# Blake---Round 6

# 1NC

## Afropessimism

### 1NC—Afropessimism

#### The affirmative is a fundamental reconstruction of America at the level of systems of thought—however, the only coherent ethical choice is the destruction of America. Antagonism in the US is not metaphysical but paradigmatic, and anti-blackness is the sine-qua-non of Pax Metaphysica.

**Wilderson** 20**10** [Frank B., killed apartheid officials in South Africa, nuff said, Red, White & Black: Cinema and the Structure of U.S. Antagonisms, pages 1-5]

When I was a young student at Columbia University in New York there was a Black woman who used to stand outside the gate and yell at Whites, Latinos, and East- and South Asian students, staff, and faculty as they entered the university. She accused them of having stolen her sofa and of selling her into slavery. She always winked at the Blacks, though we didn’t wink back. Some of us thought her outbursts too bigoted and out of step with the burgeoning ethos of multiculturalism and “rainbow coalitions” to endorse. But others did not wink back because we were too fearful of the possibility that her isolation would become our isolation, and we had come to Columbia for the express, though largely assumed and unspoken, purpose of foreclosing upon that peril. Besides, people said she was crazy. Later, when I attended UC Berkeley, I saw a Native American man sitting on the sidewalk of Telegraph Avenue. On the ground in front of him was an upside down hat and a sign informing pedestrians that here was where they could settle the “Land Lease Accounts” that they had neglected to settle all of their lives. He too, so went the scuttlebutt, was “crazy.” 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, twelve 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 twelve 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 they 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.i 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.ii 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 strategiesdesign), 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.iv 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.

#### Kritik outweighs – their impacts are experiential, black suffering is ontological and sets the stage for all other impacts

Frank **Wilderson**, 20**11** (revolutionary, “The Vengeance of Vertigo: Aphasia and Abjection in the Political Trials of Black Insurgents,” <http://www.scribd.com/doc/79282989/Wilderson-the-Vengeance-of-Vertigo> >:)

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 relationship 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. [4] Elsewhere I have argued that the Black is a sentient being though not a Human being. The Black’s and the Human’s disparate relationship 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 InTensions Journal Copyright ©2011 by York University (Toronto, Canada) Issue 5 (Fall/Winter 2011) ISSN# 1913-5874 Wilderson The Vengeance of Vertigo 4 (or is perceived to resist) the disciplinary 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 objective vertigo, is indicative of a political ontology which is radically different 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 revolutionary violence of the subaltern; but they are spared objective vertigo. This is because the most disorienting aspects of their lives are induced by the struggles that arise from intra-Human conflicts 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 territorial 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 frameworks of suffering and dispossession which are analogic with the myriad maps and frameworks which explain the dispossession of Human subalterns.

#### They say the resolution is void—they are wrong, blackness is the prior ontological void upon which the rest of society is constructed.

**Pak** 20**12** (Yumi, PhD in literature from UC-San Diego, “Outside Relationality: Autobiographical Deformations and the Literary Lineage of Afro-pessimism in 20th and 21st Century African American Literature,” Dissertation through Proquest)

