# Doc---Texas---Round 6

# 1NC

## Offcase

### T---1NC

#### 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

Thomas Horton 10. Professor of Law and Heidepriem Trial Advocacy Fellow, University of South Dakota School of Law. “Rediscovering Antitrust's Lost Values.” The University of New Hampshire Law Review. https://scholars.unh.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1305&context=unh\_lr

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.

### Capitalism K---1NC

#### The 1AC’s defense of spontaneous, small scale insurrections is folk politics that forecloses institutional counter-hegemony capable of transforming capitalism

Srnicek and Williams 15. (Nick Srnicek, lecturer at City University London, and Alex Williams, lecturer at City University London. Inventing the Future: Postcapitalism and a World Without Work. Verso Books: 2015. Pg. 27-31. iBooks.)

DEFINING FOLK POLITICS

What is folk politics? Folk politics names a constellation of ideas and intuitions within the contemporary left that informs the common-sense ways of organising, acting and thinking politics. It is a set of **strategic assumptions** that threatens to **debilitate the left**, **rendering it unable to** scale up, create lasting change or expand beyond particular interests. **Leftist movements under the sway of folk politics are not only unlikely to be successful – they are in fact** incapable of transforming capitalism. The term itself draws upon two senses of ‘folk’. First, it evokes critiques of folk psychology which argue that **our intuitive conceptions of the world are both historically constructed and often mistaken**.11 Secondly, it refers to ‘folk’ as the locus of the small-scale, the authentic, the traditional and the natural. Both of these dimensions are implied in the idea of folk politics.

As a first approximation, we can therefore define folk politics as a collective and historically constructed political common sense that has become **out of joint with** the actual mechanisms of power. As our political, economic, social and “technological world changes, tactics and strategies which were previously capable of transforming collective power into emancipatory gains have now become drained of their effectiveness. As the common sense of today’s left, folk politics often operates intuitively, uncritically and unconsciously. Yet common sense is also historical and mutable. It is worth recalling that today’s familiar forms of organisation and tactics, far from being natural or pre-given, have instead been developed over time in response to specific political problems. Petitions, occupations, strikes, vanguard parties, affinity groups, trade unions: all arose out of particular historical conditions.12 Yet the fact that certain ways of organising and acting were once useful does not guarantee their continued relevance. Many of the tactics and organisational structures that dominate the contemporary left are responses to the experience of state communism, exclusionary trade unions, and the collapse of social democratic parties. Yet the **ideas that made sense in the wake of those moments no longer present effective tools for political transformation.** **Our world has moved on, becoming more complex, abstract, nonlinear and global than ever before.**

Against the abstraction and inhumanity of capitalism, folk politics aims to bring politics down to the ‘human scale’ by emphasising temporal, spatial and conceptual immediacy. At its heart, folk politics is the guiding intuition that **immediacy is always better and often more authentic, with the corollary being a deep suspicion of abstraction and mediation**. In terms of temporal immediacy, contemporary folk politics typically remains reactive (**responding to actions initiated by corporations and governments, rather than initiating actions**);13 ignores long-term strategic goals in favour of tactics (mobilising around **single-issue politics** or emphasising process);14 **prefers practices that are often inherently fleeting** (such as occupations and temporary autonomous zones);15 chooses the familiarities of the past over the unknowns of the future (for instance, the repeated dreams of a return to ‘good’ Keynesian capitalism);16 **and expresses itself as a predilection for the** voluntarist and spontaneous over the institutional (as in the romanticisation of rioting and insurrection).17

In terms of **spatial immediacy**, **folk politics privileges the local as the site of authenticity** (as in the 100-miles diet or local currencies);18 habitually chooses the small over the large (as in the veneration of small-scale communities or local businesses);19 favours projects that are **un-scalable** beyond a small community (for instance, general assemblies and direct democracy);20 **and often** rejects the project of hegemony, valuing withdrawal or exit rather than building a broad counter-hegemony.21 Likewise, folk politics prefers that actions be taken by participants themselves – in its emphasis on direct action, for example – and sees decision-making as something to be carried out by each individual rather than by any representative. **The problems of scale and extension** are either ignored or smoothed over in folk-political thinking.

Finally, in terms of **conceptual immediacy**, there is a preference for the everyday over the structural, valorising personal experience over systematic thinking; for feeling over thinking, emphasising individual suffering, or the sensations of enthusiasm and anger experienced during political actions; for the particular over the universal, seeing the latter as intrinsically totalitarian; and for the ethical over the political – as in ethical consumerism, or **moralising critiques** of greedy bankers.22

Organisations and communities are to be transparent, **rejecting in advance any conceptual mediation, or even modest amounts of complexity.** **The classic images of universal emancipation and global change have been transformed into a prioritisation of the suffering of the particular and the authenticity of the local.** As a result, any process of constructing a universal politics is rejected from the outset.

#### Cap turns case---it’s a para-ontological phenomenon that defangs black radicalism, penetrating even the maroons of the university

Curry 13 (Tommy; lack Studies, Not Morality: Anti-Black Racism, Neo-Liberal Cooptation, and the Challenges to Black Studies Under Intersectional Axioms. // 2013; <https://www.academia.edu/8160498/_Draft_Black_Studies_Not_Morality_Anti-Black_Racism_Neo-Liberal_Cooptation_and_the_Challenges_to_Black_Studies_Under_Intersectional_Axioms> //Ritt)

Our present day descriptions of the crisis of Black Studies have identified neo-liberalism as a major cause of the financial and political obstacles preventing flourishing of the discipline. In this schema there is a shared concerned with other liberal arts programs that their contributions to the university are being devalued because of the encroaching corporatism in the American university. Henry Giroux‟s (2002) “Neo -liberalism, Corporate Culture, and the Promise of Higher Education: The University of as a Democratic Public Sphere” warns that under neoliberalism politics are market driven and the claims of democratic citizenship are subordinated to market values” (p.428). According to Giroux (2002) these are ubiquitous in scope. “As large amounts of corporate capital flow into the universities, those areas of study in the university that don't translate into substantial profits get either marginalized, underfunded, or eliminated… we are witnessing…a downsizing in the humanities …Moreover, programs and courses that focus on areas such as critical theory, literature, feminism, ethics, environmentalism, post-colonialism, philosophy, and sociology suggest an intellectual cosmopolitanism or a concern with social issues that will be either eliminated or technicized because their role in the market will be judged as ornamental” (p.434). But the role of neoliberalism has been underappreciated and understudied in relation to Black politics and the 21 st century articulations of “race.” While Giroux‟s analysis suggests a shared neoliberal repression upon the marked Black community of the university, Lester Spence correctly observes that “while scholars and activists alike increasingly use the concept of neoliberalism to explain rising levels of racial inequality they… miss the way this dynamic is reproduced within, and not simply on black communities ” (2012, p.140). This “reproduction within” Black communities exposes an unattended aspect of the political economy at work in the valuation of discourse and ideology within the university. The current deployment of neoliberalism in relation to the fields of knowledge and “politics” in Black Studies thereby exposes a paraontological dilemma in our diagnosis; as neoliberalism both represents the market ontology of corporations (our traditional understanding), and the internalization as homo-economicus (the Black subject as self-interested economic thinker). As Joy James (2000) observes , “In academe, a self/text preoccupation and careerism may marginalize or psychologize political struggles. In the present form of Black Studies, it is not unusual to find writers advocating for the intellectual-interrogator as more enlightened than the activist-intellectual (we also find the inflation of literary production into a form of political “activism” without analysis of the relation to community organizing. Professionalizing progressive discourse validating it within academic conversation, has a lot to do with the commodification of not only Black Studies, but Black radicalism within Black Studies. This analysis is not all together surprising given the research of Fabio Rojas ‟s (2007) From Black Power to Black Studies which argues that the corporate foundations like Ford and Carnegie directly influenced and deradicalized the course of Black Studies departments in the years following the Civil Rights movement from paradigms focusing on material-nationalist-radicalism accounts of racism to poststructuralist-integrationist-reformism accounts of identity through post-doctoral fellowships and grants. In contrast to our present day articulations of neoliberalism, or more appropriately the neoliberal crisis in relation to Black Studies, we are not only bringing attention to the externality of a white supremacist corporatism which devalues Blackness, but the reification of neoliberal axioms in the production and commodification of Black radicalism by Black scholars in Black Studies.

**Forgoing institutions abdicates communal power – only building material infrastructure for a revolutionary base quells the compounding existential climate crisis**

**Escalante 19** [Alyson, Marxist-Leninist, Materialist Feminist and Anti-Imperialist activist, "Communism and Climate Change: A Dual Power Approach," *Failing That, Invent*, https://failingthatinvent.home.blog/2019/02/15/communism-and-climate-change-a-dual-power-approach/]

