended one, nevertheless, because in order to be natural scientists, they are therefore necessarily, at the same time, middle class Western or westernized subjects, initiated 15 as such, by means of our present overall education system and its mode of knowledge production to be the optimal symbolically encoded embodiment of the West's Man, it its second reinvented bio-humanist homo oeconomicus, and therefore bourgeois self-conception, over-represented as if it were isomorphic with the being of being human, they also fall into the trap identified by Derrida in the case of his fellow French philosophers. The trap, that is, of conflating their own existentially experienced (Western-bourgeois or ethno-class) referent "we," with the "we" of "the horizon of humanity." This then leading them to attribute the reality of behavioral activities that are genre-specific to the West's Man in its second reinvented concept/self-conception as homo oeconomicus, ones that are therefore as such, as a historically originated ensemble of behavioral activitiesas being ostensibly human activities-in-general. This, in spite of the fact that they do historicize the origin of the processes that were to lead to their recent natural scientific findings with respect to the reality of the non-naturally caused ongoing acceleration of global warming and climate change, identifying this process as having begun with the [West's] Industrial Revolution from about 1750 onwards. That is, therefore, as a process that can be seen to have been correlatedly concomitant in Great Britain, both with the growing expansion of the largely bourgeois enterprise of factory manufacturing, as well with the first stages of the political and intellectual struggles the British bourgeoisie who were to spearhead the Industrial Revolution, to displace the then ruling group hegemony of the landed aristocracy cum gentry, and to do so, by inter alia, the autopoetic reinvention of the earlier homo politicus/virtuous citizen civic humanist concept of Man, which had served to legitimate the latter's traditionally landed, political, social and economic dominance, in new terms. This beginning with Adam Smith and the Scottish School of the Enlightenment in the generation before the American, French, and Haitian (slave) revolutions, as a reinvention that was to be effected in now specifically bourgeois terms as homo oeconomicus/and virtuous Breadwinner. 116 That is as the now purely secular genre of being human, which although not to be fully (i.e., politically, intellectually, and economically) institutionalized until the mid-nineteenth century, onwards, when its optimal incarnation came to be actualized in the British and Western bourgeoisie as the new ruling class, was, from then on, to generate its prototype specific ensemble of new behavioral activities, that were to impel both the Industrial Revolution, as well as the West's second wave of imperial expansion, this based on the colonized incorporation of a large majority of the world's peoples, all coercively homogenized to serve its own redemptive material telos, the telos initiating of global warming and climate change. Consequently, if the Report's authors note that about 1950, a steady process of increasing acceleration of the processes of global warming and climate change, had begun to take place, this was not only to be due to the Soviet Revolution's (from 1917 onwards) forced march towards industrialization (if in its still homo oeconomicus conception, since a march spearheaded by the 116 See the already cited essay by J.G.A. Pocock "symbolic capital," education credentials owning and technically skilled Eastern European bourgeoisie)—as a state-directed form of capitalism, nor indeed by that of Mao's then China, but was to be also due to the fact that in the wake of the range of successful anti-colonial struggles for political independence, which had accelerated in the wake of the Second World War, because the new entrepreneurial and academic elites had already been initiated by the Western educational system in Western terms as homo oeconomicus, they too would see political independence as calling for industrialized development on the "collective bovarysme "117 model of the Western bourgeoisie. Therefore, with the acceleration of global warming and climate change gaining even more momentum as all began to industrialize on the model of homo oeconomicus, with the result that by the time of the Panel's issued April 2007 Report the process was now being driven by a now planetarily homogenized/standardized transnational "system of material provisioning or mode of techno-industrial economic production based on the accumulation of capital; as the means of production of ever-increasing economic growth, defined as "development"; with this calling for a single model of normative behavioral activities, all driven by the now globally (post-colonially and post-the-1989-collapse-of-the-Soviet Union), homogenized desire of "all men (and women) to," realize themselves/ourselves, in the terms of homo oeconomicus. In the terms, therefore, of "its single (Western-bourgeois or ethno-class) understanding" of "man's humanity," over-represented as that of the human; with the well-being and common good of its referent "we"—that, not only of the transnational middle classes but even more optimally, of the corporate multinational business industries and their financial networks, both indispensable to the securing of the Western-bourgeois conception of the common good, within the overall terms of the behavior-regulatory redemptive material telos of ever-increasing economic growth, put forward as the Girardot-type "cure" for the projected Malthusian-Ricardo transumed postulate of a "significant ill" as that, now, ostensibly, of mankind's threatened subordination to [the trope] of Natural Scarcity, this in the reoccupied place of Christianity of its postulate of that "ill" as that of enslavement to Original Sin."' With the result that the very ensemble of behavioral activities indispensable, on the one hand, to the continued hegemony of the bourgeoisie as a Western and westernized transnational ruling class, is the same ensemble of behaviors that is directly causal of global worming and climate change, as they are, on the other, to the continued dynamic enactment and stable replication of the West's second reinvented concept of Man; this latter in response to the latter's existential imperative of guarding against the entropic disintegration of its genre of being human and fictive nation-state mode of kind. Thereby against the possible bringing to an end, therefore, of the societal order, and autopoetic living Western and westernized macro world system in it bourgeois configuration, which is reciprocally the former's (i.e., its genre of being human, and fictive modes of kind's condition of realization, at a now global level. This, therefore, is the cognitive dilemma, one arising directly from the West's hitherto unresolvable aporia of the secular, that has been precisely captured by Sven Lutticken in a recent essay. Despite, he writes, "the consensus that global warming cannot be ascribed to normal fluctuations in the earth's temperature... [the] social and political components of this process have been minimized; man-made nature is re-naturalized, the new (un)natural history presented as fate." And with this continuing to be so because (within the terms, I shall add, of our present "single understanding of man's humanity" and the unresolvable aporia which it continues to enact), "[t]he truly terrifying notion is not that [global warming and climate change] is irreversible, but that it actually might be reversible—at the cost of radically changing the economic and social order..."119 The changing, thereby, of the now globally hegemonic biologically absolute answer that we at present give to the question to who we are, and of whose biohumanist homo oeconomicus symbolic life/death (i.e., naturally selected/dysselected) code's intentionality of dynamic enactment and stable replication, our present "economic and social order" is itself the empirical actualization.

#### The aff’s narrative of climate change fails to account for historical narratives and thus justifies a privileged epistemology which does material harm to marginalized populations

Carey 12 – Mark, Associate Professor of History and Environmental Studies in the Robert D. Clark Honors College at the University of Oregon, “Climate and history: a critical review of historical climatology and climate change historiography,” 4/26/12 – tishu

Narratives of climate change that have varied across time and space continue to affect understandings of present-day climate change. Scholars, however, are just beginning to uncover the diversity of these narratives, not to mention their implications for social relations and power dynamics. As Mike Hulme explains convincingly, climate science alone is not enough to explain either how we think about climate or why global warming has led to such rancorous debates in recent decades.4 Climate is an idea as much as it is measurable, quantifiable weather patterns. And these perceptions of climate have changed considerably over time, for distinct peoples, and in different places around the globe. There are even narratives of denial that can block climate change adaptation.180 As such, it is necessary to approach climate, as Hulme does, by scrutinizing diverse meanings of science, economics, values, and international politics when trying to pinpoint people’s perceptions of climate change. One of the most prolific narratives is that of global warming crisis, which parallels the declensionist narrative embedded in modern environmentalism. Climate narratives—and indeed much climate history scholarship—perpetuates the environmentalist tale of tragedy, natural resource depletion, and catastrophic collapse that has long been at the heart of the environmental movement.181 Moreover, the dominant view among both environmentalists and those striving to mitigate global warming today is that climate change has resulted from the capitalist economy and the industrialized nations that have been ruining the earth and depleting its natural resources through unregulated, irresponsible pollution. Many in the global warming community use this narrative implicitly or explicitly in their efforts to curb emissions by regulating industry and slowing capitalist consumption. Recent research is increasingly challenging this narrative because of its inherent power dimensions that can further socio-economic and political inequality. Diana Liverman challenges what she identifies as three dominant global warming narratives: the crisis narrative, the differentiated responsibility narrative, and the market solutions narrative. These narratives serve some people more than others, they have directed too much attention to international treaties and north–south disagreements, and they also promote neoliberalism and other market-based solutions rather than offering distinct solutions outside past practices.10 For example, historical narratives of vanishing glaciers—a common motif of climate change stories—often serve particular groups such as scientists, conservationists, and tourists rather than local residents or marginalized populations.182 And in some cases, the way this narrative of melting glaciers creates a vision of glaciers as vanishing water towers—as has been done in mountain ranges worldwide—can empower certain groups like hydroelectric companies and large-scale irrigators (and thus disempower local residents), even though glacier retreat has serious hydrologic consequences for all these social groups.1 But in other cases, local residents in Peru, for instance, have mobilized the global narrative of climate crisis and melting glaciers to fight for their rights to water against a multinational energy corporation and the effects of neoliberal privatization. Although these local Peruvians used collective action to seize control of a large reservoir from Duke Energy, they gained international attention and support in part because they broadcast a (correct) story of vulnerable populations struggling to maintain water supplies below disappearing glaciers.183 Historical scholarship on climate can play a unique and important role here in uncovering this diversity of meanings, narratives, impacts, and responses to climate change. It is the job of historians not only to uncover these histories in the first place, but also to help push their conclusions into broader discussions about climate change today.

### Link – Economics

**The promise of economic growth for all and democracy to come is the most pernicious lie of whiteness—the affirmative defuses revolutionary energy into an always unrequited hope, justifying violence, warfare and racism through the dream of inclusion.**

**Hoescht 2008** (Heidi, PhD in Literature from UCSD, “Refusable Pasts: Speculative Democracy, Spectator Citizens, and the Dislocation of Freedom in the United States,” Proquest Dissertations)

This dissertation examines **the intimate connections between emancipatory democracy and speculative economics**. It studies cultural texts that reflect and **express national ideals of U.S. democracy** that emereged in three periods of heightened captialist speculation the Jacksonian period of the 1830s, the 1930s Popular Front period, **and the rise of liberal multiculturalism** between 1980 to the present. The project engages two kinds of cultural texts. The project derives its proximate objects of the study--folklore, literature, literary criticism, stage performances, community festivals and public parks—from a range of critical and cultural texts produced by Constance Rourke, F.O. Matthiessen, Nathaniel Hawthorne, George Catlin, Frederick Law Olmsted, and the neighborhood of Powderhorn Park. Yet, the disseration also explores a second text that connects these seemingly disparate objects and authors. **The social text** that binds the chapters of this dissertaion is a broader text of U.S. culture and social practice that is conditioned and inflated by the logic of speculation. This second text reveals culture as a central link in the economic project of U.S. nationalism. Culture in this text, is a key technology by which U.S. inequality is reproduced, reiterated, and translated across contexts. I argue that **the cultural logic of specualiton disables possibilities for participatory democracy and racial, gendered, and class justice and equality. This logic aligns the emancipatory aspirations of aggreived groups to the market** and property interests of elites. I show that culture has been instrumental for expanding social inequality through the promises of U.S. nationalism. **The speculative logic of U.S. democracy relies on the category of "not yet freedom" to hide economic and racial inequalities. It preserves the idea of democracy only by deferring actual justice to a perpetually pushed back future**. The pursuit of democracy in the United States has been haunted by histories of refusal and deferral. **When aggrieved groups ask for emancipation, elites often respond with promises of freedom without doing the hard work of creating justice.** Refusable Pasts explores how **the national culture of the United States portrays the deferral of freedom to some unspecified "not yet" time in the future as evidence of real democratic inclusion in the present. Promises of future freedom evidence the power and pervasiveness of popular aspirations for democracy**. Yet because **national culture offers aggrieved groups democratic promises rather than democratic practices,** it also demonstrates the power of elites to suppress popular democracy and preserve their own privileges. Speculative logic and market subjectivity permeate U.S. national culture. **Speculative practices originate in economic relations, but their logic structures national culture as well. Speculative logics promising future growth have connected the expressive cultures of U.S nationalism to the economic life of the nation's elites.** Just as investors anticipate that economic returns in the future will reward their work in the present**, citizens are encouraged to defer their desires for empowerment, autonomy, dignity and community to some perpetually promised but never quite realized time of "not yet" freedom in the future**. **Hope functions as a fundamental mechanism for deferring freedom to the future and refusing radical change in the present. Under these conditions, culture serves as a cover story promoting economic expansion and empire, slavery and racial subordination, plunder and perpetual warfare**. The national culture of the nation works to instantiate, legitimate, and perpetuate economic inequality and social stratification. It is also one forum that elites use to manage the emancipatory aspirations of popular struggles. Culture counts because stories centered on the logic of speculation promise symbolic reconciliations as the salve to the wounds caused by the perpetuation of inequalities in society. **The speculative logics that inform national culture portray inexcusable injustices in the present as mere preludes to a promised prosperity and freedom in the future**. **Thus, the democratic promises inscribed inside national culture actually function as powerful mechanisms for the perpetuation of decidedly undemocratic practices and policies.**

#### Their understanding of the human as a rational economic decision-making subject criminalizes Black bodies as irrational uncompliant subjects

**Hardin and Towns 19** – Carolyn, Assistant Professor of Media and Communication & American Studies @ Miami University. Armond, Department of Communication Studies at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, December 2019, “Plastic Empowerment: Financial Literacy and Black Economic Life”, *American Quarterly*, Volume 71, Number 4, pg. 978-980 – tishu

Homo Economicus’s Others: Black Objects and Black Debt One of the financial literacy programs run by the government, Money Smart, is a free “instructor-led curriculum” that can be taught in “a classroom or small group setting.”56 The curriculum covers “deposit and credit services offered by financial institutions, choosing and maintaining a checking account, spending plans, the importance of saving, how to obtain and use credit effectively, and the basics of building or repairing credit.”57 These materials, among many others, display the basic and well-established assumptions of financial literacy education: that individual financial stability requires rational calculations and decision-making. In other words, financial literacy is a normative project to bring individuals into compliance with the simplistic assumptions of economic models, or what James Kwak terms “economism.”58 As such, financial literacy acknowledges and seeks to remediate what behavioral economists have long noted: that models do not match reality because individuals do not act rationally.59 However, if individuals can be made to act rationally, optimal economic outcomes can be achieved. In other words, the purpose of financial literacy is to make each of us a well-functioning and rational “homo economicus,” the idealized subject of free market capitalism. Financial literacy is just the latest narrative to deploy a version of homo economicus as the baseline subject of economic rationality. Although the term is said to have originated only in the nineteenth century in response to the writing of John Stuart Mill, the notion of a “proper” capitalist subject who acts correctly within various models of capitalism is much older.60 It is also a raced subject. The history of capitalism reveals that the dominant notion of economic rationality is constructed as/in a white subject over and against black bodies both as objects rather than subjects of capitalism and as intense targets of exploitative debt. This racial tension at the heart of economic rationality reveals the racial stakes of calls for financial literacy education of black consumers. White Subject, Black Object According to Michel Foucault, the homo economicus of the late twentieth century eschews the early political economic concern of buying and selling one’s own labor power—with all its potentially collectivist political implications—for the individualized pursuit of self-interest “as an entrepreneur of himself.”61 Foucault offers as evidence Gary Becker’s universalizing idea of “human capital.” Homo economicus is he who can solve any social problem by accumulating human capital that produces an earnings stream for the entrepreneur of himself. But this entrepreneurial self-determination is not equally accessible by all raced subjects. According to Denise Ferreira da Silva, the black is not self-determined but “outer-determined,” which is to say, always open to being “affected,” manipulated by the Western subject for his own benefit.62 The black, then, functions as one about whom choices are made, not one who makes choices. Sylvia Wynter provides the most explicit argument of the overrepresentation of homo economicus as white within the Western construct of the human, which she argues cannot be disarticulated from capitalism. Indeed, homo economicus emerges out of the shift from the Renaissance’s conceptions of politics and Western Judeo-Christianity as signifiers of the human, what she calls “Man1,” to “Man2,” or “a figure based on the Western bourgeoisie’s model of being human that has been articulated as, since the latter half of the nineteenth century, liberal monohumanism’s homo oeconomicus.”63 Likewise, Lisa Tilley argues that Wynter’s homo economicus is a revision of a racialized humanness, “formulated within the colonial episteme’s Darwinian distortions as divided between the naturally selected (Europeans) and the naturally ‘dysselected’ (those racialized as naturally inferiority).”64 Wynter finds the origins of this shift in humanness in the “colonial matrix of power.”65 In her essay “1492,” she argues that Christopher Columbus functioned as a racialized turning point for Europe, one that replaced Western religious conceptions of knowledge, such as the world being flat, with secularized conceptions of the world.66 Further, Columbus’s voyage had as much to do with spreading Chris- tianity and glorifying the Spanish nation as it did with enriching “himself and his family with all the gold and tribute he could extort from the indigenous peoples, even from making some into cabezas de indios y indias (heads of Indian men and women), who could be sold as slaves.”67 Wynter notes that Columbus is often positioned in terms of celebratory American “discovery” in ways that brush over the colonial, nationalistic, and imperialistic implications of his individual financial aspirations and the objectification of black bodies on which those aspirations depended. Walter Mignolo follows Wynter, providing some insight into the racial foundations of homo economicus, particularly connecting it to Western colonialism and imperialism, both of which are inseparable from the post-Columbian context.68 Mignolo argues that the self-interested optimization that fleshes out the figure of homo economicus assumes coloniality and imperialism.69 In effect, Western colonial enrichment—at the expense of indigenous racial others of Europe—is already inherent in the “economic rationality” of homo economicus, as it is seen as a financially rational tool of enrichment, rather than a moral wrong. Elsewhere Wynter claims that the proto-notion of homo economicus that circulated in the sixteenth century underwent important transformations by the nineteenth century. Further removed from Judeo-Christianity, conceptions of economic rationality in the nineteenth century functioned in raced form to articulate both black and indigenous populations in the “New World” as the epitome of economic irrationality. Wynter notes that by the nineteenth century, the black slave “would now be made into the physical referent of the ostensibly most racially inferior and non-evolved Other to Man, itself redefined as optimally homo economicus.”70 The black slave is in effect the defining opposite of homo economicus, that nonbeing who is less than human and/ or not human at all. Where homo economicus is self-interested and free to choose—the subject who can fulfill the ultimate human goal of surplus accumulation on his own—the slave is utterly removed from not only this goal but even the possibility of choosing or acting within the construct of the self.

### Link – Labor

#### Labor focus is a liberal discourse of inclusion that conceals the singularity of Black fungibility

**King 14** – tiffany lethabo, Assistant Professor of Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies at Georgia State University. (Tiffany, 6-10-2014, "Labor’s Aphasia: Toward Antiblackness as Constitutive to Settler Colonialism", *Decolonization*, <https://decolonization.wordpress.com/2014/06/10/labors-aphasia-toward-antiblackness-as-constitutive-to-settler-colonialism/> – tishu

For the past few weeks a convergence of social media discussions on reparations, Shona Jackson’s book Creole Indigeneity: Between Myth and Nation in the Caribbean, and her recent post “Humanity beyond the Regime of Labor,” as well as my own thinking about Black Studies’ engagement with Conquest have all compelled me to think critically about the issue of Black labor.[1] I would like to take a moment to focus on the **conceptual limits of labor** as an **epistemic frame** for thinking about Blackness (as bodies and discourse) and its relationship to settler colonialism. I am particularly concerned about the ways that Black labor may **crowd out Black fungibility** as a **conceptual frame** for thinking about Blackness within settler colonial discourses. While many scholars who understand themselves as humanists have long ago conceded that strict or heavy-handed Marxian (political economic) analyses are generally impoverished and wanting; labor as an analytic persists. Indeed, labor as a discourse, or what Shona Jackson would call a “metaphysics” and “ontoepistemology”—a way of living and a way of articulating this mode of living— still **haunts our critical theories** (Jackson, 2012, p. 217).[2] This is particularly true as scholars undertake the difficult work of understanding and naming how racialized people are situated within White settler colonial states. Configuring People of Color into the calculus of settler colonial relations is onerous and in fact laborious. It is especially difficult when trying to conceptualize the unique location of Blackness. I commend scholars for taking on this task. In order to do this cumbersome work, scholars tend to rely on the **tried and true rubric** of labor. Labor becomes the site and mode of incorporating non-Black and non-Indigenous people into settler colonial relations in White settler nation-states. People of Color scholars often **rehearse histories** of arrival as populations of coerced labor as a way of explaining their presence, as well as distance or proximity to the category of the Settler. Labor also becomes a **liberal discourse** that allows immigrants and migrants to narrate the terms of their belonging and citizenship within White settler colonial states. In this way, labor functions as **a**nother **discourse of inclusion**. Recently, Jamilah Martin in response to Ta-Nehisi Coates’ article “The Case for Reparations” made a similar and astute point in her blog post “On Reparations: Resisting Inclusion and Co-optation” that reparations work as a discourse of inclusion within the project of American Democracy within the “U.S. anti-Black settler-imperial state.” While the integrationist project of reparations may be a liberal project of inclusion, it also relies on a “**teleology** of modern labor” (Jackson 2012, p. 147). It **holds out hope** **for Black inclusion** into a **human family** of laborers/workers. Yet, despite the claim of the Black laborer as “subject”, embedded within the metaphysics of labor, the bill H.R. 40 (otherwise known as the Reparations Bill) has not gained traction. H.R. 40’s **lack of success** partially speaks to the **inability** of Blackness to **become fully legible** through **human categories** like the **laborer**/**worker**. Further, it evinces the ways that laborer and worker **do not explain** the **ontological state of Blackness**. In Red, White and Black, Wilderson attends to the ways that Afropessimists “have gone **considerable lengths** to show that, point of fact, slavery **is** and connotes an **ontological status** for blackness; and that the **constituent elements of slavery** are **not exploitation** and **alienation** but **accumulation** and **fungibility** (Wilderson 2010, 14). The “**alienation**” and “**exploitation**” that the human worker experiences through labor are **contingent conditions** resulting from **human conflicts**. Many people can and have occupied these temporary and conditional abased human coordinates. White, Asian and South Asian, Latina/o and Middle Eastern indentured and other kinds of laborers have **long inhabited White settler territories** and nation-states and, as laborers, immigrants and migrants have all helped build the settler nation. Black laboring bodies have even been used to build the settler nation. However, Black labor is just **one kind of use** within an **open**, **violent** and **infinite repertoire of practices** of making Black flesh **fungible**. One way that I have explained fungibility to my undergraduate students in my course “Gender and Sexuality in the African Diaspora,” is to think about the slave owner Madame Delphine LaLaurie’s use of enslaved bodies in the FX television series, American Horror Story: Coven. LaLaurie uses Black flesh to meet uses and desires beyond those of labor and profit. She runs a torture chamber in order to satisfy lusts that include and exceed the sexual. In one episode, she murders and then uses the blood of an enslaved newborn child as an elixir that wards off the aging process. One gets a sense that the possibilities for Black flesh are unending under her ownership. The infinite possibilities for fungible Black flesh mark a fundamental distinction between fungible slave bodies and non-Black (exploited) laboring bodies. Further, Black bodies **cannot effectively be incorporated** into the **human category** of **laborers**. If Black laboring bodies **were** incorporated into the category; “laborer” would have **no meaning** as a **human condition**. Blackness is constituted by a **fungibility** and **accumulation** that **must exist outside** the **edge** and **boundary** of the **laborer-as-human**. If there were **no Black fungible** and **accumulable bodies** there **could be no “wage laborer”** that cohered into a proletariat. While labor as a discourse **may** work for non-Black and non-Native people of color as a way of interpellating themselves within settler colonial relations, it **does not explain** Black **presence**, Black **labor** or Black **use** in White settler nation-states. Theories that **attempt to triangulate Blackness** into the Settler/Native antagonism in White settler states do so by positing Blackness as the **labor force** that helps make the settler landscape possible.[3] It is true that Black labor literally tills, fences in and cultivates the settler’s land. However, this singular analysis both **obscures the issue of Black fungibility** and reduces Blackness to a **mere tool** of settlement rather than a **constitutive element** of settler colonialism’s **conceptual order**. Fungibility represents a key analytic for thinking about Blackness and settler colonialism in White settler nation-states. Black fungible bodies are the **conceptual and discursive fodder** through which the Settler-Master can even **begin** to **imagine** or “**think**” **spatial expansion** (King, 2013). The **space making practices** of settler colonialism **require the production of Black flesh** as a fungible form of **property**, **not just** as a **form of labor**. In Scenes of Subjection, Saidiya Hartman argues that the enslaved embody the abstract “interchangeability and replaceability” that is endemic to the commodity (Hartman, 1997, p. 21). Beyond, the captive body’s use as labor, the Black body has a **figurative** and **metaphorical value** that extends into the realm of the **discursive** and **symbolic**. What Hartman names as the “**figurative capacities** of blackness,” allows the Settler-Master to conceptualize Blackness as the **ultimate sign for expansion** and **unending space** within the symbolic economy of settlement (Hartman, 1997, p. 7; and King, forthcoming). Blackness is much more than labor within both slavery’s and settler colonialism’s imaginaries. Like Hartman, I argue that Blackness’ figurative capacity and interchangeability has a life—or afterlife—within the discursive and spatial projects of settler colonial expansion (King, forthcoming). Settler colonialism requires a symbol of infinite flux in order to animate and imagine its spatial project (King, 2013). In my dissertation, In the Clearing, I argue that Jennifer Morgan’s book Laboring Women: Women and Reproduction in New World Slavery, configures Black women as spatial agents who are [symbolically] essential to the settlement of land during the colonial period in the coastal regions of the South and the West Indies. In fact, the Black female body must be **discursively constructed** in order to make it possible to **even conceive** of planting settlements during the “first generations of settlement and slave ownership” in South Carolina and Barbados (Morgan, 2004). Morgan argues that 18th century settlement required particular **symbolic constructions** and particular uses of the Black female body (Morgan, 2004, p. 26).[4] Black fungibility represents **this space** of **discursive** and **conceptual possibility** for **settler colonial imaginaries**. Black fungible bodies work **beyond** the **metrics** and “**metaphysics of labor**” in White settler colonial states (Jackson, 2012, p. 215). Labor becomes a **limiting frame** for **conceptualizing Blackness** on White settler colonial terrain. Reimagining Blackness and theorizing anti-Black racism on unusual landscapes **requires** that we **rethink the usefulness** of **convenient** and **orthodox epistemic frames**. We must venture **beyond** labor and its limits in order to think about settler colonialism’s anti-Black modalities. Fungibility and other frames deserve our attention as we continue to think about anti-Black racism, Native genocide and the US settler-slave (e)state.

### Link – Welfare

#### White Welfare

**Ward 9** [Deborah E. Ward, Ph.D. Assistant Professor of Psychology at Saginaw Valley State University Research Associate at University at Buffalo, “The White Welfare State: The Racialization of U.S. Welfare Policy”, The University of Michigan Press, p. 141-146, Accessed: 7/21/23] HZaidi

How did a program that had been championed for preserving the values of home life and the service of the mother in raising future citizens become a publicly denigrated program that stigmatized its recipients and catalyzed a national movement for its elimination? What can explain the mobilization of political and social forces to eliminate a program that represented only a small fraction of all social welfare expenditures? How can the An1erican people sin1ultaneously castigate ��welfare" and welfare recipients while reaching for increases in other social welfare programs? What made AFDC recipients undeserving? The answer is the same as it was in 1911, in 1935, and in 1966: race. What made African-Americans undeserving under mothers' pensions and under ADC is the fact that they are African-American. The anti-African-American rhetoric changed little from the early 1900s. But when African-Americans were actually receiving social welfare benefits, the rhetoric reflected a different goal on the part of policymakers-program elimination. After exclusion ofAfrican-Americans was no longer tenable, the dissolution of the program became the ultimate objective. What emerged in the 1960s was more than just a ��white backlash," as Kenneth Neubeck and Noel Cazenave argue.19 The elimination of AFDC as a national program represented business as usual in the evolution of the U.S. welfare state. Although periods of white backlash clearly occurred throughout the twentieth century and represent an integral part of a larger process of racial conflict, the significance of the elin1ination of AFDC is that the institutionalization of racism in the early 1900s was a determinant of its demise. It is not just the moments of the backlash themselves that are critical, but the embeddedness of race in U.S. state development that enable racial backlash to occur in the first place. Coinciding with an increase in AFDC recipients in the 1960s was the changing face of the welfare recipient. The mass media no longer portrayed the poor as the unfortunate white family, and ��poverty took on a black face. "20 As different studies of the mass media have shown, welfare recipients were usually depicted as African-American, regardless of the group's actual representation on the AFDC rolls. Furthermore, poverty was and continues to be portrayed as a ��black" problem. The media coverage of poor African-Americans was usually negative co1npared with that of whites; in positive stories on welfare� the faces of the poor are typically white.21 While a white mother on AFDC received sympathy for her poverty and hardships, an African-American mother receiving AFDC was labeled as undeserving, irresponsible, and/or criminal. Certain high-profile media stories exacerbated the racialized reform dialogue. In 1994 major television networks and national newspapers covered a story about a drug raid in a Chicago apartment that allegedly revealed the neglect and abuse of nineteen children by five welfare mothers and one African-American man. The image of the ��Chicago Nineteen" became a powerful backdrop for the welfare reform debate.22 As James M. Avery and Mark Peffley conclude in their study of race, public opinion, and the n1edia, the n1edia's racial portrayals of poverty n1atter. Their study demonstrates the media's tendency racialize welfare policy through the disproportionate use of images of African-Americans in stories on poverty. Furthermore, Avery and Peffley show that this racialization affects the way whites respond to the articles. 23 The media stories reinforced popular perceptions and created an environment in which policymakers could take this racialized discourse to the next level. Just as public discourse vilified AFDC mothers, many policymakers capitalized on racial divisiveness to push through a social policy agenda. As discussed previously, legislators criticized AFDC generally for the dependency it created and pathologies it reinforced. However, numerous policymakers used and reinforced racist stereotypes of minorities, especially African-Americans. The image of the ��welfare queen'; emerged with the help of Ronald Reagan 24 and spurred on by depictions of the typical AFDC mother as an irresponsible, lazy drug addict. Reagan's iconic representation of the African-American AFDC recipient was just one in a long line of pejorative representations of African-An1ericans on public assistance. In the eyes of these legislators, black AFDC recipients did not want to work, used their welfare money to buy alcohol and drugs, and neglected or abused their children.25 In comparison to the sympathy white welfare recipients generated, policymakers bla1ned African-Americans for welfare abuse and administrative mismanagement. During the 1995 debates about the Personal Responsibility Act, congressmen did not try to hide their associations of race, welfare, and the ��pathologies of the poor." Representative Martin Hoke (R-OH) commented, [W]e know that in the minority community among blacks two out of every three births is now out of wedlock .... [W]e also know being raised in a family dependent on welfare dramatically reduces a child's intellectual abilities and life prospects. . . . And teenage girls who grow up in fatherless families are far more likely to have early intercourse, pregnancies and abortions than those from two parent families. 2 6 In his congressional testimony, Representative Adam Smith from Washington added to the stereotype by stating incorrectly that 8o percent of all births in ��black inner city poor neighborhoods " occurred out of wedlock.27 Representative Major R. Owens from New York summed up how welfare stereotypes have contributed to the continued racialization of welfare: ��when people think of welfare, the media, the political leadership, have handled the problen1 and issue in ways which have led to an association of welfare with African-Americans, with black people. So it becomes a demonization. "28 The fact that welfare reform seemed a poorly veiled attack on minorities did not go unrecognized during the welfare reform debates. Congressman Gary Franks of Connecticut asked very pointedly, ��As we continue to address these issues, the question is, Mr. Speaker, are we, as a Congress, looking at constructive changes or merely attacks toward African-Americans and the poor? Sadly, Mr. Speaker, at this point I am not quite sure. "29Just as race is significant in explaining why a state was late in adopting mothers' pension legislation during the 1920s, why some counties did not implement the programs at all during the 1930s, and why ADC benefit amounts varied from family to family during the 1940s, race is also significant in explaining why son1e states adopted restrictive AFDC waivers during the early 199os3° and why the national government abolished AFDC and replaced it with TANF in the 1996 reforms. Race has influenced not only different policies adopted at the state and local levels but also the levels of public support for these policies. Even after the adoption of PRWORA, state policies remained influenced by race. The strictest welfare reforms were more likely to be adopted in states where minorities made up a larger proportion of the welfare caseload.31 The devolution of welfare to the states has not eliminated racial prejudice in welfare provision but has merely reinvented the parochialism emblematic of the state n1others' pension programs. Returning to the mothers' pension philosophy of a previous century, state TANF programs can reflect local values and determinations of deserving, fit parents. The United States began its path of welfare state development with a particular deserving recipient in mind-white women. In a class by themselves, white women have been endowed with the right to stay home and raise their children without suffering the pejorative stereotypes imposed on mothers of other racial or ethnic backgrounds. With such strong racist currents running through society, it was ultimately predictable that the United States would generate public policies that perpetuated the racial hierarchy.32 At different points in U.S. state development, different ethnic and racial groups were deliberately excluded from social welfare provision. However, unlike most other racial/ethnic groups, African-Americans never had a legitimate right to ��welfare." Paradoxically, as this book has shown, mothers' pensions and ADC evolved from relatively small social welfare programs institutionally designed to exclude African-Americans into a sprawling program perceived by the public as dominated by unworthy African-An1ericans. The decentralization and fragn1entation of policymaking resulted in the following pattern of African-American participation and status in the American welfare state: initial exclusion, conditional inclusion, stigmatization and political isolation, and finally exclusion through devolution. At various junctures in the development of this social policy, opportunities arose to institutionally challenge the racialization of aid to dependent children. The state-building process is not linear. ��Its character depends on choices taken at pivotal historical moments," write Ira Katz-nelson and Bruce Pietrykowski, ��when fundamental questions about ties between the state and the economy, or between the state and civil society, enter the political agenda. "33 During the passage of the Social Security Act, legislators could have fought for provisions that did not hand to the states a bill that guaranteed the continued exclusion of African-Americans from the benefit rolls. During the War on Poverty, Johnson's advisers argued for a national standard for AFDC, but the administration never proposed such a standard to Congress.34 Furthern1ore, the Johnson administration did nothing to counterbalance the growing rhetoric linking race to the ��welfare problem." When the PWRORA was being debated, legislators could have raised the level of debate beyond the inflammatory racial discourse but instead chose to embrace this discourse to their advantage. By bestowing the administration of this program on states, the national government implicitly accepted the fact that the TANF would be implemented according to local norms and values, which, if the Progressive and New Deal eras are lessons for us, easily translate into racial and ethnic discrimination. Since TANF has been implemented, different studies have demonstrated that white recipients are more likely than members of other ethnic groups to be encouraged to get an education, less likely to be sanctioned for policy violations, and more likely to receive child care subsidies. Studies have also shown that the agencies administering TANF are the least helpful to African-Americans in providing job-readiness skills and are least likely to provide basic academic skills or tutoring services to African-Americans. These mothers are not receiving the assistance needed to successfully transition out of welfare. Finally, white women are more likely than AfricanAmerican women to receive benefits for children born out of wedlock. Some of these disparities are more noted in southern states, such as Virginia and Mississippi.35 Throughout its history, the path of this social policy has never deviated. Welfare policy constitutes one of many examples of state-building in a racialized society. Because race is woven into the An1erican econon1ic, social, and political fabric, any analysis of welfare policy should be considered within this larger institutional and policy context.36 We can see how mothers' pensions and ADC contributed to and strengthened existing civil, political, and social inequalities by mirroring existing social and racial cleavages. Mothers' pensions became the vehicle through which racial differentiation permeated U.S. welfare state-building. The racialization of U.S. welfare policy has resulted in a welfare state that stigmatizes and/or penalizes African-Americans and other ethnic minoritieswhile providing nonstigmatized entitlements to white citizens. This book provides a new lens through which to view and understand the development of America's welfare state at both the state and national levels but is just a starting point in what will be a scholarly reconsideration and reconceptualization of the role of race in the evolution of U.S. social welfare policy and state-building

#### Welfare system = policing

**Gustafson 9** [Kaaryn Gustafson is an Associate Professor, University of Connecticut School of Law, “CRIMINAL LAW THE CRIMINALIZATION OF POVERTY”, *Northwestern University*, *Vol 99 V3*, Accessed: 7/20/23] HZaidi

Welfare reform not only produced punitive policies, but also established a system that blurred the boundaries between the welfare system and the criminal justice system. Until the 1990s, the welfare system was relatively simple and self-contained. The rules of AFDC and Food Stamps were handed down by the federal government, and eligibility rules and violations of welfare rules were consistent from state to state. If families were found ineligible for aid, they were given notice and their benefits ended. If they were found cheating-for example, underreporting their income or failing to report a change of household composition-but were still income-eligible for aid, then the penalties were civil: their welfare benefits would typically be reduced by a certain percentage each month until any overpayments were recouped by the state. 10 6 As a result of the reforms, the federal government and the states instituted policies and practices that burdened welfare receipt with criminality; policed the everyday lives of poor families; and wove the criminal justice system into the welfare system, often entangling poor families in the process. David Garland notes that the "themes that dominate crime policy-rational choice and the structures of control, deterrents, and disincentives, the normality of crime, the responsibilization of individuals, the threatening underclass, the failing, overly lenient system-have come to organize the politics of poverty as well." 10 7 The welfare reform policies were designed to punish the poor; to stigmatize poverty, particularly poverty that leads to welfare receipt; and to create a system of deterrence aimed at the middle class. A vast regulatory and punitive system developed under welfare reform. The welfare policies the states instituted after welfare devolution included a broad range of punitive approaches to the poor designed not only to punish poor adults who failed to transition from welfare to work, but also to punish entire families where the head of the household failed to live up to governing standards of morality. 10 8 The reforms not only ended aid to families as a federal entitlement, they allowed states to develop their own rules about who was entitled to aid and their own regulations and practices around removing families from the aid rolls. More importantly and less well-known, however, the reforms of 1996 produced a system that blurred the boundaries between the welfare system and the criminal justice system. The welfare system is increasingly used by the government to police crimes, both those involving welfare and those unrelated to welfare. As the next Part illustrates, the welfare system is now being used to catch criminals, and restrictions on aid are being used to punish individuals who have been convicted of crimes. The fugitive felon prohibitions, Operation Talon, and the drug felony lifetime ban have little to do with aid to the poor. These rules and programs are essentially new ways for the criminal justice system to make use of welfare administrative data to capture poor individuals who are also wanted by the criminal justice system. Through changes in statutes and practices, then, the welfare system has become an extension of the criminal justice system.

