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#### Anti-black violence is a paradigmatic constant that engenders human communities and temporality. The 1AC reiterates a chronopolitical grammar of progress that secures complicity for black fungibility.

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I argue that the white supremacy Spencer evinces, in which nonblack persons of color can be contributing members of human community, reinforces the constitutive exclusion of racially black persons from the Historical frame. The rub is that Spencer is not wrong. Racially black persons cannot be-in-time because as pre-human artifacts—the trace of humanism’s race/ism or cut—they bear the weight of Man’s ontological anxieties. The promise of a universal human imago implores nonblack persons of color to make room for themselves not in a vacuum, but in an Historical world (wound) adhered by racial hierarchies, such that by activating the plasticity of racial whiteness as a human recognition, they entrench the constitutive exclusion of racially black minorities from human be(com)ing. To refuse to capitalize on this plasticity, to refuse to reproduce the antiblack sentimentality and violence of Enlightenment Europe would consent to arriving to the table of human civilization too soon—at the dawn of Man, which is how Martin characterizes the African continent—and too late, failing altogether to qualify for the recognitions and protections reserved for human subjects of a civil polity. To be sure, civil rights necessitate human recognition because “civil society” is but a placeholder for the discursive and material organization of Man (i.e., Man’s racial myths and legal categories), and because the political economy of liberal humanism is generated within and through libidinal antiblackness. The episodic and contingent violence that nonblack persons of color experience (for example, in Trump’s America) is the affective lever civil society operates to demand generalized loyalty, obscuring for nonblack minorities the choice whereby they consent to make themselves the instruments of white supremacy. The mechanism through which that loyalty is elicited is not (just) the state’s demand but liberal—libidinal—humanism’s demand for a collective, planetary distancing from and rejection of racial blackness. A white qua not-black human imago is at once the subject of Alt-Right claims to exclusivity and liberal humanism’s claims to inclusivity. Ours is a world in which those who enjoy what Frantz Fanon describes as “ontological resistance”51 (i.e., human qua white recognition) experience, in Trump’s as in Obama’s America, the ebb and flow of human community (i.e., social life), while the excommunicated, or in Wilderson’s hauntingly apt analogy for racially black persons, the “cows”52—as the raw material that makes and sustains our human world-making—are indiscriminately and senselessly, without stipulation or explanation, “accumulated and, if need be, killed,”53 in order to cohere the collective unconscious of our human community and to engender its social markers of Man. Same shit, different day I have already suggested that Trump’s simulated inclusivity betrays the continuity of the office of the American president and that his arrival to the White/Master’s House coheres and testifies to a paradigm sutured by unremarkable and interminable antiblack violence, even or especially as nonblack minority populations experience new violations in Trump’s America. The contingent and selective recognition of nonblack persons of color as white-cum-human beings absolves—gives cover to—the enduring violence whereby the black as a subject-that-is-not-one is defeated by the protections liberal humanism’s political machinery—civil society—erects to safeguard Man in his most vulnerable iterations (i.e., “worker, woman, […] gay, lesbian, and so on”). While racialized violence reduces the nonblack body (of color) to flesh, nonblack persons of color and racially black persons do not occupy comparable space-time coordinates and/or structural positionalities, because humanism’s flesh-making project or race/ism is essentially an antiblack violence. Afro-pessimism teaches us that racially black persons occupy a structural position analogous, if at all, to non-human animal beings54, which like the slave acquire value in/as death—as a meaty carcass consumable/consumed for its parts, including skin, hair,55 bones, organs, and (the story of Henrietta Lacks teaches us) cells. It is for this reason that Wilderson uses the analogy of a meat-packing plant to replace the “negro question” with the “cow question,”56 and why Sexton describes the “paradigmatic condition of black existence in the modern world” as “a perpetual and involuntary openness”57 to the tearing apart and looting of black flesh. Hortense Spillers names the hyper-vulnerability of the unsignified/unsignifiable black flesh to remain from humanism’s cut as a “hieroglyphics.” She clarifies that the “anatomical specifications of rupture” assigned to black flesh invite “the objective description of laboratory prose”58—”eyes beaten out, arms, backs, skulls branded, a left jaw, a right ankle, punctured; teeth missing, as the calculated work of iron, whips, chains, knives … the bullet.”59 Surely, this is not the representational regime of a body [End Page 226] typified by cohesion. Wilderson’s, Sexton’s, and Spillers’ interventions are Afro-pessimistic60 insofar as they dissuade the reader from holding her breath for a political metamorphosis that might finally recognize black humanity. Black fungibility like animal fungibility (perhaps too, like earth-matter fungibility61) will abate only after an epistemological catastrophe disorganizes our relational capacities and dissolves every frame of reference, obliterating the chronopolitical grammar through which those who can become Man, that is to say, who can ascend to the top of a racial hierarchy that is also or primarily a food chain, do so. Franco Barchiesi elaborates the Afro-pessimistic position to remind us that “the shift from multicultural liberalism to nationalistic supremacism” in the hour of Trump “is a change only in the form of Black subjugation.”62 Black persons categorically denied human recognition as a fact and not (just) as an inconvenience of their being “do not merely confront [the] violence”63 nonblack minority populations like immigrants, indigenous persons, and nonblack gender non-conforming persons experience as an event—for example, as a travel ban or the dismissal of marriage and bathroom rights. Rather, black Others as a people forged, Audre Lorde explains, “in the crucibles of difference,”64 are “actually constituted by [violence] through processes of depredation, coercion, and enslavement.”65 Barchiesi’s incisive reading of Wilderson’s “Gramsci’s Black Marx” (2003) makes it