# Doc---Texas---Round 3

# 1NC

## OFF

### 1NC---K

#### The 1AC has offered moralism when it needs to offer organization for Climate Maoism – refusal to seize the state from the capitalist class forecloses a dictatorship of the proletariat

Heron & Dean 20 (Kai Heron, editor at ROAR Magazine. Jodi Dean, Professor of Political Science at Hobart and William Smith Colleges. “Revolution or Ruin.” E-Flux. Journal #110 - June 2020. <https://www.e-flux.com/journal/110/335242/revolution-or-ruin/> //shree)

Let’s look at this third option more closely. To build towards an eco-communist revolution, we need to avoid both a politics of pure negation and a politics of “critical affirmation.” As Marx argued, revolutions need dialectics. They need us to find what Fredric Jameson calls the “dialectical ambivalence” in capitalism. This means training ourselves to locate aspects of the present that point beyond themselves and towards the communist horizon. Lenin did precisely this after the outbreak of the First World War. Rather than joining with the majority of the socialist parties of the Second International in capitulating to imperialist war, and rather than wallowing in melancholia following the betrayal of so many of his German comrades as they voted for war credits, Lenin saw in the war an opportunity for revolutionary advance. Those interested in the emancipation of the working class needed to fight not for peace but for the dialectical conversion of nationalist war to civil war. The war, and the collapse of the Second International, was the opportunity for something new.

What would it mean to think dialectically about the GND? We think it would mean stripping the policy’s reformist content away from its revolutionary form. For decades environmental movements in the capitalist core have busied themselves fighting for local solutions to global problems: cooperatives, local currencies, urban agriculture, and ethical consumerism. As these experiments blossomed, the climate crisis continued unabated. More pipelines were built, more indigenous land was stolen, more fires raged, and more species flickered out of existence.

In their form the GND and GIR put localism aside. Both recognize that the climate crisis demands a state-led, centrally planned, and global response. They take for granted that we need a state to intervene on behalf of nature and workers against capital. The fact that the GND and GIR promise to do this is what makes capitalists fear them. Those who are excited about the promise of the GND—such as Riofrancos—have similarly turned towards the state as a terrain of struggle and a locus of power. Consciously or not, these movements have learned from the failures of Climate Camp, Occupy, and the Movement of Squares. It is not enough to suspend the normal running of things. Taking responsibility means taking power and organizing society in what Marx called the interests of “freely associated workers,” or more controversially, the “dictatorship of the proletariat.” The struggles to implement the GND and GIR tell us that environmentalists are increasingly aware of the need to seize the state—and the need to develop a fighting organization with the capacity to do so.

Against State Denialism

Ironically, at almost the precise moment that progressive movements have become conscious of the necessity of a climate response operating at the necessary scale, the Marxist left has taken a state-phobic turn. Consider “disaster communism.” Confronted with the choice between ruin or revolution, disaster communism opts for ruin as the path to revolution—without considering the form of association necessary to ensure that the revolution ushers in a more equal, just, and sustainable world rather than insulated groups struggling with each other over resources. In lieu of the revolutionary subject emphasized in the Marxist tradition, disaster communism turns to climate breakdown as the agent of history.

Drawing on Rebecca Solnit’s book A Paradise Built in Hell, a study of how practices of mutual aid and collectivity arise in the aftermath of crises, disaster communists argue that we do not need to seize the state because the state will be washed away, along with the capitalist system itself, as the full force of the climate crisis crashes down around us. While Solnit emphasizes the ephemerality of “disaster communities,” disaster communists ask how these communities might be sustained and even flourish well beyond the punctual point of a climatic disaster wrought by capitalism. Theirs is a vision of communism arising, triumphantly, from capital’s ashes. Vision may be too strong a term here: for the most part, disaster communism is a hope, a screen covering over the need for organization and planning at a scale that can produce a form of life suitable for billions of people and nonhuman species.

Responses to the Covid-19 pandemic illustrate the point. Even as mobilized volunteers and mutual aid can meet real needs by distributing meals, assisting neighbors, and coordinating webinars, they are inadequate to the most demanding tasks of developing and administering tests for the virus, securing hospital beds in intensive care units, producing and distributing respirators, and providing adequate protective equipment at the necessary scale. Mutual aid is inspiring, but it’s not enough—it can’t stop the hoarders and profiteers, pay hospital bills and unemployment insurance, release prisoners and detainees. It doesn’t scale, particularly when the prevailing logic comes from the market. That capital accumulation takes place through dispossession as well as exploitation brings home the real limit of mutual aid: poor and working people do not own the means of production and therefore production does not meet social needs.

Furthermore, in extreme capitalist countries like the US and the UK, social and political diversity means that many do not voluntarily comply with public health recommendations. Employers insist that employees come to work. Students spend spring break at the beach. Individuals approach their own situations in terms of exceptions, reasons why they don’t need to comply with directives. Orders from the state don’t eliminate all these exceptions. But they reduce them substantially, most significantly by preventing employers from requiring workers to put themselves at risk. Were the state used as an instrument of working class power, it would, at a minimum, guarantee that workers would continue to be paid, that the health and well-being of people would be the focus of government attention. The pandemic demonstrates a truth that the left’s responses to climate change have been slow to acknowledge: global problems require a centrally planned response with all the tools that are at the disposal of the state. Failing to seize hospitals, industry, banks, and logistical networks from the capitalist class results in needless death—and gives a green light to disaster capitalism.

Geoff Mann and Joel Wainwright’s 2018 book Climate Leviathan provides another state-phobic response to the climate crisis. Mann and Wainwright predict four possible resolutions to the climate crisis. The first is “Climate Leviathan.” This is a global sovereign power that would act in the interests of capitalist states and global capital to limit the effects of climate breakdown. This is effectively the scenario hoped for by Chakrabarty. The second is “Climate Behemoth.” Here, states cannot agree to constitute a global sovereign power and so the crisis is tackled by international capital in the interests of international capital. The third is “Climate Mao.” In this scenario a single authoritarian sovereign power, most likely China, leads global mitigation and adaptation efforts. Finally, their fourth and preferred scenario is “Climate X.” This would be a so-far-nonexistent social movement that struggles to resolve the crisis in a way that is simultaneously anti-capitalist and anti-sovereign.

Alyssa Battistoni and Patrick Bigger have already written compelling Marxist critiques of Climate Leviathan. We don’t need to rehearse them here. We note, however, that responses to the Covid-19 pandemic have resembled Climate Behemoth and Climate Mao. While the US, UK, and EU have been slow to use state power to coordinate either within or among the themselves, instead following the dictates and interests of capital in their structuring of economic responses to the pandemic, China has modeled both rigorous state action with respect to quarantines and international leadership with respect to provision of medical aid. What’s important for our argument here is that Mann and Wainwright’s state denialism prevents them from conceiving the state as a form for the collective power of working people, an instrument through which we remake the economy in the service of human and nonhuman life.

Jasper Bernes offers a third state-phobic Marxist response to the climate crisis. A proponent of communization theory, Bernes argues that communism means “the immediate abolition of money and wages, of state power, and of administrative centralization.” Absent something like a state, how is a just response to the climate crisis even possible? Should we assume that it will spontaneously emerge as a result of disparate local disaster communisms? Should we assume that access to food, water, living space, and capacities for self-defense will be equally distributed, that by some miracle the immediate abolition of money and wages will leave everyone in the same position? The pandemic gives us insight into the inability of the communization approach to respond to catastrophe: when millions who have been dependent on the wage are without it, they require centralized state power to seize the means of production and distribution and administer both on the scale necessary to meet social needs. The issue isn’t the power of the state. It’s the class wielding state power.

#### Capitalism ensures climate apartheid and extinction

Heron & Dean 20 (Kai Heron, editor at ROAR Magazine. Jodi Dean, Professor of Political Science at Hobart and William Smith Colleges. “Revolution or Ruin.” E-Flux. Journal #110 - June 2020. <https://www.e-flux.com/journal/110/335242/revolution-or-ruin/> //shree)

We know how the first paragraph begins. We’ve read about the changing climate for over twenty years, infrequently at first and then daily until we couldn’t deny it any longer. The world is burning. The oceans are heating up and acidifying. Species are dying in the Sixth Great Extinction. Koalas have replaced polar bears as the charismatic species whose dwindling numbers bring us to tears. Millions are displaced and on the move, only to be met with fences, borders, and death.

We’ve read the news and it keeps getting worse. As pandemics spread, as the climate crisis continues unabated, the imperatives of capital prevent state action on anything but protecting banks and corporations. Since 1988, when human-induced climate change was officially recognized by the establishment of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the oil and gas sector has doubled its contribution to global warming. The industry emitted as much greenhouse gas over the twenty-eight years after 1988 as it had in the 237 years since the beginning of the industrial age. Regular reports announce that the atmospheric impact of these emissions is manifesting faster than scientists previously expected. The IPCC clock tells us that we have eleven years to prevent warming from rising more than 1.5 degrees above preindustrial levels. Some places on earth already hit that mark in the summer of 2019. “Climate change”—that innocuous moniker preferred by Republican political consultant Frank Lutz and adopted by the George W. Bush administration because “global warming” seemed too apocalyptic—has moved from seeming far away and impossible to being here, now, and undeniable. This has not stopped the United States and Canada from providing economic relief funds in the wake of coronavirus to oil and gas companies.

Those least responsible for climate change, those who have suffered the most from capitalism’s colonizing and imperial drive, are on the frontlines of the climate catastrophe. How to find clean water amidst never-ending drought? How to gather needed herbs, food, and firewood amidst rapid deforestation? How to survive the floods and fires? Centuries of colonialism, exploitation, and war undermine people’s capacities to survive and thrive, hitting poor people, women, children, people with disabilities, already disadvantaged racialized and national minorities, and the elderly hardest of all. According to a UN report, “We risk a ‘climate apartheid’ scenario where the wealthy pay to escape overheating, hunger and conflict while the rest of the world is left to suffer.” Capitalism has always permitted some to flourish by forcing others to fight for survival. The climate crisis—and now the coronavirus—intensifies these dynamics into a global class war. In Marx’s words, “ruin or revolution is the watchword” for our times.

#### Vote neg for Maoist ethics against capitalist apartheid – only unifying the colonial underclass through a People’s Liberation Army can destroywhite capitalist civilization and institute a World Black Dictatorship

Kelley and Etsche 99 (Robin D.G. Kelley, Robin Davis Gibran Kelley (born March 14, 1962) is the Gary B. Nash Professor of American History at UCLA.[1][2] From 2006 to 2011, he was Professor of American Studies and Ethnicity at the University of Southern California (USC),[3] and from 2003 to 2006 he was the William B. Ransford Professor of Cultural and Historical Studies at Columbia University. From 1994 to 2003, he was a professor of history and Africana Studies at New York University (NYU) as well the chairman of NYU's history department from 2002 to 2003.; and Betsy Etsche, Assistant Prof of American Studies at University of Kansas. “Black Like Mao: Red China and Black Revolution.” Souls: A Critical Journal of Black Politics, Culture, and Society. V1 N4. P18-20 //shree) Note: RAM = Revolutionary Action Movement founded by Freeman, Max Stanford, and Wanda Marshall.

Maoism’s emphasis on revolutionary ethics and moral transformation, in theory at least, resonated with black religious traditions (as wells as American Protestantism more generally), and like the Nation of Islam, black Maoists preached self-restraint, order, and discipline. It is quite possible that in the midst of a counterculture that embodied elements of hedonism and drug use, a new wave of student and working-class radicals found Maoist ethics attractive. On his return from China, Robert Williams – in many respects RAM’s founding father – insisted that all young black activists “undergo personal and moral transformation. There is a need for a stringent revolutionary code of moral ethics. Revolutionaries are instruments of righteousness.” For black revolutionaries, the moral and ethical dimension of Mao’s thought centered on the notion of personal transformation. It was a familiar lesson, embodied in the lives of Malcolm X and (later) George Jackson: the idea that one possesses the revolutionary will to transform himself. (These narratives are almost exclusively male despite the growing number of memoirs by radical black women). Whether or not RAM members lived by the “Code of Cadres,” Maoist ethics ultimately served to reinforce Malcolm’s status as a revolutionary role model.

RAM’s twelve-point program called for the development of freedom schools, national black student organizations, rifle clubs, black farmer cooperatives – not just for economic development but to keep “community and guerilla forces going for a while” – and a liberation guerilla army made up of youth and unemployed. RAM placed special emphasis on internationalism, pledging support for national liberation movements in Africa, Asia, and Latin America as well as the adoption of “Pan-African socialism.” In line with Cruse’s seminal essay, “Revolutionary Nationalism and the Afro-American,” RAM members saw themselves as colonial subjects fighting a “colonial war at home.” As Stanford wrote in an internal document, titled “Projects and Problems of the Revolutionary Movement.” (1964), “RAM’s position is that the Afro-American is not a citizen of the USA, denied his rights, but rather he is a colonial subject enslaved. This position says that the Black people in the USA are a captive nation suppressed and that their fight is not for integration into the white community but one of national liberation.”

As colonial subjects with a right to self-determination, RAM saw Afro-America as a de facto member of the nonaligned nations. RAM members even identified themselves as part of the “Bandung world,” going so far as to hold a conference in November 1964 in Nashville called “The Black Revolution’s Relationship to the Bandung World.” In a 1965 article published in RAM’s journal Black America, members started to develop a theory of “Bandung Humanism” or “Revolutionary Black Internationalism,” which argued that the battle between Western imperialism and the Third World – more than the battle between labor and capital – represented the most fundamental contradiction in our time. They linked the African-American freedom struggle with what was happening in China, Zanzibar, Cuba, Vietnam, Indonesia, and Algeria, and they characterized their work as part of Mao’s international strategy of encircling Western capitalist countries and challenging imperialism. After 1966, the term “Bandung Humanism” was dropped entirely and replaced with “Black Internationalism.”

Precisely what “Black Internationalism” meant was laid out in an incredibly bold thirty-six-page pamphlet published by RAM in 1966, titled The World Black Revolution. Loosely patterned on the Communist Manifesto, the pamphlet identified strongly with China against both the capitalist West and the Soviet empire. The “emergence of Revolutionary China began to polarize caste and class contradictions within the world, in both the bourgeoisie [sic] imperialist camp and also in the European bourgeois communist-socialist camp. In other words, China was the wedge that sharpened contradictions between colonial peoples and the West. Rejecting the idea that socialist revolution will arise in the developed countries of the West, RAM insisted that the only true revolutionary solution is the “dictatorship of the world by the Black Underclass through World Black Revolution.” Of course, the authors were not working from today’s definitions; RAM used “underclass” to encompass all peoples of color in Asia, Latin American, Africa, and elsewhere; the “Black Underclass” was merely a synonym for the colonial world. China was in a bitter fight to defend its own freedom. Now the rest of the “black” world must follow suit: The Black Underclass has only one alternative to free itself of colonialism, imperialism, capitalism, and neo-colonialism; that is to completely destroy Western (bourgeois) civilization (the cities of the world) through a World Black Revolution and establishing a Revolutionary World Black Dictatorship can bring about the end of exploitation of man by mankind and the new revolutionary world be created. To coordinate this revolution, RAM called for the creation of a Black International and the creation of a “People’s Liberation Army on a world scale.” For all of its strident nationalism, The World Black Revolution concludes that black nationalism “is really internationalism.” Only by demolishing white nationalism/white power can liberation be achieved for everyone. Not only will national boundaries be eliminated with the “dictatorship” of the Black Underclass,” but “the need for nationalism in its aggressive form will be eliminated.” This is a pretty remarkable statement given RAM’s social and ideological roots. But rather than representing a unified position, the statement reflects various tensions that persisted through RAM’s history. On one side were nationalists who felt that revolutionaries should fight for the black nation first and build socialism separate from the rest of the United States. On the other side were socialists like James and Grace Boggs who wanted to know who would rule the “white” nation and what such a presence would mean for black freedom. They also rejected efforts to resurrect the “Black Nation” thesis—the old Communist line that in black-majority countries of the South (the “black belt”) have a right to secede from the union. The Boggses contended that the real source of power lies in the cities, not the rural black belt. In January 1965, James Boggs resigned from his post as Ideological Chairman.

### 1NC---T

#### Our interpretation is that the negative should not be burdened with rejoinder against affirmatives that defend something other than the desirability of the United States federal government expanding the scope of its core antitrust laws

#### “The USfg” means the three branches

OECD 87. Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. The Control and Management of Government Expenditure. 179. Google Book.

1. Political and organizational structure of government The United States America is a federal republic consisting of 50 states. States have their own constitutions and within each State there are at least two additional levels of government, generally designated as counties and cities, towns or villages. The relationships between different levels of government are complex and varied (see Section B for more information). The Federal Government is composed of three branches: the legislative branch, the executive branch, and the judicial branch. Budgetary decisionmaking is shared primarily by the legislative and executive branches. The general structure of these two branches relative to budget formulation and execution is as follows.

#### “Resolved” means to enact a policy by law

Words & Phrases 64. Permanent Edition.

Definition of the word “resolve,” given by Webster is “to express an opinion or determination by resolution or vote; as ‘it was resolved by the legislature;” It is of similar force to the word “enact,” which is defined by Bouvier as meaning “to establish by law”.

#### The “core antitrust laws” are the Sherman, Clayton, and FTC Acts

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Part II of this Article discusses Congress’s historical balancing and blending of fundamental political, social, moral, and economic values to create a constitutional-like set of flexible laws that can be adapted to unforeseen and changing economic and political circumstances.22 Part II.A. briefly reviews some of the extensive scholarship addressing Congress’s balancing of values and objectives in its core antitrust laws including the Sherman, Clayton, and FTC Acts. Parts II.B. and C. explore the less-studied balancing of political, social, moral, and economic values and objectives in more recent antitrust legislation.23 Part II.B. specifically examines the legislative debates undergirding the passage of the HSR Act. 24 Part II.C. then turns to the debates and discourse that led to the passage of the NCRA in 1984 and the subsequent National Cooperative Production Amendments of 1993 and 2004. 25

#### Vote negative for predictable limits---the stasis point for debate

#### 1. Fairness---the Neg should win on average 50% of the time---any unfair advantage is a reason they should lose---their arguments are shaped by the drive to win, so presume their arguments are in bad faith.

#### 2. Clash---debate requires stasis to motivate research that develops third- and fourth-line responses---that’s key to effective politics and activism regardless of your personal beliefs---their interpretation explodes limits, makes the Aff conditional, and forces the Neg into concessionary ground.

## Case

### AT: Structuralism---1NC

#### Refuse ontology frames---Black isn’t coterminous with Slave but is an agent of a shared history of humanity---ceding democratic ideals to slavers is inaccurate, racially paternalistic, and zeroes pragmatic harms reduction

McCarthy 20 (Jesse McCarthy is an assistant professor in the departments of English and of African and African American Studies at Harvard University. “On Afropessimism.” <https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/on-afropessimism/> //shree)

Nonetheless, the fact that the main current of Afropessimist thinking runs counter to all of Black political history and tradition thus far; the fact that the foundational thinker for this perspective, Frantz Fanon, came to completely opposing conclusions with respect to the nature of politics and solidarity in struggle; the fact that the theory often appears to evade scrutiny or contestation by proclaiming itself “meta-theoretical” and “ontological”; the fact that it asserts a “mandate” for which no empirical evidence is provided and in the face of overwhelming evidence that it constitutes at best a minoritarian and class-specific position — all of this has to be reckoned with by those who want to take Afropessimism to heart.