I have previously argued that a crucial advantage to **dual power** **strategy** is that it gives the masses an infrastructure of socialist **institutions** which can directly provide for **material needs** in times of **capitalist crisis.** **Socialist agricultural** and **food distribution programs** can take ground that the **capitalist state** cedes by simultaneously meeting the needs of the masses while proving that socialist **self-management** and **political** **institutions** can function **independently** of capitalism. This approach is not only capable of **literally saving lives** in the case of crisis, but of demonstrating the **possibility of a revolutionary project** which seeks to **destroy rather than reform** capitalism. One of the most pressing of the various crises which humanity faces today is climate change. Capitalist production has devastated the planet, and everyday we discover that the small window of time for avoiding its most disastrous effects is shorter than previously understood. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change predicts that we have 12 years to limit (not even prevent) the more catastrophic effects of climate change. The simple, and horrific, fact that we all must face is that climate change has reached a point where many of its effects are **inevitable**, and we are now in a **post-brink world**, where damage control is the primary concern. **The question is not whether we can escape** a future of **climate change, but whether we can survive it**. Socialist strategy must adapt accordingly. In the face of this crisis, the democratic socialists and social democrats in the United States have largely settled on market based reforms. The Green New Deal, championed by Alexandria Ocasio Cortez and the left wing of the Democratic Party, remains a thoroughly capitalist solution to a capitalist problem. The proposal does nothing to challenge capitalism itself, but rather seeks to subsidize market solutions to reorient the US energy infrastructure towards renewable energy production, to develop less energy consuming transportation, and the development of public investment towards these ends. **The plan does nothing to call into question the profit incentives and endless resource consumption of capitalism which led us to this point**. Rather, it seeks to reorient the relentless market forces of capitalism towards slightly less destructive technological developments. While the plan would lead to a massive investment in the manufacturing and deployment of solar energy infrastructure, National Geographic reports that, “Fabricating [solar] panels **requires caustic chemicals** such as sodium hydroxide and hydrofluoric acid, and **the process uses water as well as electricity**, the production of which **emits greenhouse gases**.” Technology alone cannot sufficiently combat this crisis, as the production of such technology through capitalist manufacturing infrastructure **only perpetuates environmental harm**. Furthermore, subsidizing and incentivizing renewable energy stops far short of actually combating the fossil fuel industry driving the current climate crisis. The technocratic market solutions offered in the Green New Deal fail to adequately combat the driving factors of climate change. What is worse, they rely on a violent imperialist global system in order to produce their technological solutions. The development of high-tech energy infrastructure and the development of low or zero emission transportation requires the import of raw material and rare earth minerals which the United States can only access because of the imperial division of the Global South. This imperial division of the world requires constant **militarism** from the imperial core nations, and as Lenin demonstrates in Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism, facilitates **constant warfare** as imperial states compete for **spheres of influence** in order to facilitate cheap resource extraction. The US military, one of many imperialist forces, is the single largest user of petroleum, and one of its main functions is to ensure oil access for the United States. Without challenging this imperialist division of the world and the role of the United States military in upholding it, the Green New Deal fails even further to challenge the underlying causes of climate change. Even with the failed promises of the Green New Deal itself, it is unlikely that this tepid market proposal will pass at all. Nancy Pelosi and other lead Democrats have largely condemned it and consider it “impractical” and “unfeasible.” This dismissal is crucial because it reveals the total inability of capitalism to resolve this crisis. If the center-left party in the heart of the imperial core sees even milquetoast capitalist reforms as a step too far, we ought to have very little hope that a reformist solution will present itself within the ever shrinking 12 year time frame. There are times for delicacy and there are times for bluntness, and we are in the latter. To put things bluntly: the capitalists are not going to save us, and **if we don’t find a way to save ourselves, the collapse of human civilization is a real possibility.** The pressing question we now face is: **how are we going to save ourselves?** Revolution and Dual Power If capitalism will not be able to resolve the current encroaching climate crisis, we must find a way to organize outside the confines of capitalist institutions, towards the end of overthrowing capitalism. If the Democratic Socialists of America backed candidates cannot offer real anti-capitalist solutions through the capitalist state, we should be skeptical of the possibility for any socialist organization doing so. The DSA is far larger and far more well funded than any of the other socialist organizations in the United States, and they have failed to produce anything more revolutionary than the Green New Deal. We have to abandon the idea that electoral strategy will be sufficient to resolve the underlying causes of this crisis within 12 years. While many radicals call for revolution instead of reform, the reformists often raise the same response: revolution is well and good, but what are you going to do in the mean time? In many ways this question is fair. The socialist left in the United States today is not ready for revolutionary action, and a mass base does not exist to back the various organizations which might undertake such a struggle. Revolutionaries must concede that we have much work to be done before a revolutionary strategy can be enacted. This is a hard truth, but it is true. Much of the left has sought to ignore this truth by embracing adventurism and violent protest theatrics, in the vain hope of sparking revolutionary momentum which does not currently exist. If this is the core strategy of the socialist left, **we will accomplish nothing in the next 12 years**. Such approaches are as useless as the opportunist reforms pushed by the social democrats. Our task in these 12 years is not simply to arm ourselves and hope that magically the masses will wake up prepared for revolution and willing to put their trust in our small ideological cadres. We must instead, build a movement, and with it we must build infrastructure which can survive revolution and provide a framework for socialist development. Dual power is tooled towards this project best. **The Marxist Center** network has done an impressive amount of work developing socialist institutions across the US, largely through **tenants organizing** and **serve the people programs**. The left wing factions within the DSA itself have also begun to develop **mutual aid programs** that could be useful for dual power strategy. At the same time, **mutual aid is not enough**. We cannot simply build these institutions as a reform to make capitalism more survivable. Rather, we must make these institutions part of a **broader revolutionary movement** and they ought to function as a material prefiguration to a socialist society and economy. The institutions we build as dual power outside the capitalist state today ought to be structured towards revolutionary ends, such that they will someday function as the early institutions of a revolutionary socialist society. To accomplish this goal, we cannot simply declare these institutions to be revolutionary. Rather **they have to be linked together through an actual revolutionary movement working towards revolutionary ends**. This means that dual power institutions cannot exist as ends in and of themselves, nor can abstract notions of mutual aid cannot be conceptualized as an end in itself. The explicit purpose of these institutions has to be to **radicalize** the masses through meeting their needs, and providing an infrastructure for a socialist movement to meet **the needs of** its members and the **communities** in which it operates. **Revolutionary institutions** that **can provide food, housing**, and other needs for a revolutionary movement will be crucial for **build**ing **a base** among the masses and for constructing the beginnings of a socialist infrastructure for when we eventually engage in revolutionary struggle.

**Vote neg for a democratic centralist model of communism that provides accountability, praxis, and endurance – dual power toward a unified national party corrects for past failures**

**Escalante 18** (Alyson Escalante, Marxist-Leninist, Materialist Feminist and Anti-Imperialist activist. “PARTY ORGANIZING IN THE 21ST CENTURY” September 21st, 2018 <https://theforgenews.org/2018/09/21/party-organizing-in-the-21st-century/>)

I would argue that within the base building movement, there is a move towards party organizing, but this trend has not always been explicitly theorized or forwarded within the movement. My goal in this essay is to argue that base building and dual power strategy can be best forwarded through party organizing, and that party organizing can allow this emerging movement to solidify into a powerful revolutionary socialist tendency in the United States. One of the crucial insights of the base building movement is that the current state of the left in the United States is one in which revolution is not currently possible. There exists very little popular support for socialist politics. A century of anticommunist propaganda has been extremely effective in convincing even the most oppressed and marginalized that communism has nothing to offer them. The base building emphasis on dual power responds directly to this insight. By building institutions which can meet people’s needs, we are able to concretely demonstrate that communists can offer the oppressed relief from the horrific conditions of capitalism. Base building strategy recognizes that actually doing the work to serve the people does infinitely more to create a socialist base of popular support than electing democratic socialist candidates or holding endless political education classes can ever hope to do. Dual power is about proving that we have something to offer the oppressed. The question, of course, remains: once we have built a base of popular support, what do we do next? If it turns out that establishing socialist institutions to meet people’s needs does in fact create sympathy towards the cause of communism, how can we mobilize that base? Put simply: **in order to mobilize the base which base builders hope to create, we need to have already done the work of building a communist party.** It is not enough to simply meet peoples needs. Rather, we must build the institutions of dual power in the name of communism. We must refuse covert front organizing and instead have a public face as a communist party. When we build tenants unions, serve the people programs, and other dual power projects, we must make it clear that we are organizing as communists, unified around a party, and are not content simply with establishing endless dual power organizations. We must be clear that our strategy is revolutionary and in order to make this clear we must adopt party organizing. By “party organizing” I mean an organizational strategy which adopts the party model. Such organizing focuses on building a party whose membership is formally unified around a party line determined by democratic centralist decision making. The party model creates internal methods for **holding party members accountable**, unifying party member action around democratically determined goals, and for educating party members in communist theory and praxis. A communist organization utilizing the party model works to build dual power institutions while simultaneously educating the communities they hope to serve. Organizations which adopt the party model focus on propagandizing around the need for revolutionary socialism. They function as the forefront of political organizing, empowering local communities to theorize their liberation through communist theory while organizing communities to literally fight for their liberation. A party is not simply a group of individuals doing work together, but is a formal organization unified in its fight against capitalism. Party organizing has much to offer the base building movement. By working in a unified party, base builders can ensure that local struggles are tied to and informed by a unified national and international strategy. While the most horrific manifestations of capitalism take on particular and unique form at the local level, we need to remember that our struggle is against a material base which functions not only at the national but at the international level. The formal structures provided by a democratic centralist party model allow individual locals to have a voice in open debate, but also allow for a unified strategy to emerge from democratic consensus. Furthermore, **party organizing allows for local organizations and individual organizers to be held accountable for their actions.** It allows criticism to function not as one independent group criticizing another independent group, but rather as comrades with a formal organizational unity working together to sharpen each others strategies and to help correct chauvinist ideas and actions. In the context of the socialist movement within the United States, such accountability is crucial. As a movement which operates within a settler colonial society, imperialist and colonial ideal frequently infect leftist organizing. Creating formal unity and party procedure for dealing with and correcting these ideas allows us to address these consistent problems within American socialist organizing. Having a formal party which unifies the various dual power projects being undertaken at the local level also allows for base builders to not simply meet peoples needs, but to pull them into the membership of the party as organizers themselves. The party model creates a means for sustained growth to occur by unifying organizers in a manner that allows for skills, strategies, and ideas to be shared with newer organizers. It also allows community members who have been served by dual power projects to take an active role in organizing by becoming party members and participating in the continued growth of base building strategy. It ensures that there are formal processes for educating communities in communist theory and praxis, and also enables them to act and organize in accordance with their own local conditions. We also must recognize that the current state of the base building movement precludes the possibility of such a national unified party in the present moment. Since base building strategy is being undertaken in a number of already established organizations, it is not likely that base builders would abandon these organizations in favor of founding a unified party. Additionally, it would not be strategic to immediately undertake such complete unification because it would mean abandoning the organizational contexts in which concrete gains are already being made and in which growth is currently occurring. What is important for base builders to focus on in the current moment is building dual power on a local level alongside building a national movement. This means aspiring towards the possibility of a unified party, while pursuing continued local growth. The movement within the Marxist Center network towards some form of unification is positive step in the right direction. The independent party emphasis within the Refoundation caucus should also be recognized as a positive approach. It is important for base builders to continue to explore the possibility of unification, and to maintain unification through a party model as a long term goal. In the meantime, individual base building organizations ought to adopt party models for their local organizing. Local organizations ought to be building dual power alongside recruitment into their organizations, education of community members in communist theory and praxis, and the establishment of armed and militant party cadres capable of defending dual power institutions from state terror. Dual power institutions must be unified openly and transparently around these organizations in order for them to operate as more than “red charities.” Serving the people means meeting their material needs while also educating and propagandizing. It means radicalizing, recruiting, and organizing. The party model remains the most useful method for achieving these ends. The use of the party model by local organizations allows base builders to gain popular support, and most importantly, to mobilize their base of popular support towards revolutionary ends, not simply towards the construction of a parallel economy which exists as an end in and of itself. It is my hope that we will see future unification of the various local base building organizations into a national party, but in the meantime we must push for party organizing at the local level. If local organizations adopt party organizing, it ought to become clear that **a unified national party will have to be the long term goal of the base building movement.** Many of the already existing organizations within the base building movement already operate according to these principles. I do not mean to suggest otherwise. Rather, my hope is to suggest that we ought to be explicit about the need for party organizing and emphasize the relationship between dual power and the party model. Doing so will make it clear that the base building movement is not pursuing a cooperative economy alongside capitalism, but is pursuing a revolutionary socialist strategy capable of fighting capitalism. The long term details of base building and dual power organizing will arise organically in response to the conditions the movement finds itself operating within. I hope that I have put forward a useful contribution to the discussion about base building organizing, and have demonstrated the need for party organizing in order to ensure that the base building tendency maintains a revolutionary orientation. The finer details of revolutionary strategy will be worked out over time and are not a good subject for public discussion. I strongly believe party organizing offers the best path for ensuring that such strategy will succeed. My goal here is not to dictate the only possible path forward but to open a conversation about how the base building movement will organize as it transitions from a loose network of individual organizations into a unified socialist tendency. These discussions and debates will be crucial to ensuring that this rapidly growing movement can succeed.

### Humanism K---2NC

#### The aff’s desire for a new space comes at the expense of changing this one. Humanism is not only redeemable, but ceding control of it to the colonizer reinforces binaries that justified colonialism in the first place.