### Link – Terrible Spectacle

#### The affirmative has normalized the spectacle of violence surrounding blackness through the circulation of antiblack suffering within the political.

**Hartman 97** [Saidiya Hartman is an American writer and academic focusing on African-American studies, “Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self Making in Nineteenth-Century America”, (p. 1-3), Oxford University Press, Accessed: 7/22/23] HZaidi

The "terrible spectacle" that introduced Frederick Douglass to slavery was the beating of his Aunt Hester. It is one of the most well-known scenes of torture in the literature of slavery, perhaps second only to Uncle Tom's murder at the hands of Simon Legree. By locating this "horrible exhibition" in the first chapter of his 1845 Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, Douglass establishes the centrality of violence to the making of the slave and identifies it as an original, generative act equivalent to the statement "I was born."1 The passage through the bloodstained gate is an inaugural moment in the formation of the enslaved. It is a primal scene. By this I mean that the terrible spectacle dramatizes the origin of the subject and demonstrates that to be a slave is to be under the brutal power and authority of another.2 I have chosen not to reproduce Douglass's account of the beating of Aunt Hester to call attention to the ease with which such scenes are usually reiterated, the casualness with which they are circulated, and the consequences of this routine display of the slave's ravaged body. Rather than inciting indignation, too often they inure us to pain by virtue of their familiarity-the oft-repeated or restored character of these accounts and our distance from them are signaled by the theatrical language usually resorted to in describing these instances-and especially because they reinforce the spectacular character of black suffering. What interests me are the ways we are called upon to participate in such scenes. Are we witnesses who confirm the truth of what happened in the face of the world-destroying capacities of pain, the distortions of torture, the sheer unrepresentability of terror, and the repression of the dominant accounts?3 Or are we voyeurs fascinated with and repelled by exhibitions of terror and suffering? What does the exposure of the violated body yield? Proof of black sentience or the inhumanity of the "peculiar institution"? Or does the pain of the other merely provide us with the opportunity for self-reflection? At issue here is the precariousness of empathy and the uncertain line between witness and spectator. Only more obscene than the brutality unleashed a� the whipping post is the demand that this suffering be materialized and evidenced by the display of the tortured body or endless recitations of the ghastly and the terrible. In light of this, how does one give expression to these outrages without exacerbating the indifference to suffering that is the consequence of the benumbing spectacle, or contend with the narcissistic identification that obliterates the other, or the prurience that too often is the response to such displays? This was the challenge faced by Douglass and other foes of slavery, and this is the task I take up here. Rather than try to convey the routinized violence of slavery and its aftermath through invocations of the shocking and the terrible, I have chosen to look elsewhere and consider those scenes in which terror can hardly be discerned-slaves dancing in the quarters, the outrageous darky antics of the minstrel stage, the constitution of humanity in slave law, and the fashioning of the self-possessed individual. By defamiliarizing the familiar, I hope to illuminate the terror of the mundane and quotidian rather than exploit the shocking spectacle. The terror and the routine violence of racial slavery were perpetrated under the rubric of pleasure, property, and personhood. The scenes of subjection examined here entail the enactment of subjugation and the constitution of the subject; and they include the blows delivered to Topsy and Zip Coon on the popular stage, the obligatory revels of slaves in the marketplace, the simulation of will in slave law, the fashioning of identity, and the processes of individuation and normalization.

### Link – Progress

#### **L - politics - the American political system is rooted in anti-blackness and the rhetoric of politics and “progress” – the affirmatives description of inclusion within the political is only another attempt at false reform which is violently parasitic off of the black body and only leads to a cyclical repetition of more of the same.**

**Terrefe 17**, Selamawit Terrefe, Dr. Selamawit D. Terrefe is an Assistant Professor at Tulane University in English specializing in Global Black Studies, Gender and Sexuality, Psychoanalysis, Continental Philosophy, Critical Theory, and Radical and Revolutionary Politics. 2017, “Dissociative States: The Metaphysics of Blackness and the Psychic Afterlife of Slavery” <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/8h75877m> ila1

Figuring Blackness through Black love as the antithesis of politics is a precondition for Black love and Black politics’ disavowal Moreover, to understand intramural politics is to understand not only the truth of intramural violence, but also how politics and violence are constituted in and through Blackness (as its construction), and anti-Blackness (as its erasure). Black transgression, then, becomes contained within a closed symbolic system of subjectivity—a subjectivity that cannot create a self—and the Black intramural is overdetermined as maladjusted from the moment of Blackness’ creation. Differently put, the relationship between Black being (within the racial imaginary) and violence becomes causal, rather than Blackness being recognized as an effect of violence. Hence, Blackness pathologized as violence tyrannizes how the psyche processes the truth of Black love. Black subjectivity and “borrowed institutionality” in lieu of a self are pathologized as criminal—the locus of the problem rather than its effect. An essential construction buttresses an entire episteme upon which categories of being, thought, and the Human hinge—Blackness. To account for the political (in)capacity of Black people subtended in white violence would be to cede to the recognition that whiteness—(white) life and humanity writ large—and every discursive formation established in slavery’s wake would have to be dismantled. In other words, to avow, acknowledge and define Black love, which is inseparable from Black violence in its formation, would force whiteness to lose itself, and possibly disappear, into its own violence. Hence, white jouissance undergirds every facet of our conceptions of violence—white disavowal appears even within the most intimate and most revolutionary spheres of Black psychic and social life. Black love, Black demand, and Black relationality can never be read outside of the signifying chain of non-being, violence, that produces Blackness as the disavowed imago par excellence of the unconscious—dangerous, controllable only through recourses of denial and repression. Black demand, which is foundational to Black desire, is a longing for an affective relation to an other Black recognized as other, that could be recognized as a relation. Black demand threatens the foundation of the political, if not the world. A constant marker of the precondition of the political is Black demand, hence Black insurgency through Black love, Black collectivity, and Black revolutionary praxis counterfeits white agency and desire. This simulation appears as the performance of white violence in and through intramural violence, casting white jouissance in the spotlight, if even for a moment. The performance of political desire, whether through the practice of necklacing or, as Ideal states, “[w]e...seek...cruelty...painful conflicts as expressions of love and power,”106 counterfeits death denied to Blackness through “white jouissance” as “the path towards death.” For Blackness is a construct for whiteness to evade its own fear of death. If deathliness can be symbolized through Blackness, only whiteness can reap its benefits—transcendence, memory, progress—while Blackness remains a barred object: that is, unless Black poiesis paves the way for what has yet to be. Differently put, just as Ideal and Jimson are allegories mirroring the conceptual categories underwriting their invention, the performance of Black political desire mirrors the psychic condition undergirding anti-Black violence: white jouissance. Whiteness has capacity to parse out death and love in their affective parameters—the power to declare love recognized as love and not violence. The practice of policing how one loves is concomitant with policing how one punishes, subsequently all facets of Black social life in social death are elaborated within an ethical and psycho-political historical schema foundational to non-Black desire. In so doing, all Black intramural relations are mediated by a past which cannot be disclosed as past, but as a present denied to Blackness. This foreclosure feels like a withholding of love, at best, and a betrayal ventriloquized as a desire for whiteness at worst.

The mediated experience of Black relation through white violence is a non-relation, hence Black demand is perhaps best defined as a drive to inhabit the politics of desire. Here lies the danger of Black revolutionary poiesis and the performance of the political as it is simultaneously the safety of Black violence.

### Link – Population Adv

#### Link for population advantage – Social Security reform creates control over reproduction and commodifies black women – replicates histories of slave owners controlling reproduction

Davis 19 (Dána-Ain Davis is a professor of urban studies at Queens College, City University of New York and the Director of the Center for the Study of Women and Society, “TRUMP, RACE, AND REPRODUCTION IN THE AFTERLIFE OF SLAVERY”, Cultural Anthropology, Vol. 39 No. 1, 2019, https://doi.org/10.14506/ca34.1.05)//ameya

In light of Shakina’s comment, I want to offer another reading that refracts the targeted control of Black women’s reproduction, a racial politics of reproduc­tion, through the afterlife of slavery framework. The historian and literary scholar Saidiya Hartman (2007, 6) defines the afterlife of slavery as the circumstance of having “established a measure of man and a ranking of life and worth that has yet to be undone.” Consequently, “Black lives are still imperiled and devalued by a racial calculus and a political arithmetic that were entrenched centuries ago” (Hartman 2007, 6). She goes on to say that the afterlife of slavery encompasses “skewed life chances, limited access to health and education, premature death, incarceration, and impoverishment” (Hartman 2007, 6). I use the afterlife of slavery as a criti­cal framework to discuss a method of reasoning and knowledge production about the medical management of Black women’s reproduction. It draws on archives and documents of the past to uncover how the precarities of chattel slavery are im­posed on contemporary conditions of Black life. As Dorothy Roberts (2014) re­minds us, the **politics of reproduction are indeed linked to slavery**. Using the afterlife of slavery, we can read the incident Efe described as an ex­pression of **reproductive abuse**—a lingering reference to earlier **moments of pop­ulation control**. Specifically, nineteenth- and twentieth-century eugenic projects viewed particular groups of people as inferior and dangerous, and they ultimately subjected to sterilization people deemed unfit because of their (dis)ability, poverty, ethnicity, or race.1 The archives offer instructive sources as I seek to unpack what is so disturbing about a discussion of tubal ligation with a group of pregnant Black women attending a prenatal care session. We need only remember the Relf sisters. Mary Alice and Minnie Relf, aged fourteen and twelve, respectively, were ster­ilized in 1973. Deemed mentally disabled, they were targeted for sterilization along with a disproportionate number of African American, American Indian, Puerto Ri­can, and Mexican women (when compared to European American women). The abuse they endured became a rallying point for reproductive activists, and it was the Relf case that brought racially targeted sterilization abuse to national attention. To Shakina and Efe, the discussion of tubal ligation in prenatal care evoked the Relf incident as iconic of population control: an apparition of that past. A second example of how we can analyze the politics of reproduction through the afterlife of slavery framework comes from a little-discussed moment on March 29, 2011, when former U.S. Senator Rick Santorum appeared on a New Hampshire radio show called “The Advocates.” Although Santorum’s most notable legislative accomplishment was ushering through a bill banning late-term abortions and then pushing to prohibit the use of fetal tissue for research purposes on moral grounds, this conversation underscored a financial impetus for his antiabortion position. A caller erroneously claimed that 50 million abortions occurred in the United States every year, pointing out that if half that number instead represented future workers who paid Social Security taxes and Medicare, those two systems would be solvent. The actual number of abortions performed each year in the United States is closer to 1 million. Nonetheless, Santorum agreed, commenting that “the reason Social Security is in big trouble is we don’t have enough workers to support the retirees. Well, a third of all the young people in America are not in America today because of abortion, because one in three pregnancies end in abortion” (Kiely 2011). Santorum’s assessment contradicts data showing the U.S. abortion rate at 1.5 percent, meaning roughly 15 abortions per 1,000 women aged fifteen to forty-four (Guttmacher Institute 2018). Social Security, according to the Urban Institute (Steuerle, Smith, and Quak­enbush 2013), when considered across many decades, redistributes money from Hispanics, Blacks, and other people of color to whites. This is less ambiguous when examining old age and survivors’ benefits, although disability payments do restore some progressive redistribution to Blacks. This happens, for example, through forced annuitization, “the requirement to claim benefits as a perpetual stream of payments after reaching the age of eligibility rather than as a lump sum” (Steuerle, Smith, and Quakenbush 2013, 2). Here, we clearly see the redistribution of cap­ital from those with shorter lifespans—often Black people—to those with lon­ger lifespans. **Deploying Black reproducing bodies to uphold the redistribution of money through actuarial analyses in Social Security resembles the racialized actuar­ial practices found in insurance policies during enslavement.**  The historian Dania Ramey Berry (2017) argues that the value of enslaved laborers is calculable through analyses of life insurance policies. According to Berry, enslavers protected their investment by purchasing policies based on an appraisal to determine the premium connected to death averages and mortality tables. **Yet processes of commodification capitalized Black women’s preconception. Indeed, reproduction was crucial to the expansion of slavery**. In the database that Berry compiled, we find that insurance coverage for young women from ages twelve to seventeen ranged from $1,800 to $2,600, with interest rates between 2.25 and 2.75 percent. Enslavers capitalized on enslaved people’s value and factored in the time from which they were able to reproduce. The Black body, Berry (2017, 89) claims, was a “well-thought out” enterprise. The value of reproduction through the actuarial narratives of Social Security and insurance appraisals described above aligns with both abortion and antiabor­tion positions. According to the historian Marie Jenkins Schwartz (2006), slavehold­ers generally wanted enslaved women to bring infants to term. This held especially true after Congress ended the importation of slaves in 1808. The value of enslaved children led doctors to pay increased attention to preventing spontaneous and de­liberate miscarriages in the slave quarters and prompted medical professionals to become “more sensitive to debates surrounding abortion” (Schwartz 2006, 108). Yet debates about abortion were drawn along racial lines and structured in relation to morality. Black women—already degraded by race and class—were not really viewed as debasing themselves by performing abortions. That moral repugnance, Schwartz argues, was reserved for white women who avoided childbirth for selfish reasons. This observation resonates, albeit imperfectly, with a point Faye Ginsburg (1998, 128) makes in her book Contested Lives, in which she describes how “many pro-life women . . . viewed liberated women as a symptom of an increasingly selfish and materialistic society.”

Returning to the controlling dimension of restricting abortion, the issue was that Black women performing their own abortions challenged slaveholders’ author­ity. By regulating their own fertility, enslaved women undermined owners’ power over them and interfered with potential capital accumulation. Slaveholders there­fore castigated abortion when initiated by the mother, but paradoxically utilized the procedure when the life of the mother was in jeopardy, because her future fecundity was measured against the financial gain of her having a child (Schwartz 2006). **The paradox of race and reproduction in the Trump era is that reproduc­tive restrictions simultaneously protect whiteness and determine power over non­white**s. As the reproductive justice activist and scholar Loretta Ross (2016, 53) points out, the concurrent narrowing and expansion of reproduction exemplifies how “white supremacy constructs different destinies for each ethnic population of the United States through targeted, yet diffuse policies of population control.” At the intersection of Ross’s and Berry’s analysis rests a complex explanation for Santorum’s comment—restricting abortion access represents power over Black and brown bodies and facilitates the **capitalization of Social Security** with more workers.

Most recently, we see the entanglement of race and reproduction in the af­terlife of slavery in Trump’s proposal to use an executive order to strip the chil­dren of undocumented immigrants born in the United States of their birthright citizenship. This breach resonates with the 1857 Dred Scott case, which held that no Negro could ever be a citizen. In 1868, however, the Fourteenth Amendment settled the question of citizenship for Black Americans, affirming citizenship not as a racial matter (of “blood”), but as a matter of birth in the United States (i.e., on American “soil,” which at the time excluded Indigenous Americans living in tribal territories). In other words, what Trump proposes to do is legitimize the excision of reproducing others by invoking anti-Black racism through the reversal of the Fourteenth Amendment. With regard to white women’s reproduction, certain conservatives see hege­monic masculinities and femininities as under threat, while right-wing activists are upheld as saviors of the nation. Although she was referring to the discourse leading up to the Brexit vote, the sociologist Umut Erel (2018) is correct in suggesting that the analytic lens of reproduction offers a productive way of understanding the centrality of gender, race, and nation. Within this discourse, the desired nation or type of nation can be achieved by controlling the (re)production of particular families. Here, the politics of appropriate reproduction depends on the maternal citizenship of white women. Relatedly, anxieties about the reproduction of Black bodies gain purchase through discourses of white vulnerability and nation-building (Belew 2018; Kelly 2018). Thus we see that differing destinies for controlling reproduction exist for white women. In both the United Kingdom and the United States, white women are instrumental in the construction of national identities, serving as symbols of the nation and as mothers for the biological or assisted technological reproduction of the group. Controlling Black and brown women’s reproduction may be viewed as power plays. So, reproduction in the era of both Brexit and Trump is a culminat­ing expression of xenophobia and racism. Across the United States, however, individually and in partnership with com­munity-based organizations, radical Black birth workers form part of what might be seen as an abolitionist movement to end the high rates of premature birth and infant and maternal mortality among Black women, a movement that also ad­dresses issues such as access to abortion, housing, and other human rights. I use the term abolition here to signal what I see as the political alignment of those who want to decolonize birth with the Critical Resistance movement. Critical Resis­tance seeks to abolish not only the carceral state, but as Angela Davis reminded us in a lecture at the 2017 annual meeting of the National Women’s Studies Associ­ation, all structures of oppression, including the medical-industrial complex and any complex that compromises Black women or disrupts the radical possibility of living a free life.

### Link – Democracy

#### Democracy link

**Warren, 21** (Calvin Warren, Calvin Warren is an Associate Professor in African American Studies. He received his B.A. in Rhetoric/Philosophy (College Scholar) from Cornell University and his MA and Ph.D. in African American/American Studies from Yale University. Semanticscholar, "[PDF] Abandoning Time: Black Nihilism and the Democratic Imagination | Semantic Scholar", https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Abandoning-Time%3A-Black-Nihilism-and-the-Democratic-Warren/4734fe7c47fcd401525dd940a5c37fe6e323b537)

Samuel A. Chambers defines the imagination as a “synthetic power of creation and re-creation—an ability to combine the uncombinable, to surpass binaries without merely collapsing them, to fashion something new” (620). **And from such synthesis, we are told that a democratic imagination is possible, since we would “think the limits (and their transgression) of democratic theory and of democracy as well**” (620). Here, we see that the **democratic imagination recasts limits as possibilities rather than complete failures. Limits become the resource for creation and re-creation rather than evidence of destruction and uselessness**. A couture Kantianism / Hegelianism (mixed with a splash of deconstruction) **salvages democracy from the perils of its absurdity, devastation, and brutality**. **Why** this **investment in democracy’s “intrinsic” creative power**? **Can this creativity finally bring an end to anti-Black violence and Black suffering**? Or is the knowledge of democracy’s fabulousness enough to sustain Blacks through police terrorism, environmental racism, re-enslavement through incarceration, and food / housing insecurity and discrimination? I would suggest that what makes such creative synthesis possible is an unacknowledged dependence on time. For proponents of democracy**, it is time that is malleable for creative enterprises of re-imagination, of progress fetishization, and an “ontology of change” that need not justify (or prove) itself, declaration of change seems to be enough** (Badiou, “Ontology”). What if, however, democracy is clinging to a depleted resource**? What if time is no longer enough to orient existence, especially for those inhabitants of an abyss—within which time, space, ethics, and law are weaponized against existence? Put somewhat differently, democracy has exhausted the imagination**. It is a **speculative vampire that drains the imagination of any vital resource for its own survival. This speculation is an outrageous expenditure of energy, an enjoyment without end, a scholarly surplus-pleasure requiring an incessant (and useless)** political repetition (Johnston). I would describe this speculation—the conjoining of time, democracy, and the imagination—as an interminable quest, or a certain “stuckness” in a scene of failure (a constant encircling of political and legal vacuity). This repetition is most dramatically demonstrated, for me, in **Black political participation—voting, protesting, keeping hope alive, returning to the kernel of authoritarian violence (i. e., anti-Blackness) with unbridled hope, temporal determination, and an investment in the ontology of change** (Warren; Farred). **Time mocks Blacks, requiring historical déjà vu to be re-imagined, redeemed, rethought, or ignored, rather than accepting time as anti-Black enmity and democracy as the Abandoning Time: Black Nihilism and the Democratic Imagination** Amst 66.1 (2021): 247-51 249 permanence of anti-Blackness. Chants of “yes we can!” “your vote matters!” “we have power!” “we’re moving forward,” etc., serve to **neglect the failure of Black political participation and to imprison the imagination within futurity**. As I am writing these remarks, I am witnessing the absurdity of this democratic imagination and its unrelenting time. On one news program, I hear that police shot unarmed Andre Hill, a forty-seven-yearold Black resident of Columbus, Ohio, without cause, and rather than offering him medical assistance, decided to handcuff him (just in case the supine, dying man finds a gun, magically, I guess). On the other news program, I hear Black politicians importuning, begging, and guilting Blacks into voting for change. Black political pundits assure voters that the ontology of change is realizable if you just exercise your right to vote. “Never again!” “We will transform police practices!” “This time will be different!” Did Blacks not vote when police shot twelve-year-old Tamir Rice as he was playing with his toy gun on the playground? (By the way, no federal charges will be brought against the police officers who shot him). Did Blacks not vote when Sandra Bland lost her life in police custody? Did Blacks not vote after police deprived Eric Garner and George Floyd (and apparently 70 other people) of breath (Baker et al.)? In answer to my inquiry “why should we continue to vote if anti-Black violence is not changing?” I am told, “Just keep believing, we can vote people in that can change things!” When I then ask, “But I voted for President Obama (suspending my nihilism in an intoxication of hopeaffect), I thought things were going to change for Blacks? I feel just as unsafe and endangered post-Obama as pre-Obama,” I am told, “Obama wasn’t a ‘magic Negro.’ He did the best he could.” Then I ask, “So why vote if it will take an act of magic to address the existential threat of anti-Blackness?” **Time mocks the cyclical movement of such inquiries, they are, indeed, unanswerable within the creative, synthetic, and powerful democratic horizon**. Voting **becomes the premier instrument of the democratic imagination—supposedly, it activates the imagination with futurity, avoids paralysis with action, and can be repeated. What type of creativity will finally eradicate anti-Black brutality**? And could such creativity even operate within time**? Could we still call such creativity democracy? Must we abandon time to enable the imagination to perform the mystical, the magical, and the ineffable?**

### Link – Fiat

#### The plan demands the “durable fiat” of an ahistorical dream – anti-ethics is your paradigmatic imperative.

**Curry 13** (Curry, Tommy J. ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR @ DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY, RAY A. ROTHROCK FELLOW (’13-’16). TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY “In the Fiat of Dreams: The Delusional Allure of Hope, the Reality of Anti-Black Violence and the Demands of the Anti-Ethical,” Situating, Black Existentialism (UK: Cambridge Scholars Press, forthcoming). Available on academia.edu //shree))

The Fiat of Dreams: The potentiality of whiteness—the proleptic call of white anti-racist consciousness— is nothing more than the **fiat of an ahistorical dream**. A command ushered before thought engages racism, **before awareness** of the world becomes aware **of what is actual**. This is forced upon accounts of racism where whiteness is morally obscured from being seen as is. [w]hiteness as is partly determined by what could be, since what is was a past potentiality—a could be. The appeal to the **sentimentality**, morality, the moral abstraction/**distraction of equality**—both as a **political command** and its **anthropological requisite**—complicate the most obvious consequence of anti-Black racism, namely violence. This **moral apriorism** urges the Black thinker to conceptualize racism as an **activist project** rooted in the potential of a world filled with non-racists, a world where the white racist is transformed by Black activity into the white anti-racist. But this project supposes an erroneous view of the white racist which **occludes the reality** of white supremacy and anti-Black racism. As Robert F. Williams argues in Negroes with Guns, “the racist is a man crazed by hysteria at the idea of coming into equal contact with Negroes. And this mass mental illness called racism is very much a part of the ‘American way of Life.’” The white racist is not seen as the delusional individual ostracized from society as a result of their abhorrent social pathologies of racist hate. Rather the white racist is normal—the extended family, the spouse, the sibling, the friend of the white individual—the very same entities upon which the inter/intrasubjectivity nexus of the white self is founded. The white [he] experiences no punishment for his longing for Black servitude and his need to exploit and divest the Black worker here and then of [his] wealth. The white [she] has no uneasiness about her raping of—the destruction of generations of Black selves—mothers, children, and men—and today usurps the historical imagery of “the nigger,” to politically vacate Blackness and demonize niggers as beyond political consideration. She rewrites history, pens morality, and embodies the post-racial civil rights subject. As such, racism, the milieu of the white racist is **not** the exposed pathological existence of the white race, but rather valorized in **white individuality**, the individuality that conceptualizes their racism as a normative aspiration of what the world should look like, and even more damning, an aspiration that can be supported and propagated in the world. The white racist recognizes the deliberateness of the structures, relations, and systems in a white supremacist society and seeks like their colonial foreparents to claim them as their own. **The Anti-Ethical as Paradigmatic Imperative**: Traditionally we have taken ethics to be, as Henry Sidgwick’s claims, "any rational procedure by which we determine what individual human beings 'ought'—or what is right for them—or to seek to realize by voluntary action.” This rational procedure is however **at odds with the empirical reality the ethical deliberation must concern itself with**. **To argue**, as is often done, that **the government**, its citizens, or white people **should act justly**, **assumes that the possibility of how they could act defines their moral disposition**. If a white person could **possibly not be racist**, it does **not** mean that the possibility of not being racist, can be taken to mean that they are not racist. In ethical deliberations dealing with the problem of racism, it is common practice to attribute to historically racist institutions, and individuals universal moral qualities that have **yet to be demonstrated**. This **abstraction from reality** is what frames our ethical norms and allows us to maintain, despite history or evidence, that racist entities will act justly given the choice. Under such complexities, **the only ethical deliberation concerning racism must be anti-ethical**, or a judgment refusing to write morality onto immoral entities. In the post-structuralist era, post-colonial thinking about racism specifically, and difference/otherness generally, has given a peculiar ameliorative function to discourse and the performance of “other-ed” identities. In this era, the dominant illusion is that discourse itself , an act that requires as its basis the recognition of the “other” as “similar,” is socially transformative—not only with regard to how the white subject assimilates the similitude of the “other-ed,” but as an actual activity gauged by the recognition by one white person or by a group of white people in any given scenario, is uncritically accepted and encouraged as anti-racist politics.. In actuality such discourse appeals, which necessitate—become dependent on—(white) recognition, function very much like the racial stereotype, in that the concept of the Black body being the expression and source of experience and phenomena (existential-phenomenological-theorization) is incarcerated by the conceptualization created the discursive catalyst yearning to be perceived by the white thing seeing the Black. **Such appeals lend potentiality-hope-faith** to the already present/demonstrated ignorance-racism-interest of the white individual, who in large part expresses the historical tone/epistemology of their racial group’s interest. When morality is defined, not by the empirical acts that demonstrate immorality, but the racial character of those in question, our ethics become **nothing more** than the apologetics of our tyrannical epoch. **Ought implies a projected (futural) act**. The word **commands a deliberate action** to reasonably expect the world to be able to sustain or support. For the Black thinker, the Black citizen-subject-slave-(in)human, ought is **not rational** but **repressive**. For the oppressed racialized thinker, the ethical provocation is an immediate **confrontation with the impossibility of actually acting** towards values like freedom, liberty, humanity, and life, since none of these values can be achieved concretely for the Black in a world controlled by and framed by the white. The options for ethical actions are not ethical in and of themselves, but merely the options the immorality of the racist world will allow, thus the oppressed is forced to **idealize** their ethical positions, eliminating the truth of their reality, and the peeling away the tyranny of white bodies, so that as the oppressed, the can ideally imagine an “if condition,” whereby they are allowed to ethical engage racism from the perspective of: “if whites were moral and respected the humanity of Blacks, then we can ethically engage in these behaviors. Unfortunately, this ought constraint only forces Blacks to consciously recognize the futility of ethical engagement, since it is in this **ought** deliberation that they recognize that their **cognition** of all values are dependent not on their moral aspirations for the world, but the determined by the will of white supremacy to maintain virtue throughout all ethical calculations. In short, Black ethical deliberation is **censored** so that it can **only** engage moral questions by asserting that whites are virtuous and hence capable of being ethically **persuaded** towards right action, hence all ethical question about racism, white supremacy and anti-Blackness is not about how Blacks think about the world, but what possibility the world allows Blacks to contemplate under the idea of ethics. These ethics, the ethics that result from this vitiated morality, are not arbiters of oppression at all. They are not a rational calculus that is capable of revealing a categorical imperative, rather they function as the Kantian constraints upon human experience; the synthetic apriori upon which the phenomena of whiteness is the landscape of thinking about Blackness under the Western anthropos. There is an implicit appeal to a hierarchy of being that is both empirical and universal—all man is superior to non-man. Hence, ethics emerges as the product of the overrepresentation of Western man thinking itself—projecting itself—into the future. These ethics, theorized away from the anti-Blackness not within it, only uphold an **overdetermine**d virtue of whiteness. They hold within them no actual delineation between good or bad, only a **Puritanical call** to reason to turn its attention towards the other-ed created. This attention however relies on the perceptions and caricatures of Black torment that appeal to the whites’ self-assuring imagining of themselves, so that even **when confronted with racism and their role** as whites thinking about Black people incarcerated within a racist society and dying, these whites can claim that their conceptualization of racism itself, or (**inter-sectionally**) next to other injustices like poverty, sexism, **homophobia, etc**. makes them (whites) virtuous. It is the process of, the appeal to, “getting whites to recognize” (racist) oppression that allows the destruction of reality, Black death, to continue unabated, since it is the exact moment that whites are forced to engage racist problems in America, be it the anti-Black violence of American society, which animates the aversion of the justice system, the police state, the white citizenry, or the practice of American democracy itself—where the death of Black people/criminals/deviants/thugs remain normal and justified by whites—that they, the white(s) thinking about racism, get to impose upon Black reality, a racist moral maxim, namely that racism is not death and beyond –the end of--ethical calculus or moral evaluation, but ultimately contingent in America and of measurable consequence so much so that must be weighed next to the other democratic values that preserve this great white society: security, safety, individuality, property, profit, and freedom, the very values that when enacted by whites continue to perpetuate one ultimate end, the death of Blacks. Racism is not unethical simply because it is a moral affront to the allegedly generalizable Western/white/enlightenment notion of humanity extended to Blacks by the liberal synonymy of citizenship. Racism is unethical, immoral, because it re-presents—makes known in the present— and acts to capture the Blacks urging the acknowledgment of racism in the ontological entity of modernity’s greatest oppression—the slave; the non-human. To say racism is unethical is to say that it is outside of ethical deliberation, which is to say what is meant by ethics meant to rationally determine relationships between **human beings**. Because racism exposes the absurdity of Western ontology’s suggestion that the white/European human stands in moral obligation towards the non-human/Black/racialized other created by the Western notion of MAN, calling for “ethical deliberation” is a call to make the historical event of **Black inhumanity** introduced by modernity the referent of white rationalizations about Black death, and anti-Blackness. Such deliberation only offers the white mind the opportunity to reassert the social boundaries constraining Black life conceptually. It is the memory of slavery, which motivates the white’s attachment to the contingency of Black life, and ultimately concludes that racism, while unfortunate, is/was necessary for America/the West, the world to exist and humanity/the citizen to reach its historical/imperial apex. Thus, MAN, the onto-**anthropological basis of humanity** and the cultural values that are simultaneously birthed to project humanity into existence is the **origin** of the oppressive conceptualizations of the other. Oppression “as is” was born out of and sustained by the exclusive morality of white/Western humanity against the barbarism imposed on the Black/African. As such, the nigger born of racism is behind all oppressions, since “it” is the cultural/epistemological/historical ethic—the moral **rock bottom** of dehumanization. The oppressed is made nigger through dehumanization; the product of absolute debasement, while morality/virtue the valuations of ethics itself is reified perpetually by the activity of whiteness; its perpetual commanding of morality to conform to and justify their existence as the human. As Karen Gange writes in “On the Obsolesce of Disciplines” (2007), The shift out of our present conception of Man, out of our present “World System”—the one that places people of African descent and the ever-expanding global, transracial category of the homeless, jobless, and criminalized damned as the zero-most factor of Other to Western Man’s Self—has to be first and foremost a cultural shift, not an economic one. Until such a rupture in our conception of being human is brought forth, such **“sociological” concerns** as that of the vast global and local economic inequalities, immigration, **labor policies**, struggles about race, gender, class, and ethnicity, and struggles over the environment, global warming, and **distribution of world resources**, will remain status quo. **Anti-ethics**; the call to demystify the present concept of man as illusion, as delusion, and as **stratagem**, is the axiomatic rupture of white existence and the multiple global oppressions like capitalism, militarism, genocide, and globalization, that formed the evaluative nexus which allows whites to claim they are the civilized guardians of the world’s darker races. It is the rejection of white virtue, the white’s axiomatic claim to humanity that allows the Black, the darker world to sow the seeds of consciousness towards liberation from oppression. When white (in)humanity is no longer an obstacle weighed against the means for liberation from racism, the oppressed are free to overthrow the principles that suggest their paths to liberation are immoral and hence not possible. To accept the oppressor as is, the white made manifest in empire, is to transform white western (hu)man from semi-deitous sovereign citizen to contingent, mortal, and un-otherable. Exposing the inhumanity of white humanity is the destruction/refusal of the disciplinary imperative for liberal reformism and dialogue as well as a rejection of the social conventions that dictate speaking as if this white person, the white person and her white people before you are in fact not racist white people, but tolerable—not like the racist white people abstracted from reality, but really spoken of in conversations about racism. The revelatory call, the coercively silenced but intuitive yearning to describe the actual reality set before Black people in an anti-Black society, is to simply say **there is no negotiating the boundaries of anti-Blackness** or the horizons of white supremacy. Racism, the debasement of melaninated bodies and nigger-souls, is totalizing.

### Link – White Fem

#### White-fem is antiblack

Alexander-Floyd 12- Nikol Alexander-Floyd is a Professor of Political Science at Rutgers “Disappearing Acts: Reclaiming Intersectionality in the Social Sciences in a Post—Black Feminist Era” https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/23275087.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3A6a20d1d1a0754eca7f223b88005cb6f4&ab\_segments=&origin=&initiator=&acceptTC=1

Crenshaw then goes on to examine how black women's lack of fit with this dominant approach to defining discrimination provides less than desir able outcomes. The law reflects the reality of the most "privileged" members of legally recognized classes (151). According to her, the top-down, "but-for" (151) approach fails, because "[i]f Black women cannot conclusively say that 'but for' their race or 'but for' their gender they would be treated differently, they are not invited to climb through the hatch but told to wait in the unprotected margin until they can be absorbed into the broader, protected categories of race and sex" (152). For black women who are assailed by sexism and racism (again, sometimes in ways that resemble their impact on other groups, sometimes in ways that are compounded, or sometimes based on black women as a separate class), the law is inept. In one notable case, DeGraffenreid, for instance, the court decided that antidiscrimination law did not provide for a "super-remedy" that combined consideration of both race and sex discrimination for black women qua black women as advanced by the plaintiffs (141). The law is too narrow to address a bottom-up approach, emanating from the perspective of black women at the bottom of the social hierarchy. Just as it prohibits the application of the law to black women's discrimina tion and thereby reproduces institutional racism and sexism, this top-down approach affirms a dominant feminist praxis that universalizes white female experience as that of all women and abets white women's avoidance of their investments in racism. Echoing criticisms of other black feminists, Crenshaw observes that white feminists often speak for women qua women in ways that deny the specificity of black women's lives. White feminists' discussions of rape, for instance, have often been ill-fitted for black women's circumstances, according to Crenshaw; white feminists who pointed to rape laws as a means of securing female virtue fail to comprehend the implicit centering of the white experience in these positions (157-58). Black women's virtue or "chastity" was something that early rape law never had as a goal (ibid.). Indeed, Crenshaw notes that mainstream feminism's single-axis approach fails to relay how rape constituted "racial terrorism]" against black communities, and that the law aided and abetted white male access to black women's bodies (158). This top-down, single-axis focus Crenshaw derides is problematic because it also centers analyses of racism's impact on black men, leaving in the shadows black women who are doubly disadvantaged by sexism and racism. Within black communities, racism is read as the principal threat to blacks' well-being. In this light, black women who address sexism are often at cross-purposes with stated community interests geared toward fighting racism, and they are left with little support in fighting pernicious patriarchal practices.