clear that Trump’s presidency does not qualify as an historical node, which is to say, does not signify the end of times or a new time/beginning, but rather, evidences the longue durée of black social death as a world-ordering structure, more to the point, as the structure for our be(com) ing-human. It is precisely “the inhumanity of Blackness [that] allows White humans”66 including nonblack persons of color to build institutions, ideologies of freedom, images of rights, and ethical meditations on democracy. Such political and cognitive capacities posit [black] bodies as their inert, “socially dead,” Wilderson writes, yet sentient objects, or outlets of white fantasies of coercion, improvement, imagination, violence, and healing. The inhumanity of [blackness], or the fundamental antagonism between White life and [black] death, is ultimately the condition of existence for the political conflicts, moral dilemmas, and social emergencies of civil society, as well as its aptitude to experience and narrativize history as a succession of events.67 To argue that antiblack violence is paradigmatic—a structure and a constant—is to suggest that reforms to civil society will not abate the violence black Others necessarily must endure to make civil society, more to the point, to make or conceive of a social polity—an “us”—in the first place. Wilderson’s intervention, abridged by Barchiesi to clarify our present moment as altogether typical, insists that the reorganization [End Page 227] of civil society’s parts will not de-escalate the rates at which black persons are indiscriminately maimed and murdered, because black life is not contingently fungible but essentially so, and because the metaphysics and/as metapolitics of black fungibility are not just essential for the making of a socially dead black Other. They are principally and foremost essential for the making of a non-fungible or white-passing “us”.68 The story of that be(com)ing, of a human subject that is “semantically-neurochemically” programmed to enact antiblack “individual and collective behaviors,”69 is located in the hearts and minds of those eligible for human recognition, as a libidinal economy. Insofar as Trump and his henchmen (i.e., Spencer) use liberalism’s seemingly capacious parachute to trap the rights of nonblack minority populations, they mobilize not an American nightmare but one instance in the “ongoing disaster”70 of “the social” that is mobilized by the American Dream. Trump’s hate-mongering is our price of admission not just for a model of the social organized by/as civil society, but for the making of human community (i.e., the “social”), that is to say, for epistemology and ontology itself. Recall Hartman’s argument that “the very effort to pry apart the Negro question and the social question exposes their enduring entanglements”71 as a private relation. Libidinal interests, untouchable by the law but which determine the law72, “[shape] the emergence of the social in the United States”73 as a racially unified site in which the immigrant and savage find the civil rights that correspond with human recognition. While nonblack minorities in Trump’s America are being made to experience, albeit irregularly and provisionally, what Michael Harriot describes as “the America black people have always lived in,”74 which denies human recognition to revoke civil rights, for the black Other who lives in this nowhere or “sunken place,”75 it matters not who steers the American ship. Hillary Clinton’s presidency like Barack Obama’s before hers would have (at best) activated the elasticity whereby nonblack differences (in Obama’s America, gay and trans rights especially) are accommodated by entrenching the constitutive antagonism of racial blackness (such that the hour of the first black presidency testified to the fact that black lives don’t or can’t matter).76 The violent removal of Vietnamese-American doctor and ‘model minority’77 David Dao from United Flight 3411 on April 9, 2017 serves to illustrate what Damon Young of Very Smart Brothas describes as the contingent blackification of nonblack minority populations in Trump’s America. Young resolves that Dao “wasn’t quite [black] for a day,” but that he “was definitely treated like [he was].”78 The wanton and senseless nature of Dao’s physical beating rendered his body (of color) fungible as an event, because this violence defied his treatment otherwise, for example, in Obama’s multiculturalist, ‘post-racial’ America. More specifically, Dao’s psychological suffering in the video seen ‘round the globe evokes the psychosomatic terror (pace Fanon) typical of humanism’s flesh-making project, that is to say, its anti/blackness. The absolute wretchedness whereby Dao cannot articulate his suffering, his demonstration of a “pain [he] can’t live inside of and can’t live without,”79 indeed, of a pain which he cannot signify, contain, or cathect with recourse to “the brush of discourse, or the reflexes of iconography”80 is expressed by the hopelessness with which Dao pleads with his captors to “just kill [him].” We might pause to ask why the video of Dao’s suffering captivated audiences as it did. Certainly, had Dao been black, the violation of his person would not have registered as a scandal. Videos of black suffering have the opposite effect, prompting us to stand not appalled and aghast but agape and mesmerized, chomping at the bit for (pace Hartman) more “scenes of subjection” that might (impossibly) satisfy our unabating human appetite for the flesh of the Other. In addition, scenes of black subjection function to reassure us that the human world will continue to make room for nonblack minority populations by discarding with the being of the black. Our absence from fugitive demands for black life—our sheer disregard of black fungibility, such that some of us can claim in the hour of Trump that “this is the first time [we’ve] protested anything”81—further suggests that black and nonblack minority populations do not wade through the muck and mire of racism together. Even as black persons show up to do our work, “[taking] up so many causes not immediately recognized as black,” for example, “the rights of Palestinians and Indigenous water protectors,”82 and even as nonblack minorities like Dao are violated in ways that testify to the interminability of antiblack political and (as) libidinal violence and to the consequences of that violence for nonblack persons of color, it is the black who has had to do the wading—the sinking and the dying—so that we who are not fungible can do the living.83 What is specific about and underwrites the antiblackness of this moment, if anything, is that audiences view Trump’s violence as exceptional, and in lamenting nonblack suffering in Trump’s America valorize the protections of the liberal state, obscuring its structural antiblackness.