I turn here to Hartman’s work in African American cultural studies, wherein she problematizes the notion of empathy as a useful or neutral structure of feeling. In Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America, Hartman recounts John Rankin’s letter to his brother, where he describes how deeply moved he was after witnessing a slave coffle. He writes that his imagination forces him to believe, “‘for the moment, that I myself was a slave, and with my wife and children placed under the reign of terror. I began in reality to feel for myself, my wife, and my children’” (Scenes of Subjection 18, emphasis mine). This notation of beginning to “feel,” where the feeling supplants “reality,” is the point of Hartman’s contention and my intervention. As she writes, “in making the slave’s suffering his own, Rankin begins to feel for himself rather than for those whom this exercise in imagination presumably is designed to read.” Or, in other words, “the ease of Rankin’s empathic identification is as much due to his good intentions and heartfelt opposition to slavery as to the fungibility of the captive body” (19). Rankin can feel black because blackness is fungible: blackness is simultaneously tradable and replaceable. This is precisely what Wilderson critiques as the “ruse of analogy.” He writes that this ruse “erroneously locates Blacks in the world – a place where they have not been since the dawning of Blackness,” and continues that this attempt at “analogy is not only a mystification, and often erasure, of Blackness’s grammar of suffering” (Red, White & Black 37). In other words, Rankin is able to feel for himself, his wife and his children precisely because the slave is erased in that feeling. He reads himself as analogous to the slave as a means of understanding his subject status when that analogy misreads and misplaces blackness. I contend Himes is making the same argument: by creating a figure that critically displaces the idea of a “shared humanity,” by making Jimmy white, he negates an identificatory practice which grounds itself on an eventual recognition of subjectivity, or an insertion into civil society. Hence, Himes voids the novel of blackness (except for the most periphery figures) precisely because blackness is constituted through the absence of relationality itself. Furthermore, I posit that Jimmy’s whiteness is symptomatic of Afro-pessimism via the quandary David Marriott poses in his scholarship, where he challenges us to question “how we can understand black identity when, through an act of mimetic desire, this identity already gets constructed as white” (Haunted Life 208). Marriott re-reads Fanon’s seminal encounter with a young white boy in Black Skin, White Masks, and an anecdote of a little black girl attempting to scrub herself clean of racial markings, not as encounters of interpellation, but as intensely fraught moments of violent phobic recognition of the self as something hateful and hated. Marriott states, “[i]n these two scenes a suppressed but noticeable anger and confusion arises in response to the intruding other” (the other being the little white child for Fanon, and her own image for the little girl) and that this response has “to do with the realization that the other, as racial imago, has already occupied and split the subject’s ego” (210).49 It is not that blackness is set in Hegelian opposition to whiteness as the O/other, but rather that blackness is dependent on whiteness always already having been present. In other words, blackness is not “something missing,” but rather “the addition of something undesirable and dirty that fragments the body by destroying all positive semblances of the self.” This “addition” of blackness results in “the self’s desire to hurt the imago of the body in a passionate bid to escape it” (210). In this reading of Fanon, Marriott offers his contribution to the field of Afro-pessimism: even on a psychic level, within the discourse of self and ontology, blackness is null and void. The black body is occupied by a white unconscious, one that loves his/herself as white, and hates his/herself as black.50 As Marriott writes in the introduction to On Black Men, “[t]he black man is, in other words, everything that the wishful-shameful fantasies of culture want him to be, an enigma of inversion and of hate – and this is our existence as men, as black men” (On Black Men x). themselves,” that indeed, “this prototypical identification with whiteness” is “a foundational culture and tradition which can be neither avoided nor eluded” (55 – 56). The absence of a black interiority is also addressed by Kevin Bell as he examines the 1953 meeting between Himes, Richard Wright and James Baldwin at Les Deux Magots in Paris. Bell writes that many of Himes’s literary contemporaries, including Wright and Baldwin, are mostly invested in “sonorities, colors, and movements that... constitute little more than added flavorings, punctuations and accents by which to augment an already- established, normative ‘white’ interiority” (“Assuming” 853). This is in contrast to Himes, who waylays coherence and a structured black subjectivity for the “suffocating thickness of a crazy, wild-eyed feeling” which is the discord always present in the black unconscious, or the realization that one has always been, and will always be, at war with oneself (856). Jimmy thinks that “he could see his mind standing just beyond his reach, like a white, weightless skeleton” (Yesterday 52). His mind is not his to grasp, always “just beyond his reach,” and is imagined as a white figure of death. It is impossible to incorporate Jimmy and his mind in much the same way as it is impossible to bring blackness into relationality, or to enfold him within civil society. To do so would lead to the logical unfolding present in Wilderson’s work, and one which Himes’ articulates forty years earlier during an interview: “[t]he black man can destroy America completely, destroy it as a nation of any consequence. It can just fritter away in the world. It can be destroyed completely” (“My Man Himes” 46). In other words, to make blackness relational is to lead to the incoherence and dismantling of civil society as it currently stands.