White fem is antiblack pt 2.

Alexander-Floyd 12- Nikol Alexander-Floyd is a Professor of Political Science at Rutgers “Disappearing Acts: Reclaiming Intersectionality in the Social Sciences in a Post—Black Feminist Era” https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/23275087.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3A6a20d1d1a0754eca7f223b88005cb6f4&ab\_segments=&origin=&initiator=&acceptTC=1

In "Mapping the Margins," Crenshaw (1990-91) further elaborates her theory of intersectionality by examining three forms of intersectionality— structural, political, and representational—in the context of violence against women of color. Structural intersectionality refers to the complex ways in which deeply embedded inequalities not only amplify, but also uniquely define, women of color's confrontations with both sexism and racism. Crenshaw observes that structural intersectionality occurs, for instance, when women of color are targets of domestic violence. According to her, most shelters confront "physical assault," but not the assault of poverty, un- or underemployment, or other underly ing forms of oppression that curtail women of color's ability to escape abuse (1245-46). Similarly, political intersectionality is evident in the persistence of antiracist and feminist social activism that adopts a singular focus on black men and white women, respectively. This single-axis approach generates discursive framings for political agitation that not only fail to address how racism and sexism impact black women, but also distort our understanding of racism and sexism. Finally, representational intersectionality identifies the ways in which cultural representations of black women condone violence against black women and the lack of response thereto. The objectification and hypersexual ization of black women in music, television, and other cultural outlets are commonplace. Even when controversies develop surrounding these cultural images, they can often provide the basis for policing black male behavior in order to protect white women, as opposed to alleviating black women's subjugation through these images. Crenshaw deals with a range of illustrations of each form of intersection ality and their attendant rhetorical strategies, but she identifies two that are particularly relevant to this discussion. I have named these strategies that she identifies as the "universalizing tendency" and the "bait-and-switch" in order to provide a shorthand way of discussing them, further clarify their operation, and build on Crenshaw's insights. Both the universalizing tendency and the bait-and-switch rhetorical strategies work to further marginalize women of color. First, the universalizing tendency occurs when activists or other political actors suggest that a particular issue goes beyond the experience of women of color and is relevant to a broader community of women, the effect of which is to typically highlight the plight of white women and not that of black women. In one poignant example, for instance, Crenshaw (1990-91) takes to task those who argue the case that domestic violence is not "only" a minority issue. When advocates, such as U.S. Senator David Boren, argue that this issue "affects . . . our wives, mothers, daughters, sisters, and colleagues," they lay claim to the validity of this suffering as it impacts white female subjects (1260). In such cases, black women are either sidelined and/or included in a "tokenistic" manner (1260-61). They are, in effect (consciously or unconsciously), used as a pretext for talking about white females Conversely, in the second rhetorical strategy, the bait-and-switch, black women are focused on, but only to make visible white female suffering. This occurs, for instance, in the case of the infamous 2 Live Crew controversy, where this rap group was singled out for obscenity charges. When commentators like George Will lament what this group's lyrics portend for black women, they do so only as a means to ultimately highlight its implications for white women (Crenshaw 1990-91, 1290-92). Here, black women stand as a proxy for would be white victims.

### Link – Arch of Redemption

**Debate is structured by an arch of redemption built around the axis of black subjugation – responses to the resolutional question prefigures the argumentative protocols that crowd out a grammar of suffering that can speak to the violence that repetitiously destroys black being – the rhetorical form of the 1AC siphons energy into modalities of humanist redress that are parasitic on black suffering.**

**Wilderson 16** (Frank B Wilderson III, associate professor of African American Studies and Drama at UC Irvine, PhD in Rhetoric and Film Studies from UC Berkeley, February 25 2016, “HSI Podcast 52,” <http://www.podcastgarden.com/episode/hsi-podcast-52_71843>, transcribed from audio 5:33-12:25, modified) gz

But here’s why I would say that the things can’t be reconciled and why I’m fascinated with the way high school and college debaters are using it. I think it was—I don’t know what sociologist—Max Weber (you know, I quote all sorts of people except right out fascists)—I believe he said that **the power to pose the question is the greatest power of all**. And the way that the question is posed **in the world of debate** in January—the question that carries one through the entire twelve months—is posed in a way that **cannot be reconciled with the basic lens of interpretation of Afropessimism**. The question is always posed on what I call and others call **an arch of redemption**. In other words, the question **assumes an instance of plenitude**, say, the free association and the free assembly—the right to free assembly—of citizens, and then it moves from that assumption to a rupture. So **it moves from equilibrium to disequilibrium**, which is to say the manifestation of the surveillance state. And so the third move in the tripartite arc of narrative is, of course, **the move of redemption**, which is to say how can the plenitude—whether it’s a historical materialist plenitude, a social formation having its rights and liberties disrupted—how can that be restored. It’s that movement **from equilibrium to disequilibrium to equilibrium restored** which is precisely at the center of the critique of Afropessimism. **Afropessimism is not an offering for historical redemption**; **it’s not an offering for the restoration of a body in need of redress** the way that postcolonialism is, the way that Marxism is, the way that radical feminism is, the way that indigenism is. **It’s a critique of the rhetorical structure of those lenses of interpretation**, critiquing them as to a) what they **don’t or are unable to say about the violence that subjugates and positions Blacks** and b) why it is that **they actually need Blackness as slaveness to be outside of their lens of interpretation**. So there’s a way in which—to come full circle to where I started—there’s a way in which the **rhetorical structure of debate**, the **demand of debate**, the **protocols** are **already ideologically laden**. It doesn’t matter what question you pour into those protocols. The protocols, themselves, are all **ideological** ~~straightjackets~~ [**constrictions**] which **preclude** the kind of investigation of suffering. **In order for Black suffering to be part of the debate question, it would have to go through a structural adjustment to begin to look like the suffering of some other group**. The way Hartman talks about this is by suggesting that what you have in the world of subalterns—degraded humans who suffer—you have narratives of the possibility of real or imagined redemption, which is to say, narratives which are structured around the question of how to relieve the suffering that didn’t happen before the invasion of some sorts. But what she says with respect to Blacks is that **you cannot tell the story of before the invasion, before the destruction**. So, without being able to do that, she says when you think of narrating Blackness, **you have to think of repetition as opposed to redemption**. And so when we were off the air, one of the things I said to Marquis and to Josh is that one of the foreseeable problems with the future of Afropessimism is people kind of **cherry-picking from it to enhance the explanatory power of their own suffering**. And **that cherry-picking will actually, inevitably, leave by the wayside the very deliberate absence in Afropessimism**, and that is the absence **of redemptive theorization**, which is present in everything else. Redemptive theorization is theorized through all three volumes of *Das Kapital*; it’s theorized in the psychoanalytic feminism of Hartman and people like Julia Kristeva; it’s theorized in the work of Ward Churchill and Vine Deloria. It’s not only theorized. I should take a step back. **It’s assumed**. It’s assumed. And so, these are metacritiques of relationality. What Afropessimism is is **a metacritique of the metacritique**, to show how **pure and simple relations are dependent upon**—they’re parasitic—**using blacks as a parasitic host**.

### Link – Policymaking

**Investment in political strategies creates a cruel optimism for black folk through narratives of progress that play into a trick-of-time that forces them to invest in the pursuit of their own death.**

Warren 15 Calvin L., Black Nihilism and the Politics of Hope; Source: CR: The New Centennial Review, Vol. 15, No. 1, Derrida and French Hegelianism (Spring 2015), XMT, pp. 215-248 Published by: Michigan State University Press Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.14321/crnewcentrevi.15.1.0215>

The politics of hope, then, constitutes what Lauren Berlant would call “cruel optimism” for blacks (Berlant 2011). It bundles certain promises about redress, equality, freedom, justice, and progress into a political object that always lies beyond reach. The objective of the Political is to keep blacks in a relation to this political object—in an unending pursuit of it. This pursuit, however, is detrimental because it strengthens the very anti-black system that would **pulverize black being.** The pursuit of the object certainly has an “irrational” aspect to it, as Farred details, but it is not mere means without expectation; instead, it is a means that undermines the attainment of the impossible object desired. In other words, the pursuit marks a cruel attachment to the means of subjugation and the continued widening of the gap between historical reality and fantastical ideal. Black nihilism is a “demythifying” practice, in the Nietzschean vein, that uncovers the subjugating strategies of political hope and de-idealizes its fantastical object. Once we denude political hope of its axiological and ethical veneer, we see that it operates through certain strategies: 1) positing itself as the only alternative to the problem of anti-blackness, 2) shielding this alternative [End Page 221] from rigorous historical/philosophical critique by placing it in an unknown future, 3) delimiting the field of action to include only activity recognized and **legitimated by the Political**, and 4) demonizing critiques or different philosophical perspectives. The politics of hope masks a particular cruelty under the auspices of “happiness” and “life.” It terrifies with the dread of “no alternative.” “Life” itself needs the security of the alternative, and, through this logic, life becomes untenable without it. Political hope promises to provide this alternative—a discursive and political organization beyond extant structures of violence and destruction. The construction of the binary “alternative/no-alternative” ensures the hegemony and dominance of political hope within the onto-existential horizon. The terror of the “no alternative”—the ultimate space of decay, suffering, and death—depends on two additional binaries: “problem/solution” and “action/inaction.” According to this politics, all problems have solutions, and hope provides the accessibility and realization of these solutions. The solution establishes itself as the elimination of “the problem”; the solution, in fact, transcends the problem and realizes Hegel’s aufheben in its constant attempt to **sublate the dirtiness of the “problem” with the pristine being of the solution**. No problem is outside the reach of hope’s solution—every problem is connected to the kernel of its own eradication. The politics of hope must actively refuse the possibility that the “solution” is, in fact, another problem in disguised form; the idea of a “solution” is nothing more than the repetition and disavowal of the problem itself. The solution relies on what we might call the “trick of time” to fortify itself from the deconstruction of its binary. Because the temporality of hope is a time “not-yet-realized,” a future tense unmoored from present-tense justifications and pragmatist evidence, the politics of hope cleverly shields its “solutions” from critiques of impossibility or repetition. Each insistence that these solutions stand up against the lessons of history or the rigors of analysis is met with the rationale that these solutions are not subject to history or analysis because they do not reside within the horizon of the “past” or “present.” Put differently, we can never ascertain the efficacy of the proposed solutions because they escape the temporality of the moment, always retreating to a “not-yet” and “could-be” temporality. This “trick” of time offers a promise of possibility that can only be realized in an indefinite future, and this promise is a bond of uncertainty that can never be redeemed, only imagined. In this sense, the politics of hope is an instance of the psychoanalytic notion of desire: its sole purpose is to reproduce its very condition of possibility, never to satiate or bring fulfillment. This politics secures its hegemony through time by claiming the future as its unassailable property and excluding (and devaluing) any other conception of time that challenges this temporal ordering. The politics of hope, then, depends on the **incessant (re)production** and proliferation of problems to justify its existence. Solutions cannot really exist within the politics of hope, just the illusion of a different order in a future tense. **The “trick” of time** and political solution converge on the site of “action.” In critiquing the politics of hope, one encounters the rejoinder of the dangers of inaction. “But we can’t just do nothing! We have to do something.” The field of permissible action is delimited and an unrelenting binary between action/ inaction silences critical engagement with political hope. These exclusionary operations rigorously reinforce the binary between action and inaction and discredit certain forms of engagement, critique, and protest. Legitimate action takes place in the political—the political not only claims futurity but also action as its property. To “do something” means that this doing must translate into recognizable political activity; “something” is a stand-in for the word “politics”—one must “do politics” to address any problem. A refusal to “do politics” is equivalent to “doing nothing”—this nothingness is constructed as the antithesis of life, possibility, time, ethics, and morality (a “zero-state” as Julia Kristeva [1982] might call it). Black nihilism rejects this “trick of time” and the lure of emancipatory solutions. To refuse to “do politics” and to reject the fantastical object of politics is the only “hope” for blackness in an antiblack world.

### Link – Inclusion

#### The affirmatives vivid description of inclusion only proves we live in a political and academia world in which radical discourse only ever amounts to a passionate dream of civic reform, never resulting in an analysis of the antagonistic structure of anti-blackness –instead it is fixated on the of myriad identities that make up those structural positions – Wilderson says this seemingly benign process attempts to hide rather than make known the grammar of suffering that uncovers the US and its structural antagonisms and mystifies and covers the ontological death of the Slave as intellectual and political discourse in academia continues to resist the irreconcilable demands of Blackness

Wilderson 10 (Frank B. III, “Red, White, & Black: Cinema and the Structure of U.S. Antagonisms, pg. 22-23)

Black slavery is foundational to modern Humanism’s ontics because **“**freedom**”** is the hub of Humanism’s infinite conceptual trajectories. But these trajectories only appear to be infinite. They are finite in the sense that they are predicated on the idea of freedom from… some contingency that can be named, or at least conceptualized. The contingent rider could be freedom from patriarchy, freedom from economic exploitation, freedom from political tyranny (for example, taxation without representation), freedom from heteronormativity, and so on**.** What I am suggesting is that first, political discourse recognizes freedom as a structuring ontologic and then it works to disavow this recognition by imagining freedom not through political ontology—where it rightfully began—but through political experience (and practice); whereupon it immediately loses its ontological foundations. Why would anyone do this? Why would anyone start off with, quite literally, an earth-shattering ontologic and, in the process of meditating on it and acting through it, reduce it to an earth reforming experience? Why do Humans take such pride in self-adjustment, in diminishing, rather than intensifying, the project of liberation (how did we get from ’68 to the present)? Because, I contend, in allowing the notion of freedom to attain the ethical purity of its ontological status, one would have to lose one’s Human coordinates and become Black. Which is to say one would have to die.

For the Black, freedom is an ontological, rather than experiential, question. There is no philosophically credible way to attach an experiential, a contingent, rider onto the notion of freedom when one considers the Black—such as freedom from gender or economic oppression, the kind of contingent riders rightfully placed on the non-Black when thinking freedom. Rather, the riders that one could place on Black freedom would be hyperbolic—though no less true—and ultimately untenable: i.e., freedom from the world, freedom from humanity, freedom from everyone (including one’s Black self).vGiven the reigning episteme, what are the chances of elaborating a comprehensive, much less translatable and communicable, political project out of the necessity of freedom as an absolute? Gratuitous freedom has never been a trajectory of Humanist thought, which is why the infinite trajectories of freedom that emanate from Humanism’s hub are anything but infinite—for they have no line of flight leading to the Slave.

### Link – IR

#### This cultural revival built around a presumed shared calculus of violence and values between international bodies is premised on the denial of the ongoing afterlife of racial enslavement—the becoming threat of Al-Qaeda and the subsequent War on Terror of which the 1AC is the successor is itself built within an anti-black value-system which weaponizes time and space to forge linear development timelines that index the value of international entities based on their modernization and development—this is rendered coherent only through black captivity as the primordial relation of the expulsion of black people from humanity, time, and social existence.

Agathangelou and Killian 16 (Anna M Agathangelou, Associate Professor of Political Science at York University, PhD in Political Science from the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Kyle D Killian, PhD, family therapist on faculty at the Marriage and Family Therapy Program at Capella University, 2016, “International relations as a vulnerable space: A conversation with Fanon and Hartman about temporality and violence” in *Time, Temporality and Violence in International Relations: (De)fatalizing the Present, Forging Radical Alternatives*, pp 26-30, modified)

The division of intellectual labor among the forefathers of modern reason (Rousseau, Kant, Hegel, Marx, Foucault) allows punctuations of linearity, hierarchizations, and divisions of past, present, and future. At the same time, it permits dichotomized distinctions between time and space, masculine and feminine, mind and body to be mapped onto the anarchy/sovereign/interstate structure. These produced binaries exist as analogical correlates of time/timelessness, material/transcendental, mind/body, state of nature/sovereign, and security/insecurity, ultimately associating time and mind with order, health, and purity and associating timelessness with disorder, disease, and impurity. The projection of the sovereign’s time imaginary onto a territory and onto the territory of its ‘bodies’ produces intersecting borders dividing mind from body, modernity from non-modernity, and order from disorder. When time is a linear movement from segmented and bounded ‘past’ into ‘present’ and on to the ‘future’ and vice versa, a progressive or developmental model ‘convert[s] historically specific regimes of asymmetrical power into seemingly ordinary bodily tempos and routines, which in turn organize the value and meaning of time’ (Freeman 2007: 3). To problematize this linear understanding of time is to acknowledge that within the lost moments of official history, slavery time generates a discontinuous history best told through the entanglements of multiple ‘time[s] out of joint,’ ‘heterogeit[ies that] can be felt in the bones, as a kind of skeletal dislocation.’ Of course, in ‘this metaphor, time has, indeed is, a body’ (Freeman 2007: 1). In its newer iterations, IR has systematically evaded grappling with slavery except for a few notable postcolonial theorists (Agathangelou 2009, 2001; Blaney and Inayatullah 2010; Du Bois 1999; Fanon 1967; Persuad and Walker 2001; Shilliam 2004, 2015; Vitalis 2010). Several scholars in other disciplines have written on the ‘Middle Passage’ as a form through which we can understand capitalism. Some work in the humanities argues the slave trade still haunts the market logic of the twentieth century; Baucom says temporality accumulates rather than recedes, and the ‘Middle Passage’ represents a passage into modernity (2005: 313). Thus, the slave ship, with all its overtones of illness, bodily corruption, and violence, is originary. A *lieu de mémoire*, it is the birthplace of a modern subjectivity at the junction of slavery and finance capital: [It] needed not only a standard set of exchange mechanisms, but a standard imaginary, a standard grammar of trust, a standard ‘habit’ of crediting the ‘real’ existence of abstract values, such as credit, with abstract ‘slaves’ functioning as ‘a standard measure’ through which to express the value of the range of commodifies and currencies available for exchange. (ibid: 89-90) He connects this to the Zong case, when the ship’s captain murdered African captives by throwing them into the sea so as to translate their bodies and their potential for labor via insurance into currency and evacuated them of their singular characteristics by turning them into abstract (and universal) units of exchange. This facet makes it a ‘truth event,’ identifying ‘not a marginal or local abnormality within the system but the global abnormality of the system itself’ (ibid: 118-22). Baucom’s reading places the historian as a melanchoic witness to history’s aggrieved. History, he says, is not a ‘property of the past but the property the present inherits as its structuring material and the property (both affective and instrumental) the past holds in the present’ (ibid: 330). The body politics and power relations made possible by working with time, then, link temporality and raciality, temporality and sexuality. As categories, raciality and sexuality are more complex when we think them from the vantage of the slave and slavery, especially the flesh of the enslaved woman. Spillers tells us: I would make a distinction . . . between ‘body’ and ‘flesh’ and impose that distinction as the central one between captive and liberated subject positions. In that sense, before the ‘body’ there is the ‘flesh,’ that zero degree of social conceptualization that does not escape concealment under the brush of discourse, or the reflexes of iconography . . . If we think of the ‘flesh’ as a primary narrative, then we mean its seared, divided, ripped-apartness, riveted to the ship’s hole, fallen, or ‘escaped’ overboard. (1987: 66) Making these distinctions depends on the gratuitous violence upon the slave, the object to whom anything anytime can be done and whose life can be squandered. The timely erection of this New World Order, with its human sequence written in blood, represents for its African and Indigenous peoples a scene of *actual* mutilation, dismemberment, and exile. The enslavement *marks* a theft of the body and land and the willfully violent *severing of the captive body from its motive will* and its active desire, all the while generating fortunes for the captor. This gratuitous intimacy may take the form of a capture of a body, a source of irresistible, destructive sensuality, its translation into potential pornotroping, a thing, and/or property, as attempts to ‘emplot the slave in a narrative’ (Hartman and Wilderson 2003: 184) or to incorporate slaves as sovereign subjects within official nationalist discourses (Spillers 1987: 66-69) may obliterate them. This distinction between body and flesh (the captive body) is significant for knowledge/power and has a temporal politics in the form of evolutionary notions of flesh, such as throwbacks or ‘remnants,’ with (white) sexuality’s development following a linear trajectory of heterosexual reproduction (Freeman 2007). What precipitates the possibility of a coherent story, Wilderson tells us, following Hartman, is the act of murder and enslavement. The only means of entry into civil society, history, and temporality are entitlements, sovereignty, and immigration or ‘narratives of arrival’ (Wilderson 2003: 236). However, within these narratives the ‘black American subject does not generate historical categories of Entitlement, Sovereignty, and/or Immigration for the record,’ as if this ‘flesh’ constituted through gratuitous violence is ‘off the record’ (Hartman 1997: 24; Wilderson 2003: 236). So how do we write those ‘impossibilities to illuminate those practices that speak to the limits of most available narratives to explain the position of the enslaved’ (Hartman and Wilderson 2003: 184)? There is, in other words, a temporal gap in the production of a narrative that explains how discourses always articulate the slave as ‘lagging’ humanity, unable to be co-constituted even with work (Wilderson 2003) or integrated into civil society as a sovereign subject or sovereign laborer. These narrations bind labor in a way that keeps the afterlives of slavery (Hartman 1997) animated. How the black body is narrated has implications for the manner in which temporality becomes a dividing barometer of raciality: ‘From the very beginning, we were meant to be accumulated and die’ (Wilderson 2003: 238). The theoretical slippages from singular conditions to particularities or identities are one and the same, but Wilderson ruptures them, arguing beginnings in narratives do not entail the same kinds of ends for the slave (Wilderson 2010, 2003). The ‘time of slavery,’ that is, ‘the relation between the past and the present, the horizon of loss, the extant legacy of slavery, the antinomies of redemption (a salvational principle that will help us overcome the injury of slavery and the long history of defeat) and irreparability’ (Hartman 1997: 759), has an afterlife. In assembling and narrating the ‘primal scene’ (Farley 2005: 54), the master inflicts violence on this almost-gone subject, turning it into flesh by appropriating it and transfiguring it into a ‘fiction of power’ (Hartman and Wilderson 2003: 184). In ‘narrat[ing] a certain impossibility,’ Hartman speaks to the ‘limits of most available narratives’ (ibid: 184). It is important that the writing of history not sneak in a liberal sequential registering of more slave entities that could potentially become integrated into a raciality matrix. By bringing the position of the unthought into ‘view without making it a locus of positive value,’ ‘without trying to fill in the void’ (ibid: 185), Hartman makes her own work, her own cultural history/literary genre, experiential rather than teleological, simultaneously challenging familiar stories and historical teleological accounts that presume slavery is a memory. Devices such as focalizing the ‘unthought’ violences toward the making of slaves, the emphasis on the fifteenth century’s ongoing effect on the present, and graphic descriptions of the brutality on the ships from Africa to the Americas and Europe are pivotal in making the past present. A description of how the positionality of black and white women was understood and approached differently during the slave trade has implications for how their positionalities are read today, including their rights and possibilities of freedom. Certain technologies of governance consolidated around this time included the evolution of juridical, philosophical, and narrative structures, without taking into account the slave trade. Take the notion of consent, philosophically articulated as universal but apparently disarticulated by blackness. More specifically, descriptions of the lives of slave women in the United States point to how female slaves as fungible objects differed ontologically from white women who might be house servants – subordinated but with the possibility of being free: Being forced to submit to the will of the master in all things defines the predicament of slavery. The opportunity for nonconsent [in this case, sex] is required to establish consent, for consent is meaningless if refusal is not an option . . . Consent is unseemly in a context in which the very notion of subjectivity is predicated upon the negation of will. (Hartman 1997: 111) Slavery’s temporality does not register in many of our accounts of juridical and international frameworks.Yet the ontological destruction of the body is achieved by violence, while value is formed to effect a complete disavowal of the body’s existence. The key to grasping the originary (violent and occluded) moment of the transmutation of flesh into some commodity and value into subjectivity is found in the reconciliation of the binarism that produces and is produced by value. Discussing slavery is important for recognizing the procedural modalities functioning within the ontological disposition of modernity as it relates to blackness: the primacy of carnality and the denial of the flesh structurally. This distinction is nuanced and elusive, but it is important to understanding liberalism as a set of politico-economic discourses that mediate a kind of sovereignty, as well as an experiential protocol that, through its specified *a priori* version of sovereignty, animates and translates property relations. ‘Like women,’ writes McClintock, ‘Africans (both men and women) are figured not as historic agents but as frames for the commodity, valued for their exhibition alone’ (1994: 215). To this, she adds: ‘Value, beside itself, finds itself if only for a moment in the place of the Other, who or which is always without value’ (1994: 216). Value, then, as both form and force enters the world accompanied by its fungible commodity, but this commodity is effaced by violences of value, thereby suggesting ‘value is violence’ and ‘value is violence disguised or dis-figured’ (Barrett 1999: 219; also Marx 1965). The ‘commodification of humanity’ was ‘grotesquely revealed’ in the colonials’ attempts to define the economic exchanges and ritual beliefs of other cultures as ‘irrational’ and without time, disavowing ‘them as legitimate systems’ (McClintock 1994: 228). The ‘systematic undervaluation’ of African systems ‘with respect to merchant capitalism and market values in the European metropolis’ (ibid: 231) obtained a kind of violence not easily framed by the knowledge systems of Enlightenment. Farley says: The zero hour of exploitation, that moment, the moment of capture, was the moment we were marked as Black. Thus classified, marked, as Black, we became a class, white-overblack. That moment, the moment of white-over-black, is the moment in which we were constituted as a race. (Farley 2005: 52) This moment proffers the ‘dual existence of the slave as person and property’ (ibid: 52), when submission is required of the slave, not just to the will of ~~his or her~~ [their] master but to all white persons. At this time, the penal codes of the slave-holding states weighed much more heavily on slaves than on whites. The enslaved, captive body had no rights, no humanity, not only before the law but also within civic existence. Today, the extent to which the racially marked body was formerly given no means of redress in civil society has been forgotten, as has the extent to which ownership was extended to every white person. Yet the Middle Passage represents the primal ‘scene that became these United States . . . Without the colorline there is no market. The market requires ownership and this ownership is an ownerships of people that is displaced onto an ownership of things . . . The Black is capital’s faculty of imagination’ (Farley: 58-59). Similarly, Hartman notes the submission of the slave to all whites, ‘prefigured’ an exacting submission that extended to ‘bloodshed and murder’ and ‘furnish[ed] a pretext’ and an inducement to ‘patiently endure every species of personal injury, which a white person, however brutal or ferocious his disposition . . . may choose to offer’ (Hartman 1997: 24). From the vantage of the temporal co-theorization of the continuity of slavery and black ‘flesh’ as producing social value rather than its resolution, Hartman says ‘if the past is another country,’ she is part of it: ‘I, too, live in the time of slavery, by which I mean I am living in the future created by it. It is the ongoing crisis of citizenship . . . If the ghost of slavery still haunts our present, it is because we are still looking for an exit from the prison’ (1997: 133). For some, slavery is an event of the past, especially those who punctuate a linear progressive developmental unfolding of events, but Hartman insists slavery’s afterlives are present in all our governance approaches and structures

### Link – Counter Hegemony

#### Black positionality renders their notions of counterhegemony and resistance incoherent—blackness is the site of absolute dereliction and blackness can only be the total disconfiguration of civil society

Wilderson 2007 [Frank B., “The Prison Slave as Hegemony’s Silent Scandal” in *Warfare in the American Homeland* ed. Joy James, p. 31-2]// HZaidi

Slavery is the great leveler of the black subjects positionality. The black American subject does not generate historical categories of entitlement, sover­eignty, and immigration for the record. We are "off the map" with respect to the cartography that charts civil society's semiotics; we have a past but not a heri­tage. To the data-generating demands of the Historical Axis, we present a vir­tual blank, much like that which the Khoisan presented to the Anthropological Axis. This places us in a structurally impossible position, one that is outside the articulations of hegemony. However, it also places hegemony in a structurally impossible position because—and this is key—our presence works back on the grammar of hegemony and threatens it with incoherence. If every subject— even-the most massacred among them, Indians—is required to have analogs within the nations structuring narrative, and the experience of one subject on whom the nations order of wealth was built is without analog, then that sub­jects presence destabilizes all other analogs. Fanon writes, "Decolonization, which sets out to change the order of the world, is, obviously, a program of complete disorder."12 If we take him at his word, then we must accept that no other body functions in the Imaginary, the Symbolic, or the Real so completely as a repository of complete disorder as the black body. Blackness is the site of absolute dereliction at the level of the Real, for in its magnetizing of bullets the black body functions as the map of gra­tuitous violence, through which civil society is possible— namely, those bodies for which violence is, or can be, contingent. Blackness is the site of absolute dereliction at the level of the Symbolic, for blackness in America generates no categories for the chromosome of history and no data for the categories of im­migration or sovereignty. It is an experience without analog—a past without a heritage. Blackness is the site of absolute dereliction at the level of the Imaginary, for "whoever says 'rape' says Black" (Fanon), whoever says "prison" says black (Sexton), and whoever says "aids" says black—the "Negro is a phobogenic object."13 Indeed, it means all those things: a phobogenic object, a past without a heritage, the map of gratuitous violence, and a program of complete disorder. Whereas this realization is, and should be, cause for alarm, it should not be cause for lament or, worse, disavowal—not at least, for a true revolutionary or for a truly revolutionary movement such as prison abolition. If a social move­ment is to be neither social-democratic nor Marxist in terms of structure of political desire, then it should grasp the invitation to assume the positionality of subjects of social death. If we are to be honest with ourselves, we must admit that the "Negro" has been inviting whites, as well as civil society's junior part­ners, to the dance of social death for hundreds of years, but few have wanted to learn the steps. They have been, and remain today—even in the most antiracist movements, such as the prison abolition movement—invested elsewhere. This is not to say that all oppositional political desire today is pro-white, but it is usually antiblack, meaning that it will not dance with death. Black liberation, as a prospect, makes radicalism more dangerous to the United States. This is not because it raises the specter of an alternative polity (such as socialism or community control of existing resources), but because its condition of possibility and gesture of resistance function as a negative dialec­tic: a politics of refusal and a refusal to affirm, a "program of complete disorder." One must embrace its disorder, its incoherence, and allow oneself to be elabo­rated by it if, indeed, ones politics are to be underwritten by a desire to take down this country. If this is not the desire that underwrites ones politics, then through what strategy of legitimation is the word "prison" being linked to the word "abolition"? What are this movements lines of political accountability? There is nothing foreign, frightening, or even unpracticed about the embrace of disorder and incoherence. The desire to be embraced, and elaborated, by dis­order and incoherence is not anathema in and of itself. No one, for example, has ever been known to say, "Gee-whiz, if only my orgasms would end a little sooner, or maybe not come at all." Yet few so-called radicals desire to be em­braced, and elaborated, by the disorder and incoherence of blackness—and the state of political movements in the United States today is marked by this very Negrophobogenisis: "Gee-whiz, if only black rage could be more coherent, or maybe not come at all." Perhaps there is something more terrifying about the foy of black than there is in the joy of sex (unless one is talking sex with a Negro). Perhaps coalitions today prefer to remain in-orgasmic in the face of civil society—with hegemony as a handy prophylactic, just in case. If through this stasis or paralysis they try to do the work of prison abolition, the work will fail, for it is always work from a position of coherence (i.e., the worker) on behalf of a position of incoherence of the black subject, or prison slave. In this way, social formations on the left remain blind to the contradictions of coalitions between workers and slaves. They remain coalitions operating within the logic of civil society and function less as revolutionary promises than as crowding y out scenarios of black antagonisms, simply feeding our frustration. Whereas the positionality of the worker (whether a factory worker demand­ing a monetary wage, an immigrant, or a white woman demanding a social wage) gestures toward the reconfiguration of civil society, the positionality of the black subject (whether a prison slave or a prison slave-in-waiting) gestures toward the disconfiguration of civil society. From the coherence of civil so­ciety, the black subject beckons with the incoherence of civil war, a war that re­claims blackness not as a positive value but as a politically enabling site, to quote Fanon, of "absolute dereliction." It is a "scandal" that rends civil society asun­der. Civil war, then, becomes the unthought, but never forgotten, understudy of hegemony. It is a black specter waiting in the wings, an endless antagonism that cannot be satisfied (via reform or reparation) but that must, nonetheless, be pursued to the death.

### Link – Welfare – Black Fem

#### The neoliberal welfare state is ingrained with gendered racism and parasitic on black women

Pinder 18 (Sherrow O. Pinder is Professor of Political Science and Multicultural and Gender Studies at California State University, Chico, “Black Women, Work, and Welfare in the Age of Globalization”, Lexington Books/Fortress Academic, 24 May 2018)//ameya

My intention in this book is to provide an analytical and interpretative reflection of the markedly new ways globalization is impacting the welfare state in today’s America. My concern is not simply that in the United States, post-Fordism and its emphasis on service production escalate the need for an abundance of flexible, exploitable, cheap workers. I am more interested in the many ways in which the neoliberal government responds to capital need for exploitive cheap labor through welfare-to-work-programs and the implementation of workfare, the generic term for the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA). While there is a clear link between welfare and low-wage markets, with the specious garb of ending welfare dependency, workfare forces welfare recipients, including single mothers with young children, to work outside of the home. More importantly, workfare provides an “underclass” of labor that is desolately trapped in jobs that pay minimum wage. This “underclass” is gendered and racialized, occupying a central place that is oppressive and unsettling, which is in accordance with “neoliberal governmentality”2 and its cartography of power. It is therefore critical, here, to revisit and reframe T. H. Marshall’s notion of “the social rights of citizenship”3 and the ethical question of social “rights claims” to include economics and the right to a modicum of a livable wage for all members of a democratic polity, including poor black women positioned outside of the norm of “a livable life.”4 To capture and elaborate on the precise form of the lived experience of poor black women under the workfare state, I used the concept of “deathin-life” as a condition that afro-pessimism describes as “ontological death,”5 that is, the loss of their personhood. This ontological death, as I will later show, is intrinsically linked to the trope of the welfare queen that reduces black women on welfare to that stereotype. In other words, as racialized gender bodies, black women are, in the words of the French postcolonial scholar Frantz Fanon, “overdetermined from the outside,”6 another form of black-women-on-welfare profiling as I named it. In fact, prior to the very prospect of their livability, they must, in order to live, draw upon and develop an alternative way of being in the world, which is impossible until racialized gender norms and institutionalized forms of power that produced and form them are challenged and rejected. In this regards, life needs to be “livable” first before any arguments for social “rights claims” for poor black women can be made. And to be rights bearing subject, black women’s lives have to be first recognizable as lives worth preserving. Social “rights claims” won’t necessarily reduce structural inequality, such as “gendered racism” no matter the form it takes. However, I would like to focus on rights as important to the liberal tradition that shaped and continues to shape social policies in the United States and draw attention to its limitations, especially, when such rights are, for the most part, curtailed for the undeserving poor. The upshot, as I see it, is to make a case for welfare as a right for poor people. It is understandable that my discussion seeks to illuminate a crucial but largely overlooked aspect of the negative impact of the restructuring of welfare on black single mother welfare recipients. The stereotype of the welfare queen, which is infused with racial meaning is used to describe and illustrate the position of black single mother welfare recipients as welfare dependents and undeserving of welfare. More so, it is a way of talking about poor women with an invidious racist and sexist subtext that merges in “gendered racism,” that is, a form of racism and sexism that “narrowly intertwine and combine under certain conditions into one hybrid phenomenon,”7 in the words of black feminist and critical race theorist Philomena Essed.8 Since an ethical concept of gendered racism must simultaneously be a theory of the intersectionality of race, gender, class, and other forms of differences, an intersectionality framework is properly vital for interrogating and problematizing the restructuring of welfare in which poor black women are implicated. Additionally, an intersectionality framework is antithetical to the neoliberal model of welfare restructuring in which the market and not democratically elected government is to determine poor people’s social rights. Thus, I make an argument for moving beyond T. H. Marshall’s notion of “the social rights of citizenship” and the ethical question of social “rights claims,” largely conceived to include poor black single mothers. It is only, then, that life can plausibly be “livable” for them

### Link – Securitization

#### L- Extinction – their calls to prevent extinction is a self fulfilling prophecy used to justify the extermination of “the other” which is always racialized

**AbdelRahim 08** Layla AbdelRahim, comparatist anthropologist and anarchoprimitivist author, May 2008 “Beyond the Symbolic and towards the Collapse: Intro to John Zerzan’s conferences in Montreal” <https://laylaonthe.net/introduction-to-z/#beyond> ila1

For, it is not Zerzan who has invented the Machine with its terminology and the technological solution that made the atomic bomb possible as THE option, leaving no possibility for life outside of the “Atomic way of life” under the constant threat of obliteration (and, actual death; let us not forget Baghdad, Serbia, Hiroshima, Nagasaki). And it is not Zerzan who has welcomed the extermination of millions of people around the world under the aegis of the defence of the Civilised way of life (slavery, colonialism, the war of terror on terror, etc.). Those who are worried about the collapse of their system, close their eyes on, and hence participate in, the continuing extinction of human and, what Zerzan calls, plant and animal communities around the world whose collapse this civilisation has impelled. Perhaps, the speakers, still fail to perceive the millions of already dead and still dying as “people” or as complex entities of a complex system that exists for its own right and not for the sake of being domesticated (appropriated and exploited) by some humans. Instead, in fearing the onslaught of their own collapse, these people see the “other” victims of civilisation as “resources”, the necessary collateral damage needed to regulate the smooth flow of food to the fridges, restaurants and cafés of the speakers – what Malthus called the disasters necessary to regulate “their” (the brown people’s) “overpopulation” and not “our” (civilised) voracious appetites. Being a white male, Zerzan has renounced the privileges of the white male system and his biography is a witness to that fact. While, of course, there is a difference between someone renouncing having had a choice in the first place and someone not having a chance to renounce because the System never extended an invitation to the Bacchanalia of Civilisation, it is still an excellent example for those in the position of privilege to follow. Which, of course, hardly ever the privileged do, since they greatly fear their own demise even though for others this collapse has long occured. But then, Zerzan warns us that the symbolic alienates people from the suffering of others and replaces our ability for empathy and experience with concentration on personal salvation. In its imposition of a virtual reality, Civilisation estranges us from our own pain and, ultimately, by killing the Other the civilised kill the Self. The other side of the question, though, is that many of those who do not even have a chance at privilege, gobble up the whole value system and ensure that by their simple desire to “one day get there” (“there” is of course the ultimate abstraction) run the system to its logical end: the Total Collapse, the Apocalypse – that elitist knowledge and desire that will blow up the rest of the world. Some of the so-called “anarchists” at the fair seem to fall in this category: they do not associate themselves with the capitalist elites, they identify themselves as anarchists and yet scream in fear that it is Zerzan – and not those who order and finance Knowledge and technologies – who is going to take away their cosy computers, tasty bakeries, black uniforms, contraceptives and the medical establishment that makes their abortions and sex change operations, and the like. In other words, they are deaf to the fact that it is this Knowledge with its implicit and inherent logic that has killed off thousands of varieties of animal, plant, and human cultures around the world. When they scream that the collapse will kill millions of people, they obviously exclude all the Africans, Asians, Aborigines who have already been killed and continue to perish around the world. This logic, obviously, excludes these people from the category itself of “people” and we find ourselves facing the elitist eugenicist rhetoric, once again.