#### Placing faith in language to “literally and materially transform realities” is anti-black---it presumes a myth of relationality that obscures fungibility AND papers over the violence that strips black linguistic transgression of transformative capacity.

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Perhaps the most overt instantiation of this resistance to difference can be found in the introduction to The Affect Theory Reader, where Gregg and Seigworth position affect (theory) as a transcendent force that allows us to move beyond the body’s “seeming surface-boundedness” by theorizing “bodies defined not by an outer skin-envelope . . . but by their potential to reciprocate or co-participate in the passages of affect.”31 One can interpret this as a gesture toward, and a moving-beyond, the “surface-boundedness” of race, in general, and blackness in particular, which is always already inscribed onto the skin. Implicit in much of the work within affect theory—even that which explicitly engages “race”32—is that an understanding of affect is central to moving beyond static conceptions of racial difference.

In her essay “Affective Economies,” Sara Ahmed mobilizes a Marxist framework in order to consider the ways in which affects/emotions circulate between bodies and objects. She argues that “emotions are not simply ‘within’ or ‘without’ . . . emotions do things, and they align individuals with communities . . . through the very intensity of their attachments.”33 Ahmed continues, “Emotions work as a form of capital [and are] produced only as an effect of [their] circulation.”34 In her move away from a conception of emotions as personal property—as residing solely within a subject— Ahmed posits a break from Lacanian and Freudian psychoanalysis through the decentering of the subject and the reframing of affective economies as social and material rather than solely psychic processes. She makes an important intervention by removing emotion from the realm of the individual, and pointing toward the ways in which feelings are “shaped by histories . . . of production, circulation [and] exchange.”35 However, her appraisal of emotion as social material that circulates between subjects assumes an equal structure of relation between all subjects. Taking the metaphor of emotion-as-currency a bit further, one might ask: What happens when one’s form of currency is not accepted? Ahmed’s affective economy is strained when one considers that “the Black has no social relation(s) to be either masked or unmasked . . . in a structural sense . . . the matrix of violence [in which blackness is imbricated] makes Black relationality an oxymoron.”36 The Black, instead, stands as a fungible object upon, around and through which affect accumulates, yet whose own affective power is of no consequence.

