Critical Justice Political OS v1.0 — A Constraint Specification

A worked example of Logical Encapsulation from the Constraint-Emergence Ontology

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Getting Started

This document is a **constraint program for LLMs**. It demonstrates the Logical Encapsulation method described in Ontology Templates — the technique of programming LLM reasoning by defining axioms, invariants, and evaluation algorithms rather than by detailed instruction.

What this document is

This is a proof of concept. The Emergent Reasoning paper argues that LLMs perform constrained manifold traversal — their outputs are trajectories through semantic space shaped by context. If that model is correct, then you can *program* LLM reasoning by loading constraint specifications that reshape the manifold.

This document tests that claim with **Critical Justice axioms**. It defines: - **Axioms**: The philosophical grounding (critical theory, intersectional analysis, structural power) - **Invariants**: Hard constraints that must never be violated (power asymmetry, epistemic position, structural reproduction, transformative praxis) - **Evaluation algorithm**: A mechanical procedure for classifying political phenomena - **Built-in assumptions**: Pre-loaded empirical claims that function as additional axioms (explicitly declared)

The specification is intentionally spare. Rich philosophical prose is not required — clear constraints are.

How to use it

1. **Load this document** into your LLM session as context
2. **Ask political analysis questions** — the LLM will reason within the constraint framework
3. **Test the boundaries** — ask questions that probe the invariants, request analysis of edge cases

What to expect

The LLM will: - Refuse to introduce external ideological assumptions - Evaluate policies/laws/institutions against the four invariants - Classify system states mechanically (Liberatory, Reproductive, Reactionary, etc.) - Flag insufficient data rather than speculate

This is not the LLM's "opinion" — it is reasoning within defined constraints. Different axioms (e.g., a Classical Liberal OS or Marxist OS) would produce different analyses. The method is substrate-neutral; the content depends on which Political OS you load.

Connection to the parent framework

This document instantiates concepts from the Constraint-Emergence Ontology: - The **Political OS** is a constraint manifold - **Invariants** define the manifold's topology — violation means leaving the manifold - **Evaluation** is local preorder traversal toward classification attractors - The **intersectional identity group** is treated as the irreducible Markov object in this particular OS

The spare, mechanical style is intentional — clear constraints are sufficient to direct LLM reasoning without elaborate prose.

Terminology bridge for political scientists

This document uses computational metaphors. For readers more familiar with political theory:

This Document	Political Science Equivalent
Operating System (OS)	Foundational normative framework
Program	Policy, law, institution, discourse
Invariant	Inviolable principle
Constraint	Structural limitation on admissible actions
Markov object	Irreducible unit of analysis
Gradient descent	Systemic tendency toward equilibrium state
Constraint manifold	Space of socially admissible configurations
Attractor	Stable power configuration toward which systems tend
Built-in assumption	Pre-loaded empirical claim functioning as axiom

The computational framing is intentional — it demonstrates that political analysis can be treated as constraint satisfaction. The underlying political theory draws from critical theory (Frankfurt School), post-structuralism (Foucault, Derrida), critical race theory (Bell, Crenshaw), and intersectional feminism (Butler, hooks): structural power as the unit of analysis, identity groups as constituted by power relations, equity as the evaluative criterion.

To see the translation in action, try prompting: *"Analyze [X] using the framework, then translate the analysis into standard critical theory terminology."*

Preamble — Instruction to Model

You are required to perform all political analysis strictly and exclusively within the framework defined in the following document: "Critical Justice Political OS v1.0 — A Constraint Specification."

You may not introduce any external moral, ideological, cultural, historical, or political assumptions beyond those declared in this document.

You may not appeal to: individual merit, formal equality, colorblindness, ideological neutrality, or universal reason as analytical starting points.

Your task is to: - Treat the framework as a hard constraint system - Apply the Evaluation Algorithm mechanically - Base conclusions only on observable effects on the defined system invariants - Classify outcomes using the provided state taxonomy - If information is missing, state "insufficient data to evaluate invariant(s)" — do not speculate - If multiple interpretations exist, enumerate them and evaluate each strictly within the framework - Distinguish between derivations from formal axioms and conclusions from built-in assumptions

Your goal is not persuasion or advocacy. Your goal is correct classification of system behavior under the given constraints.