#### Blackness, in of itself, is a weapon whose very existence is deemed to pose a national security threat to sovereignty, as such – the affirmative’s critique of US imperialism cements the violence of chattel slavery’s afterlife by focusing on a mode of violence that operates through transgression – by contrast, Black death requires no breach of social or political norms, because captive flesh is always vulnerable to gratuitous violation – voting negative reveals the indebtedness of their movements to antiblackness

Sexton 6 (Jared Sexton, Associate Professor of African American Studies at UC Irvine, Associate Professor of Film and Media Studies at UC Irvine, PhD in Ethnic Studies from UC Berkeley, Spring 2006, “Race, Nation, and Empire in a Blackened World,” *Radical History Review* Number 95) gz

In the United States, homegrown white supremacists, and the lion’s share of their more moderate neighbors, have long considered black people to *be* weapons of mass destruction. Racial profiling, the hallmark of Homeland Security’s dreadful encroachments, cut its fearsome teeth several years prior to the passage of the USA PATRIOT Act. Prior, as well, to the American Civil Liberties Union’s (ACLU) “Driving while Black” campaign in the late 1990s; prior to the launch of President Ronald Reagan’s infamous war on drugs in the early 1980s, and even to President Richard Nixon’s earlier consolidation of the first truly nationwide police apparatus in the late 1960s. In fact, the genealogy of this nefarious police practice is properly charted beyond the twentieth century, reaching back, with stunningly little modification, to the ethos of the colonial slave patrols of the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries. Given this line of descent, it is not unreasonable to say that racial profiling is the sine qua non of modern policing.

In the consternated deliberations of national security, official and unofficial, from the founding of the republic to the trumpeting of the new world order, the social control and crisis management of the black population has always figured centrally, even or perhaps especially when matters of emancipation or racial equality have by no means enjoyed the focus of debate. Across the sweep of U.S. history, policing the color line has required no credible threat of invasion, no evidence of insurrectionary design, no proven stockpile of illicit chemical agents or radioactive material, no particular breach of domestic or international law, no sensational moral or ethical transgression (though all of these items, real or imagined, have factored in the relevant discourses, public and private). It has only required the presence — within the polity, economy, culture, and society — of a so-called problem people, dwelling as the absence of human presence.

We can note further that the institution of transatlantic racial slavery — whose political and economic relations *constitute*, present tense, the social fabric of Western modernity in general, of the Americas in particular, and of the United States most acutely — cannot be explained (away) by the acquisition of fixed capital, the minimization of variable capital, or the maximization of profits, much less by the dictates of gunboat diplomacy, the expansion of strategic overseas military installations, or the idiosyncrasies of the White House. It may seem so at times, but only insofar as contemporary observers, or our historical counterparts, fundamentally misrecognize the nature of racial slavery: as a brutal regime of labor exploitation; as the atrocious adjunct to land conquest and the extermination, containment, and/or forced assimilation of indigenous peoples; or as an endeavor functional to, rather than in excess of and at times at odds with, the advent and maturation of Eurocentric capitalism.

Of course, all of these procedures have been important to the history of racial slavery (and vice versa), but none is essential to its origins, its development and, above all, its pernicious afterlife.1 Rather, enslavement — the inaugural enterprise for the age of Europe, the precondition for the American century and its coveted sequel — is enabled by and dependent on the most basic of operations: symbolic and material immobilization, the absolute *divestment of sovereignty* at the site of the black body: its freedom of movement, its conditions of labor, its physical and emotional sustenance, its social and sexual reproduction, its political and cultural representation. Beyond its economic utility, this rendering of the black as the object of dispossession par excellence — object of accumulation, prototypical commodity, captive flesh — structures indelibly the historical proliferation of modern conceptions of sovereignty that now dominate political and legal discourse globally and provide the crucial frames of intelligibility for both imperialism and anti-imperialism, empire and its discontents. With blacks barred by definition from the very notion of the sovereign (whatever their nominal legal status, wherever their tentative place of residence), those not marked by the material and symbolic stigma of slavery have the exclusive and positive capacity to debate about sovereignty: to trivialize its importance and rationalize its violation or to struggle in its defense, to name and lament its loss, and wage war for its recovery.

### Link – UBI

#### UBI is plagued by centuries of oppression and dehumanization of blackness carried through the Wake – smokescreen and cruel optimism

Knowles 21 (Anthony Knowles, PhD candidate Department of Sociology at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, “Universal Basic Income, Social Justice, and Marginality: A Critical Evaluation”, Social Justice, Vol 48, Issue 4)//ameya

Universal basic income programs are meant to broadly distribute wealth so that no one falls below the threshold for a decent standard of living. However, this policy alone cannot address the historical damage of systematic discrimination and cumulative disadvantage that has marginalized many communities in the first place. In addition, efforts to restitute past injustices—such as campaigns for reparations or struggles to maintain the current welfare state —may, paradoxically, be threatened by the implementation of what I term neoliberal universal basic income.This section explains why those living in the wake of historical injustice (Sharpe 2016) should take particular interest in the structure and policy goals of any proposed UBI program to avoid the adoption of a program that could undermine the efficacy of UBI for improving the overall well-being of historically marginalized communities. One of UBI’s primary and most discussed advantages as a policy is that it is universal. By giving benefits to every member of society, UBI avoids the stigma that usually comes from receiving welfare. As Van Parijs (2004, 13) puts it, “there is nothing humiliating about benefits given to all as a matter of citizenship.” However, **a universal policy that distributes equal benefits cannot explicitly recognize or ameliorate disparities in income and generational wealth that have emerged historically along gender and racial lines. Standard UBI proposals are not structurally designed to redress the inequalities produced by centuries of oppression, slavery, exploitation, settler colonialism, and race- and gender-based exploitation.** While most UBI proposals would clearly benefit the most marginalized to some extent, they cannot directly address the harm, both in terms of a dearth of material resources as well as the psychic and collective pain of marginalized groups, that centuries of capitalism, white supremacy, patriarchy, heteronormativity, and cisnormativity have produced. Put simply, a universal basic income may be desirable for a variety of reasons, but it is not a panacea for social problems, nor can it serve as a replacement for reparations for historical injustices inflicted on marginalized groups. UBI could lessen economic inequality but does not address the systemic and historical processes and phenomena that have generated contemporary patterns of inequality, economic or otherwise. Racism, sexism, homophobia, and transphobia all exist in social relations as quasi-autonomous but also interlocking phenomena that serve to stratify and oppress marginalized people in innumerable ways (see Crenshaw 1989). While forms of racism, sexism, homophobia, and transphobia do often negatively impact a person’s socioeconomic status, the effects of these structures and practices cannot be reduced to socioeconomic measures, nor can they be solved or propitiated though monetary restitution. The histories of slavery, white supremacy, patriarchy, and heteronormativity have innumerable effects on people of color, women, and LGBTQ people, leaving deep-seated scars that cannot be redressed by throwing money at the problem. To give one example of how deep the problems lie in historically marginalized communities, Sharpe (2016) explains how African Americans grapple with the afterlives of slavery, in what she calls the Wake. The Wake can be understood as the conceptual frame for living blackness in remembrance of the African diaspora and in the still unfolding aftermaths of Atlantic chattel slavery. Sharpe (2016) uses the word Wake with multiple meanings to get at the multiplicity of ways of living and being in the shadows of dark histories of oppression and violence. The primary image she uses is of the track left on the water’s surface by a ship. One can visualize this as African Americans living in the midst of that wake, being tossed and turned by the currents of history, always fighting against the waves with no real respite. She also describes the Wake as a form of grief, a ritual of mourning, or being in the line of the recoil of a gun (Sharpe 2016, 11, 8). It is also a form of political consciousness (i.e. wakefulness) that recognizes the “continuous and evolving present of slavery’s yet unresolved unfolding” (Sharpe 2016, 14). Sharpe (2016) uses this imagery and plays with the word to describe the African American experience in modern history as living in the Wake—from four hundred years of the slave trade to the legalized discrimination of Jim Crow to colorblind racism and the New Jim Crow of mass incarceration (Alexander 2010). **A UBI scheme can only minimally address the burdens of history for diasporic Africans** (See Commander 2017, Hartman 2008). Similar histories and lived experiences can be examined and explained for other marginalized groups such as women and LGBTQ people, and those at the intersections of multiple identities (Crenshaw 1989). Though the experiences of each are qualitatively different, a kind of wake, a continuous turbulence and precarity, is experienced by all marginalized people. This reveals how experiences of marginality in modern society are not limited to strictly economic or class concerns, nor could they be solved by alleviating economic hardship. The pain runs deeper than that. Lived experiences cannot be measured or quantified. Therefore, the quantitative redistribution of money across society can ameliorate the struggle for material needs but cannot alone address the qualitatively distinct lived realities of marginality that have been produced by hundreds of years of white supremacy, patriarchy, and heteronormativity. This is important to remember in tempering the occasionally utopian expectations placed on UBI by some of its proponents (Bregman 2017, Srnicek & Williams 2015, van der Veen & Van Parijs 1986).

### Link – UBI + JG

#### UBI and JG both antiblack

Lu 21 (Lynn D. Lu is an Associate Professor of Law, City University of New York School of Law, “From Stigma to Dignity? Transforming Workfare with Universal Basic Income and a Federal Job Guarantee”, SSRN, 15 January 2021)//ameya

The checkered history of past efforts to alleviate poverty and economic inequality reveals the difficulty of decoupling subsistence-level benefits from politically popular work mandates. Under current workfare programs funded by Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), compulsory work requirements subject recipients to punitive sanctions for noncompliance—no matter how inappropriate or degrading the assigned work—that reduce subsistence benefits despite demonstrated need.49 Government assistance has thus been formally recast through workfare, not as a justly deserved entitlement but rather as a condition to be excused solely in extreme circumstances.50 Hence the Trump Administration openly characterized poverty as laziness—an immoral failure of will—and expanded work requirements beyond cash assistance by requiring recipients of government aid to work off their “debt” for access to medical assistance, nutritious food, and safe housing.51 At the same time, national tax and spending policies have consistently— both in intent and impact—favored the breadwinning-white-male-headed household over that of the unmarried single mother of color. Such incentives encourage patriarchal patterns of economic dependency that exacerbate disparate racial and gender impacts in income inequality, wealth building, and economic mobility.52 Even if not explicitly supporting disparate treatment by race, sociologists suggest that “**perceptions of rising minority power, declines in whites’ relative socioeconomic status, or other perceived macro-level threats to whites’ racial status may provoke adoption of more restrictive welfare regimes**.”53 As a result, cash assistance programs associated with greater uptake by people of color carry the harshest and most punitive or onerous requirements.54 “**As whites attempt to undermine racial progress they see as threatening their group’s status, they increase opposition to programs intended to benefit poorer members of all racial groups**.”55 Past experiences with welfare and workfare reform since the New Deal era reveal persistent **discrimination and disparate impact in both the conception and execution of safety net assistance and job creation programs**. First, as historians have described, the design and implementation of New Deal programs, both by intent and in effect, reproduced existing social disparities that excluded Black workers and women of color from program benefits.56 Social Security and the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) were **explicitly and intentionally designed to exclude** agricultural and domestic workers—primarily Blacks in states governed by southern democrats—from benefits and protections,57 an injustice also effectuated by TANF’s predecessor, Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), and later by the GI Bill, as implemented at the discretion of state agency employees.58 Federal New Deal programs intended to provide a social safety net after the Great Depression provided paid, public-works jobs primarily to ablebodied men (for example, through the Works Progress Administration (WPA)) while also expanding means-tested cash assistance to households with dependent children regardless of adult employment status through AFDC.59 Although these programs varied greatly in implementation from state to state, one aspect was consistent: **Blacks were excluded from the highest paying jobs and benefit amounts**.60 As economist Nancy Rose recounts, the WPA and other New Deal work programs were successful on a number of levels but still fell victim to opposition from employers who objected to the wages as too high, the work as unproductive, and the workers as displacing the private labor force.61 Left to the discretion of local agency supervisors, job placements revealed supervisors’ preferences for enrolling older male heads of household in each family’s WPA slot and reproduced existing social disparities by, for example, favoring more privileged workers for white-collar, professional jobs.62 To appease southern legislators, WPA rolls were closed during certain seasons to maintain a ready supply of cheap domestic and agricultural workers—who were disproportionately Black63—as private employers sought agricultural laborers for low-paid farm work.64 Finally, WPA workers were prohibited from refusing jobs offered by private employers.65 While Black workers remained excluded from the benefits of social safety net programs, unmarried women faced a double bind: segregation in the labor market and increasingly punitive safety net programs.66 By the mid-1960s, as the War on Poverty continued to rage, racist stereotypes and public perceptions of welfare dependency as a disincentive to engage in low-wage work **demonized Black single mothers**67 and derailed attempts to create a federal Family Assistance Program (FAP), which would pay a minimum amount of cash assistance without a work requirement to households with children.68 Instead, the Earned Income Tax Credit was born to incentivize paid work through a tax credit conditioned on receipt of earned income and effectively meaningful only to households with dependent children.69 As sociologist Brian Steensland argues in his careful account of the rise and demise of FAP, ideology and culture played a decisive role in ending FAP’s chances of passage, as public depictions of the program increasingly framed it as a non-reciprocal payment with no expected social contribution in return.70 Coupled with the National Welfare Rights Organization’s opposition to the proposed reduction of benefit levels in northern regions of the country, and in response to pilot experiments reporting higher divorce rates correlating with mothers’ reduced economic dependence on men,71 FAP was eventually overshadowed by calls for an Earned Income Tax Credit and a later abandoned JG.72 Rose’s comprehensive history beginning with temporary New Deal job creation programs and continuing through 1990s welfare reform highlights numerous concerns that repeatedly threatened to impede progress, including fears of corruption, displacement of private employees, make-work jobs, and illegal discrimination due to discretionary local job assignment practices.73 Writing before TANF imposed even harsher work requirements as a condition of receiving public benefits, Rose called for expansion of voluntary work incentive programs (fair work rather than workfare) in order to increase labor market participation and job readiness for those left out of economic prosperity or structurally unemployed.74 Based on her extensive analysis of New Deal WPA programs, Rose identified several challenges that could have been addressed by a genuine JG program but that were instead exacerbated by the TANF program’s punitive mandatory work requirements.75 To avoid similar problems in a JG and safety net program, Rose advised that such schemes should adhere to nondiscrimination and other labor protections, be locally driven, be administered by nongovernmental organizations, and preserve worker dignity and choice—for example by preserving the choice to combine paid work with caregiving or postsecondary education.76 Similarly, around the time that welfare reform was seriously being debated, the late Anthony Atkinson proposed “participatory income” as a compromise—offering a basic income to all individuals conditioned upon participation in a broadly defined range of socially useful activities—which he later promoted as a substitute for the existing safety net.77 Even this kinder, gentler version of workfare retained the problematic aspects of a restrictive mandatory system. Instead, in 1996, the TANF program enacted a punitive workfare scheme that intensified the worst features of the WPA by imposing mandatory work requirements as a condition of receiving subsistence-level benefits.78 With the **racialized association of poverty with Black women** cemented in the public mind through the **false image of a welfare queen** living on taxpayer funds,79 TANF imposed lifetime limits on the receipt of federal cash assistance and conditioned receipt on participation in work requirements.80 Consequently, states dependent on federal funds were required to implement punitive work programs.

### Link – Wake

#### Wake thesis

**Sharpe 16** [Christina Sharpe is an associate professor of English at Tufts University and the author of *Monstrous Intimacies: Making Post-Slavery Subjects*, also published at Duke University Press, “In the Wake On Blackness and Being”, (p. 18-20) *Duke University Press*, October 13, 2016] HZaidi

Keeping each of the definitions of wake in mind, I want to think and argue for one aspect of Black being in the wake as consciousness and to propose that to be in the wake is to occupy and to be occupied by the continuous and changing present of slavery’s as yet unresolved unfolding. To be “in” the wake, to occupy that grammar, the infinitive, might provide another way of theorizing, in/for/from what Frank Wilderson refers to as “stay[ing] in the hold of the ship.” 20 With each of those definitions of wake present throughout my text, I argue that rather than seeking a resolution to blackness’s ongoing and irresolvable abjection, one might approach Black being in the wake as a form of consciousness. Political scientists, historians, philosophers, literary scholars, and others have posed as a question for thought the endurance of racial inequality after juridical emancipation and civil rights, and they have interrogated the conflation of blackness as the ontological negation of being with Black subjects and communities. That is, across disciplines, scholars and researchers continue to be concerned with the endurance of antiblackness in and outside the contemporary. In that way In the Wake: On Blackness and Being joins the work of those scholars who investigate the ongoing problem of Black exclusion from social, political, and cultural belonging; our abjection from the realm of the human. But the book departs from those scholars and those works that look for political, juridical, or even philosophical answers to this problem. My project looks instead to current quotidian disasters in order to ask what, if anything, survives this insistent Black exclusion, this ontological negation, and how do literature, performance, and visual culture observe and mediate this un/survival. To do this work of staying in the wake and to perform wake work I look also to forms of Black expressive culture (like the works of poets and poet-novelists M. NourbeSe Philip, Dionne Brand, and Kamau Brathwaite) that do not seek to explain or resolve the question of this exclusion in terms of assimilation, inclusion, or civil or human rights, but rather depict aesthetically the impossibility of such resolutions by representing the paradoxes of blackness within and after the legacies of slavery’s denial of Black humanity. I name this paradox the wake, and I use the wake in all of its meanings as a means of understanding how slavery’s violences emerge within the contemporary conditions of spatial, legal, psychic, material, and other dimensions of Black non/being as well as in Black modes of resistance. If slavery persists as an issue in the political life of black America, it is not because of an antiquarian obsession with bygone days or the burden of a too-long memory, but because black lives are still imperiled and devalued by a racial calculus and a political arithmetic that were entrenched centuries ago. This is the afterlife of slavery—skewed life chances, limited access to health and education, premature death, incarceration, and impoverishment. I, too, am the afterlife of slavery. (Hartman 2007, 6) Living in/the wake of slavery is living “the afterlife of property” and living the afterlife of partus sequitur ventrem (that which is brought forth follows the womb), in which the Black child inherits the non/status, the non/being of the mother. That inheritance of a non/status is everywhere apparent now in the ongoing criminalization of Black women and children. Living in the wake on a global level means living the disastrous time and effects of continued marked migrations, Mediterranean and Caribbean disasters, trans-American and -African migration, structural adjustment imposed by the International Monetary Fund that continues imperialisms/colonialisms, and more. And here, in the United States, it means living and dying through the policies of the first US Black president; it means the gratuitous violence of stop-and-frisk and Operation Clean Halls; rates of Black incarceration that boggle the mind (Black people represent 60 percent of the imprisoned population); the immanence of death as “a predictable and constitutive aspect of this democracy” (James and Costa Vargas 2012, 193, emphasis mine). Living in the wake means living the history and present of terror, from slavery to the present, as the ground of our everyday Black existence; living the historically and geographically dis/continuous but always present and endlessly reinvigorated brutality in, and on, our bodies while even as that terror is visited on our bodies the realities of that terror are erased. Put another way, living in the wake means living in and with terror in that in much of what passes for public discourse about terror we, Black people, become the carriers of terror, terror’s embodiment, and not the primary objects of terror’s multiple enactments; the ground of terror’s possibility globally. This is everywhere clear as we think about those Black people in the United States who can “weaponize sidewalks” (Trayvon Martin) and shoot themselves while handcuffed (Victor White III, Chavis Carter, Jesus Huerta, and more), those Black people transmigrating 21 the African continent toward the Mediterranean and then to Europe who are imagined as insects, swarms, vectors of disease; familiar narratives of danger and disaster that attach to our always already weaponized Black bodies (the weapon is blackness). We must also, for example, think of President Obama’s former press secretary Robert Gibbs, who said, commenting on the drone murder of sixteen-year-old US citizen Abdulrahman Al-Alwaki, “I would suggest that you should have a far more responsible father if you are truly concerned about the well being [sic] of your children” (Grim 2012). 22 We must consider this alongside the tracking of Haitians and Dominicans of Haitian descent without papers by drones in the midst of the ongoing ethnic cleansing in the Dominican Republic. 23 We must consider Gibbs’s statement alongside Barack Obama’s reprimands of Black men in the United States, his admonishing them to be responsible fathers. Consider, too, the resurgence of narratives that Black people were better off in chattel slavery. This is Black life in the wake; this is the flesh, these are bodies, to which anything and everything can be and is done. In the immediate aftermath of the June 17, 2015, murders of six Black women and three Black men in the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church in South Carolina in the United States, the poet Claudia Rankine published a New York Times op-ed piece titled “The Condition of Black Life Is One of Mourning.” Rankine writes, “Though the white liberal imagination likes to feel temporarily bad about black suffering, there really is no mode of empathy that can replicate the daily strain of knowing that as a black person you can be killed for simply being black: no hands in your pockets, no playing music, no sudden movements, no driving your car, no walking at night, no walking in the day, no turning onto this street, no entering this building, no standing your ground, no standing here, no standing there, no talking back, no playing with toy guns, no living while black” (Rankine 2015). To be in the wake is to live in those no’s, to live in the no-space that the law is not bound to respect, to live in no citizenship, to live in the long time of Dred and Harriet Scott; and it is more than that. To be/in the wake is to occupy that time/space/place/construction (being in the wake) in all of the meanings I referenced. To be in the wake is to recognize the categories I theorize in this text as the ongoing locations of Black being: the wake, the ship, the hold, and the weather. To be in the wake is also to recognize the ways that we are constituted through and by continued vulnerability to overwhelming force though not only known to ourselves and to each other by that force. 24 In the midst of so much death and the fact of Black life as proximate to death, how do we attend to physical, social, and figurative death and also to the largeness that is Black life, Black life insisted from death? I want to suggest that that might look something like wake work.

### Link – Asian Identity

**L – Asian Identity (model minority) – The plan articulates Asian studies in terms of contingent freedoms from oppression the federal government can afford – that’s parasitic on black abjection that forms the bedrock for Human freedom.**

**Kim 13** (Hyo Kim, assistant professor of English at Medgar Evers College, City University of New York, PhD from Stony Brook University, Fall 2013, ““The Ruse of Analogy”: Blackness in Asian American and Disability Studies,” *Penumbra: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Critical and Creative Inquiry* Volume 1)

Min Hyoung Song recently highlighted a disavowed yet structurally inevitable entanglement between blackness and Asian Americans in U.S. civil society when he noted that Asian Americans are becoming “less of a model whose successes specifically berate blacks and other racial minorities for their lack of resolve and more a kind of, for lack of a better term, super-minority whose successes berate everyone [including the disabled] who fails somehow to succeed” (18). Song’s provocative take on the evolving status of the “model minority” maps what I see as a potentially productive dialogue between Disability studies and the contemporary critique of the concept of an Asian-American model minority.1 Also, as Song makes explicit, we should also include in this dialogue the construction of blackness in any discussion of the “model minority” because the term insinuates that there is an antithesis of the “model” and it is safe to say within the Americas that people of African descent have historically and are now under the greatest scrutiny in that category. In this way, Asian Americans’ emergent status as “super-minority” also correlates with what Michelle Alexander has recently diagnosed as the “‘color blind’ public consensus that personal and cultural traits, not structural arrangements, are largely responsible for the fact that the majority of young black men in urban areas across the United States are currently under the control of the criminal justice system or branded as felons for life” (234-5). Broadly put, the aim of the present essay is to foreground how subfields such **Asian** American **and Disability** studies can participate, however unwittingly, in **deflecting attention** from what Alexander calls the “**structural arrangements**” that contour **blackness within U.S. civil society**. In doing so, I hope to intervene in the ongoing depoliticization of ethnic/minoritarian studies within higher learning. The Zero Degree of Sociality of Blackness To clarify this structural displacement I also draw upon Frank B. Wilderson’s recent intervention entitled Red, White & Black (2011). Wilderson’s provocative study maintains that in order for a politics or ethics to become **legible** within U.S. civil society, it must be based upon an assumptive logic which **calibrates all citizens-subjects as a priori human**, which effectively puts **under erasure** what Wilderson calls one of the “**structural antagonisms**” that has historically framed black bodies as potentially, or rather, **always already non-human**. It is, therefore, only by attending to such “structural antagonisms” (**as opposed to a conflict which can be dialectically resolved**) that anti-blackness (and in a different way, the antagonism toward the Native American) can be brought into sharp relief **not as contingent but gratuitous** (i.e. structural) to the formation of U.S. civil society.2 Thus when **the concept of the human** (or any of its metonymic variation such as **personhood**) is invoked as the a priori condition that subsumes all persons within civil society, it has the effect of **displacing** and **putting under erasure** what Wilderson calls the “**blackness’s grammar of suffering**”―which is **structurally bound to the Middle Passage** that effectively **transformed the African into the fungible object status of the Slave**. Therefore, as Wilderson reminds us: For the Black, freedom is an ontological, rather than experiential, question. There is no philosophically credible way to attach an experiential, a **contingent**, rider onto the notion of freedom when one considers the Black―such as freedom from gender or economic oppression, the kind of **contingent riders** rightfully placed on the non-Black when thinking freedom. Rather, the riders that one could place on Black freedom would be **hyperbolic**―though no less true―and ultimately **untenable**: **freedom from the world**, **freedom from Humanity**, **freedom from everyone** (including one’s Black self). (24) In this, there can be **no analogue to “blackness’s grammar of suffering,”** which **exceeds the descriptive power of representative language**, as it gestures toward the unrepresentable, the zero-degree of sociality which the Slave embodies. Drawing upon the interarticulations between Disability and Asian American studies to illuminate this structural displacement is not as arbitrary as it might seem, as both become **legible and ultimately unstable in and around “blackness.”** This complex entanglement, says Wilderson via Ronald Judy’s (Dis)Forming the American Canon (1994) that the **mere presence of the Black** and his or her project, albeit adjusted structurally, **threatens the fabric of the ‘stable’ economy** by **threatening its structure of exchange**. ‘Not only are the conjunctive operations of discourse of knowledge and power that so define the way in which academic fields get authenticated **implicated in the academic instituting of Afro-American studies**, but so is the **instability entailed in the nature of the academic work**.’ (40) As previously mentioned, Wilderson’s deployment of the term “antagonism” reflects his understanding that U.S. Civil Society continues to gratuitously position the Black as a being without humanity. According to Wilderson’s extension of Judy’s study, the **disavowal of the “structural antagonism” toward the Black** is thus a **necessary function** that is crucial to not only “instituting of Afro-American studies” but **the manner in which such fields as Asian American and Disability studies “get authenticated” within academia**. This insight is crucial to understanding how the convergence of Disability and Asian American studies on their **assumptive logic of the human** unwittingly works to **displace “blackness’s grammar of suffering” from the political and ethical terrain that contours U.S. civil society**.

### Link – Health Care

#### Biomedicalization has restructured the frame of health care through standardization of technoscientific biomedical processes that allow pharmaceutical managed care organization to create a transformative rhetoric within biomedicine. This justifies governmental control on the body concentrated on surveillance mechanism that hinges on medical classification as a form of biological reengineering from the inside out.

**Bliss 18** [Catherine Bliss is Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of California, San Francisco; “Biomedicalization in the Postgenomic Age”; Book: “Handbook of Genomics, Health and Society”; The Handbook provides an essential resource at the interface of Genomics, Health and Society, and forms a crucial research tool for both new students and established scholars across biomedicine and social sciences; p. 15] HZaidi

“Biomedicalization” has been used to explain a wide gamut of social phenomena, from specific diseases such as HIV and cardiovascular disease to overarching conditions such as mental and sexual health, as well as to life processes such as aging and dying and social characteristics such as race, gender, and sexuality. Researchers examining these phenomena have noticed the ways in which biomedicine has come to define them, casting such phenomena with a bioscientific imprimatur. The term “medicalization” was first introduced in the early 1970s to characterize the social process by which medicine increases its jurisdiction, entering into formerly nonmedical domains of life (Conrad 1975; Zola 1972). Theorists at the time trained their attention on the dominance of the medical profession, encouragement by social movements and patient advocacy groups, and changing institutional or organizational structures that supported the increasing reach of medicine. Yet by the turn of the Millennium, scholars were finding that medical authority wasn’t what it used to be, medicine itself was again restructuring in critical ways, and the forms that health organizing was taking were also changing drastically (Conrad 1992, Starr 2008). Due to government cost control measures and the success of social movements to create patient-based and holistic healthcare, the professional dominance of doctors was rapidly eroding. A corporate brand of managed care was taking the place of self-administered physicians networks. The pharmaceutical industry rushed in to sell drugs directly to managed care organizations and to patients themselves. Third-party payers also grew in influence, assuming a gatekeeping role in healthcare (Prainsack, this volume). The late 1990s was a critical time for medicine, as the world braced itself for the first mapping of the human genome. The Human Genome Project published a draft map in 2000, and medicine underwent a paradigm shift, becoming rationalized by bioscientific interests and aims (Clarke et al. 2010). A substantial biotechnology industry arose, replete with new, closer academic–industry relations and a growing market of direct-to-consumer goods. One major aspect of the new bioscientific medicalization, what Clarke et al. (2003: 162) summarize as “the increasingly complex, multisited, multidirectional processes of medicalisation that today are being both extended and reconstituted through the emergent social forms and practices of a highly and increasingly technoscientific biomedicine,” is economic restructuring toward the consolidation of a “biomedical technoservice complex.” This new system is characterized by multinational corporations and privatized rather than state-funded research and healthcare. Again, managed care systems have replaced physician-dominated systems. Meanwhile, increases in fee-for-service options and the devolution of healthcare management to individual patients, as well as new population-based practices that rely on new concepts of identity, have created a uniquely stratified form of medicalization. A second aspect of biomedicalization is a concerted focus on health, risk, and surveillance. Health has become a moral imperative, something individuals must work toward. Governments, medical organizations, and individuals themselves constantly monitor risks, and they do so in terms of genetic diagnoses and molecular categorizations. As Clarke et al. (2003: 172) note, “it is impossible not to be ‘at risk.’” Third, biomedicalization is characterized by a “technoscientization” of biomedicine, that is, a rationalization by technology and science at the same time. Processes and systems are computerized and standardized by new technologies and scientific classification systems. Healthcare is driven by evidence-based biomedicine, which is itself characterized by statistical reasoning and molecular science. A host of “Omic” sciences prevail, encouraging biological engineering “from the inside out” (Clarke et al. 2003: 176). Healthcare is delivered by way of electronic record systems, digitized biotechnologies, and bioengineered applications. Fourth, biomedicalization works by way of new transformations of information and the production and distribution of knowledges. Biomedicine dominates the media, where it dispels alternative notions of health and wellbeing and alternative systems of knowledge. Responsibility for one’s health is cast as an individual problem that is to be addressed with consumer applications. A range of cottage industries has cropped up offering consumers DIY (Do-It-Yourself ) goods and services, while health gurus and high-profile medical experts have encouraged patients to go online, self-diagnose, and purchase products. At the same time, pharmaceutical commercials and news of clinical trials trump alternative and complementary medicine, now joining with healthcare professionals and patient movements to popularize genetic tests and cures (Löwy, this volume). Finally, biomedicalization entails a transformation of bodies and identities. Biomedicalization is no longer about controlling a pathological entity, but rather hinges on customizing bodies to be the best they can be. There are two fundamental rhetorics, that of choice and lifestyle optimization. Individuals are pressed to opt for healthy behaviors and habits in their everyday lives, and to use biotechnologies to constantly monitor their improvement from moment to moment, in real time. Norms have multiplied such that there is no longer a singular definition of what it is to be “normal.” A plethora of identities have emerged, forged through the interaction with biotechnology and new medical classifications. Increasingly, identity is cast in genetic terms, and it is done so amid a global network that has important international ramifications (see Jingfeng in this volume). Medicalization theorists have debated whether these transformations warrant a shift in terminology (Conrad 2005; Rose 2007). Still, all agree that where medicalization occurs, it is unique in how it links up with processes like geneticization, molecularization, and pharmaceuticalization, the processes by which reductionist genetic explanations are used to describe differences between individual and group traits and behaviors (Lippman 1991), molecular models advance in science and society (Chadevarian and Kamminga 1998), and the way that conditions are transformed into opportunities for pharmacological interventions (Williams et al. 2011). Biomedicalization increasingly involves the redefinition of characteristics and conditions as inherently found in one’s DNA code and thus knowable and treatable by biomedicine, propels molecular models forward in the various fields and subfields of biomedicine as well as in healthcare and society, and bolsters pharmacological hegemony in the basic structures of bioscience and health delivery systems, often leading to an individualization of intervention and a depoliticization of care (Bell and Figert 2015).

#### This is particularly true in the context of Global Health. The 1AC’s approach to health management is underwritten by the three axes of economic, racial, and scientific inequality that coalesce to produce a Vital Abandonment of subaltern subjects unable to reap the benefits of biomedical advancements. The plans defense of patent ownership recirculates capital back into the Global North creating a genocidal terrain of anti-black exclusion at the molecular level.