Black fungibility—the reduction of the Black to a commodified, interchangeable object that can be endlessly exchanged and made to serve innumerable purposes—is the product of the originary violence of transatlantic slavery. As Calvin Warren notes, racial chattel slavery marked the moment in which, for the African, “Being was objectified, infused with exchange value, and rendered malleable within a sociopolitical order.”37 This very malleability, or “fungibility,” as an ontological fact of blackness, positions the Black body as an abstraction upon and through which the desires, feelings, and ideas of others are projected.38 Within this schema, notions of Black sentience and Black interiority are foreclosed or heavily circumscribed, as social value lies in the Black’s status as an implement; an instrument accumulated for the pleasure, enjoyment, and feeling of the Subject; a “being for the captor.”39 Surely, the object-status of the Black is produced, and kept in place, in relation to the Human-as-Man, but the fungibility of blackness precludes intersubjective relationality, since it figures the Black as an endlessly accumulable object rather than a subject in/of civil society. This fundamental fact of blackness is lost in affect theory’s (limited) engagement with race, and troubles Ahmed’s affective economy.

Ahmed invokes Frantz Fanon to speak of the ways in which “the accumulation of affective value shapes the surfaces of bodies and worlds,”40 demonstrating how fear circulates and constructs racial recognition. Reading Fanon’s primal scene,41 she argues that “fear does not reside in a particular object or sign . . . allow[ing it] to slide across signs, and between bodies.”42 Yet Ahmed’s invocation of Fanon serves to undermine her argument—she gestures toward this when she asks, rhetorically, “But doesn’t this example show us that fear does get contained by an object, in this case the Black man?”43 Indeed, the fungibility of blackness positions the Black as the embodied object of fear within the onto-epistemological order of Western Man. In other words, fear does not merely “stick” to the Black body; rather, the Black body signifies fear at the level of ontology. Fanon notes this in his outlining of negrophobia and negrophilia as the two pillars of the libidinal economy of anti-blackness. As I will argue later through a reading of Rankine’s Citizen, the Black’s structural position produces a crisis of affective recognition. As Ahmed acknowledges, “The white child [in the Fanonian moment] misrecognizes the shivering of the Black body as rage.”44 The Black body’s shivering—because of the cold weather, but also arguably indicative of a complex affective response to being hailed a “dirty nigger”45—is only legible to the white gaze as the sign of an irrational, violent anger. Due to the fixity of the Black’s structural position, blackness’s circulation within affective economies is characterized by a continual “misrecognition” and illegibility, and the nullification of Black subjectivity.

#### Focus on the Borderlands assumes cartographic coherence parasitic on black a-spatiality.

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Colonial ethics reverberate in the present

The increasing globalization of capital and spatial marginalization of “superfluous” populations is fundamentally tied to the negation of Black life and assumptions of Black nonbeing. The treatment of Black lives as the embodied absence of value, or, “the very condition of existence and the determination of value,” underpins Black non-being and the assumed lack of Black cartographic capacity in the dominant spatial imaginary, making global capitalism possible (Ferreira da Silva, 2017: 1). The interconnected nature of capitalism and race is a well-worn topic. Scholars have theorized race as an ideological outgrowth of the economy (Hall, 1996); as an apparatus used to facilitate flows of people and commodities (Lowe, 2015); as a central component of capitalist maturation (James, 1989); and as a phenomenon necessary for the establishment of the world system (Robinson, 2000), among countless other approaches. Geographers, too, have unpacked the ways in which regimes of capitalism employ racialized concepts to reproduce. Geographic interrogations of racial capitalism have analyzed the role of racist assumptions in implementing neoliberal reforms in the wake of a natural disaster (Derickson, 2014); the manipulation of racial distinction to prevent labor organizing (Wilson, 2000); how resistance to Black landownership underpinned early 20th-century industrial agriculture (Williams, 2017); the role of capitalism in perpetuating environmental racism (Pulido, 2017); and the centrality of plantation relations to numerous variations of capitalism (Woods, 1998).