#### Their arguments about how we should critique metaphysics ignore the anti-blackness; while they perform their thought experiments black bodies will continue to suffer.

George Yancy, 2008, Associate Professor of Philosophy, Duquesne University, Black bodies, white gazes: the continuing significance of race, p. 299

Although there are many while antiracists who do fight and will continue to fight against the operations of white power, and while it is true that the regulatory power of whiteness will invariably attempt to undermine such efforts, it is important that white antiracists realize how much is at stake. While antiracist whites take time to get their shit together, a luxury that is a species of privilege, Black bodies and bodies of color continue to suffer, their bodies cry out for the political and existential urgency for the immediate undoing of the oppressive operations of whiteness. Here, the very notion of the temporal gets racialized. My point here is that even as whites take the time to theorize the complexity of whiteness, revealing its various modes of resistance to radical transformation, Black bodies continue to endure tremendous pain and suffering. Doing theory in the service of undoing whiteness comes with its own snares and seductions, its own comfort zones, and reinscription of distances. Whites who deploy theory in the service of fighting against white racism must caution against the seduction of white narcissism, the recentering of whiteness, even if it is the object of critical reflection, and, hence, the process of sequestration from the real world of weeping, suffering, and traumatized Black bodies impacted by the operations of white power. As antiracist whites continue to make mistakes and continue to falter in the face of institutional interpellation and habituated racist reflexes, tomorrow, a Black body will be murdered as it innocently reaches for its wallet. The sheer weight of this reality mocks the patience of theory.

#### White supremacy is a global modality of genocidal violence – slavery may have ended in name, but its operational logic continues to fester. Their project simply provides fuel for Whiteness. The debate is a question of starting point—we must recognize power as paradigmatic and not metaphysical.

**Rodriguez ’11** [Dylan, PhD in Ethnic Studies Program of the University of California Berkeley and Associate Professor of Ethnic Studies at University of California Riverside, “The Black Presidential Non-Slave: Genocide and the Present Tense of Racial Slavery”, Political Power and Social Theory Vol. 22, pp. 38-43]