Wilder 16 ― Gary Wilder, Associate Professor of Anthropology at the University of New York, Ph.D. in anthropology and history from the University of Chicago, former Fellow at the Mellon Foundation, 2016. (“Here/Hear Now Aimé Césaire!”, The South Atlantic Quarterly, July 2016, Available Online at: <https://www.academia.edu/27869922/Here_Hear_Now_Aim%C3%A9_C%C3%A9saire_South_Atlantic_Quarterly_?auto=download> Accessed 9-8-17)

These key terms illuminate crucial aspects of what made Césaire a distinctive thinker whose critical voice may continue to resonate for us today. But in order to attend to Césaire as he did his predecessors—as a contemporary— we should recognize how his intellectual orientation and insights brush against the grain of many current theoretical tendencies. In both critical theory and postcolonial studies, the standard operation is to unmask purportedly universal categories as socially constructed, culturally particular, and implicated in practices, systems, and logics of domination. These are indispensable critical moves. But this approach often devolves into a hunt for traces of universalism or humanism, whether in textual artifacts or political projects, in order to reveal the regressive or oppressive essence of the object. This “aha” moment thus becomes the punch line of the discussion rather than the starting point for analysis. Such fears of complicity with power do not only belie a longing for intellectual and political purity. They also make it difficult to think dialectically, to identify aspects of given arrangements that may point beyond their actually existing forms.

The current insistence on negative critique also makes scholars reluctant to identify desirable alternatives and specify the kind of world they might want to create. But what do we concede if we are unable or unwilling to risk affirming more just, more human, ways of being to which we can say “yes”? It is not easy for radical thinkers to reconcile a nonprescriptive orientation to a radically open future with the imperative to envision more desirable arrangements (Coronil 2011). But ignoring or deferring the challenge does not make it disappear. Following anticolonial thinkers like Césaire, especially those located within the black Atlantic critical tradition, may remind us not to forfeit categories such as freedom, justice, democracy, solidarity, and humanity to the dominant actors who have instrumentalized and degraded them.

Given this dilemma, the attention paid to Vivek Chibber’s recent polemic against subaltern studies is not surprising. Such attention, however, seems to be less about the merits of his universalist Marxism than about a sense of some of the limitations and impasses into which certain currents of postcolonial thinking have led (Chibber 2013).7 Partha Chatterjee himself has recently written, “The task, as it now stands, cannot . . . be taken forward within the framework of the concepts and methods mobilized in Subaltern Studies . . . what is needed are new projects” (2012a: 44). He suggests that such projects should probably focus on “cultural history” and “popular culture” with a renewed focus on visual materials and embodied practices rather than written texts and on ethnography rather than intellectual history. Moreover, he links this invitation to study “the ethnographic, the practical, the everyday and the local” to a focus on subnational “regional formations” and “minority cultures” and languages whose specificities, he observes, had not been sufficiently engaged by earlier subaltern studies research on “India,” “Pakistan,” or “Bangladesh” (47–49). Valuable as such studies would surely be, it is not clear how a renewed focus on locality, with place-based assumptions about territory, consciousness, and categories, could do the kind of critical work necessary to grasp the deep shifts in political logics, structures, and practices that characterize the world-historical present. On the contrary, such approaches risk reproducing precisely the culturalist and territorialist assumptions about political identification and affiliation that need to be rethought in light of contemporary conditions.8

Chatterjee’s surprising emphasis on local ethnography seems consistent with one trend in postcolonial thinking that risks reviving the types of civilizational thinking, and associated assumptions about origins and authenticity, that it had earlier set out to dismantle (Chakrabarty 2007; Mah- mood 2005; Mignolo 2011). Consider the important ways that Talal Asad has invited us to rethink liberal assumptions about “tradition,” with respect to liberal and nonliberal forms of life. In dialogue with Ludwig Wittgenstein and Alasdair MacIntyre, Asad (1986) has developed a powerful critique of liberal secularism—and the secularist logic that subtends many modern liberal states—from the standpoint of embodied and discursive traditions. On the one hand, he reminds us that “Islamic tradition” is neither singular nor unchanging; it is a structured and dynamic space for reasoned argument. On the other hand, he reminds us that despite liberalism’s claims to post- traditional neutrality, it too constitutes a particular tradition (albeit one that defines itself in opposition to inherited, embodied, and practice-oriented forms of tradition-based reasoning).

Asad’s genealogical insights have rightly informed recent critiques of Western liberal ideologies, states, and politics especially regarding their arrogant, condescending, and violent responses to tradition-rooted practices and practitioners, whether outside or inside the West. But his interventions, however unintentionally, have also led scholars to establish dubious chains of equivalence between modernity, the West, and liberalism. Such operations seem to disregard Asad’s important invitation to understand traditions as capacious, heterogeneous, and dynamic spaces of inquiry, disputation, and revision, not simply as a set of rigid behavioral scripts, unchanging cultural formulas, or dogmatic ideological precepts. This reduction of political modernity to a one-dimensional liberalism obscures, for example, the many currents of progressive antiliberalism within the tradition of modern Western political thought. It fails to recognize the significant number of non-European colonial intellectuals engaged in anti-imperial struggles who were active participants in such “traditions within traditions.” It also disregards the contradictions within and redeemable fragments of even liberal political thinking, fragments that, if realized, might point far beyond, and possibly explode, liberalism itself.

To reify modern or Western politics into a static and stereotypical liberalism is to risk practicing an unfortunate form of “Occidentalism” that would reinforce archaic civilizational assumptions about incommensurable and unrelated worlds (and worldviews) and disregard the actual history and open possibilities for practices of cross-cultural solidarity whereby anti-imperial actors outside Europe could enter into dialogue or affiliate with, or even discover ways that they are already situated within, counterhegemonic “Western” political traditions. Critics have rightly mobilized singularity, incommensurability, or untranslatability against liberal attempts to discover an abstract humanity and thereby discount situated and embodied forms of life. But the question is whether we treat incommensurability or untranslatability as an epistemological or political limit or as an always imperfect starting point for practices of dialogue, coordination, affiliation, reciprocity, solidarity. For isn’t the impossibility of full transparency or undifferentiated unity simply the unavoidable condition within which all communication, sociality, and politics must be attempted?9

My point is not to congratulate dissident currents within the West, let alone to recuperate liberalism. It is rather to approach radical and emancipatory politics from a place of not-already-knowing, of not presuming to know a priori which aspects of a tradition are irredeemable, which traditions may become allies or habitations, what the boundaries of (thoroughly plastic) traditions must be. This nondogmatic and experimental orientation to politics, traditions, and concepts is one of the most precious and timely gifts that Césaire may offer to us now. He practiced a concrete cosmopolitan relationship to modern traditions of philosophy, aesthetics, and politics, one that was highly developed by the robust tradition of black Atlantic criticism within which he was firmly rooted along with predecessors (e.g., Toussaint and W. E. B. DuBois), contemporaries (e.g., C. L. R. James, James Baldwin, Suzanne Césaire, Senghor), and descendants (e.g., Fanon, Edouard Glissant, Stuart Hall, Paul Gilroy, Achille Mbembe, David Scott).

Understandable concerns about totalizing explanation and Eurocentric evaluation have led a generation of scholars to insist on the incommensurable alterity of non-European forms of thought. But perhaps we should be concerned less exclusively with unmasking universalisms as covert European particularism than with also challenging the assumption that the universal is European property. I read Césaire not in order to provincialize European concepts but to deprovincialize Antillean thinking. Césaire’s critical reworkings remind us that the supposedly European categories of political modernity properly belong as much to the African and Caribbean actors who coproduced them as to the inhabitants of continental Europe. Similarly, African and Caribbean thinkers, no less than their continental counterparts, produced abstract and general propositions about “humanity,” “history,” and “the world.” In contrast to invocations of multiple modernities, Césaire never granted to Europe possession of a modernity or universality or humanity that was always already translocal and fundamentally Caribbean. He never treated self-determination, emancipation, freedom, equality, or justice as essentially European and foreign. Césaire’s intellectual and political interventions radically challenged reductive territorialist approaches to social thought. He refused to concede that “France” was an ethnic or continental entity, that Martinique was not in some real way internal to “French” society and politics, or that he was situated outside of modern critical traditions. Thus his ongoing and unapologetic engagements with Hegel, Marx, Proudhon, Nietzsche, Lautréamont, Rimbaud, Mallarmé, Bergson, Freud, Breton, Frobenius, and Lenin, alongside his many African, Antillean, and African American interlocutors.

The sonic blurring between “here” and “hear” in the title of this essay is meant to signal not only the contemporaneity of Césaire’s thought for us here now but the imperative that we open ourselves to his presence and recognize his actuality across the epochal divide by hearing what he actually said. This gesture builds on Walter Benjamin’s insight that every now is a “now of recognizability” whereby “what has been comes together in a flash with the now to form a constellation” through which past epochs become newly legible (1999: 462). I also follow Césaire himself, who engaged in dialogue with predecessors as if they were contemporaries and who addressed future interlocutors directly as if they were already present. Like Benjamin, Césaire practiced a form of radical remembrance that connected outmoded pasts to charged presents. This attention to vital histories was bound up with a poetic politics that identified transformative possibilities dwelling within existing arrangements and a proleptic politics that anticipated seemingly impossible futures by trying to enact them concretely in the here and now. But Césaire can only speak to us now if we listen rather than presume to know what someone like him in his situation must have, or should have, been saying.

Until very recently, scholarship on his work has been overdetermined by methodological nationalism (that puzzles over his refusal to pursue state sovereignty), identitarian culturalism (that debates how adequately Césaire expressed Antillean lived experience and whether or not he was an essentialist), and a disciplinary division of labor (that too often splits his poetry, criticism, and politics into separate domains). Generally, Cold War scholarship was shaped by a need to evaluate him in relation to canonical anticolonial nationalists and fit him into a narrative of decolonization-as-national-independence. This has made it difficult to recognize the epochal character, world-making ambition, and global sensibility of his political reflections.

Faced with the promise of decolonization, Césaire conjugated concrete acts with political imagination in ways that displaced conventional oppositions between aesthetics and politics, realism and utopia, pragmatism and principle. Such efforts were animated by what I have been calling radical literalism and utopian realism and which he called inflection and poetic knowledge. He regarded freedom as a problem whose institutional solution was not self-evident and could only be situational. His interventions demonstrated the nonnecessary relationship between colonial emancipation, popular sovereignty, and self-determination, on the one hand, and territorial state sovereignty and national liberation, on the other. He pursued cosmopolitan aims concretely through transcultural practices and by attempting to invent new political forms through which to ground plural and postnational democratic arrangements.

We should recognize that Césaire formulated a critique not of Western civilization from the standpoint of African or Antillean culture but of modern Western racism, imperialism, and capitalism from the standpoint of Antillean and African historical situations and experiences. More generally, it was a critique of an alienated and alienating modernity from the standpoint of embodied and poetic ways of being, knowing, and relating (to self, others, and world). Above all, Césaire recognized residues of, and resources for, more just, human, and integrated ways of living together within Antillean, African, and European texts, traditions, forms, histories, and conditions. In his view, Antilleans—as culturally particular actors, imperial subjects, New World denizens, moderns, and humans—were their rightful heirs. He was concerned less with defining culturally authentic concepts, spaces, and arrangements for Antilleans (apart from Europe or uncontaminated by modernity) than with overcoming imperialism, in solidarity with other struggling peoples, in order to establish less alienated forms of human life globally.

Remembering Césaire’s insistence that modern currents of radicalism were shared legacies and common property may help us to rethink inherited assumptions about the relation between territory, ethnicity, consciousness, and interest (Buck-Morss 2009, 2010). They invite us to deterritorialize social thought and to decolonize intellectual history. This is a matter not of valorizing non-European forms of knowledge, as important as such a move certainly is, but of questioning the presumptive boundaries of “Europe” itself—by recognizing the larger scales on which modern social thought was forged and of appreciating that colonial societies produced self-reflexive thinkers concerned with large-scale processes and future prospects. We can thereby recognize Césaire as a situated postwar thinker of the postwar world, one of whose primary aims was to place into question the very categories “France,” “Europe,” and “the West” by way of an immanent critique of late imperial politics. He envisioned postnational arrangements through which humanity could attempt to overcome the alienating antinomies that had impoverished the quality of life in overseas colonies and European metropoles. His situated humanism and concrete cosmopolitanism should thus be placed in a constellation of modern emancipatory thinking oriented toward worldwide human freedom that included antiracist, anti-imperial, internationalist, and socialist thinkers from a range of traditions: black Atlantic, First Internationalist, global anarchist, Western Marxist, Marxist humanist, Third Worldist.