Nonetheless, we must push further to explicate the ways in which capitalism is actually dependent on anti-Blackness to realize itself, instead of understanding anti-Black racism as a secondary effect of the economy or a phenomenon that emerges periodically. That is to say, reflections on the interlinked nature of race and capitalism must move beyond an assumption of economic causality and grapple with the ways in which anti-Blackness is actually an always-present precondition for capital accumulation. In explicating anti-Blackness, we draw on an Afro-Pessimist framework, as Afro-Pessimism makes distinct claims about the nature of Blackness in the modern world. An Afro-Pessimist analysis of antiBlackness does not treat anti-Black racism as a contingent phenomenon (Wilderson, 2011: 3–4) but rather as a global, ever-present factor that exists as the basis “for expansion and unending space within the symbolic economy of settlement” (King, 2014). Such an approach forces us to recognize how anti-Blackness punctuates the modern epoch by identifying the underlying logics that inform concrete manifestations of anti-Black racism around the world. In this way, Afro-Pessimism adds new dimensions to already-existing work on the connections between anti-Blackness and political economy by recognizing that, while capitalism exploits all of the world’s populations, it does not dominate all of them in the same way. With regard to the question of space, anti-Blackness helps us understand how the afterlife of slavery (Hartman, 2007: 6) leads to Black populations being conceptually unable to legitimately create space, thereby leaving locations associated with Blackness open to the presumably “rational” agendas of dominant spatial actors. Black populations, then, serve as the guarantor of capitalism’s need to constantly find new spaces of accumulation. In this section, we offer an explanation of how capitalism relies on anti-Blackness by foregrounding anti-Blackness as a phenomena with its own internal logics and concrete expressions.

Capitalism is rooted in violent forms of captivity and murder unleashed on indigenous and Afro-descendant populations the world over (Ferreira da Silva, 2004; James, 1989; Rodney, 1972; Williams, 2014; Wynter, 1995). At its origin and in its contemporary manifestations, then, capitalism is systemically related to slavery and its various global permutations (Robinson, 2000: 313–314). The assumption that Black populations lack both humanity and “space, that is ethno- or politico-geography,” defines the treatment of enslaved Black peoples. Today, the assumed a-spatiality that defined conditions of chattel slavery continues to imprint the socio-spatial relations that reproduce global capital (Robinson, 2000: 81, 200).

Black populations are deemed a-spatial as a result of the fact that modern notions of space and practices of spatial production are rooted in specific relations of power (Massey, 2005: 64, 100–101). These power relations are themselves organized around logics that have particular historical roots (Santos, 2008: 21). In the colonial epoch, chattel slavery—the social, legal, and political reduction of Africans to the status of nonhumans—produced the figure of the Black, which had a nullified spatial capacity (Wilderson, 2010: 279), was disavowed as a human being (Ferreira da Silva, 2015: 91), and was a priori structurally prevented from enacting “rational” spatial expressions (Santos, 2009: 24). Locations associated with Black populations became wholly “unhallowed” spaces, which would never receive recognition as legitimately occupied (Wynter, 1976: 81). This is not to suggest that Black peoples were or are understood as not physically present. Black bodies are certainly recognized as existing in exteriority (Raffestin, 2012: 129). Still, this recognition of physical presence does not signify that Black populations’ are understood as establishing legible space. Despite physical presence, Black populations nonetheless remain rendered “ungeographic” in dominant understandings of space (McKittrick, 2006: x). Hence, the geographic locations in which Black populations reside are treated as open to the varied agendas espoused by dominant spatial actors.