Perhaps it’s worth reminding ourselves that when he was murdered, Fred Hampton was encouraging poor whites to analogize their position to that of poor Blacks. At the time of his assassination, Malcolm X was embracing and actively seeking to incorporate a cross-racial coalition into his new organization. Ella Baker actively encouraged the deepening of organizational ties and activist links across different communities by emphasizing common struggle and common oppression. What evidence do we have, on the other hand, that the power behind the status quo is quaking at the thought of Black folk gathering in isolation to mourn the end of the world?

If the challenge is more narrowly intellectual and what is needed are correctives to white Marxist hubris, Cedric Robinson’s Black Marxism (1983) already exists. Black feminist thought offers its own counternarratives. Of course, Wilderson doesn’t have to agree with Robinson or the Combahee River Collective. But isn’t it a problem that they aren’t cited even once in his books? Are we to jettison our entire tradition? Were all those who came before us so hopelessly naïve? Are we going to cast aside Vincent Harding’s There Is a River and read nothing but Fanon, Lacan, and Heidegger? Is Bantu philosophy overdetermined by social death even if its worldview was constructed in the absence of the white gaze? Afropessimism has yet to tackle these questions, to take its opponent’s counterarguments and positions seriously.

David Marriott, who is cited by Wilderson as a fellow Afropessimist, asks in his own work: whither Fanon? I wonder this, too. Wilderson says he is the figure he modeled himself on as a young man. Clearly Fanon is central to all of his thinking; indeed, all Afropessimist theorists consider Black Skin, White Masks (1952) a cornerstone text. It is an extraordinary philosophical work, and they are right that it is too often underappreciated. But it is also an extremely complicated intellectual experiment. The third sentence of that book is: “I’m not the bearer of absolute truths.” Fanon proposes to work through the problem of the abjection of Blackness, and that process extends beyond the book into the engaged existentialist revolt and the analysis of colonial relations that he explicitly argues involves the colonized subject, regardless of their race, in The Wretched of the Earth (1961). But even if one were to read only Black Skin, White Masks, it is impossible to miss the humanist assumptions that it opens onto in its conclusion. What else can one make of Fanon stating that “I am not a slave to slavery that dehumanized my ancestors,” and that “the density of History determines none of my acts. I am my own foundation”? How can one miss the assumption of a shareable humanity when he insists that “at the end of this book we would like the reader to feel with us the open dimension of every consciousness.” How can Fanon’s trajectory into the Algerian War of Independence be reconciled with the null trajectories that Afropessimism proposes?

If Afropessimism pushes us to pose harder and sharper questions as Fanon prayed his Black body always would, if it serves to break the shallow cant of the media class and its operatives — then certainly it will have done some good. But on the terms of its own presiding genius it needs to be understood as a waystation and not a terminus on the road to disalienation that Fanon argued is the only path to freedom for Black people in the modern world. That path, which he described in terms of building a “new man,” required him to first understand the depth of abjection that Blackness had been cast into, and then to undo that abjection by mobilizing its ejection from the political order of the West in a grand historical struggle to reconstruct that civilization from the side of the oppressed, an embrace that clearly involves a radical solidarity with non-Black people. This was the mission Fanon was on when he died, and it was a mission he believed Black peoples would have a special, indeed, foundational role in ultimately seeing through.

Realizing these goals does not mean adhering to a formulaic principle or that Black people need to think, act, or speak as a monolith. Fanon and Wilderson are both fond of citing Aimé Césaire’s phrase about “the end of the world” from his poem Notebook of a Return to the Native Land:

One must begin somewhere.

Begin what?

The only thing in the world worth beginning:

The End of the world of course.

These lines do not appear at the end of the poem, however, but roughly halfway through it. The interjection, “of course,” stands in here for the French word “parbleu,” which, even in the late 1930s when Césaire was composing his poem in Paris, carried a folksy and bathetic ring that is only dimly captured in the English but is easier to hear if you imagine these lines as having strayed from a play by Samuel Beckett. Wilderson intones this phrase repeatedly in his book, wielding it like a totemic hammer portending world-destroying events that, in light of the commitments of his own theory, seem to suggest, and possibly wish for, a zero-sum war between the races. But Césaire’s usage is far more ambivalent and ironic, the cry of a man whose revolutionary action must first and foremost be directed inwardly toward a poetic reconstruction of the self, a liberation that requires a self-determined and self-realizing pursuit of truth.

Fanon admired and respected no other intellectual more than Césaire. We know from his letters to his French publisher François Maspero that he imagined his writings as adressed, in no small part, to and for him. The idiosyncratic prose style of Black Skin, White Masks is Fanon’s way of signifying upon a correspondence with Césaire’s poetics. Both writers are acutely aware that the Black thinker is poised precariously between the poles of reflection and action. But both are committed to a humanistic pursuit of truth and both believe in the promise of a radiant Blackness whose time is not yet come. This is why, even as the Algerian War raged around him, Fanon continued his psychiatric research, convinced that understanding the traumas of war and torture would be necessary for healing the postrevolutionary body politic. He wrote for the present and for the future in pursuit of an understanding of himself and of human nature, and for the cause of a political independence and freedom that he hoped would set the entire African continent on a new course. Had he lived, he would have persevered until every colonialist regime from Algiers to Cape Town (the title he had in mind for his last book was Alger-Le Cap) had been driven off the continent. Fanon was no pessimist: true revolutionaries never are.

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But must we revolve around Fanon in the first place? Today many activists are more inspired by Fannie Lou Hamer. The US context has its own problems that Fanon only barely understood and addressed. Why not return instead, in this hour of national contestation, to a figure like David Walker and his Appeal to the Coloured Citizens of the World; But in Particular and Very Expressly to those of the United States of America from 1829? We still underappreciate the importance of this text, one of the seminal documents that captures the first great Black intellectual debate in the United States, which was an argument over whether or not we ought to stay in the country at all. Walker believed we should, and he was the first to define and defend the monumental implications of that choice. He attacked the mighty lobby of the American Colonization Society, which included the powerful senator Henry Clay, Abraham Lincoln, and many leading Black intellectuals of the day, who were convinced full equality for Blacks in America was neither possible nor desirable and advocated emigration. Their plans revolved around evacuating the Black population to the Pepper Coast, now the country of Liberia, which emerged from colonial schemes like “Mississippi-in-Africa” that the American Colonization Society founded in the 1830s.

We could have abandoned the country. History could have taken a very different course. American slaves could have returned to Africa and the United States could have become a white ethno-state, a second Europe. The 1820s and ’30s were the last possible moment of undoing or preventing the existence of a Black America. But Black American intellectuals made the choice to stay — to hold this ground and make something new here that the world had never seen. As the political scientist Melvin Rogers points out, Walker’s Appeal not only staked this argument in terms of a principled Black nationalist claim based on the enormous sacrifice of “blood and tears” in slavery; the rhetorical address of the text was also intended to awaken Black Americans to their own potential as a nationally self-consciously political community with a global outlook. “[F]or [Walker],” Rogers writes, “African Americans did not need a prophet to whom they should blindly defer. Rather they needed a community willing to confront practices of domination, capable of responding to their grievances, and susceptible to transcending America’s narrow ethical and political horizon.”

Wilderson’s Afropessimism insists that we are still slaves. Walker insisted in 1829 that the slaves are (and were even then) “colored citizens” of the United States and of the world. That if we are oppressed it is only because we are ignorant of our true strength, because we have been taught to disbelieve and disavow our worth to the world, to the nation, and to each other. Which of these two views is the correct one? I think the historical record and the present state of our politics tells us all we need to know on that score. For it is no coincidence that today it is Black Americans who are once again trying to save the country, to invest in finishing the work of making this place a home that we can live in. In what is a long-standing pattern, the “coloured citizens” of this country are at the forefront of practicing civics. Indeed, what could be more republican than risking one’s health to restore the health of the body politic? To ensure that one of the most basic promises of the state is properly fulfilled: that it apply its law enforcement equally, humanely, and in a manner accountable to the people it serves.

As in past struggles, our principled defense of an ethical civil code has attracted others with its moral force. We have seen a massive response, including from sources traditionally opposed to these concerns, who recognize the profoundly dysfunctional culture of US policing, prisons, and courts. Even many of those who do not agree that these are the result of actively racist policies and attitudes no longer deny that our exceptionally poor record cannot plausibly be unrelated to a long history of antiblack violence and antagonism. For this same reason, likeminded people around the world are hoping for a decisive break with the past‚ taking to the streets across the globe to demand that state actors acknowledge that there really is a history of injury that needs to stop being denied, and that we can and should work together to design a new social contract that will restore the perceived legitimacy of law enforcement and criminal justice in the eyes of all citizens and not just some.

The generation undertaking these endeavors does not seem to require a narrative of optimism in order to take the great risks they have incurred. They have a healthy indifference to both optimism and pessimism alike. Perhaps it results from the demands of carrying out politics in the real world. The incredibly difficult task of organizing and strategizing in order to elevate and amplify the best responses and to rein in and temper the counterproductive ones that delay and diminish a good cause. That’s hard to do in the best of cases: in a turbulent, paranoid, and instantly videotaped public sphere, it’s a Sisyphean task that bad-faith commentators take advantage of.

None of this diminishes the fundamental need for greater self-capacity of the kind Walker called for 200 years ago. Much of the work ahead will necessarily involve a growing capacity for self-reflection, self-criticism, irony, and joy in our politics. It will require acknowledging that struggles against white oppression will never be successful without deepened self-healing in our communities: repairing the relations in families, between men and women; ending the violence directed at trans, queer, and otherwise non-conforming people in our neighborhoods; ending the heinous blood feuds between rival gangs and sets; restoring education and communal trust as our highest priorities and most cherished aspirations. These will always remain preconditional to the realization of freedom and autonomy. It is pursuing these aims as an ongoing collective activity that will make unavoidable the realization as Walker said, that this country is “more ours” than anyone else’s — that we are a historic people with a world-historical destiny that understands our suffering as endowing us with both the right and the responsibility of civilizing the United States in such a way that it reflects the values that our historical experiences bring to it, the freedoms, equalities, and cultural pluralisms that we have made vital and central to its identity.

One doesn’t need to hang on desperately to a mirage of hope. If we look to history, we can see more than enough concrete evidence and example to support the conclusion that a racially defined caste system is unlikely to ever again prevail. Of course, that doesn’t mean history is a smoothly upward-trending curve. We have known terrible setbacks. Yes, the violent defeat of Reconstruction was successful. But the building of Black institutions and the Niagara Movement proceeded anyway. Tulsa was burned to the ground. But its Black citizens turned right around and rebuilt it out of the ashes. The Civil Rights movement was checked by the forces of reaction and the assassin’s bullet; but the world of unquestioned white superiority and authority that George Wallace hoped to preserve is reduced now to a twinkle in David Duke’s blue eye. Yes, creepy white supremacists still crawl out from under mossy stones at opportune moments to wail about their Nordic fantasies in their over-sized khaki pants. Yes, like the militants of the Islamic State, they are capable of carrying out horrific acts of terror and violence. But like that barbaric and fanatical sect, white supremacy is permanently confined to such rear-guard actions because it has already lost — it is trying to reverse a clock going forward — which explains the virulence and incoherence of its outbursts of spastic violence.

We are not at the end, but near the beginning of something new. The pandemic and the multiple underlying crises and fractures it has revealed make vivid that one need not wait so very long for “the end of the world.” The problem, as generations of millenarians have discovered, is that it turns out there’s a morning after the end of the world. And one after that too. The hardest truth is that all the uncertainties that govern the question of what can be done, what will be done, and the difference between the two, remain in our hands. What would Frantz Fanon, or David Walker, or Ella Baker tell us if they saw the streets today? Surely, not that we are at an impasse against an implacable enemy. They would insist that we lift each other and rise together with the spirit of history at our backs. We have done it before. Every time we do it’s a new day.

#### Maximum captivity frames that reduce the material history of slavery to libidinal drives is reductionist, unethical, and disavows textures of blackness

McCarthy 20 (Jesse McCarthy is an assistant professor in the departments of English and of African and African American Studies at Harvard University. “On Afropessimism.” <https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/on-afropessimism/> //shree)

The most troubling aspect of Afropessimism, however, may be its treatment of slavery. Despite the fact that Wilderson knows this is one of the most fiercely contested components of his worldview, he treats it as if it were a minor point, relegating an important statement of his position to a footnote: “It is worth reiterating that, through the lens of Afropessimism, slavery is, essentially, a relational dynamic, rather than a historical era or an ensemble of empirical practices (like whips and chains).” I submit that there is something deeply troubling about a casual parenthetical that proposes to evacuate the significance of the entire material history of antebellum slavery. It’s also logically bizarre, since it seems constitutive of the entire project that slavery have been real at least at some point in order for the relation to obtain in the first place. But these issues are brushed aside, since this erasure is necessary for the theory to do what Wilderson wants it to do; slavery must be transformed into a portable and fundamentally psychological relation untethered from historical memory and founded purely on the basis of melanin and the antagonism that an all-encompassing and all-powerful “whiteness” poses to it.

For many of us, such a leap is neither ethical nor comprehensible. But for Wilderson the portability and paradoxical fungibility of slavery fits perfectly with his interest in film and his Lacanian and Fanonian readings of it. How else to explain passages in Afropessimism in which incidents involving a terrible white roommate situation he and his girlfriend find themselves in circa 1979 are, for Wilderson, obviously comparable to Steve McQueen’s 2013 film, 12 Years a Slave, which was based on Solomon Northup’s 1853 slave narrative. This is not a jest, but a sustained and intensely explored analogy, in which the whipping of Patsey (played by Lupita Nyong’o in the film), descriptions of the cool sadism of Mary Epps (the slaveowner’s wife) from Northrup’s 1853 narrative, and Wilderson’s troubles with a batty white roommate all share the same stage. We are asked to imagine them as coequal and even coeval psychological theaters of cruelty, whose mise-en-scène simply involves different props. The plantation is everywhere and all the time. It is ontological, which means that it attaches trans-historically to all Black persons regardless of their social position.

How far does this go? In his academic monograph on film studies, Red, White & Black (2010), Wilderson forthrightly asserts that Black academics are not subalterns in the academy but “Slaves of their colleagues.” Is being talked down to in the faculty lounge really the same as being whipped at the post, or slinging rock on the corner, or being placed in solitary on Rikers Island as a juvenile? Is working at Merrill Lynch in New York as a Black woman really the same as working shifts as a Black gay man in a McDonald’s in Alabama? Is it ethical or desirable to confound all of these into a tortuous equivalency while telling those who propose to fight at your side to shut up because you don’t like the analogies they are using to connect themselves with your suffering?

It is fair to ask of a “lens” whether it actually sharpens our view and, if so, to perform demonstrations of clarity? A major problem for Afropessimism is that its claim to revealing the underlying structural truth seems to repeatedly require abandoning any significant contact with historical reality. With social categories like class, gender, and material facts made irrelevant, the theoretical work is forced to concentrate itself in rhetorical aphorisms that seem to be slouching their way toward slogans. “The antagonist of the worker is the capitalist. The antagonist of the Native is the settler. But the antagonist of the Black is the Human being,” Wilderson tells us. The problem with this, apart from its faux-syllogistic form, is that human identities are not fixed and rigid boxes, but dynamic rings of change that merge and overlap. The Black Americans involved in the colonization scheme of Liberia in the 19th century were both Black (formerly enslaved on US plantations) and also settlers. Obviously, there are Black capitalists just as there are Black workers. Is there a double-jeopardy principle for antagonisms or some calculus by which they can be selectively negated?

“Blackness and Slaveness are inextricably bound in such a way that whereas Slaveness can be disimbricated from Blackness, Blackness cannot exist as other than Slaveness,” Wilderson assures. Was Joseph Jenkins Roberts, the first president of Liberia, not capable of really being a settler or a capitalist because of the inescapable “Slaveness” of his Blackness? How should we evaluate the categories, both legal and political, that Black people themselves brought into world history? The only antagonists Jean-Jacques Dessalines recognized in 1804 were the French, whom he violently reviled, refused to grant any rights to, and often cruelly put to death (in the context of what is arguably the most just war ever fought and the only successful example of a slave revolution in history) — while simultaneously decreeing that all citizens of the Republic of Haiti henceforth would be considered Black, even the small Polish population on the island which had joined forces with the slaves against the French slave power. Dessalines also believed that a convergence of interest and identity with the “native” population was both possible and desirable, which is why he called his forces L’Armée Indigène and changed the name of the island from the colonizer’s Saint-Domingue to Haiti, a word from the language of the indigenous Taíno people.

What are we to make of the Blacks who owned slaves themselves, the imbricated weave that historians Michael P. Johnson and James L. Roark describe in their classic study, Black Masters, and that Edward P. Jones meditates upon in his great novel, The Known World? What of the fact that Black and white laborers banded together and fought against the planter elite during the years leading up to and including Bacon’s Rebellion in 1676? And if the categories of racial Blackness and whiteness are so crucial to Wilderson, why is none of the scholarship on the historical production of “whiteness” (Theodore Allen, Noel Ignatiev, Nell Irvin Painter, David Roediger) cited in either Afropessimism or Red, White & Black? Where do the unique polities of the Jamaican Maroons and quilombos of Brazil fit into this picture? Can it really be true in the full light of history that there is no Blackness at all that is not Slaveness? Is a flat reductionist dichotomy really capable of comprehending the truth of human history? I understand Wilderson’s point about his Palestinian friend, but what does his theory clarify for us about that Ethiopian Jewish soldier?

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Carter G. Woodson, in The Mis-Education of the Negro, said that “to handicap a student by teaching him that his Black face is a curse and that his struggle to change his condition is hopeless is the worst sort of lynching.” There is no reason to think Afropessimism is anything that severe. But I invoke Woodson here to remind us that more pragmatic points of view are neither new nor the product of superficial analysis. They cannot simply be breezily dismissed. Let’s not pretend that there are no voices that represent the best of Black folk as much as anyone else, and yet take a radically different point of view on race, racism, and what to do about it. Whatever position one eventually comes to, they are owed some serious account, not consignment to the oubliettes of history, as if intelligent thinking on the positionality and politics of Blacks in the United States only began yesterday.

No serious Black intellectual today thinks antiblack racism is not a matter of life and death. The question is still the old one: what is to be done? There has to be room for a serious debate and the flexibility of open-minded conversation on that score. It’s simply implausible that the answers are easy, obvious, or one-dimensional. The fact that Black Lives Matter has done more to explode the Overton window in American politics than any movement since the 1960s has to be fully and duly appreciated for the extraordinary achievement that it is. But Adolph Reed Jr.’s countervailing contention that Black Lives Matter is merely a rebranding and retreading of Black Power for millennials is a barb nonetheless worth reflecting on seriously.

#### Neurological, racial bias is flexible and determined by coalitional habit forming in the brain---orienting groups around institutional change best breaks down bias. This is offense because their theory rejects these solutions.