#### A positive orientation towards the ideals of radical humanist freedom are key to global liberationist struggles and solving existential crises.

Karenga 6 ― Professor at of Black and Africana Studies from California State University Long Beach, Ph.D. in Social Ethics from the University of Southern California, Ph.D. in Political Science from United States International University at San Diego, B.A. in Political Science from University of California at Los Angeles, M.A. in Political Science from University of California at Los Angeles, 2006. (“Philosophy in the African tradition of resistance: issues of human freedom and human flourishing”, *Not* *Only The Master’s Tools African-American studies in theory and practice*, p. 242-245)

Surely, we are at a moment of history fraught with new and old forms of anxiety, alienation, and antagonism; deepening poverty in the midst of increasing wealth; proposals and practices of ethnic cleansing and genocide; pandemic diseases; increased plunder; pollution and depletion of the environment; constant conflicts, large and small; and world-threatening delusions on the part of a superpower aspiring to a return to empire, with spurious claims of the right to preemptive aggression, to openly attack and overthrow nonfavored and fragile governments openly, and to seize the lands and resources of vulnerable peoples and establish “democracy” through military dictatorship abroad, all the while suppressing political dissent at home (Chang 2002; Cole et al. 2002). These anxieties are undergirded by racist and religious chauvinism, by the self-righteous and veiled references of these rulers to themselves as a kind of terrible and terrorizing hand of God, appointed to rid the world of evil (Ahmad 2002; Amin 2001; Blum 1995). At the same time, in this context of turmoil and terror and the use and threatened use of catastrophic weapons, there is the irrational and arrogant expectation that the oppressed will acquiesce, abandon resistance, and accept the disruptive and devastating consequences of globalization, along with the global hegemony it implies (Martin and Schumann 1997). There is great alarm among the white-supremicist rulers of these globalizing nations, given the radical resistance rising up against them, even as globalization’s technological, organizational, and economic capacity continues to expand (Barber 1996; Karenga 2002c, 2003a; Lusane 1997). There is great alarm when people who should “know” when they are defeated ridicule the assessment, refuse to be defeated or dispirited, and, on the contrary, intensify and diversify their struggles (Zepezauer 2002).

Certainly the battlefields of Palestine, Venezuela, long-suffering Haiti, and Chiapas, Mexico, along with other continuing emancipatory struggles everywhere, reaffirm the indomitable character of the human spirit and the durability and adaptive vitality of a people determined to be free, regardless of the odds and assessments against them. Indeed, they remind us that the motive force of history is struggle, informed by the ongoing quest for freedom, justice, power of the masses, and peace in the world. Despite “end of history” claims and single-superpower resolve and resolutions, these struggles continue. For still the oppressed want freedom, the wronged and injured want justice, the people want power over their destiny and daily lives, and the world wants peace. And all over the world—especially in this U.S. citadel of aging capitalism with its archaic dreams of empire—clarity in the analysis of issues, and in the critical determination of tasks and prospects, requires the deep and disciplined reflection characteristic of the personal and social practice we call philosophy.

But this sense of added urgency for effective intervention is prompted not only by the critical juncture at which we stand but also by an awareness of our long history of resistance as a people, because in our collective strivings and social struggles we seek a new future for our people, our descendants, and the world. Joined also to these conditions and considerations is the compelling character of our self-understanding as a people, as a moral vanguard in this country and the world. For we have launched, fought, and won with our allies struggles that not only have expanded the realm of freedom in this country and the world but also have served as an ongoing inspiration and a model of liberation struggles for other marginalized and oppressed peoples and groups throughout the world. Indeed, they have borrowed from and built on our moral vocabulary and moral vision, sung our songs of freedom, and held up our struggle for liberation as a model to emulate. Now, self-understanding and self-assertion are dialectically linked. In other words, how we understand ourselves in the world determines how we assert ourselves in the world. Thus, an expansive concept of ourselves as Africans—continental and diasporan—and as Africana philosophers forms an essential component of our sense of mission and the urgency with which we approach it.

The Kawaida Philosophical Framework

It is important to note that I have conceived and written this chapter within the framework of Kawaida philosophy (Karenga 1978, 1980, 1997). Kawaida is a philosophic initiative that was forged in the crucible of ideological and practical struggles around issues of freedom, justice, equality, self-determination, communal power, self-defense, pan-Africanism, coalition and alliance, Black Studies, intellectual emancipation, and cultural recovery and reconstruction. It continued to develop in the midst of these ongoing struggles within the life of the mind and struggles within the life of the people, as well as within the context of the conditions of the world. Kawaida is defined as an ongoing synthesis of the best of African thought and practice in constant exchange with the world. It characterizes culture as a unique, instructive, and valuable way of being human in the world—as a foundation and framework for self-understanding and self-assertion.

#### Their call to escape this world fails and re-inscribes violence ― their refusal to explain a realistic alternative future only creates totalitarian violence

Condit 15 ― Celeste Condit, Distinguished Research Professor in the Department of Communication Studies at the University of Georgia, National Communication Association Distinguished Scholar, Ph.D. from the University of Iowa, 2015. (“Multi-Layered Trajectories for Academic Contributions to Social Change”, *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, Vol. 101, No. 1, February 4th, 2015, Available Online at: <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/00335630.2015.995436?needAccess=true> Accessed 9-8-17)

\*Edited for Gendered Language\*

The Insufficiencies of Twentieth-Century Critical Theories of Social Change

The theories of social change that dominated American Communication Studies at the close of the twentieth century echoed those of the Western humanities. These theories spurred extensive thought about the performances of individual identity and the relationship of identity to mass media and culture, and they probably had some laudable influence on the broader culture. They are, however, inadequate to the evolving contexts I have described.

One can sum up the most widely circulating theories of social change among “critical social theorists” of the twentieth century in the following, admittedly simplified, statement:

There is an (evil) Totality (fill in the blank with one or more: patriarchy, whites, the West, the U.S., neo-liberalism, global capitalism) that must be overturned by a Radical Revolution. We don’t know the shape of what will come after the Revolution, but The Evil is a construction of the Totality, so anything that comes after will be better. All you need is … (fill in the blank: Love, Courage, Violence, etc.).

For an example, read Slavoj Žižek’s attack on the evil Totality (“capitalism,” 5 pp. 41/ 49), which requires the “excess” of violence named as “courage” 6 (pp. 75, 78, 79), via “a leap” 7 (p. 81), to eliminate “democracy” for a yet-to-be-imagined “new collectivity” (p. 85).8

The resilience of this social theory identifies it as a rhetorical attractor; a predispositional symbolic set that readily transmits emotive potency. To appropriate Kenneth Burke’s terms, the bio-symbolics of human political relationships readily create a “grammar” and “rhetoric” in the form of a unified enemy that can be imagined as defeated in a singular battle, after which, things in “our” tribe may be harmonious. To identify this fantasy theme in this way is to suggest that it may not merely be the product of “Western” or “capitalist” imaginations, but rather that it arises from an intersection of the structural characteristics of language systems and the nature of human biologies (which readily adopt both tribal social cooperation and inter-tribal competition).

Because neither biology nor symbolics are deterministic systems, this fantasy theme is avoidable, even if it is powerfully attractive. Because both biology and symbolics are material, however, specific kinds of work are necessary in order to avoid the lure of that predisposition. This point is crucial, because it invalidates the twentieth century (idealist) approaches to social change, which envisioned a single (violent) leap away from the social as sufficient to create and maintain better worlds. Thus, when Žižek and others urge us to “Act” with violence to destroy the current Reality, without a vision of an alternative, on the grounds that the links between actions and consequences are never certain, we can call ~~his~~ [their] appeal both a failure of imagination and a failure of reality.

As for reality, we have dozens of revolutions as models, and the historical record indicates quite clearly that they generally lead not to harmonious cooperation (what I call “AnarchoNiceness” to gently mock the romanticism of Hardt and Negri) but instead to the production of totalitarian states and/or violent factional strife. A materialist constructivist epistemology accounts for this by predicting that it is not possible for symbol-using animals to exist in a symbolic void. All symbolic movement has a trajectory, and if you have not imagined a potentially realizable alternative for that trajectory to take, then what people will leap into is biological predispositions— the first iteration of which is the rule of the strongest primate. Indeed, this is what experience with revolutions has shown to be the most probable outcome of a revolution that is merely against an Evil.

The failure of imagination in such rhetorics thereby reveals itself to be critical, so it is worth pondering sources of that failure. The rhetoric of “the kill” in social theory in the past half century has repeatedly reduced to the leap into a void because the symbolized alternative that the context of the twentieth century otherwise predispositionally offers is to the binary opposite of capitalism, i.e., communism. That rhetorical option, however, has been foreclosed by the historical discrediting of the readily imagined forms of communism (e.g., Žižek9 ). The hard work to invent better alternatives is not as dramatically enticing as the story of the kill: such labor is piecemeal, intellectually difficult, requires multi-disciplinary understandings, and perhaps requires more creativity than the typical academic theorist can muster.

In the absence of a viable alternative, the appeals to Radical Revolution seem to have been sustained by the emotional zing of the kill, in many cases amped up by the appeal of autonomy and manliness (Žižek uses the former term and deploys the ethos of the latter). But if one does not provide a viable vision that offers a reasonable chance of leaving most people better off than they are now, then Fox News has a better offering (you’ll be free and you’ll get rich!). A revolution posited as a void cannot succeed as a horizon of history, other than as constant local scale violent actions, perhaps connected by shifting networks we call “terrorists.”

#### The alternative is radical humanism ― only a commitment to praxis in this world reclaims liberal notions of equality

Pithouse 16 ― Richard Pithouse, Professor of politics at Rhodes University, Senior Researcher at the Unit for Humanitites at Rhodes University, Research Fellow at the Centre for Civil Society at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2016. (“Frantz Fanon: Philosophy, Praxis, and the Occult Zone”, *Journal of French and Francophone Philosophy*, Vol XXIV, No 1, Available Online at: <http://www.jffp.org/ojs/index.php/jffp/article/viewFile/761/723> Accessed 9-8-17)

His response to the impossibility of a dialectic of recognition72 is not to give up on the aspiration for a world of mutuality, of universal humanism (predicated on a universal ontology) – he still aspires to a world that will recognise “the open door of every consciousness”73 - but to accept that he has found himself in a world “in which I am summoned into battle”74 and to commit to action: “To educate man to be actional, preserving in all his relations his respect for the basic values that constitute a human world, is the prime task of him who, having taken thought, prepares to act.”75 In Gordon’s estimation the Fanonian position is that “Legitimacy doesn’t emerge from the proof of cultural heritage or racial authenticity, it emerges...[Fanon] argues, from active engagement in struggles for social transformation and building institutions and ideas that nourish and liberate the formerly colonized.”76

This commitment to praxis is a politics that, in Gordon’s formulation, requires a commitment to “meeting people on the terrain where they live”77 with a view to forging what, as noted above, Mbembe calls “a radical future orientated politics in this world and these times.”78 Such a politics, it is asserted here, must be grounded in what S’bu Zikode first called a ‘living politics’79 and what Lewis Gordon calls ‘living thought’ or ‘thinking as a living activity’.80 It requires a decisive break with the idea, all too frequently present in South Africa, that radical politics is fundamentally a matter of rallying ‘the masses’ to the authority of a group of people who, whether situated in a party, a proto-party or an NGO, imagine themselves to be an enlightened vanguard.

