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On Friday, May 29, 2020, I attended Sam Weber's short lecture "Recounting the Plague" on Zoom. During his presentation of Camus' *L'étranger* and Artaud's "Le théâtre et son double," Sam highlighted one of the lasting themes of the formerly-niche genre of "plague literature." The theme is a tried and true anthem of existentialism: that the "virus" has always been latent within us, or rather, that humanity *is* the virus. The discussion that followed touched on the study of "plagues" as a way to translate philosophical discussions of singularity and universality into a tangible confrontation with mortality and death. In other words, as Sam put it, plagues occupy an interesting site between the irreducible and the relational, which many participants offered to contextualize in Eurocentric terms. Maziyar Faridi brought up the idea of "suddenness" to describe not only the rapid deterioration of bodies infected by Covid-19, but also the sense of utter shock felt when the Western world came to a grinding halt. Others added that plenty of countries in the Middle East and parts of Africa had experienced quarantines, curfews, and lockdowns long before our current pandemic. Nasrin Qader commented on the Trump administration's warlike rhetoric against the disease, and the group collectively mused over the consequences of this language, and especially its resonances with recent uprisings in Chile. I listened carefully, realizing only later that we did not discuss, at least explicitly, an issue that has weighed on me over the last week: the national demonstrations and mass protests over George Floyd's murder by four Minnesota policemen.

The video of Floyd's murder is positively grotesque, and I have only been able to watch it once. Moreover, the story of the incident is old, even older than the anthem of French existentialism: the police were called to a store in Minneapolis where Floyd, a black man, was allegedly attempting to spend a counterfeit 20 dollar bill. Derek Chauvin, the white arresting officer, handcuffed Floyd and knelt on the back of his neck until he died from asphyxiation. I am attaching two videos of the scene to this document; the first shows the murder itself, and the second shows the bystander who filmed the incident as she screams to passerby in the street, trying to process what she has seen. For the simple reason that the same structures of power that murder black men like George Floyd are also those that fail to, say, provide adequate Covid-19 testing and proper healthcare coverage, I think that the most important contribution I can make to a developing archive on experiences during the pandemic is a list of resources that help document and fight systemic racism and violence in the United States. This list is incomplete, but nevertheless, I would like to begin the work of highlighting some important grassroots organizations and funds that are fighting for racial equality and the rights of historically underrepresented groups. I am attaching the names of these organizations for the purpose of providing real, concrete examples of what Sam wrote in his request email: if there were ever examples of "narratives that could potentially open our minds to future possibilities that are less unpleasant and more animating than current circumstances, and capable of providing us with orientation regarding future opportunities for social and political action," these organizations provide them. Hopefully, my short contribution to this Covid-19 archive project can underscore the intimate and direct correlation between our nation's response to the pandemic, and its response to racism and white supremacy; additionally, I hope it can begin a conversation to which others more knowledgeable than myself can add. In the end, the metaphor of reopening old wounds fails to do justice to George Floyd's murder; rather, like shingles and chicken pox, the pandemic has simply reinfected a virus that has been with us since our country's founding.

My personal experience during the pandemic has certainly been marked by days of depression, frustration, and a sense of irreparable loss. But it is more important, especially as a member of the

academic community, to recognize that my experience has been largely marked by financial security, physical safety, and relative comfort. I am a healthy, 25-year-old American citizen. I am white. I have feelings of anxiety and sadness that are valid; but I have been able to actually save some money during the lockdown. I have had the privilege of having groceries delivered to my door; I can close my laptop whenever I feel angry or distraught. I have watched so many videos and read so many articles on my phone screen over the past three months that have made me question my fundamental complicity with those in power. Late at night, when I can't sleep, I let these headlines crawl out from their respective hiding places and incubate my consciousness: articles about botched primary elections; the demise of Bernie Sanders; videos of the riots against shelter-in-place orders; Black Lives Matter protests in Atlanta, Boston, Minneapolis, and New York; samples from J.Crew's mask sale; tear gas and pepper spray; anti-racism reading lists; Donald Trump's name on my stimulus check. Yesterday, I read that Elon Musk's SpaceX successfully launched NASA astronauts into space, and it felt so strange to remember the existence of something like an external reality. I can only imagine what our country looks like from above.

Places to Donate, Grassroots Campaigns, Petitions, Resources (WORKING LIST):

Note: The first link is the most comprehensive collection of petitions and other resources.

1. https://docs.google.com/document/u/1/d/1Xa9Av-NfuFsWBHlsMvPiqJHdNedZgnCRW56qAS-7PGQ/mobilebasic?urp=gmail_link
(If you have trouble with the above link, try the following (which is case sensitive): bit.ly/BlackLivesAction)
2. <https://minnesotafreedomfund.org/>
“The Minnesota Freedom Fund pays criminal bails and immigration bond for those who can't afford to as we seek to end discriminatory, coercive, and oppressive jailing.”
3. <https://chicagobond.org/>
“The Chicago Community Bond Fund (CCBF) pays bond for people charged with crimes in Cook County, Illinois. Through a revolving fund, CCBF supports individuals whose communities cannot afford to pay the bonds themselves and who have been impacted by structural violence.”
4. <https://bailfunds.github.io/>
Bail funds by state, endorsed by National Bail Fund Network
5. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/29/books/review/antiracist-reading-list-ibram-x-kendi.html>
A list of antiracist literature by the New York Times
6. <https://blacklivesmatter.com/>
Information on the Black Lives Matter movement and opportunity to donate

Video of George Floyd's Murder:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ve8S0rGd9-c>

Video of Bystander Account:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GXKMih20Ur0>