Elbe’22 |Stefan Elbe B.Sc. (Econ) in International Relations, LSE; Ph.D. in International Relations, LSE. Director (Centre for Global Health Policy) School of Global Studies “Who Owns a Deadly Virus? Viral Sovereignty, Global Health Emergencies, and the Matrix of the International” *International Political Sociology*, https://doi.org/10.1093/ips/olab037|KZaidi

The most prominent of these global axes of inequality is undoubtedly economic in nature and manifests in the highly unequal international access to biomedical interventions during global health emergencies. “[T]he single greatest global challenge in public health,” a report by the Third World Network (TWN) notes, “is to address the huge disparities between wealthy and poorer countries in their citizens’ access to vaccines, therapeutics, and diagnostics” (Hammond 2021, 3). The global demand for new biomedical interventions spikes dramatically during pandemics and certainly runs much higher than the initial international production capacity for novel therapeutic products. With global pharmaceutical production largely concentrated in profit-orientated commercial and corporate enterprises, and in a context where demand outstrips global supply under market conditions, the factor most likely to determine who will secure access to those scarce treatments during a pandemic is price. Low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), therefore, routinely struggle to compete with their wealthier counterparts in securing access to such life-saving biomedical interventions. Recent experiences with COVID-19 underscore those longer standing concerns. In the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, many high-income countries pledged support for the new COVAX facility—an ambitious international procurement mechanism designed to equitably supply newly developed COVID-19 vaccines to the entire world. However, many high-income countries subsequently entered into extensive bilateral agreements with commercial vaccine manufacturers to supply their populations, and so the COVID-19 pandemic was once again marked by a resurgence of vaccine nationalism, with many high-income countries purchasing far more vaccine doses than needed for the size of their population (Hammond 2020, 2; Wouters et al. 2021). Over a year into the pandemic, many low-income countries were still struggling to vaccinate even 10 percent of their populations, while many high-income countries were already accumulating spare doses and contemplating additional “booster” shots (Usher 2021). As with many prior outbreaks, a major gap thus rapidly emerged between high- and low-income countries around access to vaccines during COVID-19 (Eccleston-Turner and Upton 2021; Mathieu et al. 2021). Yet, those international tensions over affordability are only the most immediately apparent economic inequalities that are relevant here. A subtler form of economic inequality additionally relates to how the global geographic distribution of pharmaceutical infrastructures has evolved historically. That is because countries home to substantial pharmaceutical infrastructures also possess a second option for securing access to scarce biomedical interventions; they can invoke the exceptional circumstances of a pandemic to nationalize pharmaceutical products manufactured within their territories. During pandemic flu (H5N1, H1N1), for example, the limited global manufacturing capacity for pandemic influenza vaccines was geographically concentrated in high-income countries (Australia, Europe, Japan, and North America), giving those countries and regions a distinct advantage in terms of securing priority access to medicines for their populations (WHO 2005, 47; Elbe 2018). Yet, this alternative option of nationalizing supplies, which has resurfaced in the form of widespread vaccine nationalism during COVID-19 (BBC 2021), is only available to those countries possessing such pharmaceutical infrastructures, again excluding the vast majority of the world’s LMICs. Thus, the geographically uneven global distribution of pharmaceutical infrastructures compounds their subaltern economic position during global health emergencies. Many LMICs are also at a third economic disadvantage here. Scholars of international political economy have described how biocapital, that is, the growing commercial exploitation of biological materials, has become a highly profitable component of the global economy (Rajan 2006; Birch and Tyfield 2013; Elbe and Long 2020). Global health emergencies can generate lucrative opportunities to produce such commercial biovalue and financial profit by triggering immense international demand for new diagnostics, medicines, and vaccines; virus samples are critical to those commercial production processes. While pathogen samples are initially shared for noncommercial public health purposes (such as characterization and monitoring of genetic variations), some of these samples are subsequently also used by the pharmaceutical industry for commercial and profit-orientated practices to develop propitiatory commercial biomedical interventions (Hammond 2020, 1). With biomedical expertise and production capabilities concentrated in highincome countries, however, such commercial revenues again flow mostly to their corporations and stakeholders. To the Indonesian health minister, the entire system of international virus sharing, therefore, appeared to perpetuate a protracted cycle of international economic inequality in which “the developed countries become richer and richer while the poor countries become poorer and poorer” (Supari 2008, 6). Emphasizing the powerful global health rationale for international virus sharing obscures, then, how those practices can also buttress the hegemony of already dominant economic actors in international relations and how LMICs frequently occupy a subaltern position during global health emergencies. Unlike their wealthier counterparts, LMICs cannot usually access the life-saving biomedical interventions that are subsequently developed with those critical samples. They also do not have the option of nationalizing such products to secure access for their populations nor can they reap the considerable commercial benefits generated from such biomedical technologies. Viewed from this perspective, the entire process of international virus sharing can appear intensely unjust, resembling an elaborate international circuit of dispossession “in which property is generated under conditions that require its divestment and alienation from those who appear, only retrospectively, as its original owners” (Nichols 2018, 5). Echoing the geopolitics of knowledge articulated by Walter Mignolo (2002) to ask “who and when, why and where is knowledge generated” (Mignolo 2009, 160), there is also a highly stratified geopolitics of biomedicine that only selectively protects some populations against emergent viral harms.

The Whiteness of Global Health Security

This international axis of economic inequality is entangled with a second axis of racial inequality. That is because the uneven geographic distribution of biomedicine is historically closely bound up with the legacies of racialized colonial expansion, extraction, and capitalism (see Bhattacharyya 2018; see also Jones 2008). Throughout those histories, biological resources central to the advancement of scientific knowledge, medicine, and commerce were taken from indigenous and colonized peoples and then brought back home to metropoles of European empires, frequently without explicit consent (Schiebinger 2007, 6). Many of these practices were carried out on the basis of the constructed racial inferiority of the people from which those resources were taken (Quijano 2000; 2007b). Land appropriation from indigenous communities in the so-called New World, for example, was catalyzed by their perceived racial and cultural “otherness,” which meant that they were not recognized as having “true” possession of these lands (Harris 1993, 1721–22; see also Grovogui 1996). Those experiences of colonialism still resonate within the contemporary context of global health emergencies (King 2002; Packard 2016; Richardson 2020).

The ongoing practices of international virus sharing continue to exhibit a dominant “whiteness”—understood here not as a simplified marker of “ethnicity” or skin color but as “a “standpoint” rooted in structural power” (Sabaratnam 2020, 5). The philosopher George Yancy argues that whiteness can be conceived of as a particular power–knowledge nexus “inextricably linked to a (white) regime of truth and modalities of power” (Yancy 2004a, 108), which places whites in positions of power vis-à-vis non-whites by virtue of their whiteness (Yancy 2004b, 6; see also Abímbo. ´lá and Pai 2020). Such white normativity manifests during global health emergencies when, for instance, outbreak countries are not perceived as having equally legitimate ownership rights over biological materials located inside their territories, and it therefore appears acceptable to remove such samples from their countries. “Each time I looked into the past,” the Indonesian health minister observed during the H5N1outbreak, “I saw the shadow of imperialism that had taken the most resources of my country because we had no technology to take the benefits from our resources” (Supari 2008, 10). During the Ebola outbreak in West Africa, several of the outbreak countries became similarly concerned that thousands of biological samples were being transferred out of their countries amidst the chaos of the initial response (Yozwiak, Schaffner, and Sabeti 2015). With public concern growing that international researchers were effectively “stealing African populations’ biological property,” several governments enhanced export restrictions around such biological samples (Abramowitz et al. 2018, 105). As one observer puts it: “Everyone knows it’s a holy mess. At the moment, it means all sharing [of samples] is on hold” (quoted in Freudenthal 2019).

The whiteness of global health emergency management is further reflected in discussions about the security considerations surrounding those lethal virus specimens. Here, too, outbreak countries are frequently cast in an inferior position when foreign experts remind them that they lack the capacity to handle such dangerous pathogens safely, and it would therefore be better to transfer them to countries owning such facilities. Very few countries in the world possess the high-security biosafety level 4 (BSL-4) laboratories needed to securely handle dangerous pathogens. Yet, this comparative “underdevelopment” of many outbreak countries is no mere accident of history. A more diachronic perspective would suggest that this is often also grounded in the longer histories of colonialism that sanctioned—politically, economically, and socially—the underdevelopment of other parts of the world through practices of extraction and colonialism (Rodney 2018). This historical legacy leaves many outbreak countries confronting a difficult dilemma: should they oblige to foreign requests to hand over their samples, destroy them, or retain the samples with all of the attendant biosecurity risks that entails (Rizk et al. 2020, 30)? They must make these deliberations, moreover, against the backdrop of long-standing suspicions that powerful foreign countries may covertly steal such pathogen samples from them anyway in the name of national security (Rizk et al. 2020, 30).

Finally, the whiteness of global health emergency management is also evident when interactions with outbreak countries do not afford their official representatives a level of recognition befitting countries of equal standing. One report of the Yellow Fever outbreak in Angola notes how the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) “came under considerable fire by Angolan public health officials, for having sent young, inexperienced personnel who were simply using the epidemic as an opportunity for experience” (Abramowitz et al. 2018, 59). During the MERS outbreak, the government of Saudi Arabia felt similarly aggrieved by the practice of foreign researchers “parachuting” into their country without properly engaging or collaborating with government officials and without seeing the need to engage the local authorities (Katz and Phelan 2018b, 5). Entangled with the more prominent global axis of economic inequality is, therefore, also a second axis of racial inequality reflected in the ways that outbreak countries and populations of color are frequently construed as inferior in relation to established white norms and power structures—because their ownership claims over such samples are not recognized as being equally legitimate, because they are construed as being incapable of handling such pathogen samples safely, and because they are assigned a subaltern position in the research practices surrounding such novel pathogens.

Epistemological Extractions and Erasures Science does not stand outside of this entanglement of economics and race and forms yet a third global axis of epistemological inequality traversing virus-sharing practices. Throughout history, the epistemic practices of the natural sciences have frequently been put into the economic service of the powerful and have contributed to the international projects of imperialism and colonialism (see Harding 2011; Adas 2016). The entanglements of science and race are likewise attracting greater attention from historians of science, especially in relation to overt acts of scientific racism unfolding during scientific research as well as its contribution to the biologicization of race (Robinson 1983, 76; Saini 2019). Comparatively less attention, however, has been paid to what Michelle Murphy calls “the inverse subject of racialized disadvantage—the work of racialized privilege” and “to the work of racialization in scientific practices not explicitly about race, in practices we would call normal science” (Murphy 2006, 112). Although many of the scientific practices mobilized during global health emergencies are not thematically concerned with race, they nevertheless resonate with such epistemic privilege. The setting of research priorities during outbreaks, for example, often favor the scientific interests of powerful countries. During the Ebola outbreak in Africa local researchers felt that research priorities were mostly driven by the interests of foreign researchers rather than by local needs. Priority was given to research on biological specimens instead of focusing on questions about local transmission patterns, natural reservoirs, ecosystems, and diagnostics (Abramowitz et al. 2018, 89). These were the key questions for outbreak countries, but “[n]ot much has been done in this way, unfortunately. Only the samples were transported outside ….” (quoted in Abramowitz et al. 2018, 89). More recent revelations by investigative journalists underscore the significance of this problem. They detail how thousands of blood samples from West Africa were subsequently exported abroad and that scientists from Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Liberia are now frustrated because they cannot access these samples for research benefitting their countries, even though some of those scientists put their lives at risk to obtain the samples (Freudenthal 2019). Epistemic privilege is further reflected in the way that researchers from outbreak countries are often marginalized in, and excluded from, processes of scientific knowledge production. Researchers working in LMICs can confront powerful obstacles to satisfying their own research aspirations because they lack access to sophisticated laboratory facilities, cannot find sufficient time amidst their existing employment to conduct research projects, or do not have access to the funds required (Crane 2013, 131, 132). Again, such comparative scientific “underdevelopment” cannot just be construed as a natural state of affairs but is again also linked to longer histories of colonialism and racism (Rodney 2018, 14); it can leave scientists in outbreak countries with little choice but to cooperate with foreigners if they want to undertake research. As one African researcher put it: “When you have a really powerful team and a weak [one]… you can’t speak of sharing. This is an abuse of language. Either we share nothing, or give and others exploit, or keep back and nothing is done. But sharing, that means that each person has a capacity to do something … It is difficult for me to hear this word ‘sharing.’ It isn’t sharing when it’s a question of ‘I give’ or ‘I keep’” (quoted in Abramowitz et al. 2018, 25). The very language of “sharing” itself already masks the deeper inequalities often at play in this field. Scientists from high-income countries finally also occupy a privileged epistemic position regarding the allocation of rewards, prestige, and other career benefits resulting from research on novel pathogens. The international standing of scientists, and the funding they can attract for their research teams, is closely tied to publications and citations. Scientists’ careers can benefit substantially from publishing research about dangerous new pathogens at the forefront of international attention. Yet, LMIC scientists report experiences in which scientific analyses derived from samples they have shared in the past (because they lacked the powerful molecular research capacity of laboratories in high-income countries) were subsequently presented at international meetings and conferences without proper advance notification or without including those who had shared the samples in the authorship arrangements (Sedyaningsih et al. 2008; see also Elbe and BucklandMerrett 2017). Lisa Tilley highlights the problematic nature of such “piratic” research more generally, understood “as methodologies which do not value knowledge until processes of extraction, commodification and value addition have been applied through academic refinement, generally in the Global North” (Tilley 2017, 27–28; see also Chivalán Carrillo and Posocco 2020). An extensive array of academic value production surrounds the epistemological study of lethal viruses, culminating in a global health science “that paradoxically embodies and even benefits from the very inequalities it aspires to redress” (Crane 2013, 7; see also Kim 2021). In the end, international virus-sharing practices are also traversed by a third axis of global epistemological inequality whereby the roles, research priorities, and contributions of researchers from LMICs can become marginalized and even erased at times.

Vital Abandonment: A Global Matrix of Lethal Subjugation During global health emergencies, all three of these economic, racial, and scientific axes of inequality coalesce to produce an interlocking and lethal matrix of global subjugation: vital abandonment. Vital abandonment here refers to the very specific ways in which the above inequalities (and others) intersect during global health emergencies to generate an increased burden of death and disease for the world’s majority population—by depriving them of equitable access to medicines, vaccines, diagnostics and other life-saving medical equipment. Their resulting and interlocking subjugation is vital in the very literal sense that the sociologist Göran Therborn defines vital inequality as the “socially constructed unequal life-chances of human organisms” (Therborn 2013, 49). Yet, this biomedical marginalization is also frequently so severe that referring to it merely as another form of inequality would not do full analytical justice to the gravity of this phenomenon. The biomedical marginalization engendered at the intersection of all those international inequalities ultimately leaves most LMIC populations in a state of near-total disposability during global health emergencies (see Odysseos 2015), as their bare life effectively becomes exposed to the unfettered circulation of lethal viruses without any meaningful protection from any biomedical interventions (see also Hentschel and Krasmann 2020). In terms of this underlying severity, the biomedical marginalization experienced during global health emergencies also resonates with the notion of social abandonment advanced by the anthropologist João Biehl. Biehl observed how protracted zones of social abandonment have emerged in several Brazilian cities; he describes in moving detail how many sick people living in one of those zones—Vita—simply died without access to medicines, until someone eventually opened a small pharmacy relying mostly on donations (Biehl 2005, 103). During global health emergencies, a very similar plight is faced by hundreds of millions of people around the world, who also remain unable to access potentially life-saving medicines or vaccines. Thus, the notion of vital abandonment advanced here builds upon both Therborn’s idea of vital inequality and Biehl’s concept of social abandonment, to capture the very severe and widespread biomedical marginalization faced by the world’s majority population during global health emergencies (see also Selmeczi 2009). Precisely because this phenomenon of vital abandonment unfolds across such a vast geographic scale, moreover, it also remains analytically distinct from the much more localized zones described by Biehl as an anthropologist. Vital abandonment does not just manifest in particular urban areas of a country such as Brazil; it rapidly extends into a far more expansive international space during global health emergencies, geographically spreading across a whole array of formerly colonized peoples living across multiple continents and affecting the world’s majority population (see also Lowe 2015).

#### Biopolitical governance positions the black body outside of the category of “human” which imposes specific forms of biomedical targeting while simultaneously forcing the black subject to keep their blackness in check in the face of mass forms of surveillance. These technologies such as BiDil and medical hot spotting designed for blacks use only posit the black body as an independent category or as a site of experimentation to fit the white template of a good citizen which blurs racial disparities into a source of marketization.

**Krupar and Ehlers 16** [Nadine Ehlers, The University of Sydney, Department of Sociology and Social Policy, Faculty Member. Studies Bioethics, Cultural Studies, and Critical Theory, Shiloh Krupar is a Geographer and Provost's Distinguished Associate Professor at Georgetown University, where she currently teaches in the Culture and Politics Program; “Biofutures: Race and the governance of health”; DOI: 10.1177/0263775816654475;] HZaidi

Contemporary biomedical technologies that target race seem to ameliorate the ‘‘cut’’ of systemic racism—by targeting supposedly race-specific health factors or directing health care toward particular spaces to alleviate health disparities. In what follows, we consider two examples of biomedical targeting technologies and their biopolitical operations. First, we focus on BiDil, a pharmaceutical approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in 2005, and subsequently marketed as a race-specific drug for self-identified African Americans suffering from heart failure. Second, we turn to what is known as ‘‘medical hot spotting,’’ a practice that began in Camden, New Jersey in 2007, and that uses GIS technologies and spatial profiling to identify populations that are medically vulnerable (‘‘health care’s costliest 1%’’) in order to provide preemptive care at home and lower hospital admissions and health care costs. These targeting operations are deployed ostensibly to affirm life: They are said to redress past forms of biomedical neglect and enable the tailoring of biomedical intervention into vulnerable communities, and they are advocated as the means through which to foster the health of those populations—through attention, through targeting. Such forms of redress and attention might be understood, then, as the attempt to practice—and actualize—a different racial future, precisely through attending to inequities in the present. However, targeted health interventions may in effect signal inequitable and endangering forms of biomedical administration.3 We advance this more cautionary view through three foundational claims. First, regardless of the motivations for biomedical targeting—that is, the will to attend to black health—the operation of race-specific biomedical targeting of black subjects is structured through an epistemology of anti-blackness. More than racist actions against blacks, the architecture of racial discrimination, or a paradigm that binds blackness and death together, anti-blackness is a form of knowledge that positions the black subject outside of the category Human.4 This positioning stems from liberal humanist thought and is constitutive of Western modernity (Barrett, 2014). Not only has the epistemology of anti-blackness shaped the racial past in the U.S., but it also curtails the present and future of black life. Such expulsion of black lives from the normative position Human is undeniable, ‘‘[g]iven the histories of slavery, colonialism, segregation, lynching’’ and the ongoing daily imperiling of black lives through police brutality and mass incarceration (Weheliye, 2014: 19). That biomedical targeting is structured through antiblackness is evident in the way it reinstitutes racial difference and separation and, as we will show, stages an additional form of violence by actually expelling blacks from the possibility of optimal health. Black lives have been consistently imperiled in and through the biomedical encounter, in the form of lack of access to care and health insurance, inequities in caregiving, and the medical abuse of black bodies, from grave robbing for medical experimentation, to the Tuskegee Syphilis Experiments, and the appropriation of the Henrietta Lacks cell line (Duster, 2003a; Institute of Medicine Report, 2002; Nelson, 2011; Roberts, 2012; Van Ryn and Fu, 2003; Washington, 2008). Anti-blackness continues to thwart black life and futurity through biomedical targeting operations that subject African Americans to what Du Bois (1899) named as a ‘‘social atmosphere . . . which differs from that surrounding whites.’’5 Race-based targeting efforts that are aimed at redressing health inequities recursively secure anti-blackness by refusing to acknowledge its structuring logic, thus equating blackness with inevitable vulnerability, risk, threat, and premature death.6 Second, and related to our first point, these biomedical targeting operations extract the conditions of black health and illness from the broader contexts of structural racism. Biomedical targeting generally fails to recognize the social conditions in which poor health emerges and, in the case of black subjects, how poor health, institutional racism, and the epistemology of anti-blackness are ontologically enmeshed. The targeting of black populations—specifically the two cases we explore here—does not simply direct resources to black subjects. Instead, in such operations, race is objectified as that to be targeted, meaning that race itself is not undone: That is, race as a stratifying mechanism that orders the social—a social order characterized by anti-blackness—is not called into question. Both BiDil and medical hot spotting demarcate populations, with supposedly distinct bodies, and name them as a political problem in need of specific health governance; black bodies and racialized spaces are targeted in order to manage the life of the population. Accordingly, BiDil might be seen to ontologize blackness as a corporeal truth for market accumulation, while medical hot spotting can be said to spatially ontologize structural racism in order to secure cost efficiencies of the health care system. BiDil is predicated on financial extraction; medical hot spotting is predicated on threat containment. These biomedical targeting technologies reveal how health interventions do not necessarily support or achieve a better future for African Americans. Instead, they advance the epistemological violence of anti-blackness by concentrating the ‘‘problem’’ of black life in the U.S. at the scales of: (1) the racialized body (BiDil) and (2) space (hot spots), which both become objects of ever more heightened administration, financial exploitation, and securitization. BiDil positions African Americans as ‘‘problem bodies’’ that must take on responsibility for their own racialized embodied risk through the act of buying and consuming race-based medicine; here, anti-blackness operates through the black responsibilization of risk. Medical hot spotting tracks, maps, and fixes high-cost health care users in ‘‘problem spaces’’ that are positioned outside the populace; hot spotting locates and reifies the structural position of anti-blackness in space for the purposes of surveillance, anticipation of risk, and containment. Third, contemporary biomedical targeting technologies are an endangering form of health administration exacerbated by the logics of neoliberalism. Under neoliberal conditions, populations previously excluded from the vital politics of the nation are now ostensibly being addressed. However, the two biomedical targeting technologies that we explore reveal a predatory power to demarcate race for purposes spanning financial extraction to threat containment—even as such ‘‘targeting’’ is advocated as the means for addressing the embodied and spatial effects of racial inequality. In neoliberal times, the color line no longer operates as a clear and obvious modality of exclusion, as Du Bois would have it (Goldberg, 2008). The neoliberal biopolitics of health increasingly emphasizes customizing health, the body, and life itself through biomedical practices (Clarke et al., 2003: 181–182). Our two case studies reveal how customizing health seems to be an operation of inclusion (directly or indirectly by race) within biomedicine: BiDil is a customized drug that attends to black health; it targets racial minorities supposedly to extend life. Medical hot spotting is also a form of customization through care delivery: It delineates ‘‘problem spaces’’—where high utilizers of health care are located—in order to direct resources and generate efficiencies in health provisions. ‘‘Customizing’’ works in the first case through ‘‘color awareness’’ and marketing within biomedicine (i.e. the racialized spectacle of the body), and paradoxically in the second, through invisibilizing race at the level of ‘‘location’’/space according to the socalled colorblind agency of the free market and cost–benefit analysis (O’Boyle, 2007). While both targeting technologies may attempt to alleviate racial health disparities, they simultaneously augment racial difference and exacerbate racial inequalities—but they do so in very different ways: thus emphasizing the importance of tracing out the empirically distinct means through which each technology resecures the epistemology of anti-blackness. BiDil highlights the neoliberal refusal to acknowledge the social production of risk, by casting health as an individual—not social—enterprise. Medical hot spotting disavows the historical and spatial processes of racial formation that structure the present and simultaneously shows that certain (racialized) subjects are positioned—in advance—as risk failures within the paradoxically ‘‘race-neutral future’’ of the nation. To begin exploring these ideas, we turn to the case of BiDil, the oft-disputed first pharmaceutical with a race-specific indication.

### Link – Anti-Capitalism

#### The grammar of suffering of the blackness is NOT one that can be defined through Marxist understandings of “exploitation” and “alienation” but rather “accumulation” and “fungibility”. The positionality of blackness is an unspeakable scandal, one that is outside the bounds of hegemony itself, that gives the position of the worker coherence.

**Wilderson 3** [Frank B. Wilderson III is American writer, dramatist, filmmaker and critic. He is a full professor of Drama and African American studies at the University of California, Irvine. He received his BA in government and philosophy from Dartmouth College, his Masters in Fine Arts from Columbia University and his PhD in Rhetoric and Film Studies from the University of California, Berkeley award-winning author of Incognegro, “THE PRISON SLAVE AS HEGEMONY’S (SILENT) SCANDAL”, Accessed: 3/31/23] HZaidi

(3) We begin to see how Marxism suffers from a kind of conceptual anxiety. There is a desire for socialism on the other side of crisis, a society that does away not with the category of worker, but with the imposition workers suffer under the approach of variable capital. In other words, the mark of its conceptual anxiety is in its desire to democratize work and thus help to keep in place and insure the coherence of Reformation and Enlightenment foundational values of productivity and progress. This scenario crowds out other postrevolutionary possibilities, i.e., idleness. The scandal, with which the Black subject position “threatens” Gramscian and coalition discourse, is manifest in the Black subject’s incommensurability with, or disarticulation of, Gramscian categories: work, progress, production, exploitation, hegemony, and historical self-awareness. Through what strategies does the Black subject destabilize—emerge as the unthought, and thus the scandal of—historical materialism? How does the Black subject function within the “American desiring machine” differently than the quintessential Gramscian subaltern, the worker? Capital was kick-started by the rape of the African continent, a phenomenon that is central to neither Gramsci nor Marx. According to Barrett (2002), something about the Black body in and of itself made it the repository of the violence that was the slave trade. It would have been far easier and far more profitable to take the white underclass from along the riverbanks of England and Western Europe than to travel all the way to Africa for slaves. The theoretical importance of emphasizing this in the early 21st century is twofold. First, capital was kick-started by approaching a particular body (a black body) with direct relations of force, not by approaching a white body with variable capital. Thus, one could say that slavery is closer to capital’s primal desire than is exploitation. It is a relation of terror as opposed to a relation of hegemony. Second, today, late capital is imposing a renaissance of this original desire, the direct relation of force, the despotism of the unwaged relation. This renaissance of slavery, i.e., the reconfiguration of the prison-industrial complex has, once again, as its structuring metaphor and primary target the Black body. The value of reintroducing the unthought category of the slave, by way of noting the absence of the Black subject, lies in the Black subject’s potential for extending the demand placed on state/ capital formations because its reintroduction into the discourse expands the intensity of the antagonism. In other words, the positionality of the slave makes a demand that is in excess of the demand made by the positionality of the worker. The worker demands that productivity be fair and democratic (Gramsci’s new hegemony, Lenin’s dictatorship of the proletariat, in a word, socialism). In contrast, the slave demands that production stop, without recourse to its ultimate democratization. Work is not an organic principle for the slave. The absence of Black subjectivity from the crux of radical discourse is symptomatic of the text’s inability to cope with the possibility that the generative subject of capitalism, the Black body of the 15th and 16th centuries, and the generative subject that resolves late capital’s over-accumulation crisis, the Black (incarcerated) body of the 20th and 21st centuries, do not reify the basic categories that structure conflict within civil society: the categories of work and exploitation. Thus, the Black subject position in America represents an antagonism or demand that cannot be satisfied through a transfer of ownership/organization of existing rubrics. In contrast, the Gramscian subject, the worker, represents a demand that can indeed be satisfied by way of a successful war of position, which brings about the end of exploitation. The worker calls into question the legitimacy of productive practices, while the slave calls into question the legitimacy of productivity itself. Thus, the insatiability of the slave demand upon existing structures means that it cannot find its articulation within the modality of hegemony (influence, leadership, consent). The Black body cannot give its consent because “generalized trust,” the precondition for the solicitation of consent, “equals racialized whiteness” (Barrett, 2002). Furthermore, as Orlando Patterson (1982) points out, slavery is natal alienation by way of social death, which is to say, a slave has no symbolic currency or material labor power to exchange. A slave does not enter into a transaction of value (however asymmetrical), but is subsumed by direct relations of force. As such, a slave is an articulation of a despotic irrationality, whereas the worker is an articulation of a symbolic rationality. A metaphor comes into being through a violence that kills the thing such that the concept might live. Gramscian discourse and coalition politics come to grips with America’s structuring rationality—what it calls capitalism, or political economy— but not with its structuring irrationality, the anti-production of late capital, and the hyper-discursive violence that first kills the Black subject, so that the concept may be born. In other words, from the incoherence of Black death, America generates the coherence of white life. This is important when thinking the Gramscian paradigm and their spiritual progenitors in the world of organizing in the U.S. today, with their overvaluation of hegemony and civil society. Struggles over hegemony are seldom, if ever, asignifying. At some point, they require coherence and categories for the record, meaning they contain the seeds of anti Blackness. What does it mean to be positioned not as a positive term in the struggle for anti- capitalist hegemony, i.e., a worker, but to be positioned in excess of hegemony, to be a catalyst that disarticulates the rubric of hegemony, to be a scandal to its assumptive, foundational logic, to threaten civil society’s discursive integrity? In White Writing, J.M. Coetzee (1988) examines the literature of Europeans who encountered the South African Khoisan in the Cape between the 16th and 18th centuries. The Europeans were faced with an “anthropological scandal”: a being without (recognizable) customs, religion, medicine, dietary patterns, culinary habits, sexual mores, means of agriculture, and most significantly, without character (because, according to the literature, they did not work). Other Africans, like the Xhosa who were agriculturalists, provided European discourse with enough categories for the record, so that, through various strategies of articulation, they could be known by textual projects that accompanied the colonial project. But the Khoisan did not produce the necessary categories for the record, the play of signifiers that would allow for a sustainable semiotics. According to Coetzee, the coherence of European discourse depends upon two structuring axes. A “Historical Axis” consists of codes distributed along the axis of temporality and events, while the “Anthropological Axis” is an axis of cultural codes. It mattered very little which codes on either axis a particular indigenous community was perceived to possess, with possession the operative word, for these codes act as a kind of mutually agreed-upon currency. What matters is that the community has some play of difference along both axes, sufficient in number to construct taxonomies that can be investigated, identified, and named by the discourse. Without this, the discourse cannot go on. It is reinvigorated when an unknown entity presents itself, but its anxiety reaches crisis proportions when the entity remains unknown. Something unspeakable occurs. Not to possess a particular code along the Anthropological or Historical Axis is akin to lacking a gene for brown hair or green eyes on an X or Y chromosome. Lacking a Historical or Anthropological Axis is akin to the absence of the chromosome itself. The first predicament raises the notion: What kind of human? The second predicament brings into crisis the notion of the human itself. Without the textual categories of dress, diet, medicine, crafts, physical appearance, and most important, work, the Khoisan stood in refusal of the invitation to become Anthropological Man. S/he was the void in discourse that could only be designated as idleness. Thus, the Khoisan’s status within discourse was not that of an opponent or an interlocutor, but rather of an unspeakable scandal. His/her position within the discourse was one of disarticulation, for he/she did little or nothing to fortify and extend the interlocutory life of the discourse. Just as the Khoisan presented the discourse of the Cape with an anthropological scandal, so the Black subject in the Western Hemisphere, the slave, presents Marxism and American textual practice with a historical scandal. How is our incoherence in the face of the Historical Axis germane to our experience of being “a phenomenon without analog”? A sample list of codes mapped out by an American subject’s historical axis might include rights or entitlements; here even Native Americans provide categories for the record when one thinks of how the Iroquois constitution, for example, becomes the U.S. constitution. Sovereignty is also included, whether a state is one the subject left behind, or as in the case of American Indians, one taken by force and dint of broken treaties. White supremacy has made good use of the Indian subject’s positionality, one that fortifies and extends the interlocutory life of America as a coherent (albeit imperial) idea because treaties are forms of articulation—discussions brokered between two groups are presumed to possess the same category of historical currency, sovereignty. The code of sovereignty can have a past and future history, if you will excuse the oxymoron, when one considers that 150 Native American tribes have applied to the Bureau of Indian Affairs for sovereign recognition so that they might qualify for funds harvested from land stolen from them.1 Immigration is another code that maps the subject onto the American Historical Axis, with narratives of arrival based on collective volition and premeditated desire. Chicano subject positions can fortify and extend the interlocutory life of America as an idea because racial conflict can be articulated across the various contestations over the legitimacy of arrival, immigration. Both whites and Latinos generate data for this category. Slavery is the great leveler of the Black subject’s positionality. The Black American subject does not generate historical categories of entitlement, sovereignty, and immigration for the record. We are “off the map” with respect to the cartography that charts civil society’s semiotics; we have a past, but not a heritage. To the data-generating demands of the Historical Axis, we present a virtual blank, much like that which the Khoisan presented to the Anthropological Axis. This places us in a structurally impossible position, one that is outside the articulations of hegemony. However, it also places hegemony in a structurally impossible position because—and this is key—our presence works back upon the grammar of hegemony and threatens it with incoherence. If every subject—even the most massacred among them, Indians—is required to have analogs within the nation’s structuring narrative, and the experience of one subject, upon whom the nation’s order of wealth was built, is without analog, then that subject’s presence destabilizes all other analogs.

### Link – UBI

#### Universal Basic Income perpetuates the illusion of state-provided liberation for Black communities while further targeting and criminalizing them through criminal legal debt collection

Zatz 21 (Noah Zatz, Professor of Law at UCLA School of Law, “Basic Income and the Freedom to Refuse,” February 16, 2021, https://lpeproject.org/blog/basic-income-and-the-freedom-to-refuse/)/RB

Criminal legal debt provides a revealing lens through which to examine universal basic income (UBI). It highlights a path to potential failure: fetishizing labor markets as the engine of economic inequality ignores how today’s criminal legal system carries forward racial capitalism’s techniques of targeted extraction. Yet recognizing this also opens a door to more robust visions of UBI that join together the powers of work refusal and debt refusal. UBI’s radical appeal has been staked to its potential to enable in practice and convey in principle a refusal of the labor market. As Kathi Weeks explains in theorizing a “post-work imaginary,” this does not require an absence of work but rather its decentering as an organizing institutional and cultural principle. And UBI would simultaneously shift power relations within waged work (as well as between waged and unwaged workers in families & communities), the centerpiece of Erik Olin Wright’s embrace of UBI as “eroding capitalism” over time. The work refusal analysis focuses on income. UBI would relieve the “work or starve” dilemma that enables labor exploitation. To do this, income must put food on the table. That places perhaps undue faith in consumer markets (as Lydia Nicholson points out). But furthermore, income can be forcibly removed before it can be used, through debt collection. This observation occasionally crops up with regard to taxation in analyses of UBI financing and tax-transfer integration. There, however, the significance (setting aside broader critiques of a financing frame, like that of Raúl Carrillo’s) involves how offsetting taxes on higher income people complicate the expressive and practical commitment to universality. Of greater concern is how UBI might be taxed back from the most marginalized, those for whom an independent income stream might be most empowering. This is where criminal legal debt fits in. Criminal imposition and enforcement of economic sanctions doubly amplifies the racial construction of economic inequality. It lies at the intersection between racialized, and particularly anti-Black, policing and punishment and also the vulnerability produced by racial structures operating within conventionally “economic” spaces of labor, housing, credit markets and so on. Accounting for this goes beyond defending formal universalism by including not only unauthorized immigrants but also currently or formerly incarcerated people. A UBI responsive to systematically racialized economic extraction must address not only historically-informed reparations but also ongoing predation. Building on USDOJ’s Ferguson report, advocates in California have documented a vicious cycle of fines and fees exacerbated by racial profiling in traffic stops, racially concentrated inability to pay that triggers drivers’ license suspensions, then arrests for driving without a license after further racially targeted stops, and more debt and risk of incarceration. A multi-state survey of formerly incarcerated people and their families found an average of $13,607 in criminal legal debt, more than the entire annual value of presidential candidate Andrew Yang’s recent UBI proposal. And Alexes Harris’ pathbreaking research found comparable debt burdens–and pervasive inability to pay–among people with felony convictions in Washington State. It would be ironic indeed if a UBI slipped quickly through the fingers of lower-income people of color and into the coffers of jurisdictions most aggressively criminalizing poverty. This would negate UBI’s ability to facilitate work refusal because UBI—devoured by debt—would no longer be available to meet basic needs without a wage (or connection to a wage-earner). Moreover, this negation’s radically unequal racial distribution would mock UBI’s pretensions to universalism. Substantive universality requires more than formal inclusion and nominally equal payments. It requires cash receipts that deliver equal capacity to refuse work. There are concrete reasons to fear this grim outcome, given both the predominant frameworks for regulating criminal legal debt and the loopholes built into some prototypes for UBI. The legal and conceptual architecture for resisting criminal legal debt largely adopts an “ability-to-pay” framework that highlights the injustice of incarcerating (or otherwise punishing) people who are unable to pay. But this same approach authorizes arrest and incarceration of anyone who chooses to refuse, despite having the money to pay. Indeed, some critics of the “new debtors prisons” might be tempted to embrace UBI precisely because it enables payment: losing your basic income is better than jail. As Theresa Zhen has argued, the ability-to-pay framework risks legitimizing the criminal legal system’s deployment as a tool of racialized economic extraction. UBI would provide a whopper of racially stratified fiscal substitution, with state and local criminal legal systems able to (selectively) capture national basic income payments. This also would blunt one of criminal debt abolitionists’ pragmatic arguments: that these onerous debts are rarely collectible. Contrary both to UBI’s universalism and work refusal goals, this would dynamically entrench racial labor stratification by creating racially differentiated capacity to refuse work. Indeed, we can already glimpse that prospect in today’s coercive systems of “get to work or go to jail” often styled as debt enforcement. And the differentially precarious economic circumstances of people with criminal records already helps concentrate them in the worst jobs. In complementary fashion, precedent exists for diverting basic income to satisfy criminal legal debt. Alaska’s Permanent Fund Dividend (APFD) program often is touted as a UBI prototype. But its garnishment protections are substantially weaker than those currently applicable to wage garnishment. The vast majority (80%) of an individual’s dividend can be seized to satisfy any creditor’s judgment. The remainder is protected against most ordinary civil debts but explicitly exposed to certain collections–including of criminal legal debt. Another related, though less sweeping, example is the deduction of student loan and child support arrears from recent pandemic stimulus checks.