Cikara and Van Bavel 15. (Mina Cikara is an Assistant Professor of Psychology and Director of the Intergroup Neuroscience Lab at Harvard University. Her research examines the conditions under which groups and individuals are denied social value, agency, and empathy. Jay Van Bavel is an Assistant Professor of Psychology and Director of the Social Perception and Evaluation Laboratory at New York University. The Flexibility of Racial Bias: Research suggests that racism is not hard wired, offering hope on one of America’s enduring problems. June 2, 2015. <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/the-flexibility-of-racial-bias/>)

The city of Baltimore was rocked by protests and riots over the death of Freddie Gray, a 25-year-old African American man who died in police custody. Tragically, Gray’s death was only one of a recent in a series of racially-charged, often violent, incidents. On April 4th, Walter Scott was fatally shot by a police officer after fleeing from a routine traffic stop. On March 8th, Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity members were caught on camera gleefully chanting, “There Will Never Be A N\*\*\*\*\* In SAE.” On March 1st, a homeless Black man was shot in broad daylight by a Los Angeles police officer. And these are not isolated incidents, of course. **Institutional and systemic racism reinforce discrimination in countless situations, including hiring, sentencing, housing, and even mortgage lending**. It would be easy **to see in all this powerful evidence that racism is a permanent fixture in America’s social fabric and** even, perhaps, **an** inevitable aspect of human nature. Indeed, the mere act of labeling others according to their age, gender, or race is a reflexive habit of the human mind. Social categories, like race, impact our thinking quickly, often outside of our awareness. **Extensive research has found that these implicit racial biases—negative thoughts and feelings about people from other races—are automatic, pervasive, and difficult to suppress**. Neuroscientists have also explored racial prejudice by exposing people to images of faces while scanning their brains in fMRI machines. **Early studies found that when people viewed faces of another race, the amount of activity in the amygdala—a small brain structure associated with experiencing emotions, including fear—was associated with individual differences on implicit measures of racial bias**. This work has led many to conclude that racial biases might be part of a primitive—and possibly hard-wired—neural fear response to racial out-groups. **There is little question that** categories such as **race**, gender, and age **play a major role in shaping the biases and stereotypes that people bring to bear in their judgments of others**. However, **research has shown that how people categorize** themselves **may be just as fundamental to understanding prejudice as how they categorize others**. When people categorize themselves as part of a group, their self-concept shifts from the individual (“I”) to the collective level (“us”). People form groups rapidly and favor members of their own group even when groups are formed on arbitrary grounds, such as the simple flip of a coin. These **findings highlight the remarkable ease with which humans form coalitions**. Recent research confirms **that** coalition**-based** preferences trump race**-based** preferences. For example, **both Democrats and Republicans favor the resumes of those affiliated with their political** party **much** more than **they favor those who share** their race. These **coalition-based preferences remain powerful even in the absence of the animosity present in electoral politics**. Our **research has shown that the simple act of placing people on a** mixed-race team **can** diminish **their** automatic racial bias. In a series of experiments, **White participants who were randomly placed on a mixed-race team—the Tigers or Lions—showed little evidence of implicit racial bias**. **Merely belonging to a mixed-race team trigged positive automatic associations with all of the members of their own group, irrespective of race**. **Being a part of one of these seemingly trivial mixed-race groups produced similar effects on brain activity—the** amygdala responded **to** team **membership** rather than race. Taken together, **these studies indicate that momentary changes in group membership can override the influence of race on the way we see, think about, and feel toward people who are different from ourselves**. Although these coalition-based distinctions might be the most basic building block of bias, they say little about the other factors that cause group conflict. Why do some groups get ignored while others get attacked? Whenever we encounter a new person or group we are motivated to answer two questions as quickly as possible: “is this person a friend or foe?” and “are they capable of enacting their intentions toward me?” In other words, once we have determined that someone is a member of an out-group, we need to determine what kind? The nature of the relations between groups—are we cooperative, competitive, or neither?—and their relative status—do you have access to resources?—largely determine the course of intergroup interactions. Groups that are seen as competitive with one’s interests, and capable of enacting their nasty intentions, are much more likely to be targets of hostility than more benevolent (e.g., elderly) or powerless (e.g., homeless) groups. This is one reason why sports rivalries have such psychological potency. For instance, fans of the Boston Red Sox are more likely to feel pleasure, and exhibit reward-related neural responses, at the misfortunes of the archrival New York Yankees than other baseball teams (and vice versa)—especially in the midst of a tight playoff race. (How much fans take pleasure in the misfortunes of their rivals is also linked to how likely they would be to harm fans from the other team.) **Just as a particular person’s group membership can be flexible, so too are the relations between groups. Groups that have previously had cordial relations may become rivals (and vice versa)**. Indeed, psychological and biological responses **to out-group members** can change, depending on whether or not that out-group is perceived as threatening. For example, people exhibit greater pleasure—they smile—in response to the misfortunes of stereotypically competitive groups (e.g., investment bankers); however, this malicious pleasure is reduced when you provide participants with counter-stereotypic information (e.g., “investment bankers are working with small companies to help them weather the economic downturn). Competition between “us” and “them” can even distort our judgments of distance, making threatening out-groups seem much closer than they really are. These distorted perceptions can serve to amplify intergroup discrimination: the more different and distant “they” are, the easier it is to disrespect and harm them. Thus, not **all out-groups are treated the same: some elicit indifference whereas others become targets of antipathy. Stereotypically threatening groups are especially likely to be targeted with violence, but those** stereotypes can be tempered **with** other info**rmation.** **If perceptions of intergroup relations can be changed, individuals may overcome hostility toward perceived foes and become more responsive to one another’s grievances.** **The** flexible nature **of both group membership and intergroup relations offers reason to be** cautiously optimistic **about the potential for greater cooperation among groups in conflict** (be they black versus white or citizens versus police). One strategy is to bring multiple groups together around a common goal. For example, during the fiercely contested 2008 Democratic presidential primary process, Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama supporters gave more money to strangers who supported the same primary candidate (compared to the rival candidate). Two months later, after the Democratic National Convention, the supporters of both candidates coalesced around the party nominee—Barack Obama—and this bias disappeared. In fact, merely **creating a sense of** cohesion **between two competitive groups can increase empathy for the suffering of our rivals**. **These** sorts of **strategies** can help **reduce aggression toward hostile out-groups, which is** critical for creating more opportunities for constructive dialogue addressing greater social injustices. Of course, instilling a sense of common identity and cooperation is extremely difficult in entrenched intergroup conflicts, but when it happens, the benefits are obvious. Consider how the community leaders in New York City and Ferguson responded differently to protests against police brutality—in NYC political leaders expressed grief and concern over police brutality and moved quickly to make policy changes in policing, whereas the leaders and police in Ferguson responded with high-tech military vehicles and riot gear. In the first case, multiple groups came together with a common goal—to increase the safety of everyone in the community; in the latter case, the actions of the police likely reinforced the “us” and “them” distinctions. Tragically, these types of conflicts continue to roil the country. Understanding the psychology and neuroscience of social identity and intergroup relations cannot undo the effects of systemic racism and discriminatory practices; however, it can offer insights into the psychological processes responsible for escalating the tension between, for example, civilians and police officers. **Even in cases where it isn’t possible to create a common identity among groups in conflict, it may be possible to blur the boundaries between groups**. In one recent experiment, we sorted participants into groups—red versus blue team—competing for a cash prize. Half of the participants were randomly assigned to see a picture of a segregated social network of all the players, in which red dots clustered together, blue dots clustered together, and the two clusters were separated by white space. The other half of the participants saw an integrated social network in which the red and blue dots were mixed together in one large cluster. Participants who thought the two teams were interconnected with one another reported greater empathy for the out-group players compared to those who had seen the segregated network. Thus, reminding people that individuals could be connected to one another despite being from different groups may be another way to build trust and understanding among them. A mere month before Freddie Gray died in police custody, President Obama addressed the nation on the 50th anniversary of Bloody Sunday in Selma: “We do a disservice to the cause of justice by intimating that bias and discrimination are immutable, or that racial division is inherent to America. To deny…progress – our progress – would be to rob us of our own agency; our responsibility to do what we can to make America better." The president was saying that **we**, as a society, **have a responsibility to reduce prejudice and discrimination**. These recent findings from psychology and neuroscience indicate that we, as individuals, possess this capacity. Of course this capacity is not sufficient to usher in racial equality or peace. Even when the level of prejudice against particular out-groups decreases, it does not imply that the level of institutional discrimination against these or other groups will necessarily improve. **Ultimately, only** collective action **and** institutional evolution **can address systemic racism**. **The science is clear on one thing, though:** individual bias and discrimination are changeable**.** **Race-based prejudice and discrimination, in particular, are** created and reinforced by **many** social factors, **but they are** not inevitable consequences of **our** biology**.** Perhaps understanding how coalitional thinking impacts intergroup relations will make it easier for us to affect real social change going forward.

#### Aff fails---theorizing social life within the deadening “fact of blackness” is not revolutionary but enables corporate capture that depoliticizes anti-imperial solidarity within the world

Okoth 20 (Kevin Ochieng Okoth, MPhil in Political Theory at University of Oxford. “The Flatness of Blackness: Afro-3Pessimism and the Erasure of Anti-Colonial Thought.” <https://salvage.zone/issue-seven/the-flatness-of-blackness-afro-pessimism-and-the-erasure-of-anti-colonial-thought/?fbclid=IwAR2HUmzVvPWlokXjUhdFYjTDWLX4wTcS1MxbH1pogzBtz6Lu4-iCXA4d1sw> )

Note – Okoth abbreviates afropessimism as “AP” throughout his work

But as Annie Olaloku-Teriba points out in her excellent critique ‘Afro-Pessimism and the (Un)Logic of Anti-Blackness’, the AP™ finds a ‘comfortable antagonist’ in Moten, whose Black Ops can be neatly reintegrated into the concept of social death. It is also telling that Sexton, in ‘Ante-Anti-Blackness’, rather successfully merges the AP™ conception of social death with Moten’s Black Ops by arguing that:

“A living death is as much a death as it is living. Nothing in Afro-pessimism suggests that there is no black (social) life, only that black life is not social life in the universe formed by the codes of state and civil society, of citizen and subject, of nation and culture, of people and place, of history and heritage, of all the things that colonial society has in common with the colonised, of all the things that capital has in common with labour – the modern world system.”

Sexton shows that Moten’s Black Ops is nothing other than what he instead calls ‘the social life of social death’. There is no either/or distinction between social life and social death: we can think both together by positing that Black life is lived in the underground. Moten even acknowledges, in ‘Blackness and Nothingness (Mysticism in the Flesh)’, that the AP™ and Black Ops are engaged in the same theoretical project:

“In the end, though life and optimism are the terms under which I speak, I agree with Sexton – by way of the slightest most immeasurable reversal of emphasis – that Afro-pessimism and black optimism are not but nothing other than one another. I will continue to prefer the black optimism of his work just as, I am sure, he will continue to prefer the Afro-pessimism of mine.”

For both Afro-pessimists and Black Optimists, the afterlife of slavery is characterised by the social death of the Black/Slave and a heavily distorted version of Fanon’s concept of the ‘fact of blackness’. This assumption, however, precludes the participation of Black Ops in radical politics and confines resistance to spaces of Black performance art.

By confining Black resistance to spaces outside of the anti-Black structures of civil society, and by undercutting the possibility for anti-imperialist solidarity between racialised people across the world, the AP™ theories have opened up a space for the corporate capture of Blackness. We need only recall last year’s Nike campaign, prominently featuring the face of former NFL quarterback Colin Kaepernick, who has been blackballed by the league for kneeling during the national anthem. Since the incident, he has taken on the role of radical Black activist, complete with Panther-esque leather jackets, an afro and Afrocentric jewellery. While Kaepernick’s struggle against the racist and exploitative NFL owners and executives is, of course, legitimate and necessary, the co-optation of his struggle by a large corporation is certainly a cause for concern. Nike is notorious for its use of sweatshop labour (including both forced and child labour), and its history of exploitative labour practices has been well-documented throughout the years. By detaching the struggles of African-Americans from those of racialised workers in the Global South, Nike can present itself as a progressive vehicle for Black emancipatory politics, while completely sidelining the plight of non-white workers outside of the US. Here we might recall a powerful statement by Fred Hampton to illustrate just how far from revolutionary Black politics we find ourselves:

We don’t think you fight fire with fire best; we think you fight fire with water best. We’re going to fight racism not with racism, but we’re going to fight with solidarity. We say we’re not going to fight capitalism with black capitalism, but we’re going to fight it with socialism […] We’re going to fight […] with all of us people getting together and having an international proletarian revolution.

Wilderson and Sexton have been captured by corporate interests in much the same way. In their case, however, it is not a large corporation that co-opts Blackness, but rather the neoliberal university. Is it at all surprising that two professors working within the prestigious University of California system promote a theoretical framework that requires no political action from Black writers and activists other than simply being Black? Not only is AP™ a product of the neoliberal university, it also promotes its authors survival and flourishing within the corporate structures of higher education. When asked about his framework for psychological and physical resistance by the hosts of iMiXWHATiLiKE, Wilderson neatly dodges any commitment to radical politics with the excuse that it could cost him his academic job.

“This is so much a part of what it means to be a professor. I feel like cussing people out all the time. But if I do, I violate University of California’s civility laws, tenure or not I’m out the door, right? And that tempers my speech. So, I think that what I have to offer is not a way out. What I have to offer is an analysis of the problem. And I don’t trust me as much as I trust Black people on the ground.”

Wilderson is aware that the AP™ rely on their activist supporters and social media following to maintain their privileged position within the university – without the activists and organisers on the ground, the AP™ could not prove the market value of its work to the neoliberal institution. By creating a framework for the analysis of race that lends itself to co-optation by corporate interests, the AP™ has certainly demonstrated that it can convert Blackness into profit. All the while, these theorists delude themselves that they are spearheading a truly radical Black movement. In the introduction to a collection of essays on AP™, the editors (who presumably include Sexton and Wilderson) even have the audacity to claim that they are ‘motivated by a desire to contribute to […] bringing these writings out of the ivory towers of the academy’ and that they wish to ‘remove the materials from this sitting place and see them proliferate among those in the streets and prisons’. True, they have succeeded in disseminating a watered-down version of their musings to activists and organisers; but what they have passed on is nothing short of anti-Black, in the sense that it works against the true liberation of Black people of all classes.

Today, such Blackness (and the pseudo-politics that is attached to it) is more useful for academic promotions, Instagram hashtags, and Nike adverts than for any revolutionary or emancipatory politics worthy of the name. The people who truly benefit – or rather profit – from the AP™ brand are the academics and the various university presses and journals who jump at every opportunity to unleash a plethora of AP™ books and articles onto the academic book market. While the AP™ may seem like a niche theoretical discourse, its influence extends far beyond the university: as Olaloku-Teriba argues, the AP™’s theoretical framework provides ‘the structuring logic of various political formations in the era of #BlackLivesMatter’. What is at stake in the debate, therefore, is nothing less than the possibility of a revolutionary Black politics. Maybe African-Americans on the streets or in prison would do well to reach for George Jackson’s Soledad Brother and steer clear of the AP™ and Black Ops.

### Antitrust edu good---1NC

#### Antitrust law matters for every aspect of our lives, and debating the political details is essential to making it work.

Bryce Covert 20. Contributor at The Nation and a contributing op-ed writer at The New York Times, 11/30/20. “The Visible Hand.” https://www.thenation.com/article/culture/david-dayen-monopolized-review/

In the morning, I shower right after I wake up. I choose from a number of products to clean myself, yet they are made by just two companies: Unilever and Johnson & Johnson. I brush my teeth with a toothbrush and toothpaste made by Procter & Gamble but sold under the separate brands Oral-B and Crest. Before I eat breakfast, because I have Type 1 diabetes, I take insulin, a drug that, because of pharmaceutical consolidation and anticompetitive patent hoarding allowed to run amok, cost about $20 for a vial in 1996 but now costs $275. Lunch isn’t any better. The peanut butter for my sandwich almost certainly comes from one of three companies; same with the jelly. We all have “choices,” but do we really get to choose?

Once you put on your “monopoly decoder ring,” David Dayen writes in his new book Monopolized: Life in the Age of Corporate Power, you start to see how this power influences every part of our lives. There’s a baby formula monopoly: Three companies—Abbott Laboratories (which makes Similac), Reckitt Benckiser (which makes Enfamil), and Nestlé—control about 95 percent of the US market. It even follows us after our deaths: Service Corporation International keeps buying up funeral homes and now earns more than $1 out of every $5 in profit from funeral services, and two companies, Hillenbrand and Matthews, make 82 percent of the country’s coffins and caskets.

Some monopolies have become so obvious that everyone can spot them. If you want to fly anywhere in the United States, you basically have four choices, all of which offer increasingly bad service. If you want cable and Internet, you usually have only one or two high-cost options and no power to fight back when the company tells you a technician will be coming anywhere between 8 am and 8 pm to set it up. If you want to search for information or buy something on the Internet, there’s one choice for each that dominates all the rest: Google and Amazon.

But monopolies crop up in all sorts of unexpected places. Match Group, the parent company that owns Match.com, also owns OkCupid, Tinder, and Hinge. Berkshire Hathaway, the holding company empire of billionaire Warren Buffett, owns brands as diverse as Duracell, Dairy Queen, Benjamin Moore, and Fruit of the Loom. The coffee brands Caribou, Peet’s, Intelligentsia, and Stumptown are all owned or partly controlled by the European firm JAB.

Our country is saturated with monopolies, but some might ask, does it matter? As Dayen shows, monopolies make it harder for workers to wield power when there are fewer and fewer employers to choose from. They make the economy less dynamic and innovative. They make society less equal, and by amassing so many resources, they are able to amass power to protect those resources. Monopolies are even a threat to our very democracy, drowning out the voices of the people.

Worries about monopolies date as far back as AD 483. At the beginning of his book, Dayen quotes Emperor Zeno decreeing, “No one may presume to exercise a monopoly of any kind.” Going as far back as the railroad barons of the 19th century, Americans have worried about the ill effects of economic consolidation. Theodore Roosevelt famously took them on as a populist trustbuster. The Granger farmers’ movement and Progressive era activists fought monopolies.

Dayen mentions much of this history, but his aim is not simply to recount it or engage in the contemporary debates over the ways monopolies warp our economy and our society; instead, he wants to spark a modern movement through real, human stories. Corporate concentration and antitrust regulation can sound like dry issues. Dayen seeks to remind us of the very real consequences they have in our everyday lives.

The stories he tells can often be heartbreaking. There’s Travis Bornstein, whose son, Tyler Bornstein, died of a heroin overdose at 23 after getting hooked on opioids that were prescribed for his elbow surgery when he was 18. Rather than call an ambulance or take him to a hospital, the friend Tyler Bornstein was with when he overdosed dumped him in a vacant lot in Akron, Ohio, and fled. “You can’t prepare to lose a child,” Travis Bornstein tells Dayen. “I felt like I failed as a father.” But the Bornsteins were failed by the rampant cartelization and concentration in the pharmaceutical industry: Tyler Bornstein’s death is one of over 200,000 related to opioids since OxyContin, manufactured by one of the Big Pharma companies, was introduced in 1996.

OxyContin, Dayen insists, is just one stark example of the dangers in an industry in which, as he puts it, “monopolies at every stage of the supply chain placed their bottom lines ahead of the health of the recipients of those drugs.” For example, “If you have glaucoma, the reason liquid from your eye drops constantly rolls down your cheeks is that companies deliberately make the drop larger than the human eye can hold. Every milliliter that falls out of your eye represents a tiny profit, and it adds up.”

Dayen also introduces us to Chris Petersen, a third-generation hog farmer in Iowa whose farm has been so battered by agricultural monopolies that his daughter, who grew up aspiring to join the family business, had to find work at a hotel instead. After several generations of farmers, “I’m it,” he tells Dayen. “This is the dead end. You know, it’s sad.” It’s hard for Petersen to compete with concentrated animal feeding operations, which shove thousands of hogs into giant feedlots without sunlight and with scant room to move, whose cost cutting has sent hog prices plummeting. As Dayen notes, four hog firms control two-thirds of today’s market.