This is not the apocalyptic politics that, as is sometimes the case in Aimé Césaire’s work, is more concerned with eschatology than praxis. In the Notebook of Return to my Native Land Césaire, in a manner that in some respects anticipates some currents in contemporary Afro-pessimism, affirms that the only thing work starting is “The end of the world!”81 and anticipates the one glorious moment82, the brilliant new dawn in which “the volcanoes will break out and the naked water will sweep away the ripe stains of the sun and nothing will remain but a tepid bubbling pecked at by sea birds – the beach of dreams, and demented awakening”83, a rising of a new sun that would “burst open the life of the shacks like an over-ripe pomegranate.”84 In this vision, in which the political is sublimated into the theological, the authentic radical gesture is, ultimately, to disavow the world as it is and to wait for the birth of a new world.

Again unlike Césaire Fanon does not accept the ontological split introduced into the conception of humanity authorised by colonial racism. His evident commitment to the universal85, and action to affirm a universal humanism86, situates him in a line of black radical thought that runs from Toussaint Louverture87 to Biko88, Jean-Bertrand Aristide89 and, arguably for that matter, the constant insistence on the barricades on South African streets of words to the effect of ‘we are human not animal’.90

But like Césaire Fanon’s radical vision is not, at all, a commitment to what Césaire, writing in 1956, termed ‘abstract equality’. Césaire remarks that:

To prevent the development of all national consciousness in the colonized, the colonizer pushes the colonized to desire an abstract equality. But equality refuses to remain abstract. And what an affair it is when the colonized takes back the word on his own account to demand that it not remain a mere word!'91

From a South African perspective this condemnation of ‘abstract equality’ sounds almost prophetic but it has always been a colonial response to black insurgency. In in 1801 Napolean wrote, from St Helena, of the French policy, with regard to Haiti, of “disarming the blacks while assuring them of their civil liberty, and restoring property to the [white] colonists.”92

For Fanon emancipation has many aspects. These include a spatial aspect,93 a material aspect,94 the attainment of equality between women and men,95 but, also, and fundamentally, the sovereignty of the human person. Liberation must, he insists, in Sekyi-Otu’s revised translation, "give back their dignity to all citizens, fill their minds and feast their eyes with human things and create a prospect that is human because conscious and sovereign persons dwell therein.”96 In contemporary South Africa this cannot take the form of the sole defence of abstract rights, a politics primarily organised around exploitation via the wage relation or the sort of nationalism that is naïve about the cleavages with the nation. It must to, to return to Mbembe, “take the form of a conscious attempt to retrieve life and ‘the human’ from a history of waste.”97

## Case

### 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.

### AT: Homo economicus---1NC

#### It’s not “natural”

Jane Hardy 21. Professor of Political Economy, University of Hertfordshire, U.K.. “The myth of the ‘neoliberal self.’” *International Socialism* (171). <http://isj.org.uk/neoliberal-self/>.

The ruling classes and bosses try to make certain features of human behaviour and motivation – namely the primacy of individualism and self-interest – appear natural and taken for granted. Since some on the left have absorbed ideas about the atomisation and fragmentation of the working class, it is important to reassert Marx’s argument that there is no such thing as an individual outside of society. In the Grundrisse Marx writes:

The human being, in the most literal sense, is a political animal: not merely a gregarious animal, but an animal that individuates itself only in the midst of society. Production by an isolated individual outside societyexcept in the rare case of a civilised person in whom social forces are already dynamically present being cast by accident into the wilderness is as much of an absurdity as is the development of language without individuals living together and talking to one another.62

Feral children, born and growing up outside society, will probably develop the ability to make noises and engage in rudimentary communication, but they will not develop language. Language is deeply embedded in human culture. It enables us to refer to abstract concepts and imagined and hypothetical events; it allows us to tell stories about the past and speculate about the future. In Capital, Marx reminds us of what sets humans apart from animals:

A spider conducts operations that resemble those of a weaver, and a bee puts to shame many an architect in the construction of her cells. But what distinguishes the worst architect from the best of bees is that the architect raises his structure in imagination before he raises it in reality.63

Marx emphasised the collective nature of production. Work is a collective endeavour, whether it takes the form of prehistoric people hunting together or the vast structures of collaboration that support modern scientific inquiry and technological innovation. The large sums of money that bosses invest in teambuilding exercises show that they understand the cooperative nature of work and the creativity that it produces.

Competitiveness and self-interest are not the self-evident and natural human traits that the neoliberals would have us believe. In his 1944 book The Great Transformation, the Hungarian political economist Karl Polanyi drew on the vast body of anthropology that had emerged in the 1920s in order to debunk Smith’s idea of homo economicus. He noted that, far from having an innate propensity to truck, barter and exchange, some communities had an aversion to both exchange and acquisition, leading him to claim that the legend of the individualistic psychology of primitive man had been exploded.64 The cold rationality of the market lacks the grip on the psychology of ordinary people that ruling-class ideology suggests. In fact, even the biggest corporations recognise basic human traits such as friendliness and warmth, if only to hijack and distort them in order to sell us commodities. For example, the language of gratitude has been incorporated into a number of high-profile advertising campaigns as corporations attempt to project feelings associated with friendship; Airbnb and Uber have been repackaged as the sharing economy, masking the precarious forms of work and huge profits that they produce. Davies looks at how such rebranding often involves attempts to airbrush money out of the picture: Payment is one of the unfortunate pain points…that requires anaesthetising with some form of social experience. Thus shopping must be represented as something else entirely.65 For instance, Tesco™s Food Love Stories adverts tell emotive stories of generous people such as Birdie, a Caribbean woman who has fostered 800 children and loves making jerk chicken for her family. Never letting a good crisis go to waste, another advert encouraged Tesco shoppers to cook Jon™s aromatic isolation lamb during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The trumpeting of individual freedom has much more to do with rhetoric than the real operation of neoliberalism. Polanyi referred to the double movement: the forces of unbridled capitalism were so devastating and unsustainable that legislation had to be introduced to curb its worst excesses in the 19th century.66 The logic of unfettered capitalism would be child labour and the sale of uranium on the open market.67 Georg Lukács, another Hungarian theorist, pointed out that when capitalism was still expanding it rejected every sort of social organisation as an incursion into property rights and the freedom of the individual capitalist.68 The HBO series Deadwood illustrates how capitalism was forced to develop regulatory institutions and structures. In 1876, the discovery of gold in the Black Hills of the Dakota Territory attracted thousands of people to the area to prospect. The camp of Deadwood was established and rapidly expanded into a large town. Initially, this lawless town was the epitome of the Wild West™s every man for himself ethos. However, an outbreak of cholera meant that even the most corrupt and venal proto-capitalists had to cooperate to develop institutions, founding a hospital and establishing norms for the disposal of bodies in order to preserve their embryonic capitalist economy.

### State good---1NC

#### Pragmatic policy reforms can be successful, but require specific goal-oriented approaches---role playing strategy development and learning to draw connections between disparate struggles is key

Lakey ‘13 (George Lakey co-founded Earth Quaker Action Group which just won its five-year campaign to force a major U.S. bank to give up financing mountaintop removal coal mining. Along with college teaching he has led 1,500 workshops on five continents and led activist projects on local, national, and international levels. Among many other books and articles, he is author of “Strategizing for a Living Revolution” in David Solnit’s book Globalize Liberation. 8 skills of a well-trained activist. June 11, 2013. <https://wagingnonviolence.org/feature/8-skills-of-a-well-trained-activist/>)

Why more training now? The history of training is a history of playing catch-up. Very few movements seem to realize that the pace of change can accelerate so rapidly that it outstrips the movement’s ability to use its opportunities fully. In Istanbul a small group of environmentalists sit down to save a park, and suddenly there are protests in over 60 Turkish cities; the agenda expands, from green space to governance to capitalism; doors open everywhere. It would be a good moment to have tens of thousands of skilled organizers ready to seize the day, supporting smart direct action and building prefigurative institutions. But excitement alone may slacken; as with the Occupy movement, spontaneous creativity has its limits. With the right skills, movements can sustain themselves for years against punishing, murderous resistance. The mass direct action phase of the civil rights movement pushed on effectively for a decade after 1955. Mass excitement doesn’t need to fizzle in a year. A movement thrives by solving the problems it faces. Anti-authoritarians don’t want to count on a movement’s top leaders to be the problem-solvers, but instead to develop shared leadership by fostering problem-solving smarts at the grassroots. There’s nothing automatic about grassroots problem-solving. How well people strategize, organize, invent creative tactics, reach effectively to allies, use the full resources of the group and persevere at times of discouragement — all that can be enhanced by training. Nothing is more predictable than that there will be increased turbulence in the United States and many other societies. Activists cause some of the turbulence by rising up; other turbulence results from things like climate change, the 1 percent’s austerity programs and other forces outside activists’ immediate control. Increased turbulence scares a lot of people. It’s only natural that people will look around for reassurance. The ruling class will offer one kind of reassurance. The big question is: What reassurance will the movement offer? When students in Paris in May 1968 launched a campaign that quickly moved into nationwide turbulence, with 11 million workers striking and occupying, there was a momentary chance for the middle class to side with the students and workers instead of siding with the 1 percent. The movement, though, didn’t understand enough about the basic human need for security and failed to use its opportunity. That was a strategic error, but to choose a different path the movement would have required participants with more skills. Training would have been necessary. We can learn from this, inventory the skills needed and train ourselves accordingly. What is training ready to do for us? Here are a few of the key benefits that we should expect to gain from one another through training: 1. Increase the creativity of direct action strategy and tactics. The Yes Men and the Center for Story-Based Strategy lead workshops in which activist groups break out of the lockstep of “marches-and-rallies.” We need to have a broad array of tactics at our disposal, and we have to be ready to invent new ones when necessary. 2. Prepare participants psychologically for the struggle. The Pinochet regime in Chile depended, as dictatorships usually do, on fear to maintain its control. In the 1980s a group committed to nonviolent struggle encouraged people to face their fears directly in a three-step process: small group training sessions in living rooms, followed by “hit-and-run” nonviolent actions, followed by debriefing sessions. By teaching people to control their fear, trainers were building a movement to overthrow the dictator. 3. Develop group morale and solidarity for more effective action. In 1991 members of ACT UP — a militant group protesting U.S. AIDS policy — were beaten up by Philadelphia police during a demonstration. The police were found guilty of using unnecessary force and the city paid damages, but ACT UP members realized they could reduce the chance of future brutality by working in a more united and nonviolent way. Before their next major action they invited a trainer to conduct a workshop where they clarified the strategic question of nonviolence and then role-played possible scenarios. The result: a high-spirited, unified and effective action. 4. Deepen participants’ understanding of the issues. The War Resisters League’s Handbook for Nonviolent Action is an example of the approach that takes even a civil disobedience training as an opportunity to assist participants to take a next step regarding racism, sexism and the like. When we understand how seemingly separate struggles are connected, it helps us create a broader, stronger, more interconnected movement. 5. Build skills for applying nonviolent action in situations of threat and turbulence. In Haiti a hit squad abducted a young man just outside the house where a trained peace team was staying; the team immediately intervened and, although surrounded by twice their number of guards with weapons, succeeded in saving the man from being hung. Through training, we can learn how to react to emergencies like this in disciplined, effective ways. 6. Build alliances across movement lines. In Seattle in the 1980s, a workshop drew striking workers from the Greyhound bus company and members of ACT UP. The workshop reduced the prejudice each group had about the other, and it led some participants to support each other’s struggle. Trainings are a valuable opportunity to bring people from different walks of life together and help them work toward their common goals. 7. Create activist organizations that don’t burn people out. The Action Mill, Spirit in Action, and the Stone House all offer workshops to help activists to stay active in the long run. I’ve seen a lot of accumulated skill lost to movements over the years because people didn’t have the support or endurance to stay in the fight. 8. Increase democracy within the movement. In the 1970s the Movement for a New Society developed a pool of training tools and designs that it shared with the grassroots movement against nuclear power. The anti-nuclear movement went up against some of the largest corporations in America and won. The movement delayed construction, which raised costs, and planted so many seeds of doubt in the public mind about safety that the eventual meltdown of the Three Mile Island plant brought millions of people to the movement’s point of view. The industry’s goal of building 1,000 nuclear plants evaporated. Significantly, the campaign succeeded without needing to create a national structure around a charismatic leader. Activists learned the skills of shared leadership and democratic decision-making through workshops, practice and feedback. In my book Facilitating Group Learning, I share many lessons that have evolved from Freire’s day to ours. I hope that readers of this column will add to the list of training providers in the comments, since I’ve only named some. My intention is to remind us that this could be the right moment, before the next wave of turbulence has all of us in crisis-mode again, to increase training capacity for grassroots skill-building. We’ll be very glad we did.