Capitalism’s new rounds of accumulation require access to spaces that previously had different relations to capitalist practices. The assumed a-spatiality of Black populations often leads to purveyors of capitalism treating locations inhabited by Black people as available for emerging modes of accumulation. Put another way, spaces that were once marginal or peripheral to the perpetuation of capital accumulation become sites of appropriation precisely because the (Black) populations occupying them receive no recognition as viable spatial actors. The spaces necessary for new forms of accumulation are thus conceptually open because of this assumed a-spatiality and subsequently physically opened via the spatial removal and dispersal of Black residents. This dispersal entails violent actions that are a priori legitimate because of the assumed lack of Black spatial agency. In other words, new spaces of “investment have been mapped onto previous racial and colonial (imperial) discourses and practices” evidencing an inextricable relationship between anti-Black notions of space, capitalism’s logic of perpetual expansion, and the acceptable subordination of Black physical presence (Chakravartty and Silva, 2012: 368). This is what Frank Wilderson terms the “deterritorialisation of Black space” (2003: 238) that is necessary for accumulating capital vis-a`-vis emerging political economic practices. Katherine McKittrick similarly notes that Black geographies are cast as “the lands of no one” and “emptied out of life” in order that “suitable capitalist life-support systems” be put into place and globally propagated (McKittrick, 2013: 7).

A number of present-day practices demonstrate the reliance of capital on this notion of empty, lifeless, Blackened spaces, such as capital disinvestment, white flight, gentrification, urban renewal, incarceration, and policing. These spatial arrangements identify Black peoples as inhuman and locations associated with Black populations as lacking a legitimate form of occupation and usage. Such assumptions contribute to the subordination of Black populations and spaces to dominant notions of “appropriate” uses of space, while “illegitimate” spaces of Blackness remain under siege by purveyors of capital. As this occurs, new spaces of accumulation open in areas formerly peripheral to the capitalist agenda. At the same time that these new rounds of accumulation take place, sovereign expressions of power serve to forcibly remove Black people and ensure they remain separated from these new spaces of accumulation. Subsequently, Black people are routinely harassed for existing in the communal spaces in which they have resided for generations.1

Along with public policy shifts, policing, incarceration, and extrajudicial killings simultaneously disqualify Black spatial agency and remove Black bodies from spaces deemed open for appropriation by capitalism’s purveyors, thereby simultaneously spatializing antiBlackness and reproducing global capital. The systemic casting of Black spaces as lifeless and open to appropriation for the continuation of capital breathes new life into “civil society’s political economy: [the Black body] kick-starts...capital at its genesis and rescues it from its over-accumulation crisis at its end—black death is its condition of possibility” (Wilderson, 2003: 238). Put simply, the endless accumulation of capital and its legitimating sovereign practices are, in part, made possible through the continued societal insistence on Black inhumanity and a Black lack of cartography, which casts Black spaces as empty.

Hence, there exists an unquestionable connection between the colonial logics inaugurated centuries ago and today’s capitalist agenda. The lack of recognition of Black humanity underpins both projects. Early capitalism flourished thanks to the relegation of enslaved Blacks to the ontological and legal condition of non-humans on the plantations, in the forests, and in the mines of the Americas, while slaveholders and early insurance companies made fortunes off their investments in the transatlantic slave trade. Similarly, real estate speculation (Harvey, 2010), urban renewal (Perry, 2013), the roll-back of social wages (Wacquant, 2009), and the explosion of prisons (Gilmore, 2007)—all of which have allowed present-day capitalism to continue its agenda of accumulation—are only possible via the understanding of spaces inhabited by Black populations as empty and naming and treating those same populations as abject, inhuman beings. In this way, the anti-Blackness and assumed lack of Black being that originated in and defined the colonial epoch remains present with us today, despite the new material practices and justifications it takes on.

Anti-Blackness remains an ever-present condition, defining the modern world. Scholars can and should look to Black thinkers and activists to help make sense of the interrelated phenomena of anti-Blackness and global capital, as Black grassroots actors explicate the linkages between these phenomena (Burton, 2015).