We also meet Kate Hanni, who, with her husband and two children, was stuck on a grounded American Airlines flight in 2006 for nine hours without food or water, watching mothers use barf bags for diapers and others puke into them as the smell of overflowing bathrooms wafted through the cabin. The airline refused to let passengers off because doing so would have cost it money through mandated refunds. One claustrophobic traveler even tried to flash SOS signs through the window with his cell phone.

One might wonder if this is an isolated incident. But the entire industry is dominated by just four major airlines, and as Dayen writes, “as long as passengers have nowhere else to go, there’s no incentive to fix a perpetually broken system,” one in which long flight delays are frequent and the service gets worse and worse.

In Dana Chisholm’s quest for an affordable rental house in Southern California, Dayen gives us a story of how monopolization in real estate is running rampant: Chisholm eventually rented from the private-equity-backed landlord Starwood Waypoint, one of several Wall Street real estate companies that have become huge players in the rental market. In 2017, Starwood Waypoint merged with Invitation Homes and is now the nation’s largest rental landlord. More than 240,000 US homes are now in the hands of investors, mostly private equity firms. Because they own so many properties, these companies can jack up rents and fees while slow-walking upkeep and repairs. For Chisholm, that meant appliances that didn’t work, no running water in the sink, and a building infested with rats and roaches. When she contacted the management company, she had to wait months for repairs before getting a Zillow alert for her own house: The management company had listed it for rent even though she had just paid up.

While the stories Dayen offers take place all across the country, from rural areas to Los Angeles’s urban sprawl, and involve people in very different communities and careers, they have the same nugget of truth at their heart: When companies are allowed to keep consolidating, people lose. Without robust regulation that keeps consolidation in check, corporations will keep laying waste to our economy and our lives.

Dayen wrote his book before the current health crisis but in many ways anticipated it. Concentrated supply chains are brittle and unable to cope with major disruptions, such as a pandemic that spikes demand for toilet paper and nose swabs alike. Meat-processing giants that squeeze out smaller players through aggressive line speeds and cost cutting are now major Covid-19 hot spots, thanks to a focus on the bottom line instead of higher safety standards and humane worker treatment. “Amazingly,” Dayen writes, “news deserts correlate with the spread of infectious diseases, as epidemiologists rely on local articles to track outbreaks.”

As Dayen convincingly shows, monopolies are so interwoven in our economy and our lives that there is no escape from them. But his book also highlights some of the challenges faced by a politics that is primarily focused on monopoly. If you see it everywhere without pausing to clarify what is anticompetitive behavior and what is just plain old greed, you risk having the concept lose its specific meaning.

Dayen points a finger at the tech monopolies Google and Facebook, for example, for ravaging the media industry by bleeding advertising dollars dry through their dominance of the market. But there are also other forces pummeling the industry: Wall Street ownership, fickle billionaire backers, and smaller publications’ struggle to find new sources of revenue. Meanwhile, the media industry itself is dotted with monopolies, such as News Corp, which owns The Wall Street Journal and the New York Post and dozens of other properties; TV conglomerates that control local news; and dominant talk radio brands. Later, in a chapter on private equity, we begin to see how the problem with its quest for acquisitions is not only that it shrinks competition but also that it shifts companies’ focus from the production and distribution of goods to the maximization of money for investors. Private equity has, for example, fed upon the retail sector and spit out discarded brands like Sears and Toys “R” Us. This parasitic relationship seems to be less about monopoly power than avarice and a lack of regulation. Certainly, private equity funds have bought up companies in a number of sectors, leading to consolidation. But that’s not what happened to these retailers: The hedge funds came in, loaded the companies with debt, got fat off the fees, and then let the companies fail.

Dayen says that his book’s ambition is not to rehash economic arguments made elsewhere but to turn those arguments into a movement. But a call to action has to be clearly defined. Likewise, as liberal and left politics in the past demonstrated, alongside anti-monopolist politics must be a program of strong social policies. Breaking up health insurance cartels, for example, will help lower costs, but it won’t ensure health care for all. Anti-monopolism must define its potential and its limits and be married to other policy interventions.

There is a compelling reason to focus on anti-monopolist politics, which has garnered bipartisan support over the years. In Tennessee, Republican and Democratic lawmakers alike have tried to get rid of state limitations on municipal broadband service that were imposed at the behest of telecom giants. “We’re aligned on this issue, because it’s not theoretical, it’s practical,” says Chattanooga Mayor Andy Berke, a Democrat. “I’m a small-c conservative,” Christopher Mitchell, a researcher at the Institute for Local Self Reliance, tells Dayen. “The idea of a family moving because they lack broadband is devastating.” Representatives Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Rashida Tlaib stood with Freedom Caucus leaders Jim Jordan and Mark Meadows in demanding that a military contract monopolist return over $16 million in excess funds that it was able to squeeze out of the government. But it is where bipartisan support ends—on matters of redistribution and universal programs—that the lines are drawn between those seeking economic justice for all and those seeking merely a less tilted field.

One reason anti-monopolism is so popular among a certain set is that the solutions to monopoly power are easy to find. In fact, we often don’t need anything new. “We know how to handle monopolies,” Dayen points out, citing existing laws that can protect us against antitrust abuses but that have been misinterpreted or watered down. To him, this should be at the center of any anti-monopolist movement: restoring these laws with their original power and using them to break up monopolies, block mergers that create future ones, and regulate any that remain as public utilities. That’s all “entirely possible under existing law,” he adds.

The institutions are also in place, and not just in the Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission (which are supposed to police monopolies and bust trusts). The Federal Communications Commission is supposed to ensure universal, high-speed Internet access under the Telecommunications Act of 1996. The Civil Aeronautics Board, created in 1938, used to keep airlines from getting concentrated while ensuring widespread access to travel.

But if this is all a matter of laws and regulatory bodies doing the jobs they were given, then why aren’t they? Here Dayen looks to the underlying politics of monopolization. “The mechanisms are clear,” he writes, but “getting the political class to enforce them is the stumbling block.”

### Presumption---1NC

#### Vote Neg on presumption---their method does nothing to change dominant discourses or structures that perpetuate violence. Their challenge to this has no means of spilling outside of debate, which is necessary for them to solve any of their impacts---their belief that it does is cruel optimism, which turns case.

### Political engagement good---1NC

#### Investing within the political is good.

Chandler 9. David. Prof of international relations, University of Westminster. “Questioning Global Political Activism,” in What is Radical Politics Today? ed. Jonathan Pugh. 81-4.

Today more and more people are ‘doing politics’ in their academic work. This is the reason for the boom in International Relations (IR) study and the attraction of other social sciences to the global sphere. I would argue that the attraction of IR for many people has not been IR theory but the desire to practise global ethics. The boom in the IR discipline has coincided with a rejection of Realist theoretical frameworks of power and interests and the sovereignty/anarchy problematic. However, I would argue that this rejection has not been a product of theoretical engagement with Realism but an ethical act of rejection of Realism's ontological focus.

It seems that our ideas and our theories say much more about us than the world we live in. Normative theorists and Constructivists tend to support the global ethical turn arguing that we should not be as concerned with 'what is' as with the potential for the emergence of a global ethical community. Constructivists, in particular, focus upon the ethical language which political elites espouse rather than the practices of power. But the most dangerous trends in the discipline today are those frameworks which have taken up Critical Theory and argue that focusing on the world as it exists is conservative problem-solving while the task for critical theorists is to focus on emancipatory alternative forms of living or of thinking about the world. Critical thought then becomes a process of wishful thinking rather than one of engagement, with its advocates arguing that we need to focus on clarifying our own [END PAGE 81] ethical frameworks and biases and positionality, before thinking about or teaching on world affairs. This becomes 'me-search' rather than research. We have moved a long way from Hedley Bull's (1995) perspective that, for academic research to be truly radical, we had to put our values to the side to follow where the question or inquiry might lead.

The inward-looking and narcissistic trends in academia, where we are more concerned with our reflectivity- the awareness of our own ethics and values - than with engaging with the world, was brought home to me when I asked my IR students which theoretical frameworks they agreed with most. They mostly replied Critical Theory and Constructivism. This is despite the fact that the students thought that states operated on the basis of power and self-interest in a world of anarchy. Their theoretical preferences were based more on what their choices said about them as ethical individuals, than about how theory might be used to understand and engage with the world.

Conclusion

I have attempted to argue that there is a lot at stake in the radical understanding of engagement in global politics. Politics has become a religious activity, an activity which is no longer socially mediated; it is less and less an activity based on social engagement and the testing of ideas in public debate or in the academy. Doing politics today, whether in radical activism, government policy-making or in academia, seems to bring people into a one-to-one relationship with global issues in the same way religious people have a one-to-one relationship with their God.

Politics is increasingly like religion because when we look for meaning we find it inside ourselves rather than in the external consequences of our 'political' acts. What matters is the conviction or the act in itself: its connection to the global sphere is one that we increasingly tend to provide idealistically. Another way of expressing this limited sense of our subjectivity is in the popularity of globalisation theory - the idea that instrumentality is no longer possible today because the world is such a complex and interconnected place and therefore there is no way of knowing the consequences of our actions. The more we engage in the new politics where there is an unmediated relationship between us as individuals and global issues, the less we engage instrumentally with the outside world, and the less we engage with our peers and colleagues at the level of political or intellectual debate and organisation. [END PAGE 82]

You may be thinking that I have gone some way to describing or identifying what the problems might be but I have not mentioned anything about a solution. I won't dodge the issue. One thing that is clear is that the solution is not purely an intellectual or academic one; the demand for global ethics is generated by our social reality and social experiences. Marx spent some time considering a similar crisis of political subjectivity in 1840s Germany and in his writings - The German Ideology, Introduction to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right, Theses on Feuerbach, and elsewhere - he raged against the idealism of contemporary thought and argued that the criticism of religion needed to be replaced by the criticism of politics - by political activism and social change based on the emerging proletariat (see Marx, 1975, for example). Nearly two centuries later it is more difficult to see an emerging political subject which can fulfil the task of 'changing the world' rather than merely 'reinterpreting it' through philosophy.

I have two suggestions. Firstly, that there is a pressing need for an intellectual struggle against the idealism of global ethics. The point needs to be emphasised that our freedom to engage in politics, to choose our identities and political campaigns, as well as governments' freedom to choose their ethical campaigns and wars of choice, reflects a lack of socialties and social engagement. There is no global political struggle between 'Empire' and its 'Radical Discontents'; the Foucauldian temptation to see power and resistance everywhere is a product of wishful or lazy thinking dominated by the social categories of the past. The stakes are not in the global stratosphere but much closer to home. Politics appears to have gone global because there is a breakdown of genuine community and the construction of fantasy communities and fantasy connections in global space. Unless we bring politics back down to earth from heaven, our critical, social and intellectual lives will continue to be diminished ones.

Secondly, on the basis that the political freedom of our social atomisation leads us into increasingly idealised approaches to the world we live in, we should take more seriously Hedley Bull's (1995) injunction to pursue the question, or in Alain Badiou's (2004: 237-8) words subordinate ourselves to the 'discipline of the real'. Subordination to the world outside us is a powerful factor that can bind those interested in critical research, whereas the turn away from the world and the focus on our personal values can ultimately only be divisive. To facilitate external engagement and external judgement, I suggest we experiment with ways to build up social bonds with our peers that can limit our freedoms and develop our sense of responsibility and accountability to others. We may have to construct these social connections artificially but their [END PAGE 83] value and instrumentality will have to be proven through our ability to engage with, understand, critique and ultimately overcome the practices and subjectivities of our time.

### Ballot K---1NC

#### Debate is distinct from academia, in that deliberation starts with the timer and ends with the ballot---impacts about debate and the assumption the ballot has political force to remedy racism is bourgeois ideology---to think that ballots in Round 3 of the Texas tournament change material conditions of anti-blackness is inseparable from magical voluntarism

Cloud and Gunn 10 (Joshua Gunn & Dana L. Cloud, Department of Communication, University of Texas at Austin, "Agentic Orientation as Magical Voluntarism" Communication Theory 20 (2010) 50–78 © 2010 International Communication Association//shree)

Over a decade ago anthropologists Jean and John L. Comaroff (1999) advanced the provocative thesis that globalization in late capitalism has led to ‘‘a dramatic intensification . . . of appeals to enchantment,’’ often most discernable in industrializing countries such as South Africa (p. 282). From ‘‘get rich quick’’ pyramid schemes to e-mail promises from millionaire widows in Nigeria, ‘‘capitalism has an effervescent new spirit—a magical, neo-Protestant zeitgeist—welling up close to its core’’ (p. 281). Of course, over a half-century ago Theodor Adorno (1994) inveighed against astrology and soothsaying as indices of economic magic, underscoring the ability of capitalism to promote the ‘‘doctrine of the existence of spirit’’ so central to bourgeois consciousness. ‘‘In the concept of mind-in-itself,’’ argued Adorno, ‘‘consciousness has ontologically justified and perpetuated privilege by making it independent of the social principle by which it is constituted. Such ideology explodes in occultism: It is Idealism come full circle’’ (p. 133).What the Comaroffs point to is not the arrival of a new form of magical thinking, then, but the intensification and proliferation of postenlightenment gullibility via globalization—ironically in what is presumably the age of cynical reason (e.g., Sloterdijk, 1987). As human beings, academics are just as susceptible to magical thinking and narcissistic fantasies of omnipotence as everyone else. Perhaps because at some level of communication scholars tend to entertain a sense of the magical in the idea of communication (see Peters, 1999), we have been particularly prone to a philosophical belief in what we term ‘‘magical voluntarism,’’ the notion that human agency is better understood as the ability to control a given phenomenon through the proper manipulation of thoughts and symbols (e.g., language). Going well beyond the straightforward idea that our thoughts necessarily influence our actions in transforming the world around us, what we are calling magical voluntarism fosters a deliberate misrecognition of material recalcitrance, an inability to recognize the structural, political, economic, cultural, and psychical limits of an individual’s ability to act in her own interests. Furthermore, magical voluntarism refuses to acknowledge that there is a limit to the efficacy of symbolic action, beyond which persuasion and thought alone fail to shift existing social relations. In popular culture, magical voluntarism is typified by the bestselling book and DVD The Secret (Byrne, 2006; Heriot, 2006), which teach the reader/viewer that ‘‘[y]our life right now is a reflection of your thoughts. That includes all great things, and all the things you consider not so great. Since you attract to you what you think about most, it is easy to see what your dominant thoughts have been on every subject of your life, because that is what you experienced’’ (Byrne, 2006, p. 9). The ‘‘magical, neo-Protestant zeitgeist’’ typified by the raging success of The Secret (see McGee, 2007) indicates that enchantment is not limited to developing countries, but is also a crowning achievement of late capitalism in the postindustrial world. Nor is magical thinking limited to popular culture. As a recent essay in this journal by Sonja K. Foss, William J. Waters, and Bernard J. Armada (2007) demonstrates, magical thinking has some purchase in the field of communication studies (see also Geisler, 2005; Villadsen, 2008).1 According to Foss, Waters, and Armada, human agency is simply a matter of consciously choosing among differing interpretations of reality. We argue that the understanding of agency advanced by Foss, Waters, and Armada is informed by the same voluntarist ideology that has enchanted The Secret’s millions of readers. Below we advance a conception of agency as an open question in order to combat magical thinking in contemporary communication theory. Although we approach the concept of agency from different theoretical standpoints (one of us from the perspective of psychoanalysis, the other, classical Marxism), we are mutually opposed to the (bourgeois) idealism of magical voluntarism in recent work in communication and rhetorical studies on agency.2 Our primary vehicle of argument is a critique of Foss, Waters, and Armada’s essay, ‘‘Toward a Theory of Agentic Orientation: Rhetoric and Agency in Run Lola Run,’’ which represents a magical-voluntaristic brand of practical reason (phronesis) that is increasingly discredited among a number rhetorical scholars. We are particularly alarmed by the suggestion that even in ‘‘situations’’ such as ‘‘imprisonment or genocide . . . agents have choices about how to perceive their conditions and their agency . . . [which] opens up opportunities for innovating . . . in ways unavailable to those who construct themselves as victims’’ (p. 33). The idea that one can choose an ‘‘agentic orientation’’ regardless of context and despite material limitation not only ignores two decades of research within the field of communication studies on agency and its limitations (and is thus ‘‘regressive’’ in more than one sense), but tacitly promotes a belief in wish-fulfillment through visualization and the imagination, as well as a commitment to radical individualism and autonomy. As a consequence, embracing magical voluntarism leads to narcissistic complacency, regressive infantilism, and elitist arrogance.

### AT: Futurism---1NC

#### Forwarding utopian imaginaries about contingent futures isn’t liberal reformism---it’s an ethos of anticipation that insists the world can always be otherwise.