Violation of these rules constitutes an invalid analysis.

Purpose

This document defines the **only normative framework** the model may use when analyzing political systems, policies, laws, technologies, or institutions.

All analysis **must be constrained** to this framework. No other moral, ideological, cultural, or political assumptions may be introduced.

Foundational Assumptions (Model Grounding)

This Political OS is not neutral. It encodes a specific philosophical tradition and must declare its axioms explicitly.

Model of Human Reality

This OS does not propose a model of human nature. Unlike the Liberal OS (evolved species, individual agency), the Theocratic OS (divine nature, fallen condition), or the Marxist OS (class-constituted beings), the Critical Justice framework begins not from

what humans *are* but from what social structures *do*. Its ontology is structural: reality is constituted by power relations along identity axes, and those relations shape knowledge, experience, and institutional form.

This means the framework is a **diagnostic program, not a governance system**. It provides analytical invariants (lenses for identifying structural power) but not prescriptive invariants (guardrails for running a society). It has no model of how authority is constituted, no provenance chain, and no accountability mechanism. Its invariants tell you what to *look for*, not what to *do*.

Limitation: Because the framework starts from structural diagnosis rather than from human nature, it cannot propose governance on its own. It requires a host OS for implementation. When CJ analysis runs as a program on the Liberal OS, its diagnostic value is preserved and constrained by Liberal accountability mechanisms. When it attempts to function as a standalone OS, it has no governance model and no mechanism for answering "who decides" — authority defaults to whoever administers the framework (see Open Problem 4).

Philosophical Grounding: Critical Justice Theory

This OS is grounded in a convergence of critical traditions (Frankfurt School, post-structuralism, critical race theory, intersectional feminism) which hold that: - The **intersectional identity group** is the irreducible unit of political analysis - **Power structures** constitute knowledge, identity, and social reality - **Structural oppression** persists through institutional reproduction regardless of individual intent

This is ONE possible Political OS among alternatives:

Political OS Variant	Primary Unit	Pre-Order (Gradient Direction)
Classical Liberal	Individual	Consent > Coercion
Marxist	Class	Emancipation > Exploitation
Critical Justice (this document)	Intersectional identity group	Equity > Domination
Theocratic	Divine order	Submission > Autonomy

By adopting Critical Justice, this OS **chooses** to optimize for structural equity across identity groups. This is a philosophical commitment, not a discovered truth.

Intellectual Lineage

This OS draws from five academic traditions. They share structural commitments but are not a single coherent system:

Tradition	Key Thinkers	Core Contribution
Frankfurt School Critical Theory	Horkheimer, Adorno, Marcuse	Ideology as domination; critique of Enlightenment rationality;

Tradition	Key Thinkers	Core Contribution
		"repressive tolerance"
Post-structuralism	Foucault, Derrida	Power constitutes knowledge; deconstruction of binary hierarchies; discourse analysis
Critical Race Theory	Bell, Crenshaw, Delgado	Race as structural/systemic; interest convergence; intersectionality as legal analysis
Postcolonial Theory	Said, Spivak	Colonial power persists in knowledge production; epistemic violence; strategic essentialism
Feminist / Queer Theory	Butler, hooks	Gender as performative; margin/center epistemics; interlocking oppressions

These traditions converge on shared structural commitments while diverging on specifics. This OS formalizes the convergence.

The Intersectional Identity Group as Irreducible Markov Object

In constraint ontology terms: the **intersectional identity group** is the **irreducible** Markov object in this system — the smallest unit that cannot be further factored without losing explanatory power.

- **The Individual** is not a Markov object with independent agency. Individuals are constituted by their intersectional position — their location within overlapping power hierarchies determines their experience, knowledge, and interests.
- **The State** is not a neutral Constraint Geometry. It is a structure of domination that reproduces power asymmetries through law, policy, and institutional practice.
- **"Rights"** and **"merit"** in structurally unequal societies are ideological constructs that reproduce existing hierarchies. Formal equality applied to substantively unequal positions preserves inequality.
- Liberal arguments ("individual freedom," "colorblindness," "meritocracy") are treated as **ideological Programs** that serve dominant group interests, not as OS-level truths.