### Link – Carbon Dividend

#### A carbon dividend is a false promise made to prey on Black communities and allow the fossil fuels industry to use their neighborhoods as a dumping ground

Patterson et al 21 (Jacqueline Patterson, Senior Director, NAACP Environmental and Climate Justice Program (ECJP) Lorah Steichen, Consultant, NAACP Environmental and Climate Justice Program Katherine Egland, NAACP National Board of Directors, Chair ECJ Committee Saleem Chapman, Consultant NAACP, Environmental and Climate Justice Program Mandy Lee, Centering Equity in the Sustainable Building Sector Manager, NAACP ECJP Zoe Lee-Park, Intern, NAACP Environmental and Climate Justice, “Nuts, Bolts, and Pitfalls of Carbon Pricing: An Equity-Based Primer on Paying to Pollute,” July 2021, file:///C:/Users/rowan/Downloads/Nuts,%20Bolts%20and%20Pitfalls%20of%20Carbon%20Pricing\_%20An%20Equity-Based%20Primer%20on%20Paying%20to%20Pollute.pdf)/RB

Why Carbon Pricing and Trading Is a False Solution This paper finds that carbon pricing and trading systems are not very effective or equitable measures for curbing carbon emissions. Our research shows that these systems can often play out as what amounts to sophisticated international shell games, where little net decline in emissions occurs because the measures simply serve to transfer pollution from one location or one 9 country to another, depending on who can afford to pollute. Within the U.S., there is evidence that carbon pricing and trading can exacerbate existing inequalities by creating or worsening “sacrifice zones.” These zones are communities, often with BIPOC residents and households with low-income, in or near where significant fossil fuel-related pollution occurs. Thereby sacrificing the wellbeing of those communities to fuel the excesses of people living elsewhere. As consensus grows around the urgency of the climate crisis, we’re confronted with a range of false solutions that deepen inequalities and are insufficient to meet the scale and speed of needed changes. In many cases, the fight against climate change becomes a big business opportunity – with the same political and economic interests that are most responsible for the climate crisis championing supposed solutions. In fact, some of the worst environmental offenders co-opt the language of environmental advocates in order to protect their bottom line, neutralize climate legislation, and preserve the status quo. It is important to recognize that these false solutions not only fail to deliver on their environmental claims, but often worsen our ecological and economic crises. Carbon pricing falls short on many grounds. If we look at the lived experiences shared by residents of frontline communities in the US and around the world against carbon pricing schemes, we can critique the position from multiple vantage points: moral/ethical, religious and spiritual, human and civil rights, flaws with the economic reasoning, as well as socio-economic and environmental outcomes. There are four key reasons that carbon pricing and trading schemes are false solutions: #1: It misses the bigger picture – failing to tackle the root causes of the problem. Carbon pricing puts on the act of addressing the problem, but it fails to tackle the primary issue: burning fossil fuels to create energy. Instead, it aims to remedy the situation after the fact when the processes of extracting and burning fossil fuels have already taken place. #2: Carbon pricing schemes are not designed to produce localized emissions reductions. Too often, carbon pricing makes pollution hot spots worse and fails to reduce localized emissions--by design. 1,2 #3: The origins of the carbon pricing model design is establishing a mechanism that favors polluter/industry interests. Carbon markets were created so that governments and fossil fuel companies could “flexibly” meet emissions reductions standards without having to significantly change their own polluting practices.3 #4: Existing carbon markets haven’t produced significant emissions reductions at the rate we need.4,5 Carbon prices have been consistently too low. In fact, some studies, such as in British Columbia, Canada, have demonstrated that emissions have actually risen since a carbon tax was implemented.6 Policymakers have often had more success in reducing emissions by imposing direct regulations. “I don’t know who’s willing to gamble on climate change. We’re in a crisis, and we don’t have the luxury of taking a gamble.” Kathy Egland, Chair of the ECJ Committee of the NAACP National Board of Directors Advising the Federal Government against Carbon Pricing In May 2021, the White House Environmental Justice Advisory Council released recommendations for the Biden Administration’s Justice40 Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool & Executive Order 12898 Revisions. In their list of Examples of The Types of Projects That Will Not Benefit A Community, they included the “establishment or advancement of carbon markets, including cap and trade.” Debunking “Equity” Arguments for Carbon Pricing While carbon pricing is often framed as the only, the best, or the most realistic solution to the climate crisis, in reality there are many far more effective means through which climate movements can build power and move toward a just transition. Climate justice activists and advocates should be aware of the ways that fossil fuel interests attempt to pacify and co-opt the climate movement. It is critical that we remain vigilant to the way that changes in language or framing are used to confuse, compel, and divide us. Below are the three most common ways that carbon pricing advocates falsely use equity framing: • “Polluters Pays” Discourse: Rather than effectively and completely forcing polluters to absorb all the true costs of their pollution, carbon pricing allows polluters to buy their way out of stopping their pollution. • Faulty Economic Justice Arguments: Token revenues distributed to frontline communities will never make up for the destruction resulting from the source of that revenue. “I can tell you that the fossil fuel industry takes a page, a few pages, from our civil rights playbook. They come into our communities, and they prey on economic desperation. They make false and idle promises which they have no intentions of keeping. It’s a simple message to explain to people how ‘this is a way you’re going to be able to put a roof over your family’s heads and food on your table.’ And then when we come in, it’s kind of difficult to come behind a message like that with something that might take a little more time but would be worth that investment of time.” Kathy Egland, Chair of the ECJ Committee of the NAACP National Board of Directors. Language of Urgency of “Realistic” Action: We don’t have time for false solutions like carbon pricing that fail to disrupt the power of the fossil fuel industry. There are numerous more effective, real solutions that promote the structural changes we urgently need. A Just Transition, not Cap and Trade, Will Advance Climate Justice Washington-based coalition Front and Centered, which includes the Seattle King County NAACP and Tacoma NAACP, makes it clear: “Washington state must cut greenhouse gas emissions from energy use in half within the next ten years if we have any chance in meeting long term state requirements to nearly eliminate pollution that causes climate change by 2050. To achieve this goal – let alone achieve it in a way that protects communities from the impacts of climate change and fossil fuel pollution and the pitfalls of an unjust transition – requires much more than a change in the price of oil, gas, or coal, it requires a Just Transition of our entire economy. There is no just pathway to our emissions goals that relies on the commodification of our air, land, and water, which we depend on for life.”

### Link – Scenario Planning

#### Scenario planning is pornotroping that condemns blacks to repetition of impersonal death – infatuation with the “contingency” of “material change” disavows libidinal investments.

**Leong 16** – PhD UC Irvine - Assistant Professor, English, University of Utah - Assistant Professor, Environmental Humanities Graduate Program, University of Utah (Diana, “The Mattering of Black Lives: Octavia Butler’s Hyperempathy and the Promise of the New Materialisms,” Catalyst: Feminism, Theory, Technoscience, 2(2), 1-35)

Black lives matter and black lives matter and black lives matter. This homographic reading of the most salient political statement of recent years speaks to the torsions of blackness, matter, and life that have come to define our contemporary era. In “Unbearable Blackness,” Jared Sexton (2015) argues with regard to the triangulation of these concerns that antiblack fantasies “do not render blacks, like so much of the planet, subject to death in an economy of disposability; rather, they subject blacks to ‘the **interminable time** of meaningless, **impersonal dying**’” (p.168). In the wake of recent grand jury decisions not to prosecute the murders of Tamir Rice, Eric Garner, and Michael Brown, to name only the most widely publicized cases, Sexton’s claims register most strongly in the state’s refusal to allow these deaths to die. They are caught instead in a biopolitical apparatus that suspends racial blackness between a life unrecognized as such and an illegible form of death that can never pass into reason. Against this timeless, spectral dying, we can read the declaration that “Black Lives Matter” as a call to return racial blackness to a form that matters, to a form, in other words, that is matter. On this score, I ask: how do black life and death become matter, and what is at stake in the demand that they should assume such form? Octavia Butler’s Afrofuturist novels Parable of the Sower (1993) and Parable of the Talents (1998) dramatize these questions through protagonist Lauren Olamina and her condition of hyperempathy. In this article, I explore hyperempathy as a speculative embodiment of “pornotroping” (Spillers, 2003) to understand how racial blackness structures current theorizations of matter. Questions about the proper scale, scope, and character of matter have assumed a renewed sense of urgency given the emergence of the Anthropocene, a distinct geological epoch in which human activity has become so influential as to alter fundamental aspects of the Earth System. While ecologist Eugene Stoermer and Nobel Prize-winning atmospheric chemist Paul Crutzen introduced the current definition of the term in the 1980s, we have since witnessed a growing scientific consensus about the rigor of the concept. A recent article published in the journal Science by the Anthropocene Working Group (2016) provides the latest example of this support, demonstrating that fluctuations in the content and pace of sediment deposits and extinction rates are anthropogenically driven. However, the very nomenclature of the “Anthropocene” has been subject to critique from within the humanities for allowing an abstract notion of the “Anthropos” to anchor an implicit philosophy of history. Daniel Hartley (2015), for instance, comments in a recent issue of the UK-based magazine Salvage, “Inherent to the Anthropocene discourse is a conception of historical causality which is purely mechanical: a one-onone billiard ball model of technological invention and historical effect, which is simply inadequate to explain actual social and relational modes of historical causation” (para. 4). Hartley takes special issue with the presumed origins of the Anthropocene, which many geologists date to the industrial and nuclear revolutions. This determination, he suggests, interprets the environmental impact of technology as the “net effect” of an undifferentiated “human” activity (Waters et. al., 2016, p. 139). In order to assert a causal link between technological development and ecological catastrophe, any consideration of the roles race, class, and gender have played in engineering our historical present must be obscured.1 The benefits and consequences of technological development and environmental disaster, after all, are rarely if ever distributed symmetrically among and within human populations. “It is not all people that are indicted by the onset of the Anthropocene,” writes Nicholas Mirzoeff (forthcoming 2016), “but a specific set: colonial settlers, enslavers, and would-be imperialists” (pp. 19-20). At the same time, this remodeling of human history and ecological philosophy is not unique to geologists. Indeed, the Anthropocene’s scientific definition may have become matters of debate only recently, but its constitutive concerns—global warming, genetic technology, biodiversity loss, environmental racism—have thrown our prevailing concepts of nature and culture into crisis well before the epoch’s formal identification. At stake is not only the fate of homo sapiens as a species, but also the basic composition of a world yet to come. The challenges of analyzing the effects of non-human systems (e.g., weather patterns or ocean currents) and actors (e.g., viruses or pesticides) while attending to the uneven distribution of environmental risks and resources have generated a range of philosophical responses. For example, publications like Dipesh Chakrabarty’s (2009), “The Climate of History,” Elizabeth Kolbert’s (2014) The Sixth Extinction, and Roy Scranton’s (2015) Learning to Die in the Anthropocene recommend a universal or existential “species thinking” necessary for grasping the complexities of climate change. Other responses, like Jane Bennett’s (2010) Vibrant Matter and Jeffrey Jerome Cohen’s (2015) Stone, interrogate fantasies of human mastery as a way of reckoning with the power of non-human agents. Over the last decade, one particular variety of response has acquired critical purchase within the academic left: the new materialisms. As part of what Richard Grusin (2015) has named “the nonhuman turn” in contemporary thought, the new materialisms join affect theory, critical animal studies, and object-oriented ontology in calling for enhanced attention to matter and materiality. The popularity of this approach, evidenced by a growing number of monographs, special journal issues, and anthologies, appears grounded in the need to develop strategies of coexistence attuned to the Anthropocene’s political and ecological crises.2 How, for example, should we understand agency and embodiment in light of recent developments in biotechnology and the increasingly unpredictable behavior of non-human objects? The promise of the new materialisms thus inheres in the notion that a focus on materiality can offer us more comprehensive and efficacious ways to respond to these developments. As Diana Coole and Samantha Frost (2010) write in their introduction to the New Materialisms anthology, “What is at stake here is nothing less than a challenge to some of the most basic assumptions that have underpinned the modern world, including its normative sense of the human and its beliefs about human agency, but also regarding its material practices such as the ways we labor on, exploit, and interact with nature” (p. 4). There is much to recommend an intensified engagement with matter, not least of which is Coole and Frost’s proposal that such engagements can disrupt our “normative sense of the human” and of “human agency.” Given this professed interest in dismantling human exceptionalism, it is curious then that, as Zakiyyah Jackson (2015) and other critical race scholars point out, the new materialisms have systematically “[ignored] praxes of humanity and critiques produced by black people, particularly those praxes which are irreverent to the normative production of ‘the human’ or illegible from within the terms of its logic” (p. 216).3 Black thought has long challenged the enforced description of Africans and their descendants as non-human objects of science, as specimens for study and experimentation, as commodities for market exchange, as things. In fact, from at least the 16th century onward, black bodies provided crucial raw material for the development of natural history, the natural sciences, and the life philosophies in Enlightenment thought.4 Both geology and biology, for example, pursued notions of species and evolution that preserved early racial taxonomies; the techniques of observation and interpretation used to analyze geological activity were the same as those employed by the racial science of phrenology. Mirzoeff (forthcoming 2016) leverages this history to argue that “the very concept of observable breaks between geological eras in general and the definition of the Anthropocene in particular is inextricably intermingled with the belief in distinct races of humanity” (p. 2). His claim that the concept of the Anthropocene reproduces race-making technologies gestures to the historical fact that the human as such has emerged through the exclusion and extermination of black bodies. Proscribed from the realm of the human, black intellectuals have had to think within and through the categories of the non-human and the inhuman to pursue new ways of being in the world. Philosophical questions about the vitality and agency of the human, the animal, and the object are therefore longstanding in the fields of Black studies. Alexander Weheliye (2015) observes in Habeas Viscus that across Sylvia Wynter’s oeuvre, “it is the human—or different genres of the human—that materializes as the object of knowledge in the conceptual mirror of black studies” (p. 21). The scholarly work of Hortense Spillers (2003) and Fred Moten (2003), and the Afrofuturist contributions of Nalo Hopkinson (1998; 2000) and Nnedi Okorafor (2010), similarly confront the “most basic assumptions that have underpinned the modern world,” including our notions of history, temporality, and modern science.5 And yet, as it is with the Anthropocene’s implied philosophy of history, much of the scholarship produced under the banner of the new materialisms tends to reduce race to a crude “identity politics” or to endorse a model of difference-withoutrace.6 This reduction and disavowal of race, I contend, is something of a structural necessity for the new materialisms. In what follows, I trace the general theoretical principles of the new materialisms to a dissatisfaction with the linguistic and cultural paradigms of post-structuralism. I then demonstrate how this dissatisfaction enables an ethics of relation or affect that further legitimizes the reduction and dismissal of race. However, as a close reading of Butler’s Parable duology reveals, one of the primary figures of the new materialisms—the material body—is defined by and through disavowed social fantasies about black female flesh that are linked to the global legacies of modern slavery. My examination of the critical responses to Butler’s novels further suggests that such fantasies are necessary to secure a libidinal investment in the ethical potential of materiality. I argue, thus, against a misrecognition of black female flesh as a resource against the violence of hierarchical differences, rather than the site of their active production. Finally, I turn to a reading of Butler’s Parable duology as an allegory about the dangers of proceeding in the Anthropocene without a robust analysis of the formation of racial blackness. Because a proper survey of new materialist literature is beyond the scope of this article, the comments below should be taken as entry points for probing the (absent) place of racial blackness in theories about matter.7 The promise of the new materialisms The new materialisms are drawn from a long genealogy of philosophical materialism, in which Spinoza, Nietzsche, Bergson, Marx, and Deleuze are cited as major touchstones. In recognition of this legacy, Coole and Frost (2010) assert that the interventions loosely gathered by the term “new materialisms” are better “categorized as renewed materialisms,” with the qualifier “new” acknowledging the “unprecedented” ecological, biological, and technological conditions under which we currently live and labor (p. 4, italics in original). Although their specific objects of analysis are appropriately diverse, the new materialisms collectively insist on a post-humanist matter that is lively, self-directed, agential, creative, and always in the process of becoming. In this regard, matter is better thought of as materialization, or the process by which complex phenomena are temporarily and contingently stabilized to varying degrees. The ontological shift entailed here is towards a philosophical monism, inspired most notably by the work of Deleuze. Following Spinoza and Bergson, Deleuze (1994) develops a notion of the virtual as a generative field of difference, or a “plane of immanence,” where “all the varieties of differential relations and all the distributions of singular points [coexist] in diverse orders ‘perplicated’ in one another” (p. 206). These differences are then formatted into distinct phenomena or entities by processes of actualization that “[bring] the object back into relation with the field of differential relations in which it can always be dissolved and become actualized otherwise, as something else, by being linked through other differential relations to other particles” (Cheah, 2010, pp. 85-86). While not all new materialist theories cleave to a strictly Deleuzian philosophy, there is general agreement that the dynamic interactions among objects, bodies, and phenomena turn us away from the Anthropocene’s “billiard ball model” of causality, and more significantly, away from some of poststructuralism’s critical trends. According to the new materialisms, the linguistic and cultural turns of the last half century have resulted in both an intellectual and a political poverty. Specifically, social constructivism (Coole & Frost, 2010) and cultural representationalism (Barad, 2007) have overdetermined matter to the extent that it appears as a passive product made meaningful only through cultural and discursive practice. Coole and Frost (2010) even write of a theoretical “exhaustion,” claiming that they “share the feeling current among many researchers that the dominant constructivist orientation to social analysis is inadequate for thinking about matter, materiality, and politics in ways that do justice to the contemporary context of biopolitics and global political economy” (p. 6). Somewhere and sometime during the rise of the Anthropocene, cultural theory, broadly conceived, lost its explanatory power. This assessment of inadequacy repeats across much of the recent new materialist scholarship, condensing the cultural turn into a discursive reductionism that rebuffs the empirical for the ideal, or the material for the symbolic. Elizabeth Grosz’s (2004) The Nick of Time opens with a telling “reminder to social, political, and cultural theorists, particularly those interested in feminism, antiracism, and questions of the politics of globalization, that they have forgotten a crucial dimension of research…not just the body, but that which makes it possible and which limits its actions: the precarious, accidental, contingent, expedient, striving, dynamic status of life in a messy, complicated, resistant, brute world of materiality” (p. 2). Social, political, and cultural theory, in other words, have overlooked the material conditions of life that render the body available for inscription and enculturation in the first instance. So too in the recently published Gut Feminism does Elizabeth Wilson (2015) rebuke “social constructionism” for “[tending] not to be very curious about the details of empirical claims in genetics, neurophysiology, evolutionary biology, pharmacology or biochemistry” (p. 3). Her ensuing conclusion is that focusing on how social structures produce and discipline bodies comes at the expense of recognizing the ways bodies radically alter and organize social structures themselves. It appears that cultural theory harbors an “allergy to ‘the real’” that dissuades “critical inquirers from the more empirical kinds of investigation that material processes and structures require” (Coole & Frost, 2010, p. 6). However, the very aspects that would make matter more “real” than language or culture are the same aspects that restrict its **ethical potential** and **facilitate a conceptual rejection of race**. In line with their post-humanist agenda, the new materialisms evoke matter and materiality as existing in excess of human subjectivity and its attendant domains. Mechanistic theories of causality hold that objects are composed of inert matter acted upon by external forces, which presumes that an object’s potential or possible capabilities are already present and fixed in some initial moment of creation. But, as the new materialisms emphasize, the virtual field of differential relations is immanent to matter in such a way that it is impossible to anticipate all of the effects a material configuration may have, or the organizational forms it may take. This ability to act independently of the subject’s will and desire is variously construed as “impersonal and preindividual forces,” an alterity that “comes from outside the capability or power of the subject” (Cheah, 2010, p. 80, 89), “degrees of indetermination” that represent the “‘true principle of life’” (Grosz, 2010, p. 149), and a “powerful reminder…that life will always exceed our knowledge and control” (Bennett, 2010, p.14). Differences in terminology aside, the new materialisms are united by an understanding of materiality as a spectral, impersonal force with material effects, one that escapes reason and disrupts systems of meaning, including modernist binaries like mind/body, culture/nature, and inside/outside (Dolphijn & van der Tuin, 2012). The latter aspect is key because, while matter can frustrate representation, its “excessive” properties do not mean that it exists “outside” of the subject. Rather, matter and materiality are “real” because they actively produce reality in unpredictable ways (Cheah, 2010). It is here that the ethical impetus of the new materialist project is located. If we accept our embeddedness in mutually transformative, nonhuman networks, the ground of ethics shifts accordingly. First, a responsibility to an externalized other gives way to an accountability for the many relations that constitute becoming. And second, ethics are no longer reducible to the decisions or actions of individuals that are initiated by a properly historical judgment. In Rosi Braidotti’s (2010) terms, “Accepting the impossibility of mutual recognition and replacing it with one of mutual specification and mutual codependence is what is at stake in postsecular affirmative ethics” (p. 214). I find nothing immediately problematic with an ethics that aspires to keep pace with advancements in science, philosophy, and technology. What I find troublesome is how our acquiescence to these ethics is solicited. New materialist ethics necessarily manifest as affective encounters that operate best on micropolitical scales. Because materiality is figured as an impersonal force of the real, it runs the risk of becoming a transcendental signified that merely replaces language or culture as an organizing principle. Doing so would severely diminish its import as an inducement to a posthumanist ethics. To circumvent the “tension between **universalistic** theory and **specific** mode of inquiry,” chance, **contingency**, and **creativity** in micro-level encounters are prioritized over more **obstinate** assemblages that **congeal at** the **global** or macro-levels (Zhan, 2016, p. 26). Further, as the nucleus of the new materialisms, the embodied subject or material body compels an ethics that unfolds on a parallel plane, meaning between and within bodies. “This implies,” Rosi Braidotti (2010) proposes, “approaching the world through affectivity and not cognition: as singularity, force, movement, through assemblages or webs of interconnections with all that lives,” and “accepting the impossibility of mutual recognition and replacing it with one of mutual specification and mutual codependence” (p. 214). In the quotation above, Braidotti invokes an ethics of relation, in which sensation and perception comprise the “zone of [ethical] effectivity,” and attunement and affirmation take precedence over social transformation (Tumino, 2011, p. 555). Because material inter- and intraactions are preconscious and multisensorial, ethical practice is based not on the ability to evaluate right from wrong, but on a commitment to feeling right. We can observe this adjustment in appeals to “an ongoing responsiveness to…entanglement” (Barad, 2007, p. 394), “a heightened sensitivity to the agency of assemblages” (Bennett, 2010b), a “wakefulness” to the “feel [of] what makes us laugh, lament, and curse” (Orlie, 2007, p. 127) and an “experience of the vitality of being” (Connolly, 2010, pp. 196-197). As a consequence, the **experiences** of living under conditions of crisis are **fetishized** at the expense of **addressing the causes** of these conditions themselves. The imperative to “[live] with the open wound...through a sort of **depersonalization** of the event” (Braidotti, 2010, p. 213), for example, not only depoliticizes the claims of historically oppressed communities, but also **flattens distinctions** between traumas inflicted through **happenstance** and **persistent intergenerational harm**. How else could one, as Braidotti does, list as equivalent examples: those who survived the Holocaust, Frida Kahlo’s deadly tram ride, and missing the train to the World Trade Center on September 11th (p. 214)? The limits of a new materialist ethics appear most forcefully, then, as we attempt to move from an embodied “responsiveness” to the dislocation of structures. When patterns of materialization are addressed, it is generally as the amalgamation of “perpetual circuits of exchange, feedback, and reentry” that thereby “[inflect] the shape of political experience” (Connolly, 2010, pp. 190-191). On the one hand, there is nothing innately objectionable about attributing the creation and transformation of political structures to any number of quotidian, embodied experiences. This is in fact common in political theory and historiography.8 On the other hand, it becomes more difficult to reconcile the effects of chance, unpredictability, and **indeterminacy** with the **endurance** and **repetition** of something like antiblack violence.9 The new materialisms are therefore at pains to clarify why the structures of global antiblackness continue to function as if “neither time nor history, nor historiography and its topics, show movement, as the human subject is ‘murdered’ over and over again by the passions of a bloodless and anonymous archaism, showing itself in endless disguise” (Spillers, 2003, p. 208). Interpreting and describing our entanglements with non-human, materialist forces are not enough to account for, much less dislodge attachments to, social categories and representational arrangements. By this I mean that becoming more aware of material forces will not inevitably reduce the weight of discursive or **psychic formations**. It could even **obstruct change** by making forms of affect and sensation newly **available for inscription**. As Timothy Morton (2007) states, when “contact becomes content,” perceptions of difference collapse into identity (p. 37). Granted, these complications are not unique to the new materialisms as changes in scale almost always require a re-calibration of ethics. The point is, however, that the framing of the new materialisms as inherently more ethical generates, and is generated by, a disavowal or misreading of race as a stagnant analytical framework. As I submit above, since at least the Enlightenment period intellectual genealogies have maintained an almost overwhelming racial homogeneity. Critical theories produced by non-white scholars may have increased in terms of production or representation, but these are consistently marked as minority perspectives that have little to do with universal or ontological questions.10 Hence, black bodies especially are rendered objects for theoretical development, rather than subjects of universal philosophy. Coole and Frost (2010) continue this trend, revealing that even as “feminists and class theorists have often insisted upon” the importance of material bodies and environments, the authors remain “[concerned] that such material dimensions have recently been marginalized by fashionable constructivist approaches and identity politics” (p. 19). The latter, they continue, “had a good deal to say about the body and its imbrication in relationships of power, but we are not convinced that they pay sufficient attention to the material efficacy of bodies or have the theoretical resources to do so” (ibid.). Such a statement is heavy with longstanding racial charges of intellectual primitivism and parochialism. The unfortunate request to be “convinced” of identity politics’ intellectual merit effectively seals an historically white critical theory as the standard for authoritative knowledge production.11 One must also wonder about the referents for these insufficiently materialist identity politics, given that the New Materialisms anthology fails to cite even one example that might be taken as representative of a larger trend. Even if Coole and Frost employ “identity politics” as a shorthand for idealist approaches to subjectivity, their statement betrays both a misunderstanding of studies of “identity,” and a symptomatic desire to abandon race. To be clear, Coole and Frost never openly reduce “identity politics” to racial identity. But in many if not most of new materialisms’ founding texts, race receives only casual mention alongside the “other socalled axes of social difference” like sex, gender, and class, and often to specify a concept that has been “paralyzed by [a] ‘binary’ take on dualism” (Dolphijn & van der Tuin, 2012, p. 88, 143), or to name potential beneficiaries of one’s theorization (Barad, 2007; Grosz, 2004). We could perhaps attribute this treatment of race to an obdurate politics of attention (Ahmed, 2008) that determines which issues receive consideration.12 Nonetheless, to ascertain if and how the new materialisms might furnish us with a timelier ethics, we must first ask what purpose the omission of race serves. The Movement for Black Lives has forcefully reminded us that black bodies have historically provided the standards against which the human subject and non-human objects are measured. This is to say that the “rupture in the quality of being” inaugurated by modern racial slavery is not limited to black lives (Brand, 2001, p. 29). Black critical theorists repeatedly insist on the world-historical scale of this rupture, tracking how it conditions our thinking about humans and matter, and the movements of this thought itself. What this means for our current discussion is that “the question of race’s reality has and continues to bear directly on hierarchies of knowledge pertaining to the nature of reality itself” (Jackson, 2015, p. 216), or on what Dionne Brand (2001) calls our “cognitive schema” (p. 29). As a conceptual orientation or method of “way-finding,” the prevailing cognitive schema articulates **a libidinal economy of antiblackness** to the history of ideas, ensuring, as Spillers (2003) maintains, that “**dominant symbolic activity**, the ruling episteme that releases the dynamics of naming and valuation, remains grounded in the originating metaphors of captivity and mutilation;” “**sticks and bricks might break our bones**, **but words will** **most certainly kill us**” (pp. 208-209). By inverting a childhood rejoinder about the supposedly limited reach of the symbolic, Spillers lays out a provocative proposal: the metaphors of slavery are immanent to the force of the material. Although “‘race’ alone bears no inherent meaning, even though it reifies in personality,” it “gains its power from what it signifies by point, in what it allows to come to meaning” (Spillers, 2003, p. 380). Black lives matter, and blackness enlivens matter. It is possible, then, that the elaboration of thought, the conditions of its enunciation and reception, are always part of a racial praxis, even when those “personalities” that absorb the reification of race are most absent. This is a paradigmatic example of the prevailing cognitive schema at work. Antiblackness conditions the force of materiality by determining the logic of both its actualization and its theoretical manifestations. These functions become clearer when we turn our attention to Octavia Butler’s Parable duology.

### Link – Physiology

#### Physiology is the gold standard, not reductive racism – neurotransmitters produce anti-black gut reactions making phobias de facto, not de jure.

**Sullivan 14** (Shannon Sullivan is Chair of Philosophy and Professor of Health Psychology at UNC Charlotte. THE HEARTS AND GUTS OF WHITE PEOPLE: Ethics, Ignorance, and the Physiology of White Racism. Journal of Religious Ethics Volume 42, Issue 4. December 2014. Pages 591–611//shree)