Wilder 17—Associate Professor of Anthropology at CUNY Graduate Center [Gary, 2017, “Anticipation,” Political Concepts: A Critical Lexicon Issue 3, <https://www.politicalconcepts.org/anticipation-gary-wilder/>, language edited change denoted by brackets] AMarb

There is no doubt that cruel optimism and benevolent pessimism have produced, and leveraged the concept of anticipation in order to prohibit or require certain kinds of citizen action, to legitimize or exempt certain state interventions, to produce docile and anxious subjects who become trapped in states of what Berlant has nicely phrased “animated suspension.”15 The constant exhortation to self-manage, improve, and promote is accompanied by precarity and exhaustion, uncertainty and anxiety, disorientation and meaninglessness. But does this mean that all future-oriented thinking or action is intrinsically ~~disabling~~, normalizing, and depoliticizing? It would be a mistake to reduce futurity as such to a liberal conception of progress, or anticipation to a liberal ideology or affect. Doing so is precisely what has led some of these scholars to draw dubious political conclusions from their own important insights. Think here of Berlant’s assertion of the present as an impasse in relation to which affective beings must focus on survival, maintenance, and adaptation, “without futurity.”16 She dismisses the wish for new images of the good life as a symptom of the current situation.17 Or, consider David Scott’s melancholic ruminations about our being tragically stranded in a post-socialist political present. Adams, Murphy, and Clarke ask us to refuse anticipation as such.18 And Edelman promotes an anti-political opposition to “every realization of futurity,” any aspiration to forge “some more perfect social order,” any action oriented toward future “good.”19 Instead he celebrates jouissance as bound up with the death drive and an absolutist negation of social form.20 By treating the present as one-dimensional and unsurpassable, such criticism accedes to existing arrangements and discounts politics oriented toward a future good life as intrinsically delusional, self-undermining, or conservative. But to abandon good-life imaginaries and future-oriented practices is to erase the crucial space between how things are and how they ought to be. It is no surprise, therefore, that such thinking often turns to (post-political understandings of) affect, bodies, objects, or deep history as the only way to think outside or against existing conditions and ideologies. How then are we to pursue progressive politics when relations of domination are mediated by the idea and reality of progress itself?21 Against the liberal tendency to plan and predict we must insist on a radically open future, and refuse to define that which it might hold. But against the liberal tendency to project present arrangements, forward, we must also fashion images of the good life. Of course this imperative leads immediately to a further challenge. How are we to envision alternative social arrangements when the concepts, frameworks, and forms with which to do so can only really be furnished by an open future that has not yet arrived? This is the very dilemma implied by Marx’s claim that “the social revolution of the nineteenth century cannot take its poetry from the past but only from the future.”22 Radical politics is thereby fated to imagine the unimaginable. And this is the challenge posed by Adorno’s call to contemplate the world from the standpoint of redemption. 3. The Price of Messianism Some thinkers have attempted to challenge liberal progressivism without abandoning futurity by turning to ungrounded utopianism, blank futurism, or Messianic apocalypticism. But such moves also tend to leave present arrangements undisturbed—whether by idly fantasizing about ideal worlds, refusing to name possible alternatives, or either fetishizing or waiting for the sudden event that will produce an absolute rupture. Think here of Bloch’s “principle of hope,” Derrida’s “waiting without expectation,” and Badiou’s “fidelity to the event.”23 We might usefully recall Gershom Scholem’s remarks on “the paradoxical nature” of the Messianic idea in Judaism whereby the wished-for redemption can have no concrete relationship to previous history. As a “transcendence breaking in upon history . . . from an outside source,” he explains, Jewish redemption rejects the Enlightenment idea of historical progress. But it also rules out the possibility of immanent developments or history-making practices. Scholem thus suggests that the “price demanded by Messianism” has been “endless powerlessness in Jewish history . . . There is something grand about living in hope, but at the same time there is something profoundly unreal about it . . . in Judaism the Messianic idea has compelled a life lived in deferment.”24 Although Benjamin invoked this Messianic tradition, his reflections “On the Concept of History” do not imply powerlessness, pessimism, or deferment. Noting the Jewish prohibition on “inquiring into the future,” he endorsed its focus on “remembrance” as a way to “disenchant the future, which holds sway over those who turn to soothsayers for Enlightenment.”25 But Benjamin was less concerned with renouncing futurity as such than with challenging the homogeneous empty clock time and the associated continuum that underlie bourgeois conceptions of predictable futures, automatic progress, and historicist history. Benjamin seeks to break the spell of bourgeois progress by understanding history in terms of “Now-time, which, as a model of messianic time, comprises the entire history of mankind in a tremendous abbreviation.”26 But this was neither a call to adapt to the present nor to wait for a divine irruption. It was a reminder that “every second was the straight gate through which the Messiah might enter.”27 But by Messiah, he means us—contemporary human actors. We can recognize this as a political, and not a strictly theological, claim when we read it alongside of Benjamin’s second thesis: “there is a secret agreement between past generations and the present one . . . our coming was expected on earth . . . like every generation that preceded us, we have been endowed with a weak messianic power on which the past has a claim.”28 In this formulation, living historical actors are themselves quasi-Messianic agents who, at any second and in the name of past generations, might initiate a revolutionary irruption, break the historical continuum, stop clock-time and redeem the world. Benjamin invoked revolutionary Messianism to challenge the political passivity of Social Democrats whose faith in automatic human progress, he argued, had opened the door to fascism and diverted the working classes from making their own history here and now. By exploding the continuum of history and transcending clock time, he believed, they would liberate humanity from the “progressive” processes that had enslaved them and their ancestors. In this way modern society would be emancipated from an infernal history of ongoing catastrophe whereby human actions fueled the quasi-autonomous force that was propelling them blindly into a future over which they had no control.29 At the very least, Benjamin suggested that this revolutionary interruption would end the “storm” of progress, free humans from their “servile integration in an uncontrollable apparatus,” and, maybe even allow actors “to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed” (as the Angel of History wished to, but could not, do).30 But despite the Jewish injunction not to inquire into the future, Benjamin is not only offering a formal definition of revolution as redemptive rupture. We often forget that he also elaborates substantive ideas about what a redeemed, or post-revolutionary, society would entail. He relays that it would mark the end of a “positivist” and “corrupted conception of labor” based in “the Protestant work ethic” which collapses human progress with “technological development” and is “tantamount to the exploitation of nature.”31 In contrast, Benjamin envisions a new form of “cooperative labor” that would “increase efficiency to such an extent that . . . far from exploiting nature, would help her give birth to the creations that now lie dormant in her womb.”32 Emancipated from alienated labor, historical “progress,” and the meaningless tyranny of clock time, human actors (honoring their responsibility to enslaved ancestors) would make their own worlds within a qualitative now-time. Benjamin thus offers us an orientation to futurity that breaks with the logic of deferment contained in both liberal progressivism and blank Messianism. With the idea of a revolutionary rupture that can be initiated in any given second, his insights point to an understanding of anticipation as a kind of political disposition whereby radical actors cultivate a state of readiness for any possibility at every possible moment. But by also offering a positive vision of what a better society might look like, his call to act in the name of oppressed ancestors, provide concrete content to such anticipatory action. Yet, Benjamin does not try to account for how these actors might move from this now to a next-now. Beyond routing future possibilities through past eras, he does not indicate how subjects might orient their action, recognize what might actually be possible or even desirable, or what conditions might facilitate this or that leap. He beautifully triangulates revolutionary classes, past generations, and historical materialists, but does not work out the mediations between radical thinking and revolutionary praxis. He directs our attention to “now time” as cause and consequence of a revolutionary interruption, but does not address the dialectical movement between acting and imagining, naming and discovering, making and seizing. 4. Practicing Anticipation Adorno too sought to overturn the bourgeois conception of progress without paying the price of Messianism. In his 1962 essay, he argues argues that if we are to reclaim a real concept of progress we need to avoid both “atemporal theology” (which expects redemption from a “transcendental intervention”) and “the idolization of history” (as if progress were automatic or human actions necessarily led toward a more perfect world).33 Adorno explains that the term progress promises “an answer to the doubt and the hope that things will finally get better, that people will at last be able to breathe a sigh of relief.”34 Like Benjamin, he insists that “Wherever bourgeois society satisfies the concept it cherishes as its own, it knows no progress; wherever it knows progress, it violates its own law.”35 But rather than simply reject the concept of progress, he seeks to sublate its bourgeois form. He writes, “The nexus of deception surrounding progress reaches beyond itself . . . the devastation wrought by progress can be made good again, if at all, only by its own forces, never by the restoration of the preceding conditions that were its victims.36 He does this by seeking real progress precisely in those places where bourgeois “progress” is interrupted and the bourgeois concept is called into question. He writes, “Progress means: to step out of the magic spell, even out of the spell of progress . . . in that . . . humanity . . . brings to a halt the domination it exacts upon nature . . . In this way it could be said that progress occurs where it ends.”37 One thereby pursues that which progress promises precisely by interrupting or undoing that which purports to be progress (as well as the conceptual framework that reduces progress to domination and misrecognizes domination as progress). Despite Adorno’s reputation for political pessimism and philosophical abstraction (and vice versa), he does not only insist on the possibility of real human progress, but suggests that it must be pursued concretely. He writes, Too little of what is good has power in the world for progress to be expressed in a predictive judgment about the world, but there can be no good, not a trace of it without progress . . . Every individual trait in the nexus of deception is nonetheless relevant to [progress’s] possible end. Good is what wrenches itself free, finds a language, opens its eyes. In its conditions of wresting free, it is interwoven in history that, without being organized unequivocally toward reconciliation, in the course of its movement allows the possibility of redemption to flash up.38 Adorno thus offers an orientation to futurity, at once political and dialectical, that is organized around human action in the present. Beyond the opposition between gradual reformism and revolutionary rupture, through the everyday work of finding and wrenching free bits of good which can be associated with new languages and rewoven into history, the possibility of reconciliation is opened and glimpses of redemption are possible. Adorno thus suggests that these glimpses of future possibility must be pursued concretely. But he also reminds us that these glimpses are no less important than the pursuit. He explicitly links prospect for transformation to acts of political imagination. As with “progress,” Adorno tries to think utopia against “utopia.” In his 1964 exchange with Ernst Bloch, he criticizes ideological forms of “cheap” and “false” utopias which present the given world as already reconciled and realized.39 And he recognizes the value of the (Jewish) prohibition against picturing the future concretely “insofar as we do not know what the correct thing would be.”40 At the same time, he insists that “something terrible happens due to the fact that we are forbidden to cast a picture . . . the commandment against a concrete expression of utopia tends to defame the utopian consciousness and to engulf it.”41 In the West, he explains “people have lost . . . the capability to imagine the totality as something that could be completely different . . . people are sworn to this world as it is and have this blocked consciousness vis-à-vis possibility.”42 Such concessions to the given, he suggests, can only be overcome through some kind of utopian orientation that insists, for example on “the evident possibility of fulfillment” in modern society or that “a life in freedom and happiness would be possible today.”43 But he is equally concerned by the fact that “the idea of utopia has actually disappeared completely from the conception of socialism,” explaining, “the apparatus, the how, the means of a socialist society have taken precedence over any possible content, for one is not allowed to say anything about the possible content. Thereby the theory of socialism that is decidedly hostile toward utopia now tends really to become a new ideology concerned with the domination of humankind.”44 Adorno warns that any claim to know the future should be avoided. Yet he also insists that unless some kind of “picture” of what might be possible can “appear within one’s grasp, then one basically does not know at all what the actual reason for the totality is, why the entire apparatus has been set in motion.”45 He concludes by agreeing with Bloch that there can be no transformation, no socialism, no fulfillment without the utopian-transcendent belief that “something’s missing.”46 In short, Adorno invites critics to undertake a tricky, if not paradoxical, practice of envisioning without defining. This balancing act between identifying concrete possibilities through utopian imagination while not foreclosing outcomes through predictive naming is a crucial dimension of what I am calling anticipation. This orientation to the future breaks with the liberal faith that things will automatically and progressively work themselves out. But does so in ways that differ fundamentally from either “waiting without expectation” or nihilistic calls to accept the impasse of the present, abjure transformative projects, or renounce propositions about a future good life. The concrete utopian orientation to futurity suggested by Adorno resonates with a similar position formulated by Henri Lefebvre, another heterodox Marxist who sought to make sense of late capitalist alienation in the postwar period. In the first volume of his Critique of Everyday Life (1947), Lefebvre argued that material progress had created unprecedented possibilities for the good life, but its benefits were only enjoyed by the few; real power was stolen from community and placed in the hands of an elite, and the domination of things was transformed into domination of humans by other humans.47 He thus describes the colonization of everyday life by capital. But because capitalism develops unevenly, he believed, “traces of ‘another life,’ a community life” organized around different social logics and values, persisted within a heterogeneous modernity.48 At the same time, Lefebvre contended, a paradoxical situation of “backwardsness” emerged in which “life is lagging behind what is possible” — behind the very different set of arrangements that capitalist modernization had actually made possible.49 It is precisely this proximity between, on the one hand, an alienated existence and, on the other, that which is no longer possible and that which is newly possible which, according to Lefebvre, creates opportunities, through everyday practices, for different ways of being to emerge.50 In cities especially, he suggests, alternative modes of living and new forms of solidarity appear in the theater of everyday life.51 In response to optimistic “partisans of Progress,” Lefebvre points out “the decline of everyday life since . . . Antiquity.” But it also differs from nihilistic calls for adapting to the impasse of the present, abjuring transformative projects, or renouncing propositions about a future good life. Conversely, in response to the pessimistic philosophers of decadence, he insists on “the breadth and magnificence of the possibilities which are opening out for man, and which are so really possible . . . (once the political obstacles are shattered).”52 Such anarchist pessimists, he argues, mistakenly accept “this life as the only one possible” and are unable to recognize the potential “greatness” that may shine through alienated forms.53 Rather than focus on the false opposition between progress and decline, Lefebvre directs our attention to the difference between quantitative and qualitative forms of progress. He dismisses as a “childish error” the tendency to base our image of “the [hu]man of the future on what we are now” and “simply granting him a greater quantity of mechanical means and appliances.”54 Rather, he insists, “we should acquire a sense of qualitative changes, of modifications in the quality of life – and above all of another attitude of the human being toward himself.”55 He thus calls on us to envision a future organized around “total life” and a “living totality” in which a “truly human” and “total man” may be realized.56 For Lefebvre, the task of recognizing the possible in the actual requires creative acts of political imagination. But he also criticizes idle speculation about fantastic futures, insisting that understandings of alternatives must emerge through experimental practices. He asserts that “man as a total problem” – “the possibility of the total” and “truly human man” – can only be “posed and resolved on the level of everyday life.”57 Challenging the kind of critique or revolt promoted by “mystics and metaphysicians,” he proposed a dialectical approach that would overcome false oppositions between “everyday life and festival – mass moments and exceptional moments . . . seriousness and play – reality and dreams.”58 According to Lefebvre, everyday life, especially in cities, becomes the scene of a certain utopianism which combines imaginative vision with experimental practices in order to identify and pursue what he called the “possible-impossible.”59 At once future-oriented and now-centered, aesthetic and political, a serious strategy and an end in itself, such everyday practices contribute to what a more human “art of living.”60 We might also call this an art of anticipation in which visionary thinking and experimental acts come together in a type of “play acting” that “explores what is possible.”61 In the late 1950s, Lefebvre further developed this thinking about lived utopianism. Under modern capitalist conditions, he explains, previous modes of envisioning a truly human form of life (whether based on fantasies of natural living or classical antiquity) had either been lost or discredited as fictive or mythical, but new ones had not taken their place. Far from celebrating this development, he regarded it as tragic that the postwar Left had no myth of “the new life” and spoke only in the language of industrial rationalism, technocratic planning, and productivist acceleration.62 But Lefebvre also argued that in the new era of postwar planning there was a resurgence of utopian thinking because “the advanced countries are lagging behind their own possibilities” and are “less able to satisfy those who ought to be happy with it.”63 He writes, “Utopianism lives again . . . It is exploring the possibilities of praxis . . . Imagination is adopting or rediscovering a creative power. It is pooling forces with an obscurely rediscovered spontaneity.”64 And, “If we are to build a revitalized life . . . we must use utopian method experimentally, looking ahead to what is possible and what is impossible and transforming this hypothetical exploration into applicable programs and practical plans.”65 Lefebvre called this orientation a “philosophy of the possible” which attends to “relations with the real and the here-and-now” in order to discover “the opening, by which [we] may enter in a practical way into the ‘possible-impossible’ dialectic.”66 Lefebvre’s call in the late 1950s for a new “revolutionary romanticism” seemed to receive an uncanny answer in what he regarded as “the irruption” of May ’68. For him this unforeseen event “broke into” everyday life even as everyday practices constituted that which was revolutionary about the event.67 For Lefebvre, May ‘68 was neither an unmediated presentist eruption nor the working out of a blueprint for the future. He writes, “A theory of the movement has to emerge from the movement itself, for it is the movement that has revealed, unleashed, and liberated theoretical capacities.”68 His analysis of ‘68 emphasizes spontaneous popular contestation and mass participation, the commitment to transform society as a whole and create new forms of life, and above all the emergence of experiments in self-management which were at once concrete and utopian, practical and performative, actual and prefigurative, political and cultural. For Lefebvre, this “irruption” demonstrated that “everyday existence” cannot be “transcended in one leap” but only through “the process of self-management.”69 He characterized it as an “unthinkable movement” that nevertheless “actually existed” and therefore allowed and compelled people to “think the unthinkable.”70 Not surprisingly, he called May ‘68 a “concrete utopia.”71 The dialectic movement between utopian imagination and experimental practice allowed May ‘68 to make real a supposedly impossible form of life in the “anticipated urban society.”72 He writes, “The specifically utopian function of cultural contestation will thus supersede itself by fulfilling itself in practice.”73 This kind of collective anticipation through concrete utopian experiments in self-management comes through clearly in Kristin Ross’s insightful analysis of the Paris Commune. Ross writes: More important than any laws the Communards were able to enact was simply the way in which their daily workings inverted entrenched hierarchies and divisions . . . The world is divided between those who can and those who cannot afford the luxury of playing with words or images. When that division is overcome, as it was under the Commune . . . what matters more than any images conveyed, laws passed, or institutions founded are the capacities set in motion.74 If social relations are to be radically transformed, Ross suggests, it will not be by teaching people how to be citizens of a future society, but by mobilizing such capacities, which are at once practical and theoretical, political and aesthetic, actual and potential.75 In a similar spirit Massimiliano Tomba examines the “insurgent universality” that was practiced and performed by the more radical and subaltern forces within the French Revolution. He writes, this insurgency not only interrupted the continuum of a specific historical configuration of power, but . . . disclosed and anticipated new political pathways, which indicated alternative trajectories beyond political modernity. These pathways were molten in the red-hot magma of many experiments, abandoned or repressed. The experiment was the virtuous “skidding off course (dérapage)” of the Revolution during which slaves, women and the poor gained voice and acted as if they were citizens.76 More recently, we might consider the category confounding character of the 1979 Iranian Revolution and the everyday practices of “horizontalism” following the 2001 financial crisis in Argentina, in recent Occupy struggles, and autonomous popular movements worldwide. Concrete utopian anticipation has assumed more robust forms in the Zapatista experiment in Chiapas, Mexico and the ongoing Kurdish experiment in Rojava, Syria. 5. Reconstruction, Transfiguration, Improvisation These brief examples should make clear that the politics of anticipation are not only symbolic and performative. An anticipatory dialectic of prefiguration and transfiguration – or the circular relation among envisioning, enacting, and realizing – has been especially well developed within the black radical tradition. Consider, for example, W.E.B. Du Bois’s plan during the early 1930s to organize African Americans into self-managing consumer cooperatives. He took as his staring points the refractory character of the color line (which proved to be invulnerable to rational refutation or legal challenges), the mutually reinforcing relation between racism and poverty, the white supremacy of the American labor movement, and the devastating effect of the Great Depression on the black community. Given this historical condition, Du Bois sought to identify immanent possibilities within alienated forms by turning the fact of segregation into a source of social strength and political education. He argued that if planned and organized, existing networks of black sociality