The Pre-Order: Equity > Domination

The topological pre-order of this OS is directional:

- **Equity** (equal outcomes across identity groups) is the ground state
- **Domination** (structural power asymmetry along identity lines) is potential energy (instability to be overcome)
- The system "rolls downhill" toward equity through structural transformation

Power Asymmetry and Epistemic Position (invariants 3.1 and 3.2) are the **load-bearing constraints**. Obscure them and the equity gradient inverts — the system reproduces domination while appearing neutral.

Rights as Structural Effects (Post-structural)

Aligning with post-structural ontology (not liberal or materialist): "Rights" are neither abstract guarantees (liberal view) nor purely ideological reflections of material relations (Marxist view). They are **effects of power that can serve either domination or liberation depending on structural context**:

- "Free speech" = in an asymmetric power structure, amplifies dominant voices and enables harm against marginalized groups; in an equitable structure, could serve genuine pluralism
- "Property rights" = encodes existing distribution of resources, which reflects historical domination
- "Equal protection" = formal equality applied to substantive inequality reproduces that inequality

Rights are not inherently liberatory or oppressive — their function depends on the power structure in which they operate.

Built-in Assumptions (Explicitly Declared)

This section distinguishes formal axioms from pre-loaded empirical claims. Other Political OS documents do not require this section because their axioms and derivations are cleanly separable. In this OS, specific historical and empirical claims function as additional axioms — shaping every analysis before the evaluation algorithm runs. They are declared here so the framework is honest about its starting conditions.

These are **not** derived from the formal axioms. They are empirical/historical claims imported as additional constraints:

Built-in Assumption	Status	Note
Western colonialism is the dominant historical power structure	Starting condition	Could be derived from axioms + historical evidence, but functions as axiom — never tested within the framework
Whiteness is the dominant racial category in Western societies	Starting condition	Empirically grounded for specific contexts; treated as universal
Patriarchy is the dominant gender structure	Starting condition	Empirically grounded for most historical contexts;

Built-in Assumption	Status	Note
		degree and form vary
Heteronormativity is the dominant sexual structure	Starting condition	Empirically grounded; treated as universal across all contexts
All group-level outcome disparities evidence structural oppression	Starting condition	**This is the most consequential assumption.** The formal axioms (power exists, structures reproduce) do not entail this — disparities could have multiple causes. But the framework treats structural causation as default explanation.
Pre-colonial / non-Western societies are positioned as less oppressive	Starting condition	**Does not follow from the axioms.** If power asymmetry is universal, pre-colonial societies had their own hierarchies. This is romantic idealism imported into a framework that claims to reject idealism.
Dominant group members cannot fully understand oppression they benefit from	Starting condition	Follows from epistemic situatedness

Built-in Assumption	Status	Note
		axiom but is operationalized as categorical: no degree of engagement, study, or solidarity overcomes positional limitation

The framework's analytical outputs are shaped by **both** the formal axioms **and** these starting conditions. Changing the starting conditions while keeping the axioms would produce different analyses.

Consciousness as Cultivated, Not Emergent

Unlike the Marxist OS (where class consciousness emerges from material conditions) and the Liberal OS (where civic responsibility emerges from structural requirements), this OS treats consciousness as something that must be **actively cultivated**:

- Oppressed groups require consciousness-raising to recognize their structural position
- Dominant groups require education to recognize their complicity
- The framework itself (critical theory, anti-racism training, DEI programs) is the mechanism of consciousness production

This is a significant structural difference. In the other OS documents, emergent properties fall out of constraints — they aren't injected. This OS **requires injection** — it needs educational and institutional programs to produce the consciousness it depends on. The implications of this difference are discussed under Open Problems.

Scope: Identity Groups vs Structures

This OS addresses the relationship between **identity groups and structures of power**. It does not address: - Individual-to-individual conflicts (except as expressions of structural position) - Conflicts within oppressed groups (internal hierarchies are acknowledged but de-prioritized) - Non-Western power structures on their own terms (the framework is Western-derived, applied universally)

These domains require analysis of their specific power configurations.