### AT: Anti-Statism---1NC

#### Anti-statism doesn’t mean much if you don’t have a real way to defeat the state

Day 9 (Christopher, The Historical Failure of Anarchism: Implications for the Future of the Revolutionary Project, ttp://mikeely.files.wordpress.com/2009/07/historical\_failure\_of\_aanarchism\_chris\_day\_kasama.pdf)

The strength of anarchism is its moral insistence on the primacy of human freedom over political expediency. But human freedom exists in a political context. It is not sufficient, however, to simply take the most uncompromising position in defense of freedom. It is neccesary to actually win freedom. Anti-capitalism doesn’t do the victims of capitalism any good if you don’t actually destroy capitalism. Anti-statism doesn’t do the victims of the state any good if you don’t actually smash the state. Anarchism has been very good at putting forth visions of a free society and that is for the good. But it is worthless if we don’t develop an actual strategy for realizing those visions. It is not enough to be right, we must also win. Continues… Finally revolutionaries have a responsibility to have a plausible plan for making revolution. Obviously there are not enough revolutionaries to make a revolution at this moment. We can reasonably anticipate that the future will bring upsurges in popular opposition to the existing system. Without being any more specific about where those upsurges might occur it seems clear that it is from the ranks of such upsurges that the numbers of the revolutionary movement will be increased, eventually leading to a revolutionary situation (which is distinguished from the normal crises of the current order only by the existence of a revolutionary movement ready to push things further). People who are fed up with the existing system and who are willing to commit themselves to its overthrow will look around for likeminded people who have an idea of what to do. If we don’t have a plausible plan for making revolution we can be sure that there will be somebody else there who will. There is no guarantee that revolutionary-minded people will be spontaneously drawn to anti-authoritarian politics. The plan doesn’t have to be an exact blueprint. It shouldn’t be treated as something sacred. It should be subject to constant revision in light of experience and debate. But at the very least it needs to be able to answer questions that have been posed concretely in the past. We know that we will never confront the exact same circumstances as previous revolutions. But we should also know that certain problems are persistent ones and that if we can’t say what we would have done in the past we should not expect people to think much of our ability to face the future

### AT: Humanism---1NC

#### Humanism is contingently good and alternatives are far worse

Lester 12 – Alan Lester, Director of Interdisciplinary Research, Professor of Historical Geography, and Co-Director of the Colonial and Postcolonial Studies Network at the University of Sussex, 2012 (*Humanism, Race and the Colonial Frontier*, Published of the Institute of British Geographers, Volume 37, Issue 1, p. 132-148) //Xain

Anderson argues that it is not an issue of extending humanity to … negatively racialised people, but of putting into question that from which such people have been excluded – that which, for liberal discourse, remains unproblematised. (2007, 199) I fear, however, that if we direct attention away from histories of humanism’s failure to deal with difference and to render that difference compatible with its fundamental universalism, and if we overlook its proponents’ failed attempts to combat dispossession, murder and oppression; if our history of race is instead understood through a critique of humanity’s conceptual separation from nature, **we dilute the political potency of universalism. Historically, it was not humanism** that gave rise to racial innatism, it was the **specifically anti-humanist politics** of settlers forging new social assemblages through relations of violence on colonial frontiers. Settler communities became established social assemblages in their own right **specifically** **through the rejection of humanist interventions**. Perhaps, as Edward Said suggested, **we can learn from the implementation of humanist universalism in practice**, and insist **on its potential to combat racism**, and perhaps we can insist on the contemporary conceptual hybridisation of human–non-human entities too, without necessarily abandoning all the precepts of humanism (Said 2004; Todorov 2002). We do not necessarily need to accord a specific value to the human, separate from and above nature, in order to make a moral and political case for a fundamental human universalism that can be wielded strategically against racial violence. Nineteenth century humanitarians’ universalism was fundamentally conditioned by their belief that British culture stood at the apex of a hierarchical order of civilisations. From the mid-nineteenth century through to the mid-twentieth century, this ethnocentrism produced what Lyotard describes as ‘the flattening of differences, or the demand for a norm (“human nature”)’, that ‘carries with it its own forms of terror’ (cited Braun 2004, 1352). The intervention of Aboriginal Protection demonstrates that humanist universalism has the potential to inflict such terror (it was the Protectorate of Aborigines Office reincarnated that was responsible, later in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, for Aboriginal Australia’s Stolen Generation, and it was the assimilationist vision of the Protectors’ equivalents in Canada that led to the abuses of the Residential Schools system). But we must not forget that **humanism’s alternatives,** founded upon principles of difference rather than commonality, **have the potential to do the same and even worse**. In the nineteenth century, Caribbean planters and then emigrant British settlers emphasised the multiplicity of the human species, **the absence of any universal ‘human nature’**, the **incorrigibility of difference**, in their **upholding of biological determinism**. Their assault on any notion of a fundamental commonality among human beings has **disconcerting points of intersection with the radical critique of humanism today**. The scientific argument of the nineteenth century that came closest to post-humanism’s insistence on the hybridity of humanity, promising to ‘close the ontological gap between human and non-human animals’ (Day 2008, 49), was the evolutionary theory of biological descent associated with Darwin, and yet this theory was adopted in Aotearoa New Zealand and other colonial sites **precisely to legitimate the potential extinction of other, ‘weaker’ races** in the face of British colonisation on the grounds of the natural law of a struggle for survival (Stenhouse 1999). Both the upholding and the rejection of human–nature binaries can thus result in racially oppressive actions, **depending on the contingent politics of specific social assemblages**. Nineteenth century colonial humanitarians, inspired as they were by an irredeemably ethnocentric and religiously exclusive form of universalism, at least combatted exterminatory settler discourses and practices at multiple sites of empire, and provided spaces on mission and protectorate stations in which indigenous peoples could be shielded to a very limited extent from dispossession and murder. They also, unintentionally, reproduced discourses of a civilising mission and of a universal humanity that could be deployed by anticolonial nationalists in other sites of empire that were never invaded to the same extent by settlers, in independence struggles from the mid-twentieth century. Finally, as Whatmore’s (2002) analysis of the Select Committee on Aborigines reveals, they provided juridical narratives that are part of the arsenal of weapons that indigenous peoples can wield in attempts to claim redress and recompense in a postcolonial world. The politics of humanism in practice, then, was riddled with contradiction, fraught with particularity and latent with varying possibilities. It could be relatively progressive and liberatory; it could be dispossessive and culturally genocidal. Within its repertoire lay potential to combat environmental and biological determinism and innatism, however, and **this should not be forgotten in a rush to condemn humanism’s universalism** as well as its anthropocentrism. It is in the tensions within universalism that the ongoing potential of an always provisional, **self-conscious, flexible and strategic humanism** – one that now recognises the continuity between the human and the non-human as well as the power-laden particularities of the male, middle class, Western human subject – resides.

# 2NC

## T

#### Debate can be a vehicle for change – just because change is not immediate doesn’t mean it impossible.

Palczewski 19 Catherine Helen Palczewski, Professor of Communication Studies and former Director of Debate @ University of Northern Iowa. A Personal/Political Case for Debate Philosophy & Rhetoric Volume 52, Number 1, 2019 Penn State University Press https://muse.jhu.edu/article/721923

On 26 May 2015, four seventh- and eighth-grade students spoke to the Portland Public Schools (PPS) Board of Education about their district's dress code (Porter 2016). Jeffrey Roberts testified about how the code stereotypes boys as distractible and how the prohibition on jerseys and sagging targeted specific students based on race. Hailey Tjensvold and Anna Loisa Cruz testified about the double standard that resulted in 100 percent of the students sent home being girls. Sophia Carlson argued the message sent to girls was that "hiding her body is more important than her education. . . boys are more entitled to their education than she is." The arguments presented by the students persuaded the school board to form a committee of students, parents, teachers, and administrators to create a code "fair and nondiscriminatory to all students" (McCombs 2017).

Lisa Frack, Oregon NOW board president, was at the school board meeting and had been developing a model dress code. Frack, along with Carlson and NOW board vice-president Elleanor Chin, served on the PPS Board of Education committee, which met for two hours every month for a year. The PPS Board of Education adopted a new code, based on the Oregon NOW model, in June 2016.

The debate was not contained to Oregon. In August 2017, Evanston Township High School (ETHS) in Illinois updated its dress code based on the Oregon NOW model after a student advisor to the school board found it online. ETHS district superintendent Eric Witherspoon had "heard from our students that their ability to be inspired to learn was directly impacted by their daily experiences with dress code enforcement because of their gender identity or expression, racial identity, cultural or religious identity, [End Page 89] body size, or body maturity" (quoted in McCombs 2017). As administrators reviewed the data, they found it "supported the students' claims of being disciplined disproportionately across racial and gender lines" (McCombs 2017).

This example illustrates a few things about debate.

First, **debate is still possible and still matters**. The students' arguments persuaded a group with the power to change policy. Then, people with different power positions and different interests (students, administrators, teachers, parents, community members) worked together to develop a solution.

Second, debate depends on people's willingness to consider claims supported by data. After students at ETHS claimed that the dress code was inequitably enforced along racial and gender lines, administrators found that the data regarding disciplinary actions supported these claims. Debate is possible when people are willing to consider changing their positions and subscribe to the rules of the game (i.e., that arguments require evidence).

Third, debate depends on extended interactions over time. Changing the dress code took hundreds of hours of work over months of meetings. Woman suffrage took over seven decades of debates. That does not mean that change is impossible. Instead, it means that change requires debate, deliberation, input from affected parties, and careful balancing of costs and benefits. Debate's extended interactions require patience and persistence. Just because you (think you) are right does not mean that people will automatically stop doing something or start doing something else. Winning the debate is only the first step in changing attitudes and behaviors.