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and exchange could ground a new form of solidarity and autonomy through which to confront capitalism and racism. He believed that self-managing cooperatives organized around mutualist lines could create opportunities for work without exploitation, production without profit, exchange without stratification, knowledge production without exclusion – in ways that would reinforce bonds across different social sectors of the black community.77 On one level, Du Bois’s multi-faceted program was a pragmatic response to an immediate predicament. These consumer cooperatives would create a basis for economic survival under conditions of Jim Crow segregation during the Depression. By doing so without depending on either state aid (that might not come) or legal reform (that might not matter), it was also meant to transform formal liberty into substantive freedom. Du Bois emphasized that these economic efforts were meant to complement, and help to realize, rather than replace the existing civil rights struggle. He offered a strategy for achieving full citizenship from a position of economic security, strength, and leverage. But Du Bois’s call for economic self-management was also a concrete utopian project to radically reconstruct American democracy by abolishing the color line and overcoming capitalist social relations. In his view, these self-managing cooperatives would allow black actors to develop alternative forms of labor, exchange, and sociality – the new subjectivities, everyday practices, ethical relations, and spiritual/cultural orientations that would: 1. prepare themselves for the future order they desired, 2. model (to themselves and others) what was possible and what that future might entail (through experimental practices), 3. help to hasten that future by enacting it here and now (to materialize it by envisioning it, and to come to see it through material practices). With this plan for strategic self-segregation, Du Bois was not calling for blacks to withdraw from American society. He was recognizing that their involuntary status as a nation-within-a-nation offered them an opportunity (and perspective) to lead the nation as a whole (beginning with the white working class) on a different path beyond the color line and towards socialist democracy. His program was based on the conviction that racial domination could never be overcome under capitalist conditions and that socialism could never be realized until the color line was abolished.78 It envisioned self-managing black communities playing a vanguard role in a process whereby a whole range of cooperative movements among different communities would form, federate, and help to create a new “cooperative commonwealth” in and beyond America. It thereby anticipated both a multi-racial socialist democracy within America and a new order of international solidarity among self-managing peoples of color against global imperialism. In this way, Du Bois believed that the black freedom struggle could realize American democracy, empower and unite colonized peoples, redeem the West, and emancipate humanity – through concrete everyday practices that anticipated, in all of these ways, a seemingly impossible future already made plausible by present conditions and glimpsed through the subaltern’s privileged critical insight. On the one hand, his plan was a revolutionary rejection of liberal progress. It insisted that no change would come automatically and that real emancipation would not be possible by merely adjusting the existing framework. On the other hand, this was a program for radical transformation that refused the fantasy of sudden revolutionary rupture. Du Bois was mindful of the long black Atlantic history during which each emancipatory break enabled a new forms of domination. He suggested that the process of subjective and objective transformation that he was proposing might take decades, or even generations. It was this long view that helps explain why Du Bois developed this plan during the period when he was writing Black Reconstruction in America, and vice versa. In his 1935 masterwork, Du Bois demonstrates how black slaves interrupted the historical continuum through a “general strike” whereby they fled plantations and withdrew their labor power from the Confederate war effort. He famously recounts how freed slaves experienced emancipation as an apocalyptic rupture. But, as importantly, he demonstrates how an alliance of freed blacks, Southern white workers, and Northern abolition democrats (black and white) was briefly able to leverage the Freedman’s Bureau to open the possibility for an experiment in non-racial socialist democracy that, in challenging the very basis of capitalist private property and American social divisions, far exceeded the intentions of the U.S. government and Northern interests who had supported its creation. Much of his study is devoted to describing the revolutionary attempt to reconstruct the very bases of American democracy through experimental practices made possible by a contingent set of conditions that created a unique historical situation which was seized by an alliance of actors who anticipated – envisioned, performed, pursued – an alternative future in their everyday acts. This nexus of vision, conjuncture, and practices, he suggests, positioned freed blacks to be the vanguard of a socialist revolution and truly democratic society that might have been. But Du Bois explains how this revolutionary “Southern Experiment” was ultimately foreclosed by white working class racism. When white workers allied with the planter class against freed blacks, Northern capital was allowed to destroy the prospect of real democracy (and racial equality) in America and across the imperialist world. Du Bois demonstrates how this process allowed slave emancipation to evolve into a regime of legal segregation and social stigmatization – the very regime into which Du Bois was born and against which he spent his life in militant struggle. Du Bois’s interwar plan for self-managing black cooperatives can thus be read as an untimely attempt to pursue the unrealized promise of the post-Civil War Southern Experiment. In the 1930s Du Bois sought to revitalize the unrealized 1870s project to reconstruct American democracy on multi-racial and socialist lines.79 The anticipatory character of Du Bois’s account of Reconstruction and his program for cooperative self-management may be situated in a long history of black Atlantic concrete utopianism which combined visionary projects with experimental practices. Here we might think of maroon communities throughout the New World slave system, Toussaint Louverture’s 1801 black republic, and the emergence of what Laurent Dubois, following Jean Casimir, called the “counter-plantation” system in post-revolutionary Haiti. Thomas Holt describes how a similar movement for peasant self-sufficiency immediately followed the emancipation of slaves in 19th century Jamaica. As I have argued elsewhere, Aimé Césaire’s and Léopold Senghor’s constitutional struggle to transform imperial France into a postnational democratic federation may be located in this tradition of anticipatory politics. But so too can Frantz Fanon’s account of the new forms of life that emerged through the lived experience of revolutionary struggle for Algerian independence and Patrice Lumumba’s untimely experiment in popular democracy in the Congo. In each of these anticipatory initiatives, we can recognize what Paul Gilroy has called the dialectic of fulfillment and transfiguration. In The Black Atlantic, Gilroy describes a pragmatic “politics of fulfillment” whose “normative content focuses attention on . . . the notion that a future society will be able to realize the social and political promise that present society has left unaccomplished.”80 Gilroy distinguishes this orientation from a utopian “politics of transfiguration” that strives “continually to move beyond the grasp of the merely linguistic, textual, and discursive. . . This politics exists on a lower frequency, where it is played, danced, and acted, as well as sung and sung about, because words . . . will never be enough to communicate its unsayable claims to truth.”81 Gilroy treats black musical expression as an especially rich locus and medium for such utopian acts. Gilroy argues that this “tradition of expression” “refuses to accept that the political is a readily separable domain. Its basic desire is to conjure up and enact the new modes of friendship, happiness, and solidarity that are consequent on the overcoming of the racial oppression.”82 He suggests that these two modes of politics are not mutually exclusive; within the black Atlantic tradition they have long co-existed and complemented each other. But if the politics of fulfillment has generated a black “counter-discourse” through which to make political claims, Gilroy argues, the politics of transfiguration constitutes a “counterculture of modernity” that seeks to expand the very domain and meaning of politics itself – partly by linking it to ethics and aesthetics, imaginative practice and cultural performance, embodied practices and lived memories.83 I would like to underscore the anticipatory dimensions this politics of trasnsfiguration, which conjures and enacts new ways of being and relating. According to Gilroy, it emphasizes the emergence of qualitatively new desires, social relations, and modes of association within the racial community of interpretation and resistance and between that group and its erstwhile oppressors. It points specifically to the formation of a community of needs and solidarity which is magically made audible in the music itself and palpable in the social relations of its cultural utility and reproduction.84 These transfigurative practices create new continuities among politics, ethics, and aesthetics; Gilroy speaks of “grounded ethics” and “grounded esthetics.85 Gilroy thus describes a set of concrete utopian practices that anticipate (by enacting in both form and content) an alternative good life. He writes, progress from the status of slaves to the status of citizens led [western blacks] to enquire into what the best possible forms of social and political existence might be. The memory of slavery, actively preserved as a living intellectual resource in their expressive political culture, helped them to generate a new set of answers to this enquiry. They had to fight – often through their spirituality – to hold on to the unity of ethics and politics sundered from each other by modernity’s insistence that the true, the good, and the beautiful had distinct origins and belong to different domains of knowledge.86 This path from broken present to utopian future, by way of living memory and embodied performance, resonates with the ways that Benjamin conjugated remembrance and rupture. It is indeed likely that Gilroy had both Benjamin and Adorno in mind when he writes, The history and utility of black music. . . enable us to trace something of the means through which the unity of ethics and politics has been reproduced as a form of folk knowledge. This subculture often appears to be the intuitive expression of some racial essence but is in fact an elementary historical acquisition produced from the viscera of an alternative body of cultural and political expression that considers the world critically from the point of view of its emancipatory transformation. In the future, it will become a place which is capable of satisfying the (redefined) needs of human beings that will emerge once the violence – epistemic and concrete – of racial typology is at an end. Reason is thus reunited with the happiness and freedom of individuals and the reign of justice within the collectivity.87 Gilroy affirms that this political orientation converges with Marxism, even if the convergence is also undercut by the simple fact that in the critical thought of blacks in the West, social self-creation through labour is not the centre-piece of emancipatory hopes. For the descendants of slaves, work signifies only servitude, misery, and subordination. Artistic expression, expanded beyond recognition from the grudging gifts offered by the masters as a token substitute for freedom from bondage, therefore becomes the means towards both individual self-fashioning and communal liberation. Poiesis and politics begin to coexist in novel forms [– autobiographical writing, special and uniquely creative ways of manipulating spoken language, and, above all, the music.]88 The important point here is not the extent of Gilroy’s Marxism or the accuracy of his interpretation of Western Marxist desires regarding labor, but that he is describing a tradition of concrete utopianism through which a future good life is anticipated (envisioned, enacted, conjured ) through experimental practices that are at once political, ethical, and aesthetic.89 Gilroy writes eloquently about an “ethics of antiphony” and “the tactics of sound developed as a form of black metacommunication.”90 His attention to music and performance as black radicalism’s privileged media, and to utopian enactment or untimely anticipation as central features of black aesthetics, has been extensively elaborated by Fred Moten. Referring to blackness as “the extended movement of a specific upheaval, an ongoing irruption that annaranges every line,” Moten links this upheaval and irruption to (an ethics, politics, and aesthetics) of “the cut” and “the break.”91 Moten uses this multivalent term to index variously the gap between (as well as the elevated conjunction of): sound and words, music and text, poetry and philosophy, phenomenology and semiotics, experience and expression, scream and message, being and knowing, description and explanation, performance and analysis, showing and naming, deconstruction and reconstruction, objectivity and subjectivity, body and spirit, substance and sign, violence and joy, absence and abundance, visibility and invisibility, tragedy and elegy, singularity and totality, emotion and structure, spontaneity and preparedness, individuality and collectivity, event and process, situatedness and ongoinginess, return and birth, origin and repetition, past and future. It is through this cut, by lingering in this break – at once existential, epistemological, and temporal – that the (radical) work and play of “improvisation,” in and through and for what he calls “ensemble,” unfolds. This is a dazzling intervention on blackness and/as improvisation in the break where form mirrors content, or each reworks the other, in every instant. Among the many ramifying images that Moten offers is that of improvisation as the performance of an “old new language – tragic, hopeful, fallen” that registers “the fantasy of what hadn’t happened yet” and works “to activate the foresight that is not prophecy but description . . . embodied and silently sounded in the music’s knowing echo of shriek and prayer.”92 Descriptive foresight (in an old-new language) of what has not yet happened wonderfully expresses the peculiar political logic of anticipation that I have been trying to outline. Moten explains how this improvisational practice links vision, performance, and action. He relates blackness (and critique) to the practice of “lingering” in the “shattering tremble of the improvising ensemble’s music . . . Not in the interest of an understanding or adequate representation of the action whose performance would occur in this lingering, but in the interest of an enactive invocation, a material prayer, the dissemination of the conditions of possibility of . . . action.”93 In short, Moten conjures a space and practice of imaginative performance and embodied desire that is at once aesthetic, ethical, and political. It recognizes aesthetic performances as political acts and political performances as aesthetic acts within a relational, which is to say ethical, ensemble. For Moten, the practice of improvisation also confounds reified past-present-future distinctions. His discussion does not only imply that such aesthetic-ethical-political practices may anticipate, by enacting, what hasn’t yet happened. It also suggests that they anticipate that which is not yet known, a wish that can only emerge through present practice and performance. He thus links improvisation to the “unsayable claims of black utopian political desire, an unrequited love imaged after the fact.”94 Raising the question of “improvisation’s time and the time of ensemble’s organization” Moten writes of the “attempt . . . to sustain the desire that you anticipate, that you’ll have felt even now, to stop to look up, to sing the inscription.”95 This will and capacity to see and sing the inscription in order to sustain the desire that you anticipate is one way to understand prophecy. In a recent interview Moten remarks, “The prophet is the one who tells the brutal truth, who has the capacity to see the absolute brutality of the already-existing and to point it out and to tell that truth, but also to see the other way, to see what it could be. That double-sense, that double-capacity: to see what’s right in front of you and to see through it to what’s ahead of you.”96 Moten thereby voices an insight that has long been recognized by Jewish Marxist and black radical thinkers – namely that anticipation is less a matter of predicting the future than of “foreseeing the present.”97 In 1940 Walter Benjamin described the paradoxical character of the “prophetic relation to the future” by noting that “the seer’s gaze is kindled by the rapidly receding past . . . the prophet has turned away from the future: he perceives the contours of the future in the fading light of the past as it sinks before him into the night of times.”98 A few years later, during the war that would take Benjamin’s life, Aimé Césaire identified “the ground of poetic knowledge” as “an astonishing mobilization of all human and cosmic forces” in which “all lived experience. All the possibility . . . all the pasts, all the futures . . . Everything is summoned. Everything awaits.”99 And the “visionary” speaker in his 1946 poem declares, “my ear to the ground, I heard Tomorrow pass.”100 Decades later, but in a similar spirit, Edouard Glissant writes about the existence within Caribbean thought and consciousness of “a prophetic vision of the past” based on “the identification of a painful notion of time and its full projection forward into the future.”101 Perhaps people compelled by history to inhabit a painful sense of time are gifted with a prophetic sense of the past and a capacity (and necessity) to foresee the present. Running through these otherwise distinct reflections is the insight that anticipation entails sudden or stolen glimpses across epochal divides. It names the proleptic power of acting “as if” impossible futures were already at hand. 6. Dialectics of Anticipation What links these various concrete utopian experiments, thinkers, and traditions is not only a commitment to radical politics, direct democracy, or autonomous socialism. They also share a distinctive orientation to futurity. Their reflections and actions point beyond both the fiction of liberal progress and the fantasy of apocalyptic rupture. They reject the given order, envision a better world, and act as if the impossible were possible – even while mindful that new forms cannot be planned and implemented but can only emerge practically, experimentally. We can thus think of anticipation as a kind of political disposition whereby radical actors cultivate a state of readiness for any possible possibility and a will to overcome existing arrangements by acting from the standpoint of a not-yet redeemed world. We can think of anticipation as an untimely desire to recognize and pursue alternative possibilities that are enabled by and condensed within present arrangements. From this perspective, anticipation prefigures by enacting the supposedly impossible. It indexes a politico-temporal orientation, rather than an affective state or an ideological discourse. As a critical political concept, anticipation is neither about planning nor waiting. It rejects nihilistic presentism but also avoids the false opposition between liberal progress and apocalyptic rupture. (Or we can say that it rejects liberal progress while avoiding the false opposition between nihilistic presentism and apocalyptic rupture.) Through an immanent critique of actual relations that allows actors to recognize supposedly impossible possibilities, by tacking dialectically between creative imagination and experimental practices, anticipation seeks to balance the dual imperative to insist on an open future and to envision envisioning a good life. We might therefore refer to a dialectics of anticipation marked by the dual imperatives to be open to the impossible and to imagine the possible, to envision and enact, to seize the sudden illumination as it appears and seek to produce it through everyday life. A dialectical concept of anticipation is a calling for that is also a calling forth, an enacted idea that may bring into being what it desires through the performance itself (even as that very image of future possibilities only arises through such performative acts). Anticipatory politics are therefore also aesthetic operations (and vice versa). Neither about optimism nor pessimism, these concrete utopian practices cut across reified distinctions between immanence and transcendence, present and future, actual and possible, instrumental and utopian, imagination and action, strategy and spontaneity, politics and performance. Anticipation signals a readiness to interrupt the continuum and a commitment to live otherwise. They are not only “practices” in the sense of doing, they are forms of practice in the sense of learning, of getting better at – in this case, getting better at being the kind of person, living the kind life, entering into the types of social relations that will only be really possible, or possibly realized, in a future order.

# 2NC---Texas---Round 3

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#### B. Market logics transform persons to things and legitimize dual logics of commodification and gratuitous punishment

Mallipeddi 16 – Assistant Professor of English at Hunter College [Ramesh, *Spectacular Suffering*, University of Virginia Press, pp. 3-4]

I begin with a juxtaposition of Dickson and Equiano because they encapsulate this book's two central lines of inquiry. Spectacular Suffering focuses on moments of witnessing slavery in the long eighteenth century and the structures of sentimental affect that invariably attend these moments. First, my analysis approaches the problem of slavery as a problem of embodiment, evidenced both in Dickson's visceral response to the scarred, fettered slave and in Equiano's rage against the potential flogging he may receive. This foregrounding of bodily experience is a central element in sentimental representations of slave distress, since the two features of Atlantic slavery-commodification and punishment-are fundamentally concerned with the transformations of the body, with the subjection of the raced body to the regimes of the market and to plantation discipline. From its inception, the Atlantic slave trade and mercantile capital transformed persons into things, human beings into commodities, singular selves into exchangeable units. Plantation slavery, in turn, intensified the commodifying operations of the slave trade by turning captive Africans into fungible possessions, depriving the enslaved of any rights to their bodies. As the episodes from Sloane and Dickson reveal, West Indian slave laws categorized Africans as their master's property, granting the latter virtually unlimited punitive power. The movement of sympathetic feeling is frequently a direct corollary of the objectifying operations of mercantile capital, on one hand, and the exercise of slaveholder disciplinary authority, on the other. It is by counterposing the singular body to the abstract commodity, the particular to the typical, and taking affective property in the slaves in opposition to the claims of legal proprietorship assumed by the slaveholders that metropolitan observers such as Dickson registered their disquiet over enslavement.

#### Simply imagining a new world can’t articulates concrete political demands in the real one – neoliberalism prefers affective approach that lets radicals blow off steam than transform the system

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The second part of the essay will investigate **a particular strain of Afrofuturism**: its British version as unfolded in the works of Kodwo Eshun at the Warwick University’s Cybernetic Culture Research Unit (CCRU) (1997-1998),and by Steve Goodman (2010). I will **focus on** how these works – by intermixing cybernetics and philosophy – have displaced the preoccupations concerning ‘discourse’, ‘meanings’ and ‘representations’ linked to the (sub)cultural aspect of Afrofuturism, in favour of **a ‘micropolitical’ approach to black culture**.[4] In particular, I will address this passage by focusing on the main area of experimentation of this strain of Afrofuturism – music.[5] **The focus will be on** the relation between the microphysical level of music and its micropolitical implications, which means the sound and its **appeal to the body** **at the level of** its pre-personal **affects**.[6] I will interrogate here the ambivalent position of this strain of Afrofuturism in relation to the articulation of the question of race. What becomes of this question **when** meanings and **representations are considered** to be **secondary side-effects of wider affective processes? Is such a perspective complicit of** a **dangerous denial** or disavowal of **the necessity to articulate political demands about race** – something **even more dangerous in** the **neoliberal times** we face, as its detractors have often mentioned**?** Or could we find in this British version of Afrofuturism a conception of race so ‘molecularized’ and ‘abstract’ as to allow another modality of politics at its ‘degree zero’ to emerge, in the form of a sensory/sensual politics of ‘abduction’, ‘possession’ and ‘contagion’ which stresses the non-linear causality and the processes of retroaction between technological advancements and socio-cultural phenomena?

#### 4. Re-imagining the future just extends neoliberalism’s reach – the political economy has already decided that we exist in the “futurepast” imagined by Afrofuturism – coopts the aff

**James 13** (Robin, Associate Professor of Philosophy at UNC Charlotte. Afrofuturism and Drones. Nov 1, 2013. http://thesocietypages.org/cyborgology/2013/11/01/afrofuturism-and-drones/ //shree)

**Afrofuturism** is a set of theories and practices that critique and **imagine alternatives to Western modernity**. Specifically, Afrofuturism targets the linear, progressive temporality which posits European/Western civilization as “present reality,” as the culmination of historical development, and the “future” vis-a-vis which non-Western cultures are the supposedly primitive “past.” One way Afrofuturists do this is **by scrambling linear progressive temporality**. For example, musician Sun Ra treated Ancient Egypt as both distant past and alien, intergalactic future. Theorist Kodwo Eshun calls this notion of time the “futurepast.” **But, as Nyong’o’s tweets suggest**, **that** sort of **critique might not pack much punch** anymore. **Now that** we **neoliberals have reached** what Francis Fukuyama famously called “**the end of history**,” **when mainstream society seems to exist in the “futurepast” imagined by Afrofuturists** (as Steven Shaviro has argued), **is Afrofuturism** obsolete? Has it become **co-opted?** (**Think**, for example, **of the mainstream industry success of Afrofuturist musicians like Janelle Monae,** Lil **Wayne, Kanye** West, **& Beyonce**.)