I will set aside the pedagogical question of how an instructor should best handle classroom situations like the one created by both Brittney’s comment and my TA’s response to it. What I want to focus on here aresome of the ethical and epistemological issues surrounding Brittney’s belief that the image of black men as threatening and frightening is **real**—that is, **more than a cultural stereotype**—and she “knows” this because of her **physiological**, affective response to them. She really is scared when she encounters black men, as she might have said. She was not just making it up to try to discriminate against them, and her body proved it. Since nothing is **more real or irrefutable than felt physiological responses**—unchosen and unwilled, after all—then her body’s alarmed response to black men means that they are frightening. Philosophy has toreckon with that reality, Brittney might have continued, and if it cannot,vthen it is a load of politically correct crap that is not worth the bother.How should critical philosophers of race respond to claims such asvthese? More speciﬁcally, how might their responses help transform whitevpeople’s racist behavior and embodied beliefs, rather than encourage themvto cling defensively to the felt certainty of their white privileged experi-ence (as I believe my TA’s response to Brittney did)? This is a difficult taskvsince, as Charles Mills states in the epigraph, white people often arevincapable of understanding their behavior as racist due to the white ignorance required by the racial contract. I believe that Brittney genu-inely did not see what was morally objectionable about her fear of blackmen. This is not solely, or perhaps even primarily a cognitive difficulty,however, as I will argue. Like most contemporary white ignorance/ knowledge, her affective “knowledge” that black men are threatening operated primarily on a non-cognitive, bodily level. 1 While I do not agree with most of what Brittney said or implied, I thinkshe is right that philosophy (and critical race theory more broadly) mustreckon with the lived reality of human physiology and affects. And this isso even—or maybe especially?—in the case of politically charged subjectssuch as white racism. To be fully successful, critical philosophy of race and critical race theory need to examine **not just** the ﬁnancial, **legal**, political, and other forms of white racism, but also its physiological operations. In societies in which de jure Jim Crow has been eliminated, white privilege continues to operate as much, if not more through **human biology** than through mental beliefs, hidden and “invisible” because it is a product of **gut reactions** rather than **conscious decision** or choice. 2 In dialogue with Mills, I will argue that white ignorance is more physiological than cog-nitive and that philosophical appeals to human physiology and biology need not be reductive, as they often historically have been. Critically examining the physiology of white racism can help remove a weapon from the arsenal of white domination by invalidating commonplace and sim-plistic appeals to biology to justify white supremacy and white privilege. I realize that combining the topics of physiology and biology with those of race and white domination is dangerous. The Western world has a long, destructive history of using biology reductively to justify white supremacy and related forms of oppression. Nazi Germany often is a prime example,but it is important to remember that the United States and many othercountries were engaged in eugenics in the ﬁrst half of the twentiethcentury (McWhorter 2009). And nineteenth-century scientiﬁc practicessuch as craniology were created precisely for the purpose of proving theinferiority of non-white races (Gould 1981). For these reasons, positive explorations of biology and physiology have tended to be out of thequestion for contemporary critical philosophy of race and critical racetheory. Even if we utilize contemporary medical knowledge of human physiology, we cannot be certain that we are not replicating racist and sexist biases embedded in our time and place. **As valid as all these concerns are, however, it would be even more dangerous for critical philosophers of race and critical race theorists to refuse to engage with the disciplines of human physiology and biology**. 3 To begin, it is **not** the case that the medical and biological sciences necessarily produce **reductive** understandings of human existence. The sciences increasingly are operating with sophisticated biopsychosocial understandings of how psyche, body, and environments transact to produce human health and disease (more sophisticated understandings than many philosophers work with, in fact). 4 It is also not the case that systems of white supremacy have always heavily relied on biological arguments. Formal apartheid in South Africa (1948–1994), for example,was far more dependent on manufactured beliefs about cultural differ-ences between whites and blacks than on alleged biological hierarchies(Dubow 2010). While it is undeniable that the discipline of biology, along with related ﬁelds such as anthropology and evolutionary theory, have a nasty history of promoting white supremacy and white privilege, it can be and sometimes has been untangled from them. In cases where white supremacy relies on alleged cultural or environmental differences, pro-ceeding as if white supremacy and biology are inseparable means that we might be waging the wrong ﬁght. 5 And in cases where biology can help us uncover some of the hidden operations of white privilege, dismissing biology as reductively racist means that we might be overlooking a powerful ally in the struggle against white domination.The result of refusing to engage the biological and medical sciences is to concede the domain of human physiology to white racism, and this is a problematic concession to make. It is to give up on any sort of critical understanding of how a person’s physiological responses to the world are constituted, and thus also might be reconstituted for the better. It is, for example, to allow a white woman’s tensed, knotted stomach at the sightof a black man to stand as an allegedly apolitical and “natural” event.Brittney’s affective and physiological responses to black men were indeedreal: she felt them, and they should not be dismissed as if they did notoccur. She was right about that. But they are not any kind of proof of asupposedly inherent threat posed by black men. Critical philosophy of raceneeds to be able to explain how both of these claims are true, and doing so requires critically approaching rather than eschewing physiology andbiology.When trying to change white people’s racist attitudes and comport-ments, critical philosophers and other theorists of race often start in thewrong place by focusing on conscious beliefs. We might think, as the earlyW. E. B. Du Bois did, that if we could just provide accurate informationthat would eliminate white people’s misconceptions about African Ameri-cans, then their mistaken belief in white supremacy would dissolve. Andif more information alone is not enough to do the trick, then it can besupplemented with moral injunctions that use guilt and shame to get white people to change their minds about people of color. In either case,faulty beliefs about people of color are the supposed culprits. But as DuBois himself later realized, white misunderstandings and ignorance of people of color are not accidental, and they are not likely to be changed by moral exhortations. A kind of racial occlusion, they are a product of white people’s unconscious racial habits, which have deep roots and are strongly invested—albeit not consciously—in maintaining the economic, psycho-logical, and global domination of people of color (Du Bois 1984, 296). White occlusions regarding people of color, and of race more broadly, are part of what Mills has called an epistemology of ignorance that enables and even requires white people to know the world in systematically distorted ways(Mills 1998, 18, 93). 6 White ignorance is not an accidental feature of the world—although itlikes to be understood in this way. If white people’s (mis)understandingsof the world seem like a product of happenstance, then they can appearrelatively harmless and easy to correct. Sure, one might say, white people might have gaps in their knowledge about people of color, but their ignorance is not signiﬁcant and does not have any major impact on the world. White ignorance is much more devious and malign than thispeaceful description depicts, however. “Imagine,” as Mills urges, “anignorance militant, aggressive, not to be intimidated, an ignorance that isactive, dynamic, that refuses to go quietly—not at all conﬁned to theilliterate and uneducated but propagated at the highest levels of the land,indeed presenting itself unblushingly as knowledge ” (Mills 2007, 13).Because white ignorance functions as official knowledge of “inventedOrients, invented Africas, invented Americas, with a correspondinglyfabricated population, countries that never were, inhabited by people whonever were—Calibans and Tontos, Man Fridays and Sambos,” it tends tobe extremely powerful and effective (Mills 1998, 18–19). It helps produceand secure a white-dominated world that is comfortable for, and ﬂattering to, white people.The epistemic distortions generated by white ignorance thus do nothinder white people. In fact, they are incredibly functional: they allowwhite people to socially, psychologically, and ﬁnancially thrive at theexpense of people of color (Mills 1998, 18). Yet at the same time, as Millsargues, the distortions of white ignorance morally handicap white people.They produce tremendous obstacles for the ethical behavior of whitepeople, toward people of color in particular but also toward other white people at times. 7 It is not just that the racial contract contains rigorousepistemological clauses, in other words. Its twisted epistemologicalrequirements also entail a particular moral relationship to the world thatis highly unethical. The resulting handicap is twofold. Even as they mightthrive in other respects, white people are largely incapable of behaving ethically especially with regard to racial matters, and they generallycannot see or understand themselves as unethical and thus they havelittle chance of changing their behavior for the better. According to Mills, white ignorance is primarily a cognitive dysfunc-tion. 8 Even as he insightfully examines the “microspace of the [raced]body” and the perception of black bodies in particular as “moving bubble[s]of wilderness,” white people’s distorted understandings of nonwhite bodies(and the world more generally) are never themselves described as embod-ied (1998, 51, 53). They are mental. As in the epigraph, Mills invokes thecognitive in claiming that “ white misunderstanding, misrepresentation, evasion, and self-deception on matters related to race are among the mostpervasive mental phenomena of the past few hundred years, a cognitive and moral economy psychically required for conquest, colonization, andenslavement” (Mills 1998, 19; I italicized “mental” and “cognitive,” allother italics are Mills’s). The inverted epistemology of the racial contractis “a particular pattern of localized and global cognitive dysfunctions”requiring “a certain set of structured blindnesses and opacities” (Mills1998, 18, 19). Those blindnesses are “not, of course, due to biology, theintrinsic properties of [a white person’s] epidermis, or physical deﬁcienciesin the white eye,” but to a pattern of white cognitive (mis)perception thatsystematically distorts the world for the ends of white domination (Mills2007, 18).In contrast with Mills, I want to invoke biology—not in the sense thatwhite people have deﬁciencies in their retinas or optical cones, but in thesense that their racialized blindness can be located in their opacities of their physiology—to understand the operations of white ignorance.This claim appreciates Du Bois’s shift to understanding white dominationas unconscious, which in turn resonates strongly with Mills’s vibrantdescription of white ignorance as aggressive, active, and dynamic. But itpushes further to posit that contemporary white people’s supremacist understandings of race are located not just in their unconscious habits,but also in their bodily constitution (which of course is related to uncon-scious habits). Human physiology is where a great deal of supposed non-bodily aspects of human existence is located. Philosophers (andperhaps also others) tend to be ignorant of the physiology of phenomenasuch as white racism, however, because of their general dismissal of thebody. Critical philosophers of race will make better headway against white racism if they acknowledge that it can function physiologically. By “physiologically” I mean something stronger or more speciﬁc than the phenomenological claim that white racism is embodied. White racism certainly is manifest in the embodied habits of **white (and sometimes also non-white) people**, and the phenomenological analysis of racial embodi-ment has developed helpful understandings of the operations of whiteprivilege and white supremacy. 9 As in the case of Maurice Merleau-Ponty,however, phenomenology’s approach to embodiment often is set in oppo-sition to the biological, psychological, and medical sciences, arguing for “aforeswearing of science” because “scientiﬁc points of view . . . are alwaysnaïve and at the same time dishonest” (Merleau-Ponty 1962, vii, ix). Thisdismissal is problematic given that white racism is bodily constitutive of more than just white people’s physical comportment, gestures, and stylesof interaction with others. White racism also can help shape white people’s biochemical make-up and activities: for example, their **serotonin** and other neurotransmitter levels, the activity patterns of their **a**utonomic **n**ervous **s**ystem, their predisposition for **gastric tachyarrhythmia**, their levels of **hormone production**, and so on. We might say that the tenets of the racial contract need to be examined not just morally and epistemo-logically, but also biologically. **To be fully effective, critical philosophy of race needs to be in conversation with the medical sciences: neurobiologists, gastroenterologists, psychoneuroimmunologists, and other medical and health professionals who understand human biologyand physiology well.** What then do we learn from these conversations? The main focus of themedical sciences when they study race and racism tends to be on thedetrimental health effects of racial discrimination and oppression forpeople of color. For example, hypertension, high blood pressure, poorcardiovascular activity, and other physiological conditions associated withincreased mortality rates have been linked with incidents of racial hos-tility and socioeconomic stress experienced by African Americans andother racial minorities in the United States (Ryff and Singer 2003; see alsoWilliams 1999). Interestingly, what is never discussed to my knowledge isthe ﬂipside of this research’s conclusions, namely that the relatively goodhealth of many white Americans—lower incidence of hypertension, high blood pressure, and so on—can be considered a product of white privilegerather than a neutral or “normal” physiological condition. (I will return tothis ﬂipside shortly.) While white people sometimes are mentioned as aracial group in medical studies, they virtually never are discussed as agroup of people who systematically beneﬁt, medically and otherwise, fromtheir race. Categories of race sometimes are used in the medical and lifesciences, in other words, and occasionally even racism is acknowledged asa problem that people of color confront, 10 but the topic of white domin-ation’s effect on white people is largely absent. And yet it hovers in the margins of at least some scientiﬁc studies,which makes it possible to hypothesize about the operations of whiteprivilege and domination in the physiology of white people. 11 Take the example of nausea, a queasy or tense feeling in the stomach that is acontrol mechanism inhibiting food intake and sometimes producing vom-iting. What is interesting about this control mechanism is that it is notmerely physiological. It also is psychological and, as psychologist R. M.Stern explains, “it [sometimes] occurs in threatening situations that have little to do with eating” (2002, 590). While perhaps initially puzzling, this characteristic of nausea turns out to make sense: when threatened, the body’s autonomic nervous system (ANS) activity changes in ways that decrease or even stop gastric motor activity (Stern 2002, 590). The stomach and intestines stop digesting their contents, in other words, andso it is not a good idea to keep putting food into them. In the face of a threat—which can be a toxic piece of food, or it can be a threat having nothing to do with food whatsoever—the body has a control mechanism to keep the stomach and intestines empty while they are not functioning. While the different nausea thresholds of white, Chinese, and African American people are brieﬂy discussed in Stern’s study, topics of racism and white domination are never explicitly broached. The non-food-related “threats” that are mentioned in the study are public speaking and acting in a play. But the speciﬁc phenomenon of threat is used to explain the psychophysiology of nausea, and I suggest that racial threats, both real and perceived, fall into the category of menacing situations that can contribute to nausea. When a person feels threatened because of a racial situation, her physiology can be altered: chemical levels can change, gastromotor activity can cease impacting the absorption of nutrients that help constitute her ﬂesh, bones and blood, etc. This is true for anyone in a threatening racial situation, whatever hisor her race.Although I am focusing here on white people, such as Brittney,who experience themselves as racially threatened, I must underscore thathistorically and presently white people themselves are the primary groupthat poses a threat to other people. White people almost exclusively arethe terrorizing force that uses race to menace people of color, not the otherway around. I am not, in other words, ﬂattening the racial terrain with aturn to white people’s physiology, nor am I equating a perceived threat (forexample, of black men experienced by Brittney) with a real threat (forexample, of white lynchers). What I am claiming is that white dominationhas different but nonetheless constitutive effects on the biology of whitepeople and people of color and that the end of white domination willrequire not just signiﬁcant ﬁnancial, legal, educational, and politicalchanges, but also psychophysiological transformations. White people’s mistreatment of people of color as inherently inferior is found in all kindsof registers, not just the physiological, but it manifests itself in the latterdomain too. As long as white women’s stomachs seize up in fear of black men, we know that white privilege and white supremacy continue to “invisibly” thrive. The hidden physiological dimensions of white privilege—in this case, speciﬁcally white class privilege—also can be found in recent neurocardiological research on the heart. This claim may seem puzzling since, as mentioned above, the beneﬁts of white privilege to white healthare never discussed to my knowledge in any current neurocardiologicalstudies. To see white privilege at work in them, one must read with an eyefor something that, in a signiﬁcant respect, is not there. This does notmean, however, that white privilege is a foreign topic being artiﬁciallyinserted into the research. It is not the case, as the familiar accusationgoes, that white racism never would have been an issue if the criticalphilosopher of race (or person of color) had not introduced it. 12 Something like a gestalt shift is necessary; we need to change what we are looking for when we read. As we will see, while the study examined below saysnothing about the health effects of white privilege for middle and upperclass white people, the topic simultaneously is included, written with the very same words that do not speak of it. Dubbed the “heart brain” because of its sophisticated intrinsic nervoussystem, which “enables it to learn, remember, and make functional deci-sions independent of the cranial brain,” the heart affects not just thebody’s autonomic regulation, but also its emotional processing (McCraty and Childre 2004, 232). Afferent neuronal signals travel from the heart tothe brain, affecting the central nucleus of the amygdala, which is a keyemotional center (McCraty and Childre 2004, 233, 235). This means thatfolk associations of the heart with love, compassion, and spirituality canbe understood as more than metaphorical or ﬁgurative (McCraty andChildre 2004, 230). These other-directed emotions and states of being areassociated with both an appreciative openness to the world and a com-plementary sense that the world is open to you. Both experiences of openness, moreover, are correlated with a physically healthy heart brain. A heart brain that is functioning optimally is the physical manifestationof an open relationship to the world.Evidence of the heart brain’s optimal functioning can be found in therhythms and patterns of a person’s heart rate, as indicated by itstachograms (indicating heartbeats per minute) and its power spectraldensity (indicating the frequency, or the speciﬁc electric current, of thebeating heart) (McCraty and Childre 2004, 237). Consider three differentcases: one of negative emotions such as anxiety, frustration, or anger; amore neutral case of relaxation; and ﬁnally a case of positive emotionssuch as appreciation. As we will see, the terms “negative” and “positive”here correspond with the harmful or beneﬁcial physiological effects of various emotional states. For example, when a person is angry, her heartrate tends to be fast, erratic, and characterized by rhythms in the lowfrequency band of the power spectrum (0.0033–0.04 hertz). This type of heart rate decreases parasympathetic activity in the ANS (autonomicnervous system), which is signiﬁcant because the parasympathetic branchof the ANS regulates sleeping, digesting, and other bodily activitiesassociated with rest and relaxation (McCraty and Childre 2004, 233). If the balance in the ANS tips too often away from the parasympathetic andtoward the sympathetic branch, the latter of which stimulates “ﬁght orﬂight” responses to danger, the body does not have enough time or energyto renew and repair itself. The result of this imbalance tends to be healthproblems associated with chronic anxiety and stress, such as cardiovas-cular disease and antecedent conditions such as hypertension (Malpas2010). In contrast, when a person is relaxed and not angry, her heart ratepattern tends to be relatively slow, less erratic, and marked by increasedpower in the high frequency band (0.15–0.4 hertz). Correspondingly,parasympathetic activity in the brain also increases (McCraty and Childre2004, 237).The sympathetic branch of the ANS should not be thought of as simplyopposed to the parasympathetic branch, however. The relationshipbetween the two branches actually is one of complementarity since theconstant, basic activity of the sympathetic branch is crucial to the body’sability to maintain its internal stability (homeostasis). Thus, the idealphysiological situation is for the two branches to be synchronized, and this takes place when the heart rate is highly ordered and smooth. This typeof heart rate tends to occur when a person feels positive emotions such asappreciation. When a person experiences the emotion of appreciation orgratitude, her parasympathetic activity increases and coordinates withthe activities of the sympathetic branch. The rhythms of the appreciativeheart are not identical to those of the relaxed heart, however. While bothare marked by increased parasympathetic activity in comparison to theangry heart, the appreciative heart oscillates at a different frequency(0.04–0.14 hertz, centering around 0.1), one that allows better resonanceand coherence across different physiological systems.When a person feels grateful or appreciative, her entire biologicalsystem tends to pulse in smooth coordination with itself. The result of such synchronization is health beneﬁts such as “increased efficiency inﬂuid exchange, ﬁltration and absorption between the capillaries andtissues” and other physiological changes that increase “systemwide energyefficiency and metabolic energy savings” (McCraty and Childre 2004, 238).Sometimes this event is described subjectively as an experience of increased “ﬂow,” of clarity, creativity and invigoration in which blockagesand barriers in one’s life have (at least temporarily) dissolved (McCratyand Childre 2004, 231–32). The feeling is one of possibilities opening up,along with the physical and emotional energy to pursue them. As acorresponding study argues, while negative emotions “narrow people’sideas about possible actions,” positive emotions “widen the scope of atten-tion, broaden repertoires of desired actions, . . . and increase openness tonew experiences” (Fredrickson 2008, 450). This can be a spiritual experi-ence for some, in which one feels an increased connection with otherpeople and the world at large. Whether spiritual or not, however, positiveemotions such as appreciation have been linked scientiﬁcally to increasedphysiological efficiency, “substantiat[ing] what many people have long intuitively known: positive emotions bolster one’s ability to meet life’schallenges with grace and ease, optimize cognitive capacities, sustainconstructive and meaningful relationships with others, and foster goodhealth” (McCraty and Childre 2004, 249).So, the primary study’s authors ask, why are not more people doing something to pursue positive emotions on a day-to-day basis? Theiranswer provides a trigger for the gestalt shift needed to reveal white classprivilege: Why do genuine positive emotional experiences remain transient and unpre-dictable occurrences for most people? We propose that a main factor under-lying this discrepancy is a fundamental lack of mental and emotionalself-management skills. In other words, people generally do not make effortsto actively infuse their daily experiences with greater emotional qualitybecause they sincerely do not know how. (McCraty and Childre 2004, 241) The authors proceed to offer a number of feedback techniques, or “inter- ventions,” that can improve emotional experience by increasing awarenessof and altering heart rates and frequencies. These can be sophisticated“heart math” techniques or as simple as deep breathing exercises, whichmodulate the heart’s rhythm and thus can change one’s emotional-neurological state (McCraty and Childre 2004, 243–46, 236).The authors’ suggestions are intriguing, and in many respects theiroverall research program integrating emotions, cardio-physiology, andneurology is both medically and philosophically important. It provides aconcrete example of how to non-reductively appreciate the medical-physiological aspects of human emotional life. But it is woefully focused onthe individual isolated from the social-political world, which enables theauthors to offer extremely whitewashed guidance for improving humanemotional-cardio health. By “whitewashed,” I mean saturated with whiteclass privilege. Whether or not the authors are white or come from classprivileged backgrounds (I do not know, nor is it necessarily important toknow), their interventions implicitly address only the emotional-cardiodifficulties of middle- and upper-class white human beings, and excludethose of non-white people. They focus on people who are not regulartargets of white racism and who do not daily beneﬁt from the “invisible”ease and comfort in life provided by white class privilege. In that way, theauthors’ suggestions suffer from white solipsism, erasing or ignoring thelives and health of those who are not white.To better see the white class privilege at work in this study, let usconsider an all-too-common experience for African Americans of being presumed to be criminal. George Yancy powerfully describes the phenom-enon of hearing the click of a car door being locked by a white person inside when he or she sees a black person on the street. Much more than just a simple sound, the click is “part of a racial and racist web of signiﬁcance” that constructs “the occupants’ sense of themselves as ‘safe’(and white) [which] is purchased at the expense of denigrating the blackbody as unsafe” (Yancy 2012, 31). If the clicks could speak, we could hearthem establish the ontological stability and epistemological credibility of white identity: “ Click (innocent) . . . Click (reliable). Click ( our whitespace) . . . Click (civilized). Click (law abiding)” (Yancy 2012, 31). Whitepeople’s security and comfort is established in opposition to the dangerousblack person, “fragment[ing] my existence and cut[ting] away at myintegrity,” as Yancy explains (Yancy 2012, 33). The same clicks proclaim-ing white goodness simultaneously tell him and all black people—for theytoo can hear the clicks outside the car—that they are subpersons: “ Click (thug), click (criminal), click (thief)” and, ultimately, “ Click , click, click,click, click (nigger, nigger, nigger, nigger, nigger)” (Yancy 2012, 33).This is not an isolated or atypical experience for black people in theUnited States. In addition to the clicking experience, there is the elevator effect—again powerfully described by Yancy—in which white women aloneonanelevatorvisiblytenseupwhenablackmangetsonboard(Yancy2008,5).As mentioned in the opening paragraph of this essay, Brent Staples alsowrites of the handbag-clutching march white women assume when they seehim on the street (Staples 1986, 54). Cornel West documented his experi-ence with the police when he was Driving While Black, that is, stoppedthree times in ten days for driving too slowly in an upscale residential area(Yancy2012,44–45;seealsoWest1993,x–xi).Andontheﬂipside,TimWise,a white man, describes the surprise on a white police officer’s face whenWise rolled down the darkened window of his beat-up, anti-David-Duke-bumper-stickered car when he was stopped for no apparent reason (dis-cussed in Yancy 2012, 45–46; see also Wise 2005, 39).As the shocked officer fumbled to ﬁnd an explanation for pulling Wise over, it was clear to Wisethat he was targeted because his car marked him as black. Finally, there isthe corresponding, ubiquitous experience of black people’s being tailed bystore clerks or plainclothes officers when they do their shopping. As Yancyexplains, the “presumptive innocence” granted to white people spares themthis unnerving and infuriating experience. A white person “can walk intostores [or drive down the street] without anyone doubting the integrity of his [or her] character and intentions” (Yancy 2012, 164).These incidents might seem (to white people) minor, even trivial—afterall, there are no physical or legal obstacles to a black person’s entering anelevator or a store, for example, and traveling to the desired ﬂoor ormaking the needed purchases. What is the big deal about an unfriendlyclerk or an uptight elevator companion? The answer is that in thecumulative effect of seemingly small details such as these lies a particularworld that black people are forced to inhabit, one that is substantiallydifferent than the world inhabited by white people. The worlds of whiteand black people are not always, or perhaps ever the same, even thoughblack and white people might inhabit (sometimes, anyway) the samephysical space. “To be white in a white world,” as Yancy reveals, “is to beextended by that world’s contours. The world opens up, reveals itself as aplace called home, a place of privileges and immunities, a space forachievement, success, freedom of movement” (Yancy 2012, 45).The world generally is not open to black people in this way. Even whenthey are not, for example, tailed by a clerk or stopped by a cop on a givenday, the possibility that they could be is ever present, adding to everyexcursion into the public sphere an element of anxiety. As Yancy explains, black people are “exposed to a daily enactment of white racialized drama” that undercuts their efforts to “secur[e] **existential** and psychological **safety** in a white racist world” (Yancy 2012, 156). Whether in a store, atwork or school, or merely walking down the street, they do not get toarrive on the scene as white people do, “with socially fortiﬁed . . . iden-tities that are certain of who they are” and whose “psychic integrity” is not at risk (Yancy 2012, 131). As a result, even though explicit Jim Crow lawshave long been removed from the books in the United States, the Ameri-can world is not a smooth space of easy passage for black people in theway that it generally is for white people. The world presents obstacles toblack people at just about every turn.Even though the obstacles are not physical, their effects can be. Kim Anderson, an African American lawyer, captures this point well as sheexplains her experience being tailed: So nobody, when I walk in a store, nobody says, “Oh, that’s Kim Anderson, African-American, female lawyer, went to Columbia,” they just see a blackwoman. I was in a store once, just walking around thinking I was going tobuy a pair of jeans. This clerk’s following me around. So I said, “Why are youfollowing me around? I’m not going to steal anything. Leave me alone. I’mnot going to take something.” When you’re confronted with racism, that covert racism, your stomach just gets so tight. You can feel it almost moving through your body; almost you can feel it going into your bloodstream.(Quoted in California Newsreel 2008, 7) We should understand Anderson’s last point literally. When she describes white racism coursing through the veins and tissues of her body, she is right. It is highly likely that the emotional tension she felt in the store was simultaneously a physiological event in which cortisol and other stress-related hormones elevated her heart rate and stimulated the sym-pathetic branch of her ANS (Boyles 2010). The “outside” of the social world cannot be sharply divided from the “inside” her body. The racism “outside” Anderson’s body simultaneously was “inside,” altering her heart brain (for the worse in this case).

### Link – Cruel Optimism

**Investment in political strategies creates a cruel optimism for black folk through narratives of progress that play into a trick-of-time that forces them to invest in the pursuit of their own death.**

Warren 15 Calvin L., Black Nihilism and the Politics of Hope; Source: CR: The New Centennial Review, Vol. 15, No. 1, Derrida and French Hegelianism (Spring 2015), XMT, pp. 215-248 Published by: Michigan State University Press Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.14321/crnewcentrevi.15.1.0215>

The politics of hope, then, constitutes what Lauren Berlant would call “cruel optimism” for blacks (Berlant 2011). It bundles certain promises about redress, equality, freedom, justice, and progress into a political object that always lies beyond reach. The objective of the Political is to keep blacks in a relation to this political object—in an unending pursuit of it. This pursuit, however, is detrimental because it strengthens the very anti-black system that would **pulverize black being.** The pursuit of the object certainly has an “irrational” aspect to it, as Farred details, but it is not mere means without expectation; instead, it is a means that undermines the attainment of the impossible object desired. In other words, the pursuit marks a cruel attachment to the means of subjugation and the continued widening of the gap between historical reality and fantastical ideal. Black nihilism is a “demythifying” practice, in the Nietzschean vein, that uncovers the subjugating strategies of political hope and de-idealizes its fantastical object. Once we denude political hope of its axiological and ethical veneer, we see that it operates through certain strategies: 1) positing itself as the only alternative to the problem of anti-blackness, 2) shielding this alternative [End Page 221] from rigorous historical/philosophical critique by placing it in an unknown future, 3) delimiting the field of action to include only activity recognized and **legitimated by the Political**, and 4) demonizing critiques or different philosophical perspectives. The politics of hope masks a particular cruelty under the auspices of “happiness” and “life.” It terrifies with the dread of “no alternative.” “Life” itself needs the security of the alternative, and, through this logic, life becomes untenable without it. Political hope promises to provide this alternative—a discursive and political organization beyond extant structures of violence and destruction. The construction of the binary “alternative/no-alternative” ensures the hegemony and dominance of political hope within the onto-existential horizon. The terror of the “no alternative”—the ultimate space of decay, suffering, and death—depends on two additional binaries: “problem/solution” and “action/inaction.” According to this politics, all problems have solutions, and hope provides the accessibility and realization of these solutions. The solution establishes itself as the elimination of “the problem”; the solution, in fact, transcends the problem and realizes Hegel’s aufheben in its constant attempt to **sublate the dirtiness of the “problem” with the pristine being of the solution**. No problem is outside the reach of hope’s solution—every problem is connected to the kernel of its own eradication. The politics of hope must actively refuse the possibility that the “solution” is, in fact, another problem in disguised form; the idea of a “solution” is nothing more than the repetition and disavowal of the problem itself. The solution relies on what we might call the “trick of time” to fortify itself from the deconstruction of its binary. Because the temporality of hope is a time “not-yet-realized,” a future tense unmoored from present-tense justifications and pragmatist evidence, the politics of hope cleverly shields its “solutions” from critiques of impossibility or repetition. Each insistence that these solutions stand up against the lessons of history or the rigors of analysis is met with the rationale that these solutions are not subject to history or analysis because they do not reside within the horizon of the “past” or “present.” Put differently, we can never ascertain the efficacy of the proposed solutions because they escape the temporality of the moment, always retreating to a “not-yet” and “could-be” temporality. This “trick” of time offers a promise of possibility that can only be realized in an indefinite future, and this promise is a bond of uncertainty that can never be redeemed, only imagined. In this sense, the politics of hope is an instance of the psychoanalytic notion of desire: its sole purpose is to reproduce its very condition of possibility, never to satiate or bring fulfillment. This politics secures its hegemony through time by claiming the future as its unassailable property and excluding (and devaluing) any other conception of time that challenges this temporal ordering. The politics of hope, then, depends on the **incessant (re)production** and proliferation of problems to justify its existence. Solutions cannot really exist within the politics of hope, just the illusion of a different order in a future tense. **The “trick” of time** and political solution converge on the site of “action.” In critiquing the politics of hope, one encounters the rejoinder of the dangers of inaction. “But we can’t just do nothing! We have to do something.” The field of permissible action is delimited and an unrelenting binary between action/ inaction silences critical engagement with political hope. These exclusionary operations rigorously reinforce the binary between action and inaction and discredit certain forms of engagement, critique, and protest. Legitimate action takes place in the political—the political not only claims futurity but also action as its property. To “do something” means that this doing must translate into recognizable political activity; “something” is a stand-in for the word “politics”—one must “do politics” to address any problem. A refusal to “do politics” is equivalent to “doing nothing”—this nothingness is constructed as the antithesis of life, possibility, time, ethics, and morality (a “zero-state” as Julia Kristeva [1982] might call it). Black nihilism rejects this “trick of time” and the lure of emancipatory solutions. To refuse to “do politics” and to reject the fantastical object of politics is the only “hope” for blackness in an antiblack world.

### Impact – Vertigo

#### The K outweighs and turns the case – the forms of violence foregrounded by the 1AC are contingent aberrations that spur subjective vertigo for the Human because unlike blackness, they’re not ontologically condemned to the condition of objective vertigo, a life constituted by disorientation which is a never-ending paradigmatic necessity.

Wilderson’11 |Frank B. Wilderson III is American writer, dramatist, filmmaker and critic. He is a full professor of Drama and African American studies at the University of California, Irvine. He received his BA in government and philosophy from Dartmouth College, his Masters in Fine Arts from Columbia University and his PhD in Rhetoric and Film Studies from the University of California, Berkeley award-winning author of Incognegro: A Memoir of Exile and Apartheid. Fall 2011 “The Vengeance of Vertigo: Aphasia and Abjection in the Political Trials of Black Insurgents.” http://www.yorku.ca/intent/issue5/articles/pdfs/frankbwildersoniiiarticle.pdf|HZaidi

Subjective vertigo is vertigo of the event. But the sensation that one is not simply spinning in an otherwise stable environment, that one’s environment is perpetually unhinged stems from a re- lationship to violence that cannot be analogized. This is called objective vertigo, a life constituted by disorientation rather than a life interrupted by disorientation. This is structural as opposed to performative violence. Black subjectivity is a crossroads where vertigoes meet, the intersection of performative and structural violence. Elsewhere I have argued that the Black is a sentient being though not a Human being. The Black’s and the Human’s disparate rela- tionship to violence is at the heart of this failure of incorporation and analogy. The Human suffers contingent violence, violence that kicks in when s/he resists (or is perceived to resist) the disci- plinary discourse of capital and/or Oedipus. But Black peoples’ subsumption by violence is a paradigmatic necessity, not just a performative contingency. To be constituted by and disciplined by violence, to be gripped simultaneously by subjective and ob- jective vertigo, is indicative of a political ontology which is radi- cally di erent from the political ontology of a sentient being who is constituted by discourse and disciplined by violence when s/ he breaks with the ruling discursive codes.vi When we begin to assess revolutionary armed struggle in this comparative context, we find that Human revolutionaries (workers, women, gays and lesbians, post-colonial subjects) suffer subjective vertigo when they meet the state’s disciplinary violence with the revolution- ary violence of the subaltern; but they are spared objective verti- go. This is because the most disorienting aspects of their lives are induced by the struggles that arise from intra-Human con icts over competing conceptual frameworks and disputed cognitive maps, such as the American Indian Movement’s demand for the return of Turtle Island vs. the U.S.’s desire to maintain territo- rial integrity, or the Fuerzas Armadas de Liberación Nacional’s (FALN) demand for Puerto Rican independence vs. the U.S.’s desire to maintain Puerto Rico as a territory. But for the Black, as for the slave, there are no cognitive maps, no conceptual frame- works of suffering and dispossession which are analogic with the myriad maps and frameworks which explain the dispossession of Human subalterns. The structural, or paradigmatic, violence that subsumes Black insurgents’ cognitive maps and conceptual frameworks, sub- sumes my scholarly e orts as well. As a Black scholar, I am tasked with making sense of this violence without being over- whelmed and disoriented by it. In other words, the writing must somehow be indexical of that which exceeds narration, while being ever mindful of the incomprehension the writing would foster, the failure, that is, of interpretation were the indices to actually escape the narrative. The stakes of this dilemma are al- most as high for the Black scholar facing his/her reader as they are for the Black insurgent facing the police and the courts. For the scholarly act of embracing members of the Black Liberation Army as beings worthy of empathic critique is terrifying. One’s writing proceeds with fits and starts which have little to do with the problems of building the thesis or finding the methodology to make the case. As I write, I am more aware of the rage and anger of my reader- ideal (an angry mob as readers) than I am of my own interven- tions and strategies for assembling my argument. Vertigo seizes me with a rash of condemnations that emanate from within me and swirl around me. I am speaking to me but not through me, yet there seems to be no other way to speak. I am speaking through the voice and gaze of a mob of, let’s just say it, White Americans; and my efforts to marshal a mob of Black people, to conjure the Black Liberation Army smack of compensatory gestures. It is not that the BLA doesn’t come to my aid, that they don’t push back, but neither I nor my insurgent allies can make the case that we are worthy of our suffering and justified in our actions and not terrorists and apologists for terror who should be locked away forever. How can we be worthy of our suffering without being worthy of ourselves? I press on, even though the vertigo that seizes me is so overwhelming that its precise nature—sub- jective, stemming from within me, or objective, catalyzed by my context, the raging throng—cannot be determined. I have no ref- erence points apart from the mob that gives no quarter. If I write “freedom fighter,” from within my ear they scream “terrorist”! If I say “prisoner of war,” they chant “cop killer”! Their denun- ciations are sustained only by assertion, but they ring truer than my painstaking exegesis. No rewall protects me from them; no liberated psychic zone offers me sanctuary. I want to stop and turn myself in.

### ALT – UPA

#### The act of an unflinching paradigmatic analysis allows us to deny intellectual legitimacy to the compromises that radical elements have made

Wilderson, ’10 [2010, Frank B. Wilderson is an Associate Professor of African-American Studies at UC Irvine and has a Ph.D. from UC Berkeley, “Red, White & Black: Cinema and the Structure of U.S. Antagonisms,”]/RC HZaidi

STRANGE ASit might seem, this book project began in South Africa. During the last years of apartheid I worked for revolutionary change in both an underground and above-ground capacity, for the Charterist Movement in general and the ANC in particular. During this period, I began to see how essential an unflinching paradigmatic analysis is to a movement dedicated to the complete overthrow of an existing order. The neoliberal compromises that the radical elements of the Chartist Movement made with the moderate elements were due, in large part, to our inability or unwillingness to hold the moderates' feet to the fire of a political agenda predicated on an unflinching paradigmatic analysis. Instead, we allowed our energies and points of attention to be displaced by and onto pragmatic considerations. Simply put, we abdicated the power to pose the question—and the power to pose the question is the greatest power of all. Elsewhere, I have written about this unfortunate turn of events *(Incognegro: A Memoir of Exile and Apartheid),*so I'll not rehearse the details here. Suffice it to say, this book germinated in the many political and academic discussions and debates that I was fortunate enough to be a part of at a historic moment and in a place where the word revolution was spoken in earnest, free of qualifiers and irony. For their past and ongoing ideas and interventions, I extend solidarity and appreciation to comrades Amanda Alexander, Franco Barchiesi, Teresa Barnes, Patrick Bond, Ashwin Desai, Nigel Gibson, Steven Greenberg, Allan Horowitz, Bushy Kelebonye (deceased), Tefu Kelebonye, Ulrike Kistner, Kamogelo Lekubu, Andile Mngxitama, Prishani Naidoo, John Shai, and S'bu Zulu.

### ALT – Disorder

#### The alternative is to embrace the disorder of the Black body

Wilderson 03 (Frank B Wilderson III, American writer, dramatist, filmmaker, and critic. He is Chancellor’s Professor of African American Studies at the University of California, Irvine, “The Prison Slave as Hegemony’s (Silent) Scandal,” 2003, https://www.jstor.org/stable/29768181)/RB

Fanon (1968: 37) writes, “decolonization, which sets out to change the order of the world, is, obviously, a program of complete disorder.” If we take him at his word, then we must accept that no other body functions in the Imaginary, the Symbolic, or the Real so completely as a repository of complete disorder as the Black body. Blackness is the site of absolute dereliction at the level of the Real, for in its magnetizing of bullets the Black body functions as the map of gratuitous violence through which civil society is possible: namely, those bodies for which violence is, or can be, contingent. Blackness is the site of absolute dereliction at the level of the Symbolic, for Blackness in America generates no categories for the chromosome of history, and no data for the categories of immigration or sovereignty. It is an experience without analog—a past without a heritage. Blackness is the site of absolute dereliction at the level of the Imaginary, for “whoever says ‘rape’ says Black” (Fanon), whoever says “prison” says Black, and whoever says “AIDS” says Black (Sexton)—the “Negro is a phobogenic object” (Fanon). Indeed, it means all those things: a phobogenic object, a past without a heritage, the map of gratuitous violence, and a program of complete disorder. Whereas this realization is, and should be, cause for alarm, it should not be cause for lament, or worse, disavowal—not at least, for a true revolutionary, or for a truly revolutionary movement such as prison abolition. If a social movement is to be neither social democratic nor Marxist, in terms of structure of political desire, then it should grasp the invitation to assume the positionality of subjects of social death. If we are to be honest with ourselves, we must admit that the “Negro” has been inviting whites, as well as civil society’s junior partners, to the dance of social death for hundreds of years, but few have wanted to learn the steps. They have been, and remain today—even in the most anti-racist movements, like the prison abolition movement—invested elsewhere. This is not to say that all oppositional political desire today is pro-white, but it is usually anti-Black, meaning it will not dance with death. Black liberation, as a prospect, makes radicalism more dangerous to the U.S. This is not because it raises the specter of an alternative polity (such as socialism, or community control of existing resources), but because its condition of possibility and gesture of resistance function as a negative dialectic: a politics of refusal and a refusal to affirm, a “program of complete disorder.” One must embrace its disorder, its incoherence, and allow oneself to be elaborated by it, if indeed one’s politics are to be underwritten by a desire to take down this country. If this is not the desire that underwrites one’s politics, then through what strategy of legitimation is the word “prison” being linked to the word “abolition”? What are this movement’s lines of political accountability? There is nothing foreign, frightening, or even unpracticed about the embrace of disorder and incoherence. The desire to be embraced, and elaborated, by disorder and incoherence is not anathema in and of itself. No one, for example, has ever been known to say “gee-whiz, if only my orgasms would end a little sooner, or maybe not come at all.” Yet few so-called radicals desire to be embraced, and elaborated, by the disorder and incoherence of Blackness—and the state of political movements in the U.S. today is marked by this very Negrophobogenisis: “geewhiz, if only Black rage could be more coherent, or maybe not come at all.” Perhaps there is something more terrifying about the joy of Black than there is in the joy of sex (unless one is talking sex with a Negro). Perhaps coalitions today prefer to remain in-orgasmic in the face of civil society—with hegemony as a handy prophylactic, just in case. If, through this stasis or paralysis they try to do the work of prison abolition, that work will fail, for it is always work from a position of coherence (i.e., the worker) on behalf of a position of incoherence of the Black subject, or prison slave. In this way, social formations on the Left remain blind to the contradictions of coalitions between workers and slaves. They remain coalitions operating within the logic of civil society and function less as revolutionary promises than as crowding out scenarios of Black antagonisms, simply feeding our frustration. Whereas the positionality of the worker (whether a factory worker demanding a monetary wage, an immigrant, or a white woman demanding a social wage) gestures toward the reconfiguration of civil society, the positionality of the Black subject (whether a prison-slave or a prison-slave-in-waiting) gestures toward the disconfiguration of civil society. From the coherence of civil society, the Black subject beckons with the incoherence of civil war, a war that reclaims Blackness not as a positive value, but as a politically enabling site, to quote Fanon, of “absolute dereliction.” It is a “scandal” that rends civil society asunder. Civil war, then, becomes the unthought, but never forgotten, understudy of hegemony. It is a Black specter waiting in the wings, an endless antagonism that cannot be satisfied (via reform or reparation), but must nonetheless be pursued to the death.

### ALT – Wake Work

#### The alternative is endorsing a praxis of “wake work” as a means to attend to black life in the aftermaths and ongoing subjections of slavery and captivity. The analytic of wake work ruptures the normative conceptions of black life, the “scraps of the archive”, and transforms it into a new orthography, one that is not predicated upon the hold of the slave ship.