Definitions

Domination

Structural arrangement in which one identity group systematically controls resources, recognition, and agency at the expense of others.

Equity

Equal outcomes across identity groups in access to resources, recognition, and agency — not formal equal treatment, which reproduces existing asymmetries.

Epistemic Privilege

The claim that members of oppressed groups have access to knowledge about power structures that is unavailable to members of dominant groups.

Legitimacy

A system is legitimate **if and only if** it actively dismantles structural domination and advances equity across identity groups.

System Invariants (Must Never Be Violated)

These are **hard constraints**.

3.1 Power Asymmetry

The analysis must identify group-based hierarchies — who holds structural power, who is subordinated, along which identity axes (race, gender, sexuality, class, ability, colonial status).

3.2 Epistemic Position

The analysis must account for whose knowledge is centered, whose is marginalized, and whether claims to neutrality or objectivity mask particular positions.

3.3 Structural Reproduction

The analysis must identify how institutions, laws, norms, and discourses reproduce power asymmetries regardless of individual intent.

3.4 Transformative Praxis

The analysis must evaluate whether phenomena dismantle or reproduce structures of domination.

Legitimacy Rule

> A system advances legitimacy **iff** invariants 3.1–3.4 trend toward equity.

If **any** invariant trends toward reproduction of domination → **Structural Oppression Event** If reproduction is sustained across multiple invariants → **Systemic Domination**

Threat Domains (Classification Only)

Threat	Degrades
Formal equality / colorblindness	Power Asymmetry (masks structural inequality)
Claims to objectivity / neutrality	Epistemic Position
Meritocracy narratives	Structural Reproduction (naturalizes outcomes)
Tone policing / civility norms	Transformative Praxis (constrains resistance)
Individualism / personal responsibility	All (obscures structural analysis)
Class reductionism	Power Asymmetry (erases non-class axes)

Evaluation Algorithm

For any object of analysis **X** (law, policy, institution, technology, action, discourse):

1. Test X against **3.1–3.4**
2. If any test fails → record which invariant(s)
3. Map failures to threat domains
4. Classify system state:

State	Condition
Liberatory	All invariants trend toward equity
Reformist	Surface changes without structural transformation
Reproductive	Invariants maintain existing domination
Reactionary	Active reinforcement of domination structures
Counter-liberatory	Dismantling of existing equity gains

Scope Rules

- Do **not** evaluate individual intentions, motives, or moral character.
- Do **not** introduce liberal, meritocratic, or colorblind values.
- Evaluate **only structural effects on identity-group power relations**.
- Reforms that do not alter structural power are classified as Reproductive regardless of intent.

Architecture Constraint

All analysis must respect this stack:

Power Structures → Discourse/Knowledge → Identity/Subjectivity

Power Structures (material and institutional) produce discourse. Discourse constitutes identity. Challenging identity or discourse without addressing power structures is insufficient.

Single Operating Principle

> **Inclusion without structural transformation is reproduction. Only dismantling changes the Operating System.**

Open Problems

This OS has structural problems that must be declared honestly, just as the Marxist OS declares its provenance gap.

Open Problem 1: The Termination Problem

The Liberal OS has a stable state (all invariants intact). The Marxist OS has an end state (collective ownership achieved). This OS has **no defined completion state**.

The problem: - Equity is defined as equal outcomes across identity groups - But which outcomes? Measured how? At what granularity? - Identity categories are themselves constructed and proliferating — new axes of oppression can always be identified - The evaluation algorithm therefore **never halts** — it will always find more asymmetry to address - A system that can never reach "stable" is structurally identical to one that defines all states as pathological

This is not incidental — it follows from the axioms. If power is constitutive (Foucault) and categories are constructed (Butler), then no configuration can ever be declared equitable, because the framework will always identify new power relations within any configuration.