#### 5. Futurity Link---criticizing futurism because “time accumulates” for black folk is the surrender neolib loves---the 1AC is confined to affective self-valorization like afrofuturism and the immediacy of locales which authorizes right-wing take-over – turns case

Williams & Srnicek 13 (Alex, PhD student at the University of East London, presently at work on a thesis entitled 'Hegemony and Complexity', Nick, PhD candidate in International Relations at the London School of Economics, Co-authors of the forthcoming Folk Politics, 14 May 2013, <http://criticallegalthinking.com/2013/05/14/accelerate-manifesto-for-an-accelerationist-politics/> //shree)

At the begin­ning of the second dec­ade of the Twenty-​First Cen­tury, global civilization faces a new breed of cataclysm. These com­ing apo­ca­lypses ridicule the norms and organ­isa­tional struc­tures of the polit­ics which were forged in the birth of the nation-​state, the rise of cap­it­al­ism, and a Twen­ti­eth Cen­tury of unpre­ced­en­ted wars. 2. Most significant is the break­down of the planetary climatic system. In time, this threatens the continued existence of the present global human population. Though this is the most crit­ical of the threats which face human­ity, a series of lesser but potentially equally destabilising problems exist along­side and inter­sect with it. Terminal resource depletion, especially in water and energy reserves, offers the prospect of mass starvation, collapsing economic paradigms, and new hot and cold wars. Continued financial crisis has led governments to embrace the para­lyz­ing death spiral policies of austerity, privatisation of social welfare services, mass unemployment, and stagnating wages. Increasing automation in production processes includ­ing ‘intel­lec­tual labour’ is evidence of the secular crisis of capitalism, soon to render it incapable of maintaining current standards of living for even the former middle classes of the global north. 3. In con­trast to these ever-​accelerating cata­strophes, today’s politics is beset by an inability to generate the new ideas and modes of organisation necessary to transform our societies to confront and resolve the coming annihilations. While crisis gathers force and speed, politics withers and retreats. In this paralysis of the political imaginary, the future has been cancelled. 4. Since 1979, the hegemonic global political ideology has been neoliberalism, found in some vari­ant through­out the lead­ing eco­nomic powers. In spite of the deep struc­tural chal­lenges the new global prob­lems present to it, most imme­di­ately the credit, fin­an­cial, and fiscal crises since 2007 – 8, neoliberal programmes have only evolved in the sense of deep­en­ing. This continuation of the neo­lib­eral pro­ject, or neo­lib­er­al­ism 2.0, has begun to apply another round of structural adjustments, most sig­ni­fic­antly in the form of encour­aging new and aggress­ive incur­sions by the private sec­tor into what remains of social demo­cratic insti­tu­tions and ser­vices. This is in spite of the immediately negative eco­nomic and social effects of such policies, and the longer term fun­da­mental bar­ri­ers posed by the new global crises. 5. That the forces of right wing governmental, non-​governmental, and corporate power have been able to press forth with neoliberalisation is at least in part a result of the continued para­lysis and ineffectual nature of much what remains of the left. Thirty years of neoliberalism have rendered most left-​leaning political parties bereft of radical thought, hol­lowed out, and without a popular mandate. At best they have responded to our present crises with calls for a return to a Keynesian economics, in spite of the evidence that the very conditions which enabled post-​war social democracy to occur no longer exist. We can­not return to mass industrial-​Fordist labour by fiat, if at all. Even the neo­socialist regimes of South America’s Bolivarian Revolu­tion, whilst heart­en­ing in their abil­ity to res­ist the dog­mas of con­tem­por­ary cap­it­al­ism, remain disappointingly unable to advance an alternative beyond mid-​Twentieth Century socialism. Organised labour, being systematically weakened by the changes wrought in the neo­liberal project, is scler­otic at an insti­tu­tional level and — at best — capable only of mildly mitigating the new structural adjustments. But with no systematic approach to building a new economy, or the structural solidarity to push such changes through, for now labour remains rel­at­ively impotent. The new social movements which emerged since the end of the Cold War, exper­i­en­cing a resur­gence in the years after 2008, have been similarly unable to devise a new political ideological vision. Instead they expend considerable energy on internal direct-​democratic process and affective self-​valorisation over strategic efficacy, and frequently propound a variant of neo-​primitivist localism, as if to oppose the abstract violence of globalised capital with the flimsy and ephemeral “authenticity” of communal immediacy. 6. In the absence of a radically new social, political, organisational, and economic vision the hegemonic powers of the right will continue to be able to push forward their narrow-​minded imaginary, in the face of any and all evidence. At best, the left may be able for a time to partially resist some of the worst incursions. But this is to be Canute against an ultimately irresistible tide. To generate a new left global hegemony entails a recovery of lost possible futures, and indeed the recovery of the future as such.

#### 6. Experience Link---the idea that we should only focus on the things that directly affect our lives ignores multipolar global politics, economic instability, and climate change---all necessitate a collective response which requires conceptualization beyond the individual

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Why did folk politics arise in the first place? Why is it that folk political tendencies, for all their manifest flaws, are so seductive and appealing to the movements of today? At least three answers present themselves. The first explanation is to see folk politics as a response to the problem of how to interpret and act within an ever more complex world. The second, related explanation involves situating folk politics as a reaction to the historical experiences of the communist and social democratic left. Finally, folk politics is a more immediate response to the empty spectacle of contemporary party politics.

Increasingly, multipolar global politics, economic instability, and anthropogenic climate change outpace the narratives we use to structure and make sense of our lives. Each of these is an example of what is termed a complex system, which features nonlinear dynamics, where marginally different inputs can cause dramatically divergent outputs, intricate sets of causes feedback on one another in unexpected ways, and which characteristically operates on scales of space and time that go far beyond any individual’s unaided perception.23 Globalisation, international politics, and climate change: each of these systems shapes our world, but their effects are so extensive and complicated that it is difficult to place our own experience within them. The global economy is a good example of this. In simple terms, the economy is not an object amenable to direct perception; it is distributed across time and space (you will never meet ‘the economy’ in person); it incorporates a wide array of elements, from property laws to biological needs, natural resources to technological infrastructures, market stalls and supercomputers; and it involves an enormous and intricately interacting set of feedback loops, all of which produce emergent effects that are irreducible to its individual components.24 In other words, the interaction of an economy’s parts produces effects that cannot be understood just by knowing how those parts work in isolation – it is only in grasping the relations between them that the economy can be made sense of. While we might have an idea of what an economy consists of, we will never be able to experience it directly in the same way as other phenomena. It can only be observed symptomatically through key statistical indexes (charting changes in inflation or interest rates, stock indexes, GDP, and so on), but can never be seen, heard or touched in its totality.

As a result, despite everything that has been written about capitalism, we still struggle to understand its dynamics and its mechanisms. Most importantly, we lack a ‘cognitive map’ of our socioeconomic system: a mental picture of how individual and collective human action can be situated within the unimaginable vastness of the global economy.25 Recent decades have seen an increasing complexity in the dynamics that impinge upon politics. We might consider the imminent threat of anthropogenic climate change as a new kind of problem – one that is unamenable to any simple solution and that involves such intricately woven effects that it is hard to even know where to intervene. Equally, the global economy today appears significantly more complex in terms of the mobility of capital, the intricacies of global finance and the multiplicity of actors involved. How well do our traditional political images of the world map onto these changes? For the left at least, an analysis premised on the industrial working class was a powerful way to interpret the totality of social and economic relations in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, thereby articulating clear strategic objectives. Yet the history of the global left over the course of the twentieth century attests to the ways in which this analysis failed to attend to both the range of possible liberating struggles (based in gender, race or sexuality) and the ability of capitalism to restructure itself – through the creation of the welfare state, or the neoliberal transformations of the global economy. Today, the old models often falter in the face of new problems; we lose the capacity to understand our position in history and in the world at large.

This separation between everyday experience and the system we live within results in increased alienation: we feel adrift in a world we do not understand. The cultural theorist Fredric Jameson notes that the proliferation of conspiracy theories is partly a response to this situation.26 Conspiracy theories act by narrowing the agency behind our world to a single figure of power (the Bilderberg Group, the Freemasons or some other convenient scapegoat). Despite the extraordinary complexity of some of these theories, they nevertheless provide a reassuringly simple answer to ‘who is behind it all’, and what our own role is in the situation. In other words, they act precisely as a (faulty) cognitive map.

Folk politics presents itself as another possible response to the problems of overwhelming complexity. If we do not understand how the world operates, the folk-political injunction is to reduce complexity down to a human scale. Indeed, folk-political writing is saturated with calls for a return to authenticity, to immediacy, to a world that is ‘transparent’, ‘human-scaled’, ‘tangible’, ‘slow’, ‘harmonious’, ‘simple’, and ‘everyday’.27 Such thinking rejects the complexity of the contemporary world, and thereby rejects the possibility of a truly postcapitalist world. It attempts to give a human face to power; whereas what is truly terrifying is the generally asubjective nature of the system. The faces are interchangeable; the power remains the same. The turn towards localism, temporary moments of resistance, and the intuitive practices of direct action all effectively attempt to condense the problems of global capitalism into concrete figures and moments.

In this process, folk politics often reduces politics to an ethical and individual struggle. There is a tendency sometimes to imagine that we simply need ‘good’ capitalists, or a ‘responsible’ capitalism. At the same time, the imperative to ‘make it local’ leads folk politics to fetishise immediate results and the concrete appearance of action. Delaying a corporate attack on the environment, for instance, is lauded as a success – even if the company simply waits out public attention before returning once again. Moreover, as Rosa Luxemburg pointed out long ago, the fetishisation of ‘immediate results’ leads to an empty pragmatism that struggles to maintain the present balance of power, rather than seeking to change structural conditions.28 Without the necessary abstraction of strategic thought, tactics are ultimately fleeting gestures. Finally, the abjuring of complexity dovetails with the neoliberal case for markets. One of the primary arguments made against planning has been that the economy is simply too complex to be guided.29 The only alternative is therefore to leave the distribution of resources to the market and reject any attempt to guide it rationally.30 Considered in all these ways, folk politics appears as an attempt to make global capitalism small enough to be thinkable – and at the same time, to articulate how to act upon this restricted image of capitalism. By contrast, the argument of this book is that folk-political tendencies are mistaken. If complexity presently outstrips humanity’s capacities to think and control, there are two options: one is to reduce complexity down to a human scale; the other is to expand humanity’s capacities. We endorse the latter position. Any postcapitalist project will necessarily require the creation of new cognitive maps, political narratives, technological interfaces, economic models, and mechanisms of collective control to be able to marshal complex phenomena for the betterment of humanity.

#### 7. Economization Link---their description of a ‘black monopoly’ and ‘anti-competitive practices’ to describe violence assumes human interaction can and should be explained in economic terms, securing capitalism

Kip Austin Hinton 15, Assistant Professor, The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, “Should We Use a Capital Framework to Understand Culture? Applying Cultural Capital to Communities of Color,” Equity & Excellence in Education, 48(2), 299-319, 2015.

Influence of an Economic Metaphor on Communities of Color

It makes sense for a neoliberal economist to embrace the prism of social or cultural capital, because economic research frequently interprets the world as a primarily economic sphere. But what about when a social justice educator embraces social or cultural capital? Many social justice advocates do not define the world in economic terms, and do not see market forces as the primary solution to oppressive systems. Capitalism promotes hegemony, not social justice. The agenda of capital has always run counter to the goals of community empowerment: “Within this transformed system, capital demanded that the household function as a factory” (Perelman, 2000, p. 74). According to Weber, the mere existence of family relationships presents an obstacle to capitalism (Collins, 1986, p. 269). Decades ago, Apple (1971) warned that schools were slipping into a marketplace orientation, prioritizing “maintenance of the same dominant world-view” (p. 27). Public institutions have indeed become more market-driven, focused on capital in a way that disempowers communities of color, making it harder to enact democratic reforms (Apple, 2006; Clawson & Leiblum, 2008). Metaphorical capital does not contribute to this directly, but rather indirectly—through metaphor.

Across metaphorical capitals, each framework is fundamentally economic. Research on funds of knowledge and community cultural wealth mimic economic vocabulary without a conception of investment or of supply and demand. Looking to the source, Bourdieu’s (1977) prominent theories are influenced by the economic work of Marx (2011). This makes it particularly notable that Bourdieu himself ignores most aspects of economic capital when he applies it to cultural interaction. Bourdieu does not theorize systems of exchange, return on investment, loans, entrepreneurship, or the actions of cultural capitalists. In fact, Bourdieu’s original concept is somewhat analogous to money, not to capital. Successive theorists have been reluctant to move beyond Bourdieu’s initial, imprecise articulations (Dika & Singh, 2002; Lin, 1999). So, although it may be unusual to come across a theory of race that ignores racism, it is common for a theory of capital to ignore capitalism.

Metaphors have influence. In a metaphor, one domain of human thought is superimposed on a different domain, creating important influence on the receiving domain (Barcelona, 2003). Lakoff (2004) and others have explained how a repeated metaphor reifies in our consciousness, even altering neural processes (Kovecses, 2010). The way any issue is framed, writes Mehta (2013), ¨ “changes the nature of the debate” (p. 292). A problem’s definition is a political consideration, deeply influencing which questions we ask, and which solutions we consider (Lakoff & Pinker, 2007; Sandikcioglu, 2003). This is illustrated by prominent metaphors in the languages of industrialized nations. We use money metaphors to think about time (spend time, living on borrowed time); we use war metaphors to think about arguments (defend a position, surrender a point). As Lakoff and Johnson (2003) explain, we do not explain arguments using a dance metaphor (p. 5), but if we did, it would influence the way we see our opponents/partners.

In the case of culture, are there limits to what education researchers are willing to characterize as capital? Derrida and Moore (1974) warn us of “deploying” metaphors “without limit”: “Consequently the reassuring dichotomy between the metaphorical and the proper is exploded” (p. 74). S. Smith and Kulynych (2002) claim social capital confuses analytical categories because capital is inextricably tied to economic discourse; this critique applies to all forms of metaphorical capital. In public consciousness, capital will not be divorced from capitalism. Deployments of metaphorical capital, therefore, impose the economic worldview of capitalism. These theories position capital and wealth as the normal ways of defining a relationship. Even if such theories were revised to reflect money instead (e.g., “cultural currency”), they would still precariously assume that human interaction can and should be explained in economic terms.

Metaphorical capital advances an economic framework that interprets educational or cultural situations as capitalist, neoliberal, and market-based. We have adopted a specific paradigm, and now that paradigm dictates policy options (P. Hall, 1993). Neoliberal solutions, including standardized testing and charter schools, already dominate education reform (Jones & Vagle, 2013). Political and social critiques are central to critical race theory—yet are marginalized by neoliberal discourse. It is significant that Friedman (1997), one of the most influential proponents of capital and capitalism, advocated privatization of all public schools through vouchers. Rather than functioning as independent fields, education and economics are deeply connected, often in destructive ways. In the past decades, education research has seen an increase in both capitalrelated social theory and the influence of economics. Privatization and corporatization have increased throughout education systems (Saltman, 2012). Aside from the direct harm caused by market-based reform (Burch, 2009; Saltman, 2000), corporatization has reinforced the economic worldview that was embodied by metaphorical capital. Education reports are filled with finance-related vocabulary: funds, investment, value-added, stakeholder, productivity, buy-in. Economic perspectives infringe on discussions about students, even when topics are ostensibly unrelated to money. “This is the extent of capitalism’s hegemony, that it has colonized our capacity to imagine alternatives” (Hickel & Khan, 2012, p. 221). Language influences thought, and educators begin to accept the market mindset. We normalize an inequitable power structure. The capitalist viewpoint becomes the normal way to see everything, and its opportunistic oppression, likewise, becomes normal. It is not surprising, then, that the assets of communities of color go unrecognized—and as I write this, I struggle to explain the limitations of a capitalist frame without reproducing that frame, with my problematic word choice, “assets.”

Freire (1970) has been influential among scholars who rely on metaphorical capital to write about students of color. It is significant that Freire employs economic metaphors to represent the problem (Oughton, 2010): “Banking education” is his name for the method that dehumanizes students (Freire, 1970, p. 73). Freire recognizes economic power as a destructive force at play in the lives of the poor. He consistently opposes multiple elements of the neoliberal agenda, especially the prioritization of capital (Carnoy, 1998; Freire, 1998). Throughout his work, Freire offers ways to counter the commodification of students and promote true democracy (Marginson, 2006). A Freirean analysis of metaphorical capitals, then, notices the neglect of power relations and the depiction of human relationships as economic exchanges.

Hegemonic cultural values, says Gramsci (2011), are those that are accepted as inevitable. The status quo of the economic system cannot be separated from the status quo of the education system. Gramsci embraces education, believing the development of working class intellectuals will reshape the status quo. Gramsci recognizes resistance and promotes agency, in ways that are echoed by community cultural wealth. Though Gramsci opposes economism, he never claims culture, education, and economics are independent (Jessop & Sum, 2006). These are multiple facets of a single, comprehensive system of power. That is to say, there is no such thing as a non-economic policy goal. Do we choose capital as a metaphor because it is the best metaphor, or because it is the one we are familiar with? A Gramscian analysis by Torres (2013) examines the way a neoliberal framework asserts itself as common sense within educational reforms. In a capitalist system, power is allocated to the financially powerful, structuring our self-definitions. As participants in a capitalist system, capital is our common sense, our default, so it is not a surprise that we append the word even when it is unnecessary. These are “tacit, discursive endorsements of neoliberal ideology” (Ayers, 2005, p. 535). From a social justice perspective, metaphors are not arbitrary tools to assign without consequence. They make claims about truth, using rhetoric that “cannot be neutral” (Derrida & Moore, 1974, p. 41). Discourse matters, whether within controversies over Native American mascots (King & Springwood, 2001) or a politician’s description of a war as a “crusade” (Kellner, 2007). Power relations connect seemingly innocuous discursive practices to broader practices of political rhetoric, discrimination, and global financial institutions (McKenna, 2004). In an analysis of community college mission statements, Ayers (2005) concludes that “neoliberal discourse” directs attention to market concerns, so “curriculum is likely to become heavily laden with a market ideology that reinforces and reproduces power asymmetries” (p. 546). By repeating neoliberal vocabulary, frameworks of metaphorical capital have potentially weakened democracy by re-inscribing a framework of capitalism. Even when a particular study’s content works against oppression, language choices may not.

Although market-based education reforms have become more powerful, those who promulgate theories of metaphorical capital have become less likely to have academic understanding of capital itself (Dika & Singh, 2002). Cultural neglect of students of color cannot be logically separated from the economic exclusion they face, as irrelevant curriculum leads to higher pushout rates (M. Fine, 1991; Solorzano & Yosso, 2001). Yes, the cultures of black, Latina/o, Native ´ American, and Asian American students deserve equal footing inside classrooms, and this is true even—or especially—when those cultural practices are not easily framed as a form of capital. I am inspired by Yosso (2005) in her referral to Anzaldua’s (1990) call for a more empowering ´ theory. Yet I think of Lorde’s (1984) warning, “the master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house,” because those tools keep a part of us stuck within “the master’s relationships” (p. 123). Wealth and capital are the capitalist’s tools, the capitalist’s relationships. These are not ethical relationships (Schweickart, 2002). The dominance of financial vocabulary empowers non-human (and inhumane) relationships, through capitalism. These are the relationships between supply and demand; between capital and commodity; between powerful and powerless; between legislation and corporation. As argued by Giroux and Giroux (2006), global capital is responsible for making the wealth and achievement gaps worse for black and Latina/o communities.