#### Decolonial feminism is pornotroping that disavows black feminist analysis as it appropriates their scholarship.

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In contrast to this provocative and haunting elucidation of the effects of colonialism and enslavement on the epistemology and ontology of modern conceptions of sex, gender, and dispossession, Lugones’s methodology gestures towards an insufficient theorization of modernity and modern racial and gender classifications, beginning in 1492, with Columbus’s violent arrival in the Americas and without considering its effects on the enslaved. If Lugones’s analysis aims to “unveil what is obscured,”38 its articulation of modernity as imposing “an ontology and a cosmology that, in its power and constitution, disallows all humanity, all possibility of understanding, all possibility of human communication, to dehumanized beings,”39 only postures in this direction. Frantz Fanon, in the midst of the decolonizing movements of the twentieth century, asserted: “Decolonization, we know, is a historical process: In other words, it can only be understood, it can only find its significance and become self coherent insofar as we can discern the history-making movement which gives it historical form and substance.”40 Without considering rupture in relation to the slave, rupture as a mode of power and domination, and rupture as an ethical paradigm from which to begin theorizing the violence of modern ontology, knowledge, and gender formations, Lugones’s theorization of decolonial feminism’s rush to recuperate loss of humanity and cosmology will continue to privilege a locus that can only be recognized within its Eurocentric frame. Accordingly, in advancing her argument for resistance and a return to native cultures and cosmologies, one must question who is classified as Native in Lugones’s logic. Where do African American women, as descendants of natives of Africa, dispossessed of body, name, land, language, and cosmology, fit within the constellation Lugones poses? For the rush to recapture stolen humanity is different than the impossible quest for stolen life to be returned. Decolonial feminism does not simply erase or work against the Black feminist roots of women of color feminisms, it places itself as the authority of Indigenous feminisms, representing a “historicized” “ground” on which claims to decoloniality of gender and “incarnate intersubjectivity” could be made on behalf of subjects Lugones’s work erases. Yet, I am left questioning which definition of “intersubjectivity”41 with which Lugones is working considering her emphasis on relation without a full account of relations of domination within subjugated groups in the Americas; an analysis of how power relations structure intra-and-inter psychic dynamics that Audre Lorde theorized as “horizontal hostility,”42 Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui as “internal colonialism,”43 or Spillers with her concept of the Black “intramural.” 44 The reason for the ambiguous characterization of “intersubjectivity” in Lugones’s work, I argue, concerns her lack of engagement with Blackness and racial slavery as phenomena independent of and in concert with colonialism in the New World. The ethical, political, and theoretical erasure of this articulation within her version of decolonial feminism reveals how its very condition of possibility as a theoretical framework depends upon, argues against, and yet still omits the figure of African American and Black diasporic women in the Americas, including African-Native Americans: a method of “pornotroping” shadowed by its aims Lugones presents as follows: “I want to follow subjects in intersubjective oration and conflict, fully informed as members of Native American or African societies, as they take up, respond, resist, and accommodate to hostile invaders who mean to dispossess and dehumanize them.”45 Lugones’s vocabulary of acting in relation, of “be-ing in relation,”46 proves seductive in advocating for community in resistance at the site of “colonial difference.”47 However, these ideal suppositions fortify the coloniality of gender’s porno-tropological use of Black feminist theorizing and Black women’s bodies to establish a field of discourse toward a decolonial feminism, the goal of which Lugones asserts as the “beginning” or “possibility”48 of resistance.

#### **Focus on becoming pathologizes black bodies as static liabilities that hamper posthuman movement.**

Barchiesi 19, Ohio State University, African American and African Studies Department. (Franco, Winter 2019, “Social Death in the Staging of the Encounter; or, the Antiblackness of Critical Theory”, Published in *Propter Nos*, Vol. 3, pg. 55-57)