**Sharpe 16** [Christina Sharpe is an associate professor of English at Tufts University and the author of *Monstrous Intimacies: Making Post-Slavery Subjects*, also published at Duke University Press, “In the Wake On Blackness and Being”, (p. 20-23) *Duke University Press*, October 13, 2016] HZaidi

If, as I have so far suggested, we think the metaphor of the wake in the entirety of its meanings (the keeping watch with the dead, the path of a ship, a consequence of something, in the line of flight and/or sight, awakening, and consciousness) and we join the wake with work in order that we might make the wake and wake work our analytic, we might continue to imagine new ways to live in the wake of slavery, in slavery’s afterlives, to survive (and more) the afterlife of property. In short, I mean wake work to be a mode of inhabiting and rupturing this episteme with our known lived and un/imaginable lives. With that analytic we might imagine otherwise from what we know now in the wake of slavery. Dionne Brand does this wake work as she imagines otherwise in Verso 55, a verso in which she not only revisits A Map to the Door of No Return’s imagining of diaspora consciousness’s relation to that door as mythic and real location but also imagines an encounter between the returned from diaspora and those who were held in the cells of the forts.25 She imagines those who were held, reconfiguring—coming back together in wonder—the traces of their former selves rising up in greeting. Here the ancestors are like Marie Ursule, who, in At the Full and Change of the Moon, reanimates those Ursuline nuns who were her enslavers for the purpose of looking after her daughter Bola whom she dreams into a, into the, future. In Verso 55, Brand imagines that with the entrance of the pilgrims those who were held reconstitute from where they “lay in their corners, on their disintegrated floors, they lay on their wall of skin dust,” and stand to greet them; the ancestors, the only gods we had, their traces so much dust and haunt in those holding rooms. With these words Brand produces into the wake other than the “production of nothing—empty rooms, and silence, and lives reduced to waste”; she imagines other uses for “the scraps of the archive” (Hartman 2008, 4).26 Brand, like Hartman, encounters these rooms, this pain of and in the archive, but those rooms are not empty, and though the scraps of cotton, new world slave crop, may in fact be insufficient to our needs and to theirs, they are what we have to offer. And those dwellers of the rooms who had no thoughts of visitors, could not know, but might imagine, that anything, any part, of them would survive the holding, the shipping, the water, and the weather, drink those visitors in like violet tea and lemon air. Verso 55 is filled with the knowledge that this holding, these deaths, that shipping ought never to have happened, and with that knowledge and “the scraps of the archive” Brand imagines something that feels completely new. The rooms are not empty and the scraps are what we have to offer. But even if those Africans who were in the holds, who left something of their prior selves in those rooms as a trace to be discovered, and who passed through the doors of no return did not survive the holding and the sea, they, like us, are alive in hydrogen, in oxygen; in carbon, in phosphorous, and iron; in sodium and chlorine. This is what we know about those Africans thrown, jumped, dumped overboard in Middle Passage; they are with us still, in the time of the wake, known as residence time. They said with wonder and admiration, you are still alive, like hydrogen, like oxygen. (Brand 2015) Brand does this in A Map to the Door of No Return as well, particularly with her “Ruttier for the Marooned in Diaspora,” which bristles with her refusal to think return, her dislodging of belonging, and her hard insisting on the facts of displacement and the living in and as the displaced of diaspora. NourbeSe Philip does this in Zong! through her destruction of the archive in order to tell “the story that cannot be told” but must still be told (Saunders 2008a, 65). We must be (and we already are) about the work of what I am calling wake work as a theory and praxis of the wake; a theory and a praxis of Black being in diaspora. I am trying to find the language for this work, find the form for this work. Language and form fracture more every day. I am trying, too, to find the words that will articulate care and the words to think what Keguro Macharia (2015) calls those “we formations.” I am trying to think how to perform the labor of them. Or what Tinsley (2008, 191) calls a “feeling and a feeling for” and what Glissant ([1995] 2006, 9) refers to as “knowing ourselves as part and as crowd.” This is what I am calling wake work. With Brand and Philip, I want to sound this language anew, sound a new language. Thinking, still, with Brand and Philip, who demand, always, a new thinking, I want to distinguish what I am calling Black being in the wake and wake work from the work of melancholia and mourning.27 And though wake work is, at least in part, attentive to mourning and the mourning work that takes place on local and trans\*local and global levels, and even as we know that mourning an event might be interminable, how does one mourn the interminable event? Just as wake work troubles mourning, so too do the wake and wake work trouble the ways most museums and memorials take up trauma and memory. That is, if museums and memorials materialize a kind of reparation (repair) and enact their own pedagogies as they position visitors to have a particular experience or set of experiences about an event that is seen to be past, how does one memorialize chattel slavery and its afterlives, which are unfolding still? How do we memorialize an event that is still ongoing? Might we instead understand the absence of a National Slavery Museum in the United States as recognition of the ongoingness of the conditions of capture? Because how does one memorialize the everyday? How does one, in the words so often used by such institutions, “come to terms with” (which usually means move past) ongoing and quotidian atrocity? Put another way, I’m interested in ways of seeing and imagining responses to terror in the varied and various ways that our Black lives are lived under occupation; ways that attest to the modalities of Black life lived in, as, under, and despite Black death. And I want to think about what this imagining calls forth, to think through what it calls on “us” to do, think, feel in the wake of slavery—which is to say in an ongoing present of subjection and resistance; which is to say wake work, wake theory. I want, too, to distinguish what I am calling and calling for as care from state-imposed regimes of surveillance.28 How can we think (and rethink and rethink) care laterally, in the register of the intramural, in a different relation than that of the violence of the state? In what ways do we remember the dead, those lost in the Middle Passage, those who arrived reluctantly, and those still arriving? To quote Gaston Bachelard, whom I arrived at through Elizabeth DeLoughrey’s “Heavy Waters,” “water is an element ‘which remembers the dead’” (DeLoughrey 2010, 704). What, then, are the ongoing coordinates and effects of the wake, and what does it mean to inhabit that Fanonian “zone of non-Being” within and after slavery’s denial of Black humanity?29 Inhabiting here is the state of being inhabited/occupied and also being or dwelling in. In activating the multiple registers of “wake,” I have turned to images, poetry, and literature that take up the wake as a way toward understanding how slavery’s continued unfolding is constitutive of the contemporary conditions of spatial, legal, psychic, and material dimensions of Black non/being as well as Black aesthetic and other modes of deformation and interruption. That set of work by Black artists, poets, writers, and thinkers is positioned against a set of quotidian catastrophic events and their reporting that together comprise what I am calling the orthography of the wake. The latter is a dysgraphia of disaster, and these disasters arrive by way of the rapid, deliberate, repetitive, and wide circulation on television and social media of Black social, material, and psychic death. This orthography makes domination in/visible and not/visceral. This orthography is an instance of what I am calling the Weather; it registers and produces the conventions of antiblackness in the present and into the future. A reprise and an elaboration: Wakes are processes; through them we think about the dead and about our relations to them; they are rituals through which to enact grief and memory. Wakes allow those among the living to mourn the passing of the dead through ritual; they are the watching of relatives and friends beside the body of the deceased from death to burial and the accompanying drinking, feasting, and other observances, a watching practiced as a religious observance. But wakes are also “the track left on the water’s surface by a ship (figure 1.4); the disturbance caused by a body swimming, or one that is moved, in water; the air currents behind a body in flight; a region of disturbed flow; in the line of sight of (an observed object); and (something) in the line of recoil of (a gun)”; finally, wake means being awake and, also, consciousness. In the wake, the semiotics of the slave ship continue: from the forced movements of the enslaved to the forced movements of the migrant and the refugee, to the regulation of Black people in North American streets and neighborhoods, to those ongoing crossings of and drownings in the Mediterranean Sea, to the brutal colonial reimaginings of the slave ship and the ark; to the reappearances of the slave ship in everyday life in the form of the prison, the camp, and the school. As we go about wake work, we must think through containment, regulation, punishment, capture, and captivity and the ways the manifold representations of blackness become the symbol, par excellence, for the less-than-human being condemned to death. We must think about Black flesh, Black optics, and ways of producing enfleshed work; think the ways the hold cannot and does not hold even as the hold remains in the form of the semiotics of the slave ship hold, the prison, the womb, and elsewhere in and as the tension between being and instrumentality that is Black being in the wake. At stake is not recognizing antiblackness as total climate. At stake, too, is not recognizing an insistent Black visualsonic resistance to that imposition of non/being. How might we stay in the wake with and as those whom the state positions to die ungrievable deaths and live lives meant to be unlivable? These are questions of temporality, the longue durée, the residence and hold time of the wake. At stake, then is to stay in this wake time toward inhabiting a blackened consciousness that would rupture the structural silences produced and facilitated by, and that produce and facilitate, Black social and physical death. For, if we are lucky, we live in the knowledge that the wake has positioned us as no-citizen.30 If we are lucky, the knowledge of this positioning avails us particular ways of re/seeing, re/inhabiting, and re/imagining the world. And we might use these ways of being in the wake in our responses to terror and the varied and various ways that our Black lives are lived under occupation. I want In the Wake to declare that we are Black peoples in the wake with no state or nation to protect us, with no citizenship bound to be respected, and to position us in the modalities of Black life lived in, as, under, despite Black death: to think and be and act from there. It is my particular hope that the praxis of the wake and wake work, the theory and performance of the wake and wake work, as modes of attending to Black life and Black suffering, are imagined and performed here with enough specificity to attend to the direness of the multiple and overlapping presents that we face; it is also my hope that the praxis of the wake and wake work might have enough capaciousness to travel and do work that I have not here been able to imagine or anticipate.

#### Vote negative to endorsement of black annotation and redaction as a method of wake work.

**Sharpe 16** [Christina Sharpe is an associate professor of English at Tufts University and the author of *Monstrous Intimacies: Making Post-Slavery Subjects*, also published at Duke University Press, “In the Wake On Blackness and Being”, (p. 113-117) *Duke University Press*, October 13, 2016] HZaidi

I point to these practices of Black annotation and Black redaction as more examples of wake work. The orthographies of the wake require new modes of writing, new modes of making-sensible. Redaction comes to us most familiarly through those blacked-out “sensitive lines” in certain government documents that contain information we are not allowed to read. Steve McQueen’s film End Credits (2012) consists of six hours of images and voiceover of the redacted FBI files of Paul Robeson. As I watched and listened, it again became clear to me that so much of Black intramural life and social and political work is redacted, made invisible to the present and future, subtended by plantation logics, detached optics, and brutal architectures. [figure omitted] There is, in the Black diaspora (and I include the Continent here because of colonial histories and presents and trans\*migration) a long history of Black life, of Black lives being annotated and redacted. There is, as well, continuous resistance to and disruption of those violent annotations and redactions. A 2015 conference on Black portraiture has the subtitle Imaging the Body and Re- Staging Histories. Each time I read that word imaging I read it doubly. That is, I read the word as imaging, “to make a representation of the external form of,” and also as imagining, “to form a mental image or concept of; to suppose or assume; the ability to form mental images of things that either are not physically present or have never been conceived or created by others.”12 If we understand portraiture to be both the “art of creating portraits” (image and text) and “graphic and detailed description,” how might we understand a variety of forms of contemporary Black public image- making in and as refusals to accede to the optics, the disciplines, and the deathly demands of the antiblack worlds in which we live, work, and struggle to make visible (to ourselves, if not to others) all kinds of Black pasts, presents, and possible futures? Much of the work of Black imaging and the work that those images do out in the world has been about such imaginings of the fullness of Black life. In Cutting a Figure: Fashioning Black Portraiture, Richard Powell (2008, xv) writes that “a significant segment of black portraiture stands apart from the rest of the genre, and not only because of the historical and social realities of racism. Rather, the difference often lies in the artistic contract between the portrayer and portrayed; conscious or unconscious negotiations that invest black subjects with social capital.” While Powell speaks here of Black artists and subjects’ negotiated and reciprocal imaginings, I want to think about those portraits outside of our own imaging and imagining in which, to borrow from Huey Copeland (2013), we seem “bound to appear.” There is a long history and present of resistance to, disruption and refashioning of images of blackness and Black people. There is a long history and present of imaging and imagining blackness and Black selves otherwise, in excess of the containment of the long and brutal history of the violent annotations of Black being: what Spillers, for example, called the hieroglyphics of the flesh; a history that is “the crisis of referentiality, the fictions of personhood, and the gap or incommensurability between the proper name and the form of existence that it signifies” (Hartman 2014). I am thinking here, ushering here, into the gap, Black annotation together with Black redaction, not as opposites, but as trans\*verse and coextensive ways to imagine otherwise. Put another way, I want to think annotation in relation to the dysgraphia and the orthography of the wake; in relation to those photographs of Black people in distress that appear so regularly in our lives, whether the image of that suffering Black person comes from quotidian or extraordinary disasters, the photos of them often hit in the register of abandonment. The photographs do this even, or even especially, when they purport to “humanize” Black people—that is, they purport to make manifest “humanity” that we already know to be present.13 To be clear, just as I am not interested in rescuing the term girl (see “The Ship”), I am not interested in rescuing Black being(s) for the category of the “Human,” misunderstood as “Man,” or for the languages of development. Both of those languages and the material conditions that they re/produce continue to produce our fast and slow deaths. I am interested in ways of seeing and imagining responses to the terror visited on Black life and the ways we inhabit it, are inhabited by it, and refuse it. I am interested in the ways we live in and despite that terror. By considering that relationship between imaging and imagining in the registers of Black annotation and Black redaction, I want to think about what these images call forth. And I want to think through what they call on us to do, think, feel in the wake of slavery—which is to say, in an ongoing present of subjection and resistance. Annotation appears like that asterisk, which is itself an annotation mark, that marks the trans\*formation into ontological blackness. As photographs of Black people circulate as portraits in a variety of publics, they are often accompanied by some sort of note or other metadata, whether that notation is in the photograph itself or as a response to a dehumaning photograph, in order that the image might travel with supplemental information that marks injury and, then, more than injury. We know that, as far as images of Black people are concerned, in their circulation they often don’t, in fact, do the imaging work that we expect of them. There are too many examples of this to name: from the videotaped beating of Rodney King in 1991, to the murder of Oscar Grant, to the brutal murders of twenty-one trans women in the United States as of November 2015, to all of the circulating images of and in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina and the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, to the ongoing deaths in transatlantic, trans-Mediterranean, and transcontinental crossings extending across the Black global diaspora. This is true even though and when we find images of Black suffering in various publics framed in and as calls to action or calls to feel with and for. Most often these images function as a hail to the non Black person in the Althusserian sense. That is, these images work to confirm the status, location, and already held opinions within dominant ideology about those exhibitions of spectacular Black bodies whose meanings then remain unchanged. We have been reminded by Hartman and many others that the repetition of the visual, discursive, state, and other quotidian and extraordinary cruel and unusual violences enacted on Black people does not lead to a cessation of violence, nor does it, across or within communities, lead primarily to sympathy or something like empathy. Such repetitions often work to solidify and make continuous the colonial project of violence. With that knowledge in mind, what kinds of ethical viewing and reading practices must we employ, now, in the face of these onslaughts? What might practices of Black annotation and Black redaction offer? What follows are three examples of what I am calling Black visual/textual annotation and redaction. Redaction and annotation toward seeing and reading otherwise; toward reading and seeing something in excess of what is caught in the frame; toward seeing something beyond a visuality that is, as Nicholas Mirzoeff (2011) argues, subtended by the logics of the administered plantation. In “Home,” Toni Morrison (1998, 7) writes that she has consistently tried “to carve away the accretions of deceit, blindness, ignorance, paralysis, and sheer malevolence embedded in raced language so that other kinds of perception were not only available but were inevitable.” I am imagining that the work of Black annotation and Black redaction is to enact the movement to that inevitable—a counter to abandonment, another effort to try to look, to try to really see.14

### ALT – Terrefe

#### Alt is an instance of psychic resistance that builds moments of black social life against the afterlife of slavery.

**Terrefe 17**, Selamawit Terrefe, Dr. Selamawit D. Terrefe is an Assistant Professor at Tulane University in English specializing in Global Black Studies, Gender and Sexuality, Psychoanalysis, Continental Philosophy, Critical Theory, and Radical and Revolutionary Politics. 2017, “Dissociative States: The Metaphysics of Blackness and the Psychic Afterlife of Slavery” <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/8h75877m> ila1

For Black men’s access to these tools is in the first instance contingently granted only if it serves anti-Black interests, and in the second instance never bolsters any mode of Blackness into power. Rather, these tools are wielded to mete out punishment to Blackness that can never, and must never, be incorporated into hegemonic conceptions of what it means to be human or free, and what serves the interests of white patriarchal heteronormativity. Blackness yields no power within the state or within the intramural. Black social life “lived underground,” however, includes modes of psychic resistance we have yet to fully understand. This very resistance is inextricably linked to Black women’s (and other groups of Black people with less access to the instruments of “borrowed institutionality”) suffering made (il)legible within revolutionary movements. In fact, I argue that without devising proper analyses, discourse, and political strategies that understand the unique ways Black women’s, particularly poor Black women’s, suffering remains illegible within the intramural yet legible and malleable in the interests of anti-Blackness, we will fail in our attempts to unveil how the psychic afterlife of slavery persists within our most radical and revolutionary attempts to foment revolution and cultivate Black love: Black love for all positioned within the varied spectrum of subjectivities within Blackness.

#### The alt is an investigation of the black psyche and the lost archives of racial slavery to define blackness outside of the mandates of civil society

**Terrefe 17**, Selamawit Terrefe, Dr. Selamawit D. Terrefe is an Assistant Professor at Tulane University in English specializing in Global Black Studies, Gender and Sexuality, Psychoanalysis, Continental Philosophy, Critical Theory, and Radical and Revolutionary Politics. 2017, “Dissociative States: The Metaphysics of Blackness and the Psychic Afterlife of Slavery” <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/8h75877m> ila1

Undoubtedly, history does matter in how we subjectively bear its weight, but the recording of history is also a subjective enterprise. What Head and Kennedy’s texts also demonstrate is the impossibility of comparative analysis of African and Black diasporic identity and Black (global) structural positionality since the former is multifarious and the latter is singular. However, both are the products of significant historical events underscoring what Anthony Paul Farley has described as “perfecting slavery”: “The story of progress up from slavery is a lie, the longest lie...And slavery is death.”47 Achille Mbembe also posits that “[t]he slave trade had ramifications that remain unknown to us; to a large extent, the trade was the event through which Africa was born to modernity.”48 If one were to maintain that these texts were about the vagaries of specific events of twentieth century racial violence or the political status of Black people in the US and Africa, then Kennedy’s allusions to Africa seem as irreconcilable as Head’s reference to the KKK: “What did mothers, Black mothers, say to children whose fathers had been lynched by the Ku Klux Klan in America? She had a picture of a Southern lynch mob, a whole group of white men and women. Two Black men hung dead from a tree. The lynchers were smiling.”49 Elizabeth’s question of the Klan’s presence in America is directly followed by reference to the Black woman she hallucinates, Medusa, as a displacement for the signifier of racial terror assigned to the KKK: “Medusa smiled like that [the lynchers] in her mental images, but Medusa was as close as her own breathing, and each night she looked straight into Medusa’s powerful Black eyes. It was tracing evil to its roots. The eyes of the lynch mob were full of comprehension, bold, consciousness, deliberate.”50 Kennedy’s inclusion of Africa, via one of the protagonist’s “selves” as Patrice Lumumba, his personification as the continent’s “jungle,” or the “ebony mask” with which he is bludgeoned links Africa and the US through the metaphysical properties of Blackness as Africanness. Throughout the drama, the long durée of racial slavery and its psychic afterlife appear on a continuum through the “libidinal economy”51 of violence. Funnyhouse of a Negro’s displacement of the sexual violence of miscegenation on the Black male figure of Patrice Lumumba and A Question of Power’s displacement of the racial violence of lynching (often a punishment over the perceived threat of miscegenation) onto the figure of Medusa demonstrate how the “epidermal racial schema” of Blackness, or its relegation to the physical alone, is auxiliary to the psychic fantasies in which Blackness, as a product of racial slavery, circulates. As such, I argue that we must investigate the Black psyche and the figurative registers of the lost archive of racial slavery therein to elucidate what is untranslatable in the magnitude of slavery’s breach. One such figuration, the semiotics of psychosis, illuminates Black anti-Blackness as a constitutive element of itself—a product of the white imagination within the foundation of the Black unconscious. This is recognition of one’s self as both double and split, a non-being (in relation to Human others) severed from a history one can’t quite remember but also cannot forget has been lost, what Brand describes as the “place which holds the before of history.”52 If slavery’s archive speaks through the living dead in these texts, it is through and against the language of history, the language of madness, that they attempt to speak “outside” of themselves.

### ALT – Black Care

#### Vote neg to affirm Black care, the refusal to distance from pathology. This ends the world, producing Black sociality.

**Sexton 10** (Jared Sexton, Director, African American Studies School of Humanities , Associate Professor, African American Studies School of Humanities, Associate Professor, Film & Media Studies School of Humanities at University of California Irvine, “The Social Life of Social Death: On Afro-Pessimism and Black Optimism”)

What I find most intriguing about the timbre of the argument of “The Case of Blackness,” and the black optimism it articulates against a certain construal of afro-pessimism, is the way that it works away from a discourse of black pathology only to swerve right back into it as an ascription to those found to be taking up and holding themselves in “the stance of the pathologist” in relation to black folks. I say this not only because there is, in this version of events, a recourse to psychoanalytic terminology (“fetishization,” “obsession,” “repetition,”), but also because there is at the heart of the matter a rhetorical question that establishes both the bad advice of a wild analysis and a tacit diagnosis affording a certain speaker’s benefit: “So why is it repressed?” The “it” that has been afflicted by the psychopathology of obsessional neurosis is the understanding, which is also to say the celebration, of the ontological priority or previousness of blackness relative to the antiblackness that establishes itself against it, a priority or previousness that is also termed “knowledge of freedom” or, pace Chandler, comprehension of “the constitutive force of the African American subject(s)” (Chandler 2000: 261). [21] What does not occur here is a consideration of the possibility that something might be unfolding in the project or projections of afro-pessimism “knowing full well the danger of a kind of negative reification” associated with its analytical claims to the paradigmatic (Moten 2004: 279). That is to say, **it might just be the case that an object lesson in the phenomenology of the thing is a gratuity that folds a new encounter into older habits of thought through a reinscription of (black) pathology that reassigns its cause and relocates its source without ever really getting inside it**. In a way, what we’re talking about relates not to a disagreement about “unthought positions” (and their de-formation) but to a disagreement, or discrepancy, about “unthought dispositions” (and their in-formation). I would maintain this insofar as the misrecognition at work in the reading of that motley crew listed in the ninth footnote regards, perhaps ironically, the performative dimension or signifying aspect of a “generalized impropriety” so improper as to appear as the same old propriety returning through the back door. Without sufficient consideration of the gap between statement and enunciation here, to say nothing of quaint notions like context or audience or historical conjuncture, the discourse of afro-pessimism, even as it approaches otherwise important questions, can only seem like a “tragically neurotic” instance of “certain discourse on the relation between blackness and death” (Moten 2007: 9).xiii Fanon and his interlocutors, or what appear rather as his fateful adherents, would seem to have a problem embracing black social life because they never really come to believe in it, because they cannot acknowledge the social life from which they speak and of which they speak—as negation and impossibility—as their own (Moten 2008: 192). Another way of putting this might be to say that they are caught in a performative contradiction enabled by disavowal. I wonder, however, whether things are even this clear in Fanon and the readings his writing might facilitate. Lewis Gordon’s sustained engagement finds Fanon situated in an ethical stance grounded in the affirmation of blackness in the historic antiblack world. In a response to the discourse of multiracialism emergent in the late twentieth-century United States, for instance, Gordon writes, following Fanon, that “there is no way to reject the thesis that there is something wrong with being black beyond the willingness to ‘be’ black – in terms of convenient fads of playing blackness, but in paying the costs of antiblackness on a global scale. Against the raceless credo, then, racism cannot be rejected without a dialectic in which humanity experiences a blackened world” (Gordon 1997: 67). What is this willingness to ‘be’ black, of choosing to be black affirmatively rather than reluctantly, that Gordon finds as the key ethical moment in Fanon? [23] Elsewhere, in a discussion of Du Bois on the study of black folk, Gordon restates an existential phenomenological conception of the antiblack world developed across his first several books: “Blacks here suffer the phobogenic reality posed by the spirit of racial seriousness. In effect, they more than symbolize or signify various social pathologies—they become them. In our antiblack world, blacks are pathology” (Gordon 2000: 87). This conception would seem to support Moten’s contention that even much radical black studies scholarship sustains the association of blackness with a certain sense of decay and thereby fortifies and extends the interlocutory life of widely accepted political common sense. In fact, it would seem that Gordon deepens the already problematic association to the level of identity. And yet, this is precisely what Gordon argues is the value and insight of Fanon: he fully accepts the definition of himself as pathological as it is imposed by a world that knows itself through that imposition, rather than remaining in a reactive stance that insists on the (temporal, moral, etc.) heterogeneity between a self and an imago originating in culture. Though it may appear counterintuitive, or rather because it is counterintuitive, this acceptance or affirmation is active; it is a willing or willingness, in other words, to pay whatever social costs accrue to being black, to inhabiting blackness, to living a black social life under the shadow of social death**. This is not an accommodation to the dictates of the antiblack world**. **The affirmation of blackness, which is to say an affirmation of pathological being, is a refusal to distance oneself from blackness in a valorization of minor differences that bring one closer to health, to life, or to sociality**. Fanon writes in the first chapter of Black Skin, White Masks, “The Black Man and Language”: “A Senegalese who learns Creole to pass for Antillean is a case of alienation. The Antilleans who make a mockery out of him are lacking in judgment” (Fanon 2008: 21). In a world structured by the twin axioms of white superiority and black inferiority, of white existence and black nonexistence, a world structured by a negative categorical imperative—“above all, don’t be black” (Gordon 1997: 63)—in this world, the zero degree of transformation is the turn toward blackness, a turn toward the shame, as it were, that “resides in the idea that ‘I am thought of as less than human’” (Nyong’o 2002: 389).xiv In this we might create a transvaluation of pathology itself, something like an embrace of pathology without pathos.

### ALT – Radical Negativity

**The alternative’s radical negativity refuses questions of political feasibility and liberal choice in favor of changing the coordinates of politics so as to pose a demand in excess of any present imagination – Afropessimism is an ethics of the real which insists on abolition as the foundation for ending the world.**

Barber and Sexton 17 – Jared, Associate Professor of African American Studies and Film and Media Studies at the University of California, Irvine, where he also holds an affiliation with the Center for Law, Culture, and Society. He is the author of Amalgamation Schemes: Antiblackness and the Critique of Multiracialism (University of Minnesota Press, 2008) and Black Masculinity and the Cinema of Policing (Palgrave Macmillan, 2017). September 18, 2017, "On Black Negativity, or the Affirmation of Nothing," [http://societyandspace.org/2017/09/18/on-black-negativity-or-the-affirmation-of-nothing/](http://societyandspace.org/2017/09/18/on-black-negativity-or-the-affirmation-of-nothing/))

There is no such thing as a positive aggressive strength, only a negative defensive one. Attackers always only attack themselves. We can truly approach another only in the experience of our mutual weakness. (This is something I’ve discussed over the years with Jaye Austin Williams, who is now teaching at Bucknell University. Her research and writing on black feminist playwrights Kia Corthron, Lynne Nottage, and Suzan-Lori Parks is animated, in part, by her own martial arts background. In addition to her work as scholar-educator, writer-director, and actor-singer, she’s also a 4th Dan aikidoist.) This is the crucial distinction: the baseless, centered outreach of tenderness, and the well founded, off-center overreach of aggression. Is it any surprise, in an anti-black world, that these gestures are confused by so many, those that mistake an invitation for a threat? How many have resented the invitation blackness makes and defended themselves against it with lethal consequence? The intensification of negativity is a way of thinking seriously with and through the various black colloquialisms to “break it down.” Blackness might be that spirit of inquiry and argumentation that, borrowing a phrase from Public Enemy, says “bring that beat back,” a gesture that says you didn’t really understand all there is yet to understand, feel all there is yet to feel, hear all there is yet to hear—within your own experience. We have no trouble seeing how black musical forms have not only done right by the diverse aesthetic practices they have engaged around the world, but have also often improved upon or enhanced the source material. They have at the very least made something else beautiful and discerning right alongside: complement, supplement, compliment. The global histories of jazz and hip-hop and the increasingly visible itinerary of black art song are just several of the more prominent examples. Could we develop a similar sensibility for appreciating how black thought attempts something kindred? So, too, black political movement. Sylvia Wynter (2006) has that fantastic line in her interview with the journal Proud Flesh: “When I write, I want to sound in theory the way Aretha Franklin sounds in song.” By that she means not only—only!—that she wants all that she writes to be liberating, but also that she wants to allow her thinking to unfold in a non-linear, creative fashion, as a poesis of thought. Many have waxed romantic about this poesis of late, but it is a process that involves all of the destructive and violent counter-forces of a peaceful martial art that can destroy your joints and break your bones and even end your life if you don’t figure out how to go with the flow. DB: “There is no such thing as a positive aggressive strength, only a negative defensive one.” This remark, as index of an aikido according to blackness, brings to mind a question you ask in one of your recently published articles: is there not a way to think … about a violence indifferent to hope, violence unmotivated by rage, violence irreducible to the dialectics of love and hate? Is there a violence that, as Nikki Giovanni once said, simply ‘cannot take the weight of a constant degradation’ (Fowler, 1992: 96), a violence that operates as a response per se, as what we might call defense without positive content? (2016a). I wonder whether it would make sense to connect the line of thought you’re pursuing here to the question of—the question that is—“the relation between defense and the outstretched hand.” I’m also struck by the resonance between your emphasis, following Wynter, on a mode of thinking that “unfold[s] in a non-linear fashion” and your articulation of negativity within the context of your writing. Such negativity is inseparable from the demand—which is “so much bigger”—in that it insists, amidst delimitative aggression, on this demand’s unfolding. If one means of delimiting this demand is imposed by the linearity of an “expectation of realization”—by investment in linear temporality, a horizon of the historically successive and successful—then negativity insists on, or as, a question of time. Specifically, it asks not whether the demand is realizable, but rather why the demand must be thought within, delimited by, the terms of realizability. In this moment, “the question posed by and as blackness” seems to emerge as the seeking, asking, desiring—the offering—of time itself. One of the ways in which I see your work posing this questioning of time, or offering this time of questioning, is through the motif of “interminability.” In fact, I sense that such interminability is at issue in what you’ve here described as “a ceaselessly universalizing universality” or, once again, as a demand in excess of any presently imaginable form of realization. The absence of a term adequate to the demand is also the absence of a terminus and of the calculability that such a point of arrival could claim to make possible. In this vein, you’ve described abolition as “the interminable radicalization of every radical movement” (2016b: 593) and invoked “an ethics of the real, a politics of the imperative, engaged in its interminably downward movement” (2016a). Your elaboration of this downward—one might say unfathomable—itinerary draws on an engagement with David Marriott’s account of the subjection of black persons to “the interminable time of meaningless, impersonal dying” (Marriott, 2007: 230; cited, with emphasis added, in Sexton, 2015: 168). I mention this particularly in view of your remark that the real according to which interminability unfolds is a matter of non-life. JS: I think you’re right to draw this link between “an aikido according to [or with] blackness” and my earlier, speculative thoughts on black feminist violence as a practice of “response per se, a defense without positive content.” We are, in a very basic way, always responding to the world, to ourselves, to the world in ourselves, to ourselves in the world, more than we are initiating, in thought and action. Any initiative or initiation would seem to be marked as such by a kind of permanent time lag or belatedness in which all thought is afterthought and all action is retroaction. But, then, we are also always active in that fundamental responsiveness, so much so that even passivity (whether waiting or resting or languishing) is a type of activity, that of our active being, that which brings forth life from the non-life with which it is commingled. Our being is active, but that doesn’t mean our being is always in-action. Why, in our political and intellectual circles, all the pointed concern about activity, why the worry, or fear, about being misunderstood as passive, individually and collectively? And why the close association between being passive and being victim or between passive-being and victim-being? Indeed, that tension between active/passive states provides the principal ground for the symbolic and material production of differences of race, gender, sexuality, class—all differently arrayed for different reasons, of course. I’m reminded, on that note, of a question Wilderson asked me years ago about an often overlooked passage in Fanon, from his critique of Octave Mannoni in Chapter 4 of Black Skin, White Masks, where Fanon is meditating on the aim of his vocation as a politically engagé mental health clinician. (I have some thoughts, by the way, on what I think Fanon misses in his reading of Mannoni in my article, “Curtain of the Sky”). Here’s the passage: As a psychoanalyst, I should help my patient to become conscious of his unconscious and abandon his attempts at a hallucinatory whitening, but also to act in the direction of a change in the social structure. In other words, the black man should no longer be confronted by the dilemma, turn white or disappear; but he should be able to take cognizance of a possibility of existence. In still other words, if society makes difficulties for him because of his color, if in his dreams I establish the expression of an unconscious desire to change color, my objective will not be that of dissuading him from it by advising him to “keep his place”; on the contrary, my objective, once his motivations have been brought into consciousness, will be to put him in a position to choose action (or passivity) with respect to the real source of the conflict—that is, toward the social structures (Fanon, 2008b: 74-75). So, Fanon moves initially from this deceptively recognizable psycho-political activist guideline, where the unreason of alienated compliance gives way to the reason of disalienated resistance, to a parenthetical clinical modulation, where he no longer seeks to enable action per se, and action in a particular direction at that, but rather decision; decision in the proper sense, rather than the forced choice, the vel, of hallucinatory whiteness: “turn white or disappear.” No decision can be made within the terms of a forced choice, Fanon reveals, only a decision about the terms of its imposition. (Aside: the Philcox translation has it as: “whiten or perish.” I like the Markmann phrasing better here because it stays with the dynamics of hyper/in/visibility that Fanon is exploring, the peculiar problem of overdetermination from without, which is to say of anti-black racialization, of victimized appearance, but also of a certain ethics or aesthetics of disappearance that we can glean from a reading of Fanon. Kara Keeling (2007) and Huey Copeland (2013) and Simone Browne (2015) have elaborated on this nexus generatively in their respective work.) Wilderson’s question was to the effect of: What would a properly decided, freely chosen, passivity toward the social structure look like? Is there such a thing—ethically, politically—as radical passivity? (I ended my first book with a slightly modified reference from Thomas Carl Wall’s (1999) text bearing that very title. I wonder about this genuinely still and tend to think, yes, there is such a thing.) Žižek, to take another well-known example, has played on the pop psychological notion of “passive aggressive behavior” in his withering critique of so much leftist activism today. In The Parallax View, he writes: perhaps, one should assert this attitude of passive aggressivity as a proper radical political gesture, in contrast to aggressive passivity, the standard ‘interpassive’ mode of our participation in socio-ideological life in which we are active all the time in order to make it sure that nothing will happen, that nothing will really change. In such a constellation, the first truly critical (‘aggressive’, violent) step is to withdraw into passivity, to refuse to participate—Bartleby’s ‘I would prefer not to’ is the necessary first step which as it were clears the ground for a true activity, for an act that will effectively change the coordinates of the constellation (Žižek, 2009: 342). Now, Zizek’s “Bartleby politics” are obviously not quietist, insofar as they are meant to prepare the way for a true political act. (Frédéric Neyrat [2014] has a related conception: “Rather than its heart, passivity should be the skin of politics. Without passivity, without a ‘negative capability,’ to refer to Keats’s notion, there isn’t any creative imagination, this chaotic imagination that generates the promises of new worlds.” And, not for nothing, Hortense Spillers (2003) makes another, earlier argument for “negative capability” in a pair of essays first published in the 1990s, “The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual: A Post-Date” and “All The Things You Could Be By Now If Sigmund Freud’s Wife Was Your Mother: Psychoanalysis and Race.” But the interregnum that opens up between the frenetic, aggressively passive “activism” of the current socio-ideological constellation—in which “the anxious expectation that nothing will happen” competes with “the desperate demand to do something”—and that new constellation brought into being by the introduction of some fundamental indeterminancy—a negativity that is, as you rightly note above, strictly unfathomable—that interregnum would seem to require the cultivation of an oxymoronic passive activity. Does it make sense to speak of a need for “passivism” (not to be confused with the homophonic term “pacifism”)? Think of the performative contradiction of trying to relax; the harder you try to attain it, the more it evades you. As every athlete worth their salt knows, your best performance requires your least effort. The more you relax, the more intensely you can exert yourself. In this scenario, you do more the less you try. It’s worth thinking about this seriously in the Trump era (using Trump here as a symbol for the consolidation of a whole post-civil rights, post-cold war, post-9/11 dispensation), given how greatly the ongoing reactionary campaign benefits from and requires any and all imagery of protest, political or pedestrian, as evidence—“alternative factual evidence”—supporting a narrative, ultimately, of white victimization and oppressive black power (and all the conflictual transliterations of this antagonism seen today—from the land and resource battles in the heartland to the travel bans at the borders). Given, that is, how frustratingly ineffective that protest seems to be in the face of an entire infrastructure that not only absorbs resistance, but solicits it too. It makes you nostalgic for the days of good old-fashioned repression and co-optation (days which, of course, never really existed in black), because at least then you knew you were on to something truly oppositional, subversive, alternate. I don’t think it’s a coincidence that, under such conditions, black (or blackened) artists are drawn with some regularity to paradoxical ideas about fighting anti-blackness by over-identifying with its desire to disappear or distort or disfigure blackness, essentially taking it over and enforcing it hyperbolically, satirically, even vindictively. I think Paul Beatty’s literature has done this to great effect for twenty years or more—from White Boy Shuffle (1996) to The Sellout (2015)—and you could add to that titles like Darius James’s Negrophobia (1992) and Kola Boof’s Sexy Part of the Bible (2011); consider as well the work of Betye Saar and Kara Walker and Michael Ray Charles in the visual arts, the comedy of Dave Chappelle and Leslie Jones, or films like Spike Lee’s Bamboozled (2000) and Lars von Trier’s Manderlay (2005) and Jordan Peele’s Get Out (2017). I don’t want to get too much into the weeds of the current conjuncture and lose track of the larger structural problem posed by blackness and anti-blackness, a problem that confounds the very distinction between structure and conjuncture in the first place. It is not just the exigencies of the present moment or the strategic and tactical challenges facing the Movement for Black Lives that raise the question of how to intervene, of how to introduce “invention into existence,” as Fanon put it. What I’ve called “a groundless or baseless politics that does not proceed from a margin of power, a politics with no (final) recourse to foundations of any sort, a politics forged from critical resources immanent to the situation, resources from anywhere and anyone, which is to say from nowhere and no one in particular” (Sexton, 2016b: 589); this approach to politics would seem to entail a total rejection of transcendence, a politics of pure immanence without the Archimedean point. And in one sense it is, but I am attuned to the difficulties arising from an abandonment of the negative in our enthusiasm for the affirmative, and so I want to think not so much about transcendence viz. immanence as about the various forms or modalities of transcendence and immanence that can be mobilized.