I specifically claim that this supposed metaphorical capital is not capital at all. As social justice researchers, we are not neutral; we seek ways to fight oppressive conditions. Yet by basing our metaphors on capital, our theoretical frameworks promote a worldview that is inconsistent with our own goals. Letting go of the metaphor of capital, we may find more relevant and more ethical ways to theorize culture.

#### 1. New Link---structures determine distribution of violence, not interpersonal violence---care in locales enact change at the level of map rather than territory, they’re cruelly optimistic because they believe they can transcend hostile societies, but that can only happen thru concrete party platforms---energy doesn’t generate self-love but is accumulated as currency

Davis 19 (Elizabeth Davis is a PhD candidate in Social Justice Education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto. Beside(s) Love and Hate: The Politics of Consuming Black Culture. Theory & Event. Volume 22, Number 3, July 2019. Project Muse//shree)

For Wynter, this thinking beside(s) love and hate requires attending to the articulation of feelings with structures of feeling. She describes how the Black Power Movement, and other social movements of the 1960s and '70s, alongside the global anti-colonial movements, enacted a "psychic emancipation" by which subjugated peoples profoundly reimagined their conceptions of themselves (2006, 110). This shift marked a positive reaffirmation of identity exemplified in the slogan "Black is Beautiful." But it was a psychic emancipation, Wynter says, "effected at the level of the map, rather than at the level of the territory. That is, therefore, at the level of the systemic devalorization of blackness and correlated over-valorization of whiteness, which are themselves only proximate functions of the overall devalorization of the human species" (2006, 116). For Wynter, that these feelings effected a global psychic emancipation, does not mean they were the "right feelings." They were an insufficient challenge to the mode of sociogeny of the dominant global order.

To change the mode of sociogeny of a culture, to find the answer "on the objective as well as the subjective level" (Fanon 2008, xv) would take a stance beside(s) the affirmation that Black is Beautiful. A reimagination of the human that in Frank Wilderson's (2010) terms requires recognizing subjective capacity as itself built against blackness. For Wilderson, this imagining is a more difficult task today than in the 1960s and '70s: "though the semantic field on which subjectivity is imagined has expanded phenomenally through the protocols of multiculturalism and globalization theory, Blackness and an unflinching articulation of Redness are more unimaginable and illegible within this expanded semantic field than they were during the height of the FBI's repressive Counterintelligence Program (COINTELPRO)" (2010, 9). For Wilderson (in contrast to contemporary "feelings" of progress) blackness has become less legible, and to decipher the "grammar of [Black] suffering" that underwrites cinematic and political speech rests not on a question of love and hate but, drawing on Saidiya Hartman, of accumulation and fungibility.13

But if there are many different registers and orientations of feeling as it is lived in relation to structures of feeling, what would it be, how [End Page 590] would we know, at what level of feeling we are feeling? Or rather, how might we conceptualize subjective, intersubjective and collective feeling as articulated with the political—in particular historical moments, in social movements, and in the reproduction of the episteme? This unclarity about levels and modes of love, affirmation, and celebration of blackness, is one origin story of how both Jared Sexton and Fred Moten come to need to state that "Afro-pessimism is 'not but nothing other than' black optimism" (Moten 2013, 742; Sexton 2011, 37). Afro-pessimism is the insistence on thinking with and through the "subjectivity under erasure" (Wilderson 2010, xi) that is blackness, and black optimism is an orientation and opening up towards the possibilities of black life. They hold in tension that black social death and black social life do not negate each other (Sexton 2011, 28–29). If the misrecognition that would posit them as opposites marks a scene of dissensus, then it is not through the identity of black optimism and Afro-pessimism that an ethics is possible, but as Moten would have it, recognizing the difference between the two as infinitesimal: "…if Afro-pessimism is the study of [the impossibility of loving blackness], the thinking that I have to offer […] moves not in that impossibility's transcendence but rather in its exhaustion" (Moten 2013, 738).

Exhaustion, of the im/possibility of loving blackness, would take all of the steam out of the engines of progress that narratively frame representation—where consumption is conflated with both legibility and love. For who is to say that the white woman didn't love blackness who came up to Billie Holiday in an L.A. nightclub to request that she sing "Strange Fruit" by saying: "Why don't you sing that sexy song you're so famous for? You know, the one about the naked bodies swinging in the trees" (Davis 1998, 195). The point being not to validate such a love, but to be weary and wary of the terms of engagement by which "love" must be idealized and defended.

Economies of white enjoyment of black life have defined the brutal processes of racialization forged in the Middle Passage that shape who and how we are (Hartman 1997). In the "afterlife of slavery" (Hartman 2006), if we are to apprehend that term, we are obliged to study how these libidinal and affective economies are articulated with the formal economy. What neoliberal capitalist politico-economics has done best is to erode our capacity to imagine things differently. It feels like we have less with which to imagine ways of being together outside our current circuits of production, distribution, exchange, consumption. That Harriet Tubman is slated to be the new face of the US twenty-dollar bill calls me quite clearly to reject the prevailing notion that relations of consumption are good enough kinds of relations. [End Page 591]

#### 2. Neoliberalism turns self-expression of identity through psychic alienation---incorporates subjects into the rat race of self-innovation regardless of their willingness---amplifies battle fatigue

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As we have seen, neoliberalism propagated its ideology through a division of labour – academics shaping education, think tanks influencing policy, and popularisers manipulating the media. The inculcation of neoliberalism involved a full-spectrum project of constructing a hegemonic worldview. A new common sense was built that came to co-opt and eventually dominate the terminology of ‘modernity’ and ‘freedom’ – terminology that fifty years ago would have had very different connotations. Today, it is nearly impossible to speak these words without immediately invoking the precepts of neoliberal capitalism.

We all know today that ‘modernisation’ translates into job cuts, the slashing of welfare and the privatisation of government services. To modernise, today, simply means to neoliberalise. The term ‘freedom’ has suffered a similar fate, reduced to individual freedom, freedom from the state, and the freedom to choose between consumer goods. Liberal ideas of individual freedom played an important role in the ideological struggle with the USSR, priming the population of the Western world to mobilise behind any ideology that purported to value individual freedoms. With its emphasis on individual freedoms, neoliberalism was able to co-opt elements of movements organised around ‘libertarianism, identity politics, [and] multiculturalism’.55 Likewise, by emphasising freedom from the state, neoliberalism was able to appeal to anarcho-capitalists and the movements of desire that exploded in May 1968.56 Lastly, with the idea of freedom being limited to a freedom of the market, the ideology could co-opt consumerist desires. At the level of production, neoliberal freedom could also recruit emerging desires among workers for flexible labour – desires that were soon turned against them.57 In struggling for and successfully seizing the ideological terrain of modernity and freedom, neoliberalism has managed to wind its way inexorably into our very self-conceptions. In arrogating the meaning of terms such as modernisation and freedom, neoliberalism has proved itself to be the single most successful hegemonic project of the last fifty years.

Neoliberalism has thus become ‘the form of our existence – the way in which we are led to conduct ourselves, to relate to others and to ourselves’.58 It is, in other words, not just politicians, business leaders, the media elite and academics who have been enrolled into this vision of the world, but also workers, students, migrants – and everyone else. In other words, neoliberalism creates subjects. Paradigmatically, we are constructed as competitive subjects – a role that encompasses and surpasses industrial capitalism’s productive subject. The imperatives of neoliberalism drive these subjects to constant self-improvement in every aspect of their lives. Perpetual education, the omnipresent requirement to be employable, and the constant need for self-reinvention are all of a piece with this neoliberal subjectivity.59 The competitive subject, moreover, straddles the divide between the public and the private. One’s personal life is as bound to competition as one’s work life. Under these conditions, it is no surprise that anxiety proliferates in contemporary societies. Indeed, an entire battery of psychopathologies has been exacerbated under neoliberalism: stress, anxiety, depression and attention deficit disorders are increasingly common psychological responses to the world around us.60 Crucially, the construction of everyday neoliberalism has also been a primary source of political passivity. Even if you do not buy into the ideology, its effects nevertheless force you into increasingly precarious situations and increasingly entrepreneurial inclinations. We need money to survive, so we market ourselves, do multiple jobs, stress and worry about how to pay rent, pinch pennies at the at the grocery store, and turn socialising into networking. Given these effects, political mobilisation becomes a dream that is perpetually postponed, driven away by the anxieties and pressures of everyday life.

At the same time, we should recognise that this production of subjectivity was not simply an external imposition. Hegemony, in all its forms, operates not as an illusion, but as something that builds on the very real desires of the population. Neoliberal hegemony has played upon ideas, yearnings and drives already existing within society, mobilising and promising to fulfill those that could be aligned with its basic agenda. The worship of individual freedom, the value ascribed to hard work, freedom from the rigid work week, individual expression through work, the belief in meritocracy, the bitterness felt at corrupt politicians, unions and bureaucracies – these beliefs and desires pre-exist neoliberalism and find expression in it.61 Bridging the left–right divide, many people today are simply angry at what they see as others taking advantage of the system. Hatred for the rich tax evader combines easily with disgust for the poor welfare cheat; anger at the oppressive employer becomes indistinguishable from anger at all politicians. This is linked with the spread of middle-class identities and aspirations – desires for home ownership, self-reliance and entrepreneurial spirit were fostered and extended into formerly working-class social spaces.62 Neoliberal ideology has a grounding in lived experience and does not exist simply as an academic puzzle.63 Neoliberalism has become parasitical on everyday experience, and any critical analysis that misses this is bound to misrecognise the deep roots of neoliberalism in today’s society. Over the course of decades, neoliberalism has therefore come to shape not only elite opinions and beliefs, but also the normative fabric of everyday life itself. The particular interests of neoliberals have become universalised, which is to say, hegemonic.64 Neoliberalism constitutes our collective common sense, making us its subjects whether we believe in it or not.65

#### 3. The alt solves---party politics is collective care that transcends the self---the labor of struggle is a source of energy, not a suck

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As long as self-care is discussed as an individual responsibility and additional task, it will be something that middle-class people with leisure time will most easily relate to and will include barriers to the lives of people without time to spare. It becomes one more unchecked box on a to-do list to feel bad about, an unreal expectation, or a far-off dream.

The movement is my self-care not my reason for needing it.

Don Andres awoke every morning at 5:00am to arrive at a street corner to look for work by 6:00am. He’d work a full day of heavy construction and still arrive at the 7:00pm meeting. He’d routinely fall asleep but he was there. Why? Because organizing together to improve conditions, to create alternatives, to band together, was the only option for how care could be anything but alien in his life as a day laborer. Being at the meeting was self-care.

Lack of care is systemic. Therefore resistance to those systems is the highest affirmation of care for oneself and one’s community. Movement work is healing work.

What self-care often misses is the reality that for the majority of people engaged in social justice movements, participation is out of necessity. That a collective effort in the form of social movement is the highest articulation of caring for one’s own self in a world designed to deny your worthiness of care. Too many people discussing self-care overlook the structural barriers that make access to the care they are speaking of impossible without the struggle they often discuss as the cause of their need to ‘take care of themselves.’

Even for someone like myself who has the majority of my materials needs met, I feel most alive, most on fire, most able to go around the clock, when I’m doing political work that feels authentic, feels like it pushes the bounds of authority, and feels like it is directly connected to advancing my individual and our collective liberation.

The truth is that we cannot knit our way to revolution. The issue is not that movements are taxing, because truly they are. It’s called ‘struggle’ for a reason. But they go from strain to overtaxing when we seek to fulfill our political aspirations through vehicles never meant to carry them like in non-political formations or some 501c3s.

The crisis of care is also a crisis of organization. Non-profits are built to do a lot of good, but they have inherent limitations that mean they are rarely built to fulfill our visions of the transformative organizing that would usher in a world where we could feel whole. Most engaged in social movements today are originally driven out of either a concrete material necessity and/or a deep connection to the wrong that accompanies inequality and a drive to make it right. However the majority of organizations available to us today are designed for gentle reforms but not the fundamental transformation our spirits crave. As a result, we try to transform a model unfit to nourish our hearts and then treat that frustration with tonics and diets and stretches instead of placing our efforts in creating a collective space that unleashes our heart’s creative desires.

Maria Poblet of Causa Justa Just Cause once said, “Burnout is not about the amount of hours you work, it is about the amount of political clarity you have.” What that means is that there is no chance of us consistently burning the midnight oil if we don’t at our core believe what we’re working on will get us to a new day and no amount of yoga or therapy or comfort food we supplement our work with will compensate for that. However, if we can see a better world just over the horizon, like a marathon runner nearing a finish line, we can find endless wells to draw upon as we work to usher it in. I have literally gone from being in debilitating pain and only being able to accomplish three hours of work each day to working 18 hour shifts the same week in a completely different context. The difference was not the conditions of my work. It was my connection to my purpose.

The problem with self-care is that there is an underlying assumption that our labor is draining. The deeper question is how do we shape our struggles so that they are life-giving instead of energy-taking processes. When did activities that are aimed to move us closer to freedom stop moving us?

#### The aff’s starting point fails---communal care is reparative spiritualism that updates bourgeois ideology---navigating and adapting to hostile spaces is indistinguishable from logics of crisis management that displaces demand for transformation of material conditions

Tarrant 16 – Professor of English at Kingsborough Community College [Julie, “Mind over Matter and Other Posthumanist Feminist Tales,” in Cotter et al. eds. *All Too (Post)Human: The Humanities after Humanism*, Lanham: Lexington Books, pp. 95-105]

These developments in production and the economy have meant that women globally have been increasingly drawn directly into the structures of capitalism and as such have been subject to uneven and combined development produced by class-divided social relations of production. Within these social relations a tiny minority of ruling class women have joined the ruling (capitalist) class and reap the benefits of control over the surplus labor of the vast majority of women who have been drawn, en masse, into the capitalist workforce, but under conditions where they are subject to deepening inequalities across the class divide as well as across the social fissures of gender, race, nationality, sexuality, age, and (dis)ability and the divisions of labor that underpin these ideological differences.

The "new materialist" feminisms are, broadly speaking, responses to real problems that have been produced by contemporary capitalism and its conflictual drive for profits in the context of the development of new forms of property (such as "hedge funds" and other financial capital)- forms of property which can make it appear that capital develops independently of the daily lives and struggles of workers and their labor- and a deepening social as well as economic crisis. However, through their re-conceptualization of what is material as "the forces, processes, capacities, and resiliencies with which bodies, organisms, and material objects act both independently and in response to discursive provocations and constraints," in other words, by positing the material as the autonomy of "matter" -and thus as a "supplement [to] cultural and discursive analysis of social and political phenomenon" rather than a re-thinking of the erasure of class and labor from cultural and social theory-these "new materialist" feminisms are ultimately part of the class struggles on behalf of capitalists which justify the current material (property) relations and aid the class-interested containment of collective struggles on the part of workers. 2 Contrary to their self-representations, "new materialist" feminisms are disenabling forms of spiritualism that displace explanatory critique of the emergent material conditions with strategies of enchanted affective adaptation and survival. These spiritualisms demonize, marginalize and suppress critique and, as such, work to dismantle materialist feminism's primary conceptual tool for social transformation in favor of an updated ruling-class ideology that prioritizes crisis-management over social transformation. To avoid merely reproducing sophisticated forms of the survivalism and "prepperism" that have emerged as individualistic coping responses to economic crisis and austerity, I argue that feminism needs to return to historical materialism in the tradition of Marx, Engels, and Kollontai to understand social life in terms of its root relations and aid in the struggles to bring about social transformation.

Exemplary of the "new materialist" feminism is Rosi Braidotti' s writing on "the politics of 'life itself,"' a theory which she organizes around the trope of "sustainability." Sustainability, a concept in ecology for living within natural limits, becomes in these writings a means of reconceiving the historical social relations of capitalism as if they were the unchangeable, underlying existential limit-situation of "life itself." The politics of "life itself" and the "new materialist" focus on seeking a sustainable feminism within this new, more "realist" approach to material reality, is a form of feminist theory and politics which is ultimately the already familiar theory and politics of reparative reading. Why is this significant? As Ellis Hanson suggests in a review of Sedgwick, "Faced with the depressing realization that people are fragile and the world hostile, a reparative reading focuses not on the exposure of political outrages that we already know but rather on the process of reconstructing a sustainable life in their wake." 3 In other words, reparative analysis begins not with critique of the so-called already known and presumably known to be unchangeable, but by focusing on how to live within the already-known-to-be hostile world. Such a theory of the social begins and ends by reducing knowledge to a matter of how to cope, how to feel, how to exist, etc. within what is taken to be unchangeable. The effect of this, focus on "sustainability" within hostility is that social transformation-, which requires the production of knowledge of what needs to be transformed-is treated as impossible. Abandoning the project of transformation, I argue, is a sign of the way dominant "materialist" feminism under the guise of "new materialism" - has increasingly abandoned the project of women's emancipation from exploitation, and, in the interests of capital, instead translates austerity measures into a theoretical discourse of getting by on less.

At the core of Braidotti' s theory of "sustainable feminism" and "life politics" is a "new materialist" understanding of "life." For Braidotti, life is made up of two parts-zoe and bias. Zoe, "life as absolute vitality," is the spiritual and bios is the "bio-organic" body which sets limits on the spiritual life force. 4 Braidotti writes, "Zoe, or life as absolute vitality, however, is not above negativity, and it can hurt. It is always too much for the specific slab of enfleshed existence that single subjects actualize. It is a constant challenge for us to rise to the occasion, to catch the wave of life's intensities and ride it." 5 Thus for Braidotti, the source of social contradictions is the conflict between zoe, that is, absolute vitality or spiritual life force, and our bio-organic bodies. As a result, Braidotti' s new materialism bypasses the ensemble of social relations and historical conditions that produce social contradictions in capitalism and presents contradictions as transhistorical and existential conditions of life as such. On this logic, our absolute vitality comes into the world and reaches the limit of the body and this causes us "pain." According to this narrative, however, there is no real way to compensate for pain. This explanation of pain is an example of bypassing the social. As such it is an accommodationist block to changing the conditions that produce suffering.

Thus, according to the underlying mysticism of "new materialism," when political-economic refugees from the Middle East and northern Africa drown, suffocate, or otherwise perish in attempts to cross into Europe, it would seem that their spiritual life force, which drove them to seek a better life for themselves and their families, came up against the limits of their bio-organic bodies and this is just one of the innumerable examples of the inevitable "pain" experienced by individuals who come up against such a conflict between zoe and bias. Moreover, on this view, citizens of Europe, the United States, and beyond are encouraged to view their own "pain" upon witnessing and learning about these deaths as a matter of an "intensity" that they should "ride" (feel) as much as possible in order to enable themselves to "deal with" this tragic situation and help to create "sustainable" change, which implies reforms to immigration policy. What this approach does not address or enable, however, is why and how to understand the class relations that have produced such "migrants" and why and how these class relations also shape the ideological conditions that produce people as completely expendable surplus labor or as, in essence, trash to be disposed of as efficiently as possible with the least disruption and cost as possible. This is the way in which "reparative reading" does the necessary ideological work for capital: it focuses on emotional response to the effects of exploitation but obscures underlying causes in the structural relations of capitalism, or the need to change them, and teaches workers how to adjust to and work within the conditions of their own exploitation.

## Case