

Curatorial Statement — CG-IPTC Visualization Series No. 02 / 2025

The Cognitization of Counterinsurgency: Policing, Population, and the Technocratic Management of Life and Death in Modernity

I. Descriptivism as Philosophical Weapon

The Clay-Gilmore Institute's second visualization series extends the project inaugurated in Series No. 02 / 2025: to make visible the racialized architectures of militarized governance that now constitute the grammar of modern life. These works are not illustrations of injustice—they are actuarial depictions of a war in progress. Drawing directly from the theoretical synthesis outlined in *Notes from Inside the Killing Machine*, this exhibit fuses Leonard Harris's account of racism as necro-being with the racism-as-war thesis. The result is a descriptivist philosophy that pictures racism as both a phenomenon and a mechanism—a killing machine whose form is counterinsurgency.

Harris's dictum that racism must be depicted rather than explained finds new resonance here. Yet, as the racism-as-war thesis shows, depiction need not exclude causality. To picture the structure of death is already to outline its operational logic. The exhibit's visual language—rings, bars, and coordinates—renders this logic in plain sight: a logos of extermination and assimilation that has guided Western statecraft since the age of empire.

II. The Androcentric Grammar of Counterinsurgency

Each figure in this series dramatizes what the Institute terms the androcentricity of repression: the concentration of lethal and managerial force upon racialized men as the presumed insurgent core of a population. From the per-capita charts of police killings to Detroit's facial-recognition breakdowns, the data demonstrate a singular constancy—Black men constitute the demographic nucleus of State violence.

In the analytic vocabulary of Black Male Studies, this represents the subordinate-male-target hypothesis in empirical form: the male of the outgroup as both the preferred subject of lethal attention and the emblem through which a society stabilizes itself. In the racism-as-war framework, this is not anomaly but doctrine. Western counterinsurgency emerged to pacify populations by neutralizing precisely this figure—the “military-age male.” The CG-IPTC's concentric diagrams and red-tinted bars visualize this historic obsession: the translation of masculinity into menace, and of surveillance into pre-emptive strike.

III. From Policing to Pacification

Where Series No. 01 / 2025 traced the fusion of policing and warfare through patterns of targeting, Series No. 02 charts its cognitization—the conversion of those logics into predictive, data-driven infrastructures. Detroit's and Atlanta's datasets no longer describe discrete acts of repression; they model the actuarial intelligence of a counterinsurgency that has become self-learning.

Facial-recognition probes, GPS tagging, and “repeat-offender” justification for mass surveillance of black communities instantiate the very synthesis that the CG-IPTC theorizes: the replacement of juridical reason with military reason, of justice with management. What emerges is an apparatus that governs through probability, converting demographic life into actuarial risk. This is racism’s technological modernization—its translation from ideology into computation.

IV. Necro-Being in the Datafield

The Institute’s visualization method adheres to the descriptive imperative of Harris’s necro-being thesis: to see death statistically without surrendering its philosophical weight. Each graphic quantifies the probability of premature death as racism’s absolute indicator. The bar chart, the ring, the grid—all function as memento mori of a war that masquerades as governance. The numbers do not interpret; they disclose.

Here, descriptivism is not neutrality but indictment. To picture the disproportion of Black male death is to confront the very ontology Harris named the tragic: life lived within the horizon of non-being. Yet, when joined to the explanatory clarity of the racism-as-war thesis, these depictions illuminate the machinery that manufactures such tragedy—the counterinsurgent state whose mandate is pacification through death.

V. The Algorithmic War

The final sequence—the bullseye diagrams and population overlays—brings the exhibit into the digital present. The targeting rings mirror the logic of drone interfaces; the stacked bars replay the military’s statistical gaze. In these images, the police database becomes the battlespace. The racialized subject is no longer simply policed or punished but tracked, classified, and forecast. What counterinsurgency once enacted through patrols and informants, artificial intelligence now executes through pattern recognition and risk scoring.

The CG-IPTC thus situates its visual analytics within a continuum: from plantation ledgers to predictive algorithms, from slave patrols to neural networks. The managerial fantasy of total knowledge—the dream of a population perfectly mapped and pacified—reaches its apotheosis in the algorithm.

VI. Toward a New Philosophy of AI

What emerges from this series is the philosophical ground of the CG-IPTC itself: a call for a new philosophy of AI rooted in the synthesis of necro-being and Black Male Studies. This philosophy acknowledges that artificial intelligence is not an innovation ex nihilo but the latest instrument in the West’s long counterinsurgency against non-western forms of life/being. It countenances the militaristic genealogy of computation, the androcentric patterns of targeting that it augments, and the necro-tragic consequences of its deployment.

To think about AI philosophically, then, is to confront the continuity between intelligence and repression—to recognize that cognition, under empire, has always been a weapon. The Institute’s visualizations stand as both evidence and resistance: maps from inside the killing

machine, depicting the world that racism's war has made, and envisioning the intellectual insurgency required to dismantle it.