To crystallize what I hope to be the potentially useful implications of this provocation toward a retelling of the slavery-abolition story: if we follow the narrative and theoretical trajectories initiated here, it should take little stretch of the historical imagination, nor a radical distension of analytical framing, to suggest that the singular institutionalization of racist and peculiarly antiblack social/state violence in our living era - the US imprisonment regime and its conjoined policing and criminalization apparatuses - elaborates the social logics of genocidal racial slavery within the American nation-building project, especially in the age of Obama. The formation and astronomical growth of the prison industrial complex has become a commonly identified institutional marker of massively scaled racist state mobilization, and the fundamental violence of this apparatus is in the prison's translation of the 13th Amendment's racist animus. By "reforming" slavery and anti-slave violence, and directly transcribing both into criminal justice rituals, proceedings, and punishments, the 13th Amendment permanently inscribes slavery on "post-emancipation" US statecraft. The state remains a "slave state" to the extent that it erects an array of institutional apparatuses that are specifically conceived to reproduce or enhance the state's capacity to "create" (i.e., criminalize and convict) prison chattel and politically legitimate the processes of enslavement/imprisonment therein. The crucial starting point for our narrative purposes is that the emergence of the criminalization and carceral apparatus over the last forty years has not, and in the foreseeable future will not build its institutional protocols around the imprisonment of an economically productive or profitmaking prison labor force (Gilmore, 1999).16 So, if not for use as labor under the 13th Amendment's juridical mandate of "involuntary servitude," what is the animating structural-historical logic behind the formation of an imprisonment regime unprecedented in human history in scale and complexity, and which locks up well over a million Black people, significantly advancing numbers of "nonwhite" Latinos as, and in which the white population is vastly underrepresented in terms of both numbers imprisoned and likelihood to be prosecuted (and thus incarcerated) for similar alleged criminal offenses?17 In excess of its political economic, geographic, and juridical registers, the contemporary US prison regime must be centrally understood as constituting an epoch-defining statecraft of race: a historically specific conceptualization, planning, and institutional mobilization of state institutional capacities and state-influenced cultural structures to reproduce and/or reassemble the social relations of power, dominance, and violence that constitute the ontology (epistemic and conceptual framings) of racial meaning itself (da Silva, 2007; Goldberg, 1993). In this case, the racial ontology of the postslavery and post-civil rights prison is anchored in the crisis of social meaning wrought on white civil society by the 13th Amendment's apparent juridical elimination of the Black chattel slave being. Across historical periods, the social inhabitation of the white civil subject - - its self-recognition, institutionally affirmed (racial) sovereignty, and everyday social intercourse with other racial beings - is made legible through its positioning as the administrative authority and consenting audience for the nation- and civilization-building processes of multiple racial genocides. It is the bare fact of the white subject's access and entitlement to the generalized position of administering and consenting to racial genocide that matters most centrally here. Importantly, this white civil subject thrives on the assumption that s/he is not, and will never be the target of racial genocide.18 (Williams, 2010) .Those things obtained and secured through genocidal processes - land, political and military hegemony/dominance, expropriated labor - are in this sense secondary to the raw relation of violence that the white subject inhabits in relation to the racial objects (including people, ecologies, cultural forms, sacred materials, and other modalities of life and being) subjected to the irreparable violations of genocidal processes. It is this raw relation, in which white social existence materially and narratively consolidates itself within the normalized systemic logics of racial genocides, that forms the condition of possibility for the US social formation, from "abolition" onward. To push the argument further: the distended systems of racial genocides are not the massively deadly means toward some other (rational) historical ends, but are ends within themselves. Here we can decisively depart from the hegemonic juridical framings of "genocide" as dictated by the United Nations, and examine instead the logics of genocide that dynamically structure the different historical-social forms that have emerged from the classically identifiable genocidal systems of racial colonial conquest, indigenous physical and cultural extermination, and racial chattel slavery. To recall Trask and Marable, the historical logics of genocide permeate institutional assemblages that variously operationalize the historical forces of planned obsolescence, social neutralization, and "ceasing to exist." Centering a conception of racial genocide as a dynamic set of sociohistorical logics (rather than as contained, isolatable historical episodes) allows the slavery-to-prison continuity to be more clearly marked: the continuity is not one that hinges on the creation of late-20th and early-list century "slave labor," but rather on a re-institutionalization of anti-slave social violence. Within this historical schema, the post-1970s prison regime institutionalizes the raw relation of violence essential to white social being while mediating it so it appears as non-genocidal, non-violent, peacekeeping, and justice-forming. This is where we can also narrate the contemporary racial criminalization, policing, and incarcerating apparatuses as being historically tethered to the genocidal logics of the post-abolition, post-emancipation, and post-civil rights slave state. While it is necessary to continuously clarify and debate whether and how this statecraft of racial