Fourth, although public policy has personal impacts, debate encourages a systemic, and systematic, view rather than a personal one. For example, the individual students could have simply resorted to a personal solution, such as changing their clothing or having their parents talk to the principal. Instead, the students talked to each other, identified a systemic problem with the code and its implementation, and introduced the topic for public deliberation. They sought an institutional change that enabled them to achieve personal goals of self-expression and educational achievement.

It is possible for data to convince others (like a school's administration) that their implementation of policy is discriminatory and that it needs to be changed. It is possible to convince institutions (like school boards) to change their policies. It is possible for those who disagree to work toward a solution. Although we are in a political climate where reasonable argument and evidence (for example, of death tolls from Hurricane Maria in [End Page 90] Puerto Rico) seem to matter less, and political affiliation matters more, this example ought to give hope. 2

# 1NR

## Cap K

#### Cap turns their offense---turns movements into a commodity thru alienation – the 1AC will have a voice but lose its soul as it’s reincorporated as a new item on the market

Robinson 14 – Professor of sociology at UC Santa Barbara [William, *Global capitalism and the crisis of humanity*, Cambridge Univ. Press, pp. 222-4]

How viable are transformative strategies based on the notion that local communities can withdraw from global capitalism? The attempt to create alter- native communities at the local level, to set up cooperatives, to decentralize circuits of food supply, to withdraw from the global agro-industrial regime, to decentralize energy distribution and consumption, and to construct cooperative enterprises and local solidarity economies are necessary and important. Yet they do not in themselves resolve the problem of power. In the absence of a strategy to confront the state and to transform the system from within we are left with the dangerous illusion that the world can be changed without resolving this matter of power. Global capitalism is now internal to practically all communities on the planet. It has spun webs of worldwide interdependency that link us all to a larger totality. Global capitalism is indeed totalizing. The notion that one can escape from global capitalism not by defeating it but by creating alternative spaces or islands of utopia ignores the unpleasant fact that no matter how one wills it to be so, these spaces cannot disengage from capitalism, if for no other reason than that capital and the state will penetrate – often forcibly – and continuously reincorporate these spaces.

Localized solutions are too piecemeal to confront the power of global capitalism – to change the global balance of class and social forces. There is no way to get around the fact that the TCC holds class power over humanity, and the TNS exercises multiple forms of direct, coercive power. The state exercises power over us. This fact will not go away by ignoring this power. It is illusory to suppose that it can be countered by constructing autonomous communities, which in fact are not autonomous because such communities cannot extricate themselves from the webs of global capitalism, and even if they could, in theory, the state would not allow them to; it would use the force of its law to reincorporate such communities. There is no getting around confrontation with the state, no avoiding a struggle to wrest state power away from capital, its agents and allies. The struggle to withdraw from global capitalism, no matter how important, must be coupled with a struggle to overthrow global capitalism, to destroy the transnational capitalist state.

#### The vertical organizing bad argument---No link and turn – previous iterations of party failed because of a slide to bureaucratic state capitalism and its racist and sexist organizational policies – our party can self correct thru democratic accountability mechanisms that hold violent leaders culpable and kicks them out – but giving up on the party is worse because horizontalism zeroes organizing against the Right

Dean and Mertz 16 (Jodi and Chuck, Donald R. Harter ’39 Professor of Humanities and Social Sciences @ Hobart and William Smith Colleges and Host at This is Hell!, “The JFRP: For a New Communist Party,” aNtiDoTe Zine 1/23/16, https://antidotezine.com/2016/01/23/for-a-new-communist-party/)

CM: Great to have you on the show.¶ Let’s start with Occupy. What, to you, explains the impact that the Tea Party had on Republicans, relative to the impact that Occupy seems to have had on the Democratic Party? All of the sudden there were “Tea Party Republicans.” There weren’t “Occupy Democrats.”¶ JD: That’s a good point. The Tea Party took the Republican Party as its target. They decided that their goal was going to be to influence the political system by getting people elected and basically by trying to take over part of government. That’s why they were able to have good effects. They didn’t regard the mainstream political process as something irrelevant to their concerns. They thought of it as something to seize.¶ The problem with many—but not all—leftists in the US is that they think the political process is so corrupted that we have to completely refuse it, and leave it altogether. The Tea Party decided to act as an organized militant force, and too much of the US left (we saw this in the wake of Occupy) has thought that to be “militant” means to refuse and disperse and become fragmented.¶ CM: So what explains the left turning its back on the collective action of a political party? It would seem like a political party would fit into what the left would historically want: an apparatus that can organize collective action.¶ JD: There are multiple things. First, the fear of success: the left has learned from the excesses of the twentieth century. Where Communist and socialist parties “succeeded,” there was violence and purges and repression. One reason the left has turned its back is because of this historical experience of state socialism. And we have taken that to mean that we should not ever have a state. I think that’s the wrong answer. That we—as the left—made a mistake with some regimes does not have to mean that we can never learn.¶ Another reason that the left has turned its back on the party form has been the important criticism of twentieth century parties that have been too white, too masculine, potentially homophobic; parties that have operated in intensely hierarchical fashion. Those criticisms are real. But rather than saying we can’t have a party form because that’s just what a party does, why not make a party that is not repressive and does not exclude or diminish people on the basis of sex, race, or sexuality?¶ So we’ve got at least two historical problems that have made people very reluctant to use the party. I also think that, whether or not you mark it as 1968 or 1989, the left’s embrace of cultural individualism and the free flow of personal experimentation has made it critical of discipline and critical of collectivity. But I think that’s just a capitalist sellout. Saying everybody should just “do their own thing” is just going in the direction of the dominant culture. That is actually not a left position at all.¶ CM: So does identity politics undermine collectivism? And did that end up leading to fragmentation and a weakening of the left? Because there are a lot of people we’ve had on the show—and one person in particular, Thomas Frank—who say that there is no left in the United States.¶ JD: First I want to say that I disagree with the claim that there is no left. In fact, I think that “the left” is that group that keeps denying its own existence. We’re always saying that we’re the ones who don’t exist. But the right thinks that we exist. That’s what is so fantastic, actually. Did you see the New York Post screaming that Bernie Sanders is really a communist? Great! They’re really still afraid of communists! And it’s people on the left who say, “Oh, no, we’re not here at all!”¶ The left denies its own existence and it denies its own collectivity. Now, is identity politics to blame? Maybe it’s better to say that identity politics has been a symptom of the pressure of capitalism. Capitalism has operated in the US by exacerbating racial differences. That has to be addressed on the left, and the left has been addressing that. But we haven’t been addressing it in a way that recognizes how racism operates to support capitalism. Instead, we’ve made it too much about identity rather than as an element in building collective solidarity.¶ I’m trying to find a way around this to express that identity politics has been important but it’s reached its limits. Identity politics can’t go any further insofar as it denies the impact of capitalism. An identity politics that just rests on itself is nothing but liberalism. Like all of the sudden everything will be better if black people and white people are equally exploited? What if black people and white people say, “No, we don’t want to live in a society based on exploitation?”¶ CM: You were saying that the left denies its own collectivity. Is that only in the US? Is that unique to the US culture of the left?¶ JD: That’s a really important question, and I’m not sure. Traveling in Europe, I see two different things. On the one hand I see a broad left discussion that is, in part, mediated through social media and is pretty generational—people in their twenties and thirties or younger—and that there’s a general feeling about the problem of collectivity, the problem of building something with cohesion, and a temptation to just emphasize multiplicity. You see this everywhere. Everybody worries about this, as far as what I’ve seen.¶ On the other hand, there are countries whose political culture has embraced parties much more, and fights politically through parties. Like Greece, for example—and we’ve seen the ups and downs with Syriza over the last two years. And Spain also. Because they have a parliamentary system where small parties can actually get in the mix and have a political effect—in ways that our two-party system excludes—the European context allows for more enthusiasm for the party as a form for politics.¶ But there’s still a lot of disagreement on the far left about whether or not the party form is useful, and shouldn’t we in fact retreat and have multiple actions and artistic events—you know, the whole alter-globalization framework. That’s still alive in a lot of places. CM: You mentioned the structure of the US electoral system doesn’t allow for a political party to necessarily be the solution for a group like Occupy. Is that one of the reasons that activists dismiss the party structure as something that could help move their agenda forward?¶ JD: We can think about the Black Panther Party as a neat example in the US context: A party which was operating not primarily to win elections but to galvanize social power. That’s an interesting way of thinking about what else parties can do in the US.¶ Or we can think about parties in terms of local elections. Socialist Alternative has been doing really neat work all over the country, organizing around local elections with people running as socialist candidates not within a mainstream party. I think that even as we come up against the limits of a two-party system, we can also begin to think better about local and regional elections.¶ The left really likes that old saw: “Think Globally, Act Locally.” And then it rejects parties—even though political parties are, historically, forms that do that, that actually scale, that operate on multiple levels as organizations.¶ That we have a two-party system makes sense as an excuse why people haven’t used left parties very well in the US, but that doesn’t have to be the case.¶ And one more thing: there is a ton of sectarianism in the far left parties that exist. Many still fight battles that go back to the twenties, thirties, forties, fifties, and haven’t let that go. That has to change. We don’t need that kind of sectarian purity right now.¶ CM: You ask the question, “How do we move from the inert mass to organized activists?” You mention how you were at Occupy Wall Street; you write about being there on 15 October 2011 as the massive crowd filled New York’s Times Square. And you mention this one young speaker, and he addresses the crowd; they’re deciding if they should move on to Washington Square Park or not, because they need to go somewhere where there are better facilities. You then quote the speaker saying, “We can take this park. We can take this park tonight. We can also take this park another night. Not everyone may be ready tonight. Each person has to make their own autonomous decision. No one can decide for you. You have to decide for yourself. Everyone is an autonomous individual.”¶ Did that kind of individualism kill Occupy Wall Street from the start?¶ JD: Yeah, I think so. A lot of times I blame the rhetorics of consensus and horizontalism, but both of those are rooted in an individualism that says politics must begin with each individual, their interests, their experience, their positions, and so on. As collectivity forms—which is not easy when everyone’s beginning from their individual position—what starts to happen is that people start looking for how their exact experiences and interests are not being recognized.¶ I think that the left has given in too much to this assumption that politics begins with an individual. That’s a liberal assumption. Leftists, historically, begin with the assumption that politics begins in groups. And for the left in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the operative group is class. Class is what determines where our political interests come from.¶ I try to do everything I can in the book to dismantle the assumption that politics, particularly left politics, should begin with the individual. Instead I want people thinking about how the individual is a fiction, and a really oppressive fiction at that. And one that’s actually, conveniently, falling apart.¶ CM: You write about Occupy Wall Street having been an opening but having had no continuing momentum. You mention that the party could add that needed momentum. That’s one of the things that parties can do. The structure of the party can continue momentum and keep the opening alive.¶ When you say that a party could be a solution for a movement like Occupy, you don’t mean the Democratic Party, do you?¶ JD: I’ve got a lot of layers on this question. My first answer is that no, I really mean the Communist Party. My friends call this “Jodi’s Fantasy Revolutionary Party” as a joke, because the kind of Communist Party I take as my model may not be real, or may have only existed for a year and a half in Brooklyn in the thirties. And I don’t mean the real-existing Communist Party in the US now, which still exists and basically endorses Democrats.¶ My idea is to think in terms of how we can imagine the Communist Party again as a force—what it could be like if all of our left activist groups and small sectarian parties decided to come together in a new radical left party.¶ So no, I don’t envision the Democratic Party as being that. That’s not at all what I have in mind. I’m thinking of a radical left party to which elections are incidental. Elections might be means for organizing, but the goal isn’t just being elected. The goal is overthrowing capitalism. The goal is being able to build a communist society as capitalism crumbles.¶ Second, it could be the case—as a matter of tactics on the ground in particular contexts—that working for a Democratic candidate might be useful. It could be the case that trying to take over a local Democratic committee in order to get communist/socialist/radical left candidates elected could also be useful. But I don’t see the goal as taking over the Democratic Party. That’s way too limited a goal, and it’s a goal that presupposes the continuation of the system we have, rather than its overthrow.¶ CM: But how difficult would it be for a Communist Party to emerge free of its past associations with the Soviet Union? Can we even use the word “communist” or is it impossibly taboo?¶ JD: We have to recognize that the right is still scared of communism. That means the term is still powerful. That means it still has the ability to instill fear in its enemies. I think that’s an argument for keeping the word “communism.”¶ It’s also amazing that close to half of Iowa participants in the caucuses say that they are socialist. Four or five years ago, people were saying socialism is dead in the US. No one could even say the word. So I actually think holding on to the word “communism” is useful not only because our enemies are worried about communism, but also because it helps make the socialists seem really, really mainstream, and that’s good. We don’t want socialism to seem like something that only happens in Sweden. We want it to seem like that’s what America should have at a bare minimum.¶ One last thing about the history of communism: every political ideology that has infused a state form has done awful things. For the most part, if people like the ideology, they either let the awful things slide, or they use the ideology to criticize the awful things that the state does. We can do the same thing with communism. It’s helpful to recognize that the countries we understand to have been ruled by Communist Parties were never really communist—they didn’t even claim to have achieved communism themselves. We can say that state socialism made these mistakes, and in so doing was betraying communist ideals.¶ I don’t think we need to abandon these terms or come up with new ones. I think we need to use the power that they have. And people recognize this, which is what makes it exciting.¶ CM: You write, “Some contemporary crowd observers claim the crowd for democracy. They see in the amassing of thousands a democratic insistence, a demand to be heard and included. In the context of communicative capitalism, however, the crowd exceeds democracy.¶ “In the 21st century, dominant nation-states exercise power as democracies. They bomb and invade as democracies, ‘for democracy’s sake.’ International political bodies legitimize themselves as democratic, as do the contradictory and tangled media practices of communicative capitalism. When crowds amass in opposition, they pose themselves against democratic practices, systems, and bodies. To claim the crowd for democracy fails to register this change in the political setting of the crowd.”¶ So are crowds today, the protesters today, opposed to democracy? Or are they opposed to the current state of, let’s say, representative democracy?¶ JD: Let’s think about our basic environment. By “our,” now, I mean basically English-speaking people who use the internet and are listening to the radio and live in societies like the United States. In our environment, what we hear is that we live in democracy. We hear this all the time. We hear that the network media makes democratic exchange possible, that a free press is democracy, that we’ve got elections and that’s democracy.¶ When crowds amass in this setting, if they are just at a football game, it’s not a political statement. Even at a march (fully permitted) that’s registering opposition to the invasion of Iraq, for example, or concern about the climate—all of those things are within the general environment of “democracy,” and they don’t oppose the system. They don’t register as opposition to the system. They’re just saying that we want our view on this or that issue to count.¶ But the way that crowds have been amassing over the last four or five years—Occupy Wall Street is one example, but the Red Square debt movement in Canada is another; some of the more militant strikes of nurses and teachers are too—has been to say, “Look, the process that we have that’s been called democratic? It is not. We want to change that.”¶ It’s not that we are anti-democratic. It’s that democracy is too limiting a term to register our opposition. We want something more. We want actual equality. Democracy is too limiting. The reason it’s too limiting is we live in a context that understands itself as “democratic.” So democracy as a political claim, in my language, can’t “register the gap that the crowd is inscribing.” It can’t register real division or opposition. Democracy is just more of what we have.¶ CM: We are so dependent. We use social media so much, we use Facebook so much, we use so many of these avenues of what you call communicative capitalism so much. How can we oppose or reject this system without hurting ourselves and our ability to communicate our message to each other? Can we just go on strike? Can we become the owners of the means of communicative production?¶ JD: One of the ways that Marxism historically has understood the political problems faced by workers is our total entrapment and embeddedness in the capitalist system. What makes a strike so courageous is that workers are shooting themselves in the foot. They’re not earning their wage for a time, as a way to put pressure on the capitalist owner of the workplace.¶ What does that mean under communicative capitalism? Does it mean that we have to shoot ourselves in the foot by completely extracting ourselves from all of the instruments of communication? Or does it mean that we change our attitude towards communication? Or does it mean that we develop our own means of communication?¶ There’s a whole range here. I’m not a Luddite. I don’t think the way we’re going to bring down capitalism is by quitting Facebook. I think that’s a little bit absurd. I think what makes more sense is to think of how we could use the tools we have to bring down the master’s house. We can consolidate our message together. We can get a better sense of how many we are. We can develop common modes of thinking. We can distribute organizing materials for the revolutionary party.¶ I don’t think that an extractive approach to our situation in communicative media is the right one. I think it’s got to be more tactical. How do we use the tools we have, and how do we find ways to seize the means of communication? This would mean the collectivization of Google, Facebook, Amazon, and using those apparatuses. But that would probably have to be day two of the revolution.¶ CM: Jodi, I’ve got one last question for you, and it’s the Question from Hell, the question we might hate to ask, you might hate to answer, or our audience is going to hate the response.¶ How much did the narrative that Occupy created, of the 99% and the 1%, undermine a of collectivity? Because it doesn’t include everyone…¶ JD: Division is crucial. Collectivity is never everyone. What this narrative did was produce the divided collectivity that we need. It’s great to undermine the ~~stupid~~ myth of American unity, “The country has to pull together” and all that crap. It’s fantastic that Occupy Wall Street asserted collectivity through division. This is class conflict. This says there is not a unified society. Collectivity is the collectivity of us against them. It produced the proper collectivity: an antagonistic one.