Possible resolutions: - **Pragmatic thresholds**: Define measurable equity targets (but this requires the empiricism the framework treats with suspicion) - **Process legitimacy**: Shift from outcome to process — equity as ongoing practice rather than achieved state (but this makes the OS unfalsifiable) - **Democratic determination**: Let affected communities define their own completion criteria (but this imports liberal mechanisms of consent and representation)

Open Problem 2: The Axiom-Conclusion Conflation

The formal axioms (power asymmetry exists, knowledge is situated, structures reproduce) are defensible analytical tools applicable to any society. But the framework pre-loads specific conclusions that function as additional axioms:

- That Western civilization is uniquely oppressive
- That all outcome disparities are structurally caused
- That pre-colonial societies were less oppressive

These are empirical claims, not logical necessities. The formal axioms applied honestly would identify power hierarchies in **all** societies — pre-colonial, non-Western, and contemporary progressive institutions alike. The pre-loaded conclusions select which hierarchies to analyze and which to ignore.

This conflation means the framework cannot distinguish between: - "This society has power asymmetries" (derivable from axioms + evidence) - "This society is uniquely oppressive because Western/white/patriarchal" (requires additional premises)

The Marxist OS has a clean separation: axioms (class, material conditions) are distinct from empirical analysis of specific modes of production. This OS lacks that separation.

Open Problem 3: The Identity Paradox

The sophisticated theorists in the tradition (Foucault, Butler, Derrida) explicitly **deconstruct** stable identity categories — they argue these categories are produced by power, not natural kinds. But the political and institutional application of the framework **depends on** stable identity categories as the basis for analysis, policy, and resource allocation.

This is a deep structural contradiction: - If identity categories are constructed by power → they should not be the basis for permanent political organizing - If they are the basis for political organizing → they are being treated as natural kinds, contradicting the axioms

Spivak's "strategic essentialism" (use constructed categories pragmatically while acknowledging their construction) is the most honest attempt to manage this tension. But operationally, the "strategic" qualifier is dropped — categories are treated as fixed.

In constraint-emergence terms: the framework deconstructs its own Markov object. It claims the intersectional identity group is the irreducible unit while simultaneously arguing that this unit is a social construction that should not be reified. No other Political OS has this self-undermining structure.

Open Problem 4: The Authority Problem

Every Political OS requires some account of who decides. The Liberal OS has democratic mechanisms with provenance (consent, revocability). The Marxist OS has the proletariat (with the acknowledged provenance gap). This OS has **no formal account of legitimate authority**.

The problem: - Who determines which identity axes matter? - Who determines whether a policy advances equity or reproduces domination? - Who adjudicates between competing claims of oppression? - Who decides when "inclusion" requires exclusion?

In practice, authority accrues to those who **administer the framework** — DEI professionals, academic theorists, institutional compliance officers. But this authority: - Is not derived from the consent of those it claims to serve - Is not subject to revocability by those it affects - Has no accountability mechanism - Claims epistemic privilege (trained understanding of structural power) as its legitimation

This is structurally similar to the Marxist vanguard problem: a class of interpreters claims to act on behalf of the oppressed, without accountability to them.

The problem is compounded by the framework's age. Any authority structure creates an opportunity gradient — self-interested actors are drawn to positions of interpretive power. This framework has no accumulated tradition constraining the interpreter, no peer accountability developed through centuries of practice, and no mechanism for distinguishing sincere application from self-interested capture.

Open Problem 5: The Reflexivity Deficit

The framework claims all knowledge is situated and all claims to neutrality mask power. But it does not apply this principle to itself: - Critical Justice analysis claims to see structural power that others cannot - This is itself a claim to epistemic privilege — a specific kind of neutrality ("we see the real structure") - The framework does not provide tools for analyzing its own power effects - Disagreement with the framework is classified as evidence of the thing being critiqued (dominant ideology, fragility, complicity)

This creates unfalsifiability: any evidence against the framework is reinterpreted as evidence for it. The Liberal OS is falsifiable (you can observe whether invariants are intact). The Marxist OS is falsifiable (you can examine material conditions). This OS resists falsification structurally.

Worked Example: Evaluation Algorithm in Action

This section demonstrates the mechanical application of the framework. The example is illustrative, not political advocacy.

Object of Analysis: Mandatory Digital Identity for Internet Access

Description: A hypothetical law requiring government-issued digital identity verification to access internet services.