imprisonment is verifiably genocidal, there seems to be little reason to question that it is, at least, protogenocidal - displaying both the capacity and inclination for genocidal outcomes in its systemic logic and historical trajectory. This contextualization leads toward a somewhat different analytical framing of the "deadly symbiosis" that sociologist Loi'c Wacquant has outlined in his account of antiblack carceral-spatial systems. While it would be small-minded to suggest that the emergence of the late-20th century prison regime is an historical inevitability, we should at least understand that the structural bottom line of Black imprisonment over the last four decades - wherein the quantitative fact of a Black prison/jail majority has become taken-for-granted as a social fact - is a contemporary institutional manifestation of a genocidal racial substructure that has been reformed, and not fundamentally displaced, by the juridical and cultural implications of slavery's abolition. I have argued elsewhere for a conception of the US prison not as a selfcontained institution or isolated place, but rather as a material prototype of organized punishment and (social, civil, and biological) death (Rodriguez, 2006). To understand the US prison as a regime is to focus conceptually, theoretically, and politically on the prison as a pliable module or mobilized vessel through which technologies of racial domin8ance institutionalize their specific, localized practices of legitimated (state) violence. Emerging as the organic institutional continuity of racial slavery's genocidal violence, the US prison regime represents a form of human domination that extends beyond and outside the formal institutional and geographic domains of "the prison (the jail, etc.)." In this sense, the prison is the institutional signification of a larger regime of proto-genocidal violence that is politically legitimized by the state, generally valorized by the cultural common sense, and dynamically mobilized and institutionally consolidated across different historical moments: it is a form of social power that is indispensable to the contemporary (and postemancipation) social order and its changing structures of racial dominance, in a manner that elaborates the social logics of genocidal racial slavery. The binding presence of slavery within post-emancipation US state formation is precisely why the liberal multiculturalist narration of the Obama ascendancy finds itself compelled to posit an official rupture from the spectral and material presence of enslaved racial blackness. It is this symbolic rupturing - the presentation of a president who consummates the liberal dreams of Black citizenship. Black freedom, Black non-resentment, and Black patriotic subjectivity - that constructs the Black non-slave presidency as the flesh-and-blood severance of the US racial/racist state from its entanglement in the continuities of antiblack genocide. Against this multiculturalist narrative, our attention should be principally fixated on the bottom-line Blackness of the prison's genocidal logic, not the fungible Blackness of the presidency. CONCLUSION: FROM "POST-CIVIL RIGHTS" TO WHITE RECONSTRUCTION The Obama ascendancy is the signature moment of the post-1960s White Reconstruction, a period that has been characterized by the reformist elaboration of historically racist systems of social power to accommodate the political imperatives of American apartheid's downfall and the emergence of hegemonic (liberal-to-conservative) multiculturalisms. Byfocusing on how such reforms have neither eliminated nor fundamentally alleviated the social emergencies consistently produced by the historical logics of racial genocide, the notion of White Reconstruction departs from Marable's notion of the 1990s as the "twilight of the Second Reconstruction" (Marable. 2007. p. 216)19 and points toward another way of framing and narrating the period that has been more commonly referenced as the "post-civil rights" era. Rather than taking its primary point of historical departure to be the cresting of the Civil Rights Movement and its legacy of delimited (though no less significant) political-cultural achievements. White Reconstruction focuses on how this era is denned by an acute and sometimes aggressive reinvention and reorganization of the structural-institutional formations of racial dominance. Defined schematically, the recent half-century has encompassed a generalized reconstruction of "classically" white supremacist apparatuses of state-sanctioned and culturally legitimated racial violence. This general reconstruction has (1) strategically and unevenly dislodged various formal and de facto institutional white monopolies and diversified their personnel at various levels of access, from the entry-level to the administrative and executive levels (e.g., the sometimes aggressive diversity recruitment campaigns of research universities, urban police, and the military); while simultaneously (2) revamping, complicating, and enhancing the social relations of dominance, hierarchy, and violence mobilized by such institutions - relations that broadly reflect the long historical, substructural role of race in the production of the US national formation and socioeconomic order. In this sense, the notion of White Reconstruction brings central attention to how the historical logics of racial genocide may not only survive the apparent disruption of classical white monopolies on the administrative and institutional apparatuses that have long mobilized these violent social logics, but may indeed flourish through these reformist measures, as such logics are re-adapted into the protocols and discourses of these newly "diversified" racist and white supremacist apparatuses (e.g.. the apparatuses of the research university, police, and military have expanded their capacities to produce local and global relations of racial dominance, at the same time that they have constituted some of the central sites for diversity recruitment and struggles over equal access). It is, at the very least, a remarkable and dreadful moment in the historical time of White Reconstruction that a Black president has won office in an electoral landslide while well over a million Black people are incarcerated with the overwhelming consent of white/multiculturalist civil society.