#### Asserting homo economicus’s primacy is a neoliberal move to obscure the mundane specificities that inform material inequalities which undermine informed resistance---only the alt’s materialism can account for this

Reed 12, professor of political science at the University of Pennsylvania and a member of the interim national council of the Labor Party. RACE, CLASS, CRISIS: THE DISCOURSE OF RACIAL DISPARITY AND ITS ANALYTICAL DISCONTENTS, <http://www.sas.upenn.edu/~merlinc/ReedChowkwanyunSR.pdf> //shree. Note by google dictionary: “sui generis” means “unique”)

It should give us pause that these decidedly non-leftist policy prescriptions flow from the leftist frame of choice for analyzing the racial minority experience in the crisis of 2008. In choosing that frame, rather than fundamentally rethinking default approaches in the face of changing historical circumstances, the left has simply dusted off, rinsed, and repeated. This reflex is reinforced by commitment to a pro forma anti-racism that depends on evocations – as in Michelle Alexander’s widely noted recent book, The New Jim Crow62 – of regimes of explicitly racial subordination in the past to insist on the moral primacy of simplistic racial metaphor for characterizing inequality in the present. Most charitably, this tendency arises from intensified concerns to defend racial democracy in debates over the legitimacy of race-targeted social policy that have recurred since the late 1970s. Less charitably, it is an expression of an at best self-righteous and lazy-minded expression of the identitarian discourse that has increasingly captured the left imagination in the United States since the 1990s.63 This is moreover an antagonistic alternative to a politics grounded in political economy and class analysis, despite left-seeming defences that insist on the importance of race and class. Its commitment to a fundamentally essentialist and ahistorical racefirst view is betrayed in the constantly expanding panoply of neologisms – ‘institutional racism’, ‘systemic racism’, ‘structural racism’, ‘colour-blind racism’, ‘post-racial racism’, etc. – intended to graft more complex social dynamics onto a simplistic and frequently psychologistic racism/anti-racism political ontology. Indeed, these efforts bring to mind Kuhn’s account of attempts to accommodate mounting anomalies to salvage an interpretive paradigm in danger of crumbling under a crisis of authority.64 And in this circumstance as well the salvage effort is driven by powerful material and ideological imperatives. The discourse of racial disparity is, when all is said and done, a class discourse. Even the best of the studies analyzing the racial impact of the crisis, for example, in focusing on racial disparity in subprime mortgage markets and foreclosure rates, sidestep a chance to interrogate the very limitations of the hegemonic commitment to homeownership altogether. More generally, automatic adoption of the racial disparities approach avoids having to conduct the detailed work that would situate ascriptive status within the neoliberal regime of accumulation that mitigates its influence. Repetitiously noting the existence of segregated neighbourhoods and how they decrease property value (real and perceived) and increase the likelihood of subprime mortgage is to identify a result, albeit one that is surely repellent. It does not tell us with much exactitude what institutions, policies, actuarial models, and systems of valuation produce those results, or more generally, what sociologist Mara Loveman describes as the ‘extent a particular essentializing vocabulary is related to particular forms of social closure and with what consequences’.65 It substitutes in its place pietistic hand-wringing and feigned surprise over results that can hardly be surprising. Ironically, it is authors who operate from outside of that frame, and in some cases outside the left entirely, that currently have the most to offer us. Gretchen Morgenson and Joshua Rosner’s Reckless Endangerment traces the short-term roots of the crisis, detailing how a 1990s consensus on pushing homeownership led to a system of tax credits, perverse incentives, refinancing, risky (and often fraudulent) loans, lax regulation, and debt securitization that exploded a decade and a half later. To cast the story primarily in terms of racial disparity is to capture only a sliver of what some have labelled the ‘real estate financial complex’. Doing so misses as well the legitimizing role that disparities rhetoric played in pushing minority homeownership. Focusing so robotically on racially disparate home financing and credit access obscures how these injustices, repugnant as they are, fit into a larger picture of income

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stagnation and welfare state instability, which gave rise to the increasing need, documented by Hyman, for significant household debt, protracted mortgages, and accelerated re-financing in the first place, all simply to stay afloat. In the accounts we reviewed here, the Kerner Report’s ‘white racism’ remains the enemy, while the Big Kahuna, financialization, wobbles in the background, meriting more an obligatory mention than focused inquiry on how it impacts other phenomena. The misdirection strategies can take if predicated on such an analysis are obvious. Our call to transcend this stifling frame is absolutely not a call to ignore racial exclusion or to declare in abstract terms, as Ellen Wood has, that race is not ‘constitutive of capitalism’ the way class is.66 Rather, we advocate that in analyzing the current situation and how it fits into historical context, left analysts ought to conduct what Ian Shapiro has labelled ‘problem-driven’ research, in his words, ‘to endeavor to give the most plausible possible account of the phenomenon that stands in need of explanation’, in this case racially disparate impacts, instead of forcing it into a stifling, readymade narrative.67 Doing so will break away from analytical sloth and widen strategic options. Doing so also requires jettisoning the hoary, mechanistic race/class debate entirely. We believe that our critique here demonstrates the virtues of a dynamic historical materialist perspective in which race and class are relatively distinct – sometimes more, sometimes less, sometimes incoherently related or even interchangeable – inflections within a unitary system of capitalist social hierarchy, without any of the moralizing, formalist ontological baggage about priority of oppression that undergirds the debate. From this perspective insistence that race, or any other category of ascriptive differentiation, is somehow sui generis and transcendent of particular regimes of capitalist social relations appears to be, as we have suggested here, itself reflective of a class position tied programmatically to the articulation of a metric of social justice compatible with neoliberalism. That is a view that both obscures useful ways to understand the forces that are intensifying inequality and undermines the capacity to challenge them.