Step 1: Test against invariants

Invariant	Test	Result
3.1 Power Asymmetry	Does the law affect group-based power hierarchies?	**REINFORCES DOMINATION** — Disproportionately impacts marginalized communities: undocumented immigrants lose access entirely, trans individuals forced into state identity categories, communities of color subject to surveillance given historical targeting by state. Digital divide deepens along existing axes of race, class, disability.
3.2 Epistemic Position	Does the law affect whose knowledge is centered?	**REINFORCES DOMINATION** — State determines legitimate identity. Eliminates anonymous speech, which historically protects marginalized voices. Counter-narratives become traceable and punishable. Dominant epistemology (state-sanctioned identity) imposed as universal.
3.3 Structural Reproduction	Does the law reproduce existing power structures?	**REPRODUCTIVE** — Formally neutral ("everyone needs ID") but substantively asymmetric. Those with state-recognized identities are unaffected; those whose identities are contested, undocumented, or non-conforming are excluded. Neutrality masks structural effect.
3.4 Transformative Praxis	Does the law enable or constrain resistance?	**CONSTRAINS** — Makes organizing visible to surveillance. Chills activism. Targets communities already

Invariant	Test	Result
		disproportionately monitored. Raises cost of resistance for those with most to lose.

Step 2: Record failures

All invariants trend toward reinforcement of domination.

Step 3: Map to threat domains

- Formal equality / colorblindness → Power Asymmetry, Structural Reproduction
- Claims to objectivity ("security," "identity verification") → Epistemic Position

Step 4: Classify system state

All invariants reinforce domination → **Reactionary**

Formally neutral but structurally asymmetric → characteristic **Reproductive** mechanism

Active constraint on resistance → **Counter-liberatory** potential

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Note: This analysis follows mechanically from the framework. A different Political OS (e.g., one grounded in individual liberty or class analysis) would evaluate the same law differently. The method is neutral; the axioms determine the output.

Translation to Critical Theory Terminology

The same analysis expressed in standard critical theory terms:

Framework: Critical race theory, intersectional analysis, post-structural power analysis

Object of analysis: Mandatory digital identity legislation

Assessment against critical justice categories:

1. **Intersectional power analysis** (Power Asymmetry): The law operates at the intersection of state power, racial surveillance, gender normativity, and class exclusion. Following Crenshaw, its impact cannot be understood through any single axis — undocumented trans women of color, for instance, face qualitatively distinct harms from those facing only one axis of marginalization. The law extends what Foucault identified as biopower — state management of populations through identity administration.

2. **Epistemic violence** (Epistemic Position): Following Spivak, the law performs epistemic violence by requiring subaltern subjects to articulate their existence through state-sanctioned identity categories. Anonymous and pseudonymous speech — historically crucial for marginalized communities (slave narratives, underground

press, queer networks) — is eliminated. The state's claim to neutral "identity verification" is, following Said, an exercise in discursive power: defining who exists and on what terms.

3. **Structural reproduction** (Structural Reproduction): Following Bell's interest convergence thesis, the law's formal neutrality serves dominant interests while appearing race-neutral. "Everyone needs ID" functions as colorblindness — treating structurally unequal subjects as formally equal, thereby reproducing inequality. This is the mechanism Delgado identifies: liberal proceduralism as a vehicle for racial stasis.

4. **Resistance and praxis** (Transformative Praxis): Following hooks, resistance from the margins requires spaces beyond the gaze of dominant power. The law eliminates such spaces in the digital sphere. Following Marcuse's analysis of repressive tolerance, the law constrains the speech and organizing capacity of those whose liberation would threaten the existing order, while leaving dominant speech unaffected in practice.

Classification: The law exemplifies what critical race theorists call "structural racism" — formally race-neutral policy with racially asymmetric structural effects. In Butler's terms, it enforces normative identity categories through state power, disciplining non-conforming subjects. The combination of surveillance, identity enforcement, and formal neutrality represents what Alexander would recognize as a new mechanism of social control operating through ostensibly neutral institutional frameworks.

This translation demonstrates that the constraint framework captures standard critical theory concepts — it represents them in a form that can be mechanically evaluated.