#### Thus we should focus our energies and points of attention on an unflinching paradigmatic analysis that calls for the end of America. Their failure to pose this question is an independent reason they should live.

**Wilderson** 20**10** [Frank B., I told you he was on some guerilla shit, Red, White & Black: Cinema and the Structure of U.S. Antagonisms, pages ix-x]

STRANGE As it 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 compro-mises that the radical elements of the Chartist Move-ment 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 predi-cated 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 unfortu-nate 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 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS 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 K ismer, Kamogelo Lekubu, A ndile Mngxitama, Prishani Naidoo, John Shai, and S'bu Zulu.

# 2NC

## K

### AT: USFG = ANYTHING!!!!

#### Conception of language as inevitably fluid leads to the denial of agency. This makes resistance to white supremacist power structures impossible

Will **Brooker**, 19**99** (“Agency,” http://faculty.washington.edu/cbehler/glossary/agency.html>:)

Agency A term referring to the role of the human actor as individual or group in directing or effectively intervening in the course of history. Liberal humanism sees the individual or subject as unified and self-determining. It therefore ascribes agency to this subject as a more or less unrestricted actor in shaping her/his own life and a more general social destiny. Marxism and other theories recognizing the influence of social and economic determinations beyond the individual offer a more qualified and complex view. 'Men make their own history,' Karl Marx famously declared, but 'do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves'. For Marx, the working class was denied agency and would only assume its role as actor in the world through the revolutionary transformation of economic and social relations inspired by class consciousness. Critics of this view, within Marxism and poststructuralism, see it as no more than a postponement of the humanist ideal. Non-humanist positions, developed for example by Louis Althusser and Michel Foucault, appear to deny agency altogether. For Foucault, for example, power is omnipresent and though exercised with aims and objectives has no presiding 'headquarters,’ no specific source in the decisions of groups or individuals (1979: 94-5). As Anthony Giddens comments, 'Foucault's history tends to have no active subjects at all. It is history with the agency removed' (1987: 98). For some, the anti-humanism of poststructuralism comes unnervingly close to a belief such as Margaret Thatcher's that 'there is no such thing as society': a view which surrenders agency to market forces. Nevertheless, poststructuralist arguments have challenged the traditional Marxist emphasis upon class and party as the agencies of radical change and significantly influenced models of the operation of power and ideology. They have proved relevant if problematic, too, for feminist and other oppositional theories interested in the strategies which would render women and other subjugated peoples the 'subjects' (i.e. agents) of their own rather than the 'objects' of an imposed history. Debati

ng the implications of poststructuralist theory for political action, Michele Barrett highlights the problem posed by deconstruction: 'Feminists recognise that the "naming" of women and men occurs within an opposition that one would want to challenge and transform, yet political silencing can follow from rejecting these categories altogether' (1991: 166). To deconstruct existing relations of power, she implies, threatens to deconstruct the concept of agency itself and thus to undermine any counter-strategy.

# 1NR

## K

### AT: Intersectionality

#### Foregrounding interlocking oppressions in a chain of equivalence denies the structuring force of anti-blackness – that dooms solvency of the aff and perm

Sexton ’10 [Jared, associate professor of African American studies and film and media studies at the University of California, Irvine, “People-of-Color-Blindness”, Social Text 2010 Volume 28, Number 2 103: 31-56]

If the oppression of nonblack people of color in, and perhaps beyond, the United States seems conditional to the historic instance and functions at a more restricted empirical scope, antiblackness seems invariant and limitless (which does not mean that the former is somehow negligible and short-lived or that the latter is exhaustive and unchanging). If pursued with some consistency, the sort of comparative analysis outlined above would likely impact the formulation of political strategy and modify the demeanor of our political culture. In fact, it might denature the comparative instinct altogether in favor of a relational analysis more adequate to the task. Yet all of this is obviated by the silencing mechanism par excellence in Left political and intellectual circles today: “Don’t play Oppression Olympics!” The Oppression Olympics dogma levels a charge amounting to little more than a leftist version of “playing the race card.” To fuss with details of comparative (or relational) analysis is to play into the hands of divide-and-conquer tactics and to promote a callous immorality. 72 However, as in its conservative complement, one notes in this catchphrase the unwarranted translation of an inquiring position of comparison into an insidious posture of competition, the translation of ethical critique into unethical attack. This point allows us to understand better the intimate relationship between the censure of black inquiry and the recurrent analogizing to black suffering mentioned above: they bear a common refusal to admit to significant dif ferences of structural position born of discrepant histories between blacks and their political allies, actual or potential. We might, finally, name this refusal people-of-color-blindness, a form of colorblindness inherent to the concept of “people of color” to the precise extent that it misunderstands the specificity of antiblackness and presumes or insists upon the monolithic character of victimization under white supremacy 73 —thinking (the afterlife of) slavery as a form of exploitation or colonization or a species of racial oppression among others. 74 The upshot of this predicament is that obscuring the structural position of the category of blackness will inevitably undermine multiracial coalition building as a politics of radical opposition and, to that extent, force the question of black liberation back to the center of discussion. Every analysis that attempts to understand the complexities of racial rule and the machinations of the racial state without accounting for black existence within its framework—which does not mean simply listing it among a chain of equivalents or returning to it as an afterthought—is doomed to miss what is essential about the situation. Black existence does not represent the total reality of the racial formation—it is not the beginning and the end of the story—but it does relate to the totality; it indicates the (repressed) truth of the political and economic system. That is to say, the whole range of positions within the racial formation is most fully understood from this vantage point, not unlike the way in which the range of gender and sexual variance under patriarchal and heteronormative regimes is most fully understood through lenses that are feminist and queer. 75 What is lost for the study of black existence in the proposal for a decentered, “postblack” paradigm is a proper analysis of the true scale and nature of black suffering and of the struggles—political, aesthetic, intellectual, and so on—that have sought to transform and undo it. What is lost for the study of nonblack nonwhite existence is a proper analysis of the true scale and nature of its material and symbolic power relative to the category of blackness. 76 This is why every attempt to defend the rights and liberties of the latest victims of state repression will fail to make substantial gains insofar as it forfeits or sidelines the fate of blacks, the prototypical targets of the panoply of police practices and the juridical infrastructure built up around them. Without blacks on board, the only viable political option and the only effective defense against the intensifying cross fire will involve greater alliance with an antiblack civil society and further capitulation to the magnification of state power. At the apex of the midcentury social movements, Kwame Ture and Charles Hamilton wrote in their 1968 classic, Black Power: The Politics of Liberation, that black freedom entails “the necessarily total revamping of the society.” 77 For Hartman, thinking of the entanglements of the African diaspora in this context, the necessarily total revamping of the society is more appropriately envisioned as the creation of an entirely new world: I knew that no matter how far from home I traveled, I would never be able to leave my past behind. I would never be able to imagine being the kind of person who had not been made and marked by slavery. I was black and a history of terror had produced that identity. Terror was “captivity without the possibility of flight,” inescapable violence, precarious life. There was no going back to a time or place before slavery, and going beyond it no doubt would entail nothing less momentous than yet another revolution. 78

### AT: Permutation

#### Severance=view from nowhere

Yancy ‘5 [George, Associate Professor of Philosophy at Duquesne University, “Whiteness and the Return of the Black Body,” The Journal of Speculative Philosophy, 19(4), p. 215-216]

I write out of a personal existential context. This context is a profound source of knowledge connected to my "raced" body. Hence, I write from a place of lived embodied experience, a site of exposure. In philosophy, the only thing that we are taught to "expose" is a weak argument, a fallacy, or someone's "inferior" reasoning power. The embodied self is bracketed and deemed irrelevant to theory, superfluous and cumbersome in one's search for truth. It is best, or so we are told, to reason from nowhere. Hence, the white philosopher/author presumes to speak for all of "us" without the slightest mention of his or her "raced" identity. Self-consciously writing as a white male philosopher, Crispin Sartwell observes: Left to my own devices, I disappear as an author. That is the "whiteness" of my authorship. This whiteness of authorship is, for us, a form of authority; to speak (apparently) from nowhere, for everyone, is empowering, though one wields power here only by becoming lost to oneself. But such an authorship and authority is also pleasurable: it yields the pleasure of self-forgetting or [End Page 215] apparent transcendence of the mundane and the particular, and the pleasure of power expressed in the "comprehension" of a range of materials.