A Spinozian concern (with or without the Deleuzian mediation) with the body as the ontological ground of Human encounters has become quite appealing to critical theory, especially in the footsteps of the “affective turn” and “nomadic” decenterings of the subject. Perceptions that precarity is ineliminable and persistent severely disrupted older signposts of progress—labor, gender, or national social inclusion—and revealed anxieties with recuperating precarity itself within a relational ontology. The mission seems to be the rescue of “living labor”32 (Virno 1999) as inherent to worker’s bodies belonging to the Human family, leaving to the Slave the permanent, thus deathly, separation of “labor power” from the flesh, and the ensuing impossibility of social inclusion and recognition.33 In Negri’s reflection, it is indeed the possibility of encounter and the promise of relationality that infuse work with a new ontological status, keeping it on the Human side of precarity and preventing it from falling into the abjection of enslavement. Negri’s redemption of work not as labor but as relation thus entails a revitalizing “ontology of work” centered on “immaterial” properties that are “intellectual, communicational, relational, affective, which are expressed by subjects and social movements, thereby leading to production.”34 Critical theory’s conceptual and ethical investment in the encounter as the force deemed to restore potential, becoming, and equlibrium to bodies—singular as well as social—otherwise constantly and vehemently stimulated to be “out of step with themselves,” to recall Simondon’s formulation,35 is thus overtly aimed at conjuring away slaveness as the haunting absence-presence of stasis and permanent disequilibrium without potential. The specter of slaveness is, on the other hand, as constantly and menacingly alluded to, like the abyss out of which Humanity must be kept, in the Spinozian fold of post-Marxist critical theory, as this allusion systematically disavows the structural isomorphism between Slaveness and Blackness. Thus, Frédéric Lordon’s image of neoliberal subjectivities turned into “willing slaves of capital,” self-entrepeneurial actors motivated to pursue their own exploitation, rests not on classical notions of ideology and hegemony, but, Spinozistically, on the hypothesis that the Human’s essential capacity to desire has been twisted toward a fleetingly joyful but ultimately oppressive encounter with capital and consumption.36 In a praising review of Lordon, Jason Read reminds the readers of what is the touchstone of coherence for this peculiar version of the Human “drama of value”: Spinoza considers the historical transformation of desire primarily in terms of the biography of an individual. The movement from bondage, from domination by the affects, to liberation, to the rational comprehension of the affects, is the trajectory of liberation that defines the Ethics. Hartman’s “Venus” provides, of course, a far more structurally accurate and ethically rigorous, because less generically “human,” characterization of the position of being “dominated by affect,” one in which White affect simultaneously determines antiblack violence, the terror of enslavement, and the possibility of desire and encounter for those whose freedom means staying clear of racial bondage. If the ominous evocation of slaveness—on condition that it completely disavows the violence defining racial blackness—is a somewhat unspoken asset in the critical vis of the Spinozian moment, its adamant opposition to the very notion of structural positionality, without which blackness becomes literally unthinkable at an ontological level, is a far more pronounced, perhaps even “programmatic,” aspect in contemporary theorizations of the encounter. For Brian Massumi, for example, the very existence of the social field as something distinct from a thingly “universe” of “death” rests on the “ontogenetic priority” of movement and becoming over stasis and position, a priority practically expressing itself through an expansive notion of affect and desire, not limited to emotions and feelings, but designating bodily intensive capacity for attractions that “affect” singularities in their collective assembling.38 Inspired by Massumi, Rosi Braidotti and Jasbir Puar directly target radical projects they regard as anachronistically wedded to, respectively, “negativity” and “identity” as impediments to an affect-driven post-modern and post-human reconstitution of the social.39 Patrice Douglass has convincingly shown how such critical turns—which I trace back to various influences of Deleuzian Spinozism—delineate their conceptual capaciousness through a deprecating allusion, which is often not even so implicit, to blackness (and, in political terms, Black radicalism and radical Black feminism) as a condition putatively obsessed with immobility, loss, and grief.40 In its very allusiveness and persistent refusal to engage questions of racialized violence and structural positionality raised by Black critique (rather than the more academically en vogue “people-of-color” critique), however, the Spinozian celebration of movement, affect, and becoming is self-fulfilling, since it fixes blackness as conceptually immobile, hence the constitutive outside for the flourishing horizon of Massumi’s, Puar’s, and Braidotti’s joyous and positive Human assemblages. The coerced conceptual immobility and policed practical objecthood of blackness, Douglass concludes, fuel the “theoretical mobility” of critical theory and its manifold desired subjectivities.

#### The alternative affirms an insurgent black feminine otherwise that disarticulates Man’s chronopolitical order.

Malaklou 18, Assistant Professor of Critical Identity Studies at Beloit College, a Mellon Faculty Fellow of the Associated Colleges of the Midwest and Visiting Faculty at the Centre for Expanded Poetics in the Department of English at Concordia University in Montréal. (M. Shadee, January 2018, “‘Dilemmas’ of Coalition and the Chronopolitics of Man: Towards an Insurgent Black Feminine Otherwise”, *Theory & Event*, Volume 21, Number 1, <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/685977>)

If Afro-pessimism is necessarily a black feminism—Wilderson explains, “Afro-pessimism is made possible by the critical labors of a particular strand of Black feminism, a la [Saidiya] Hartman and [Hortense] Spillers”137—then its critique, which elaborates “the world, and maybe even the whole possibility of and desire for a world” as the “master’s tools” of Audre Lorde’s intervention,138 arms the black feminist argument with ammunition to forge a cosmology typified not by plentitude but by lack. This cosmology is grounded not by phallic signification but by a “perpetual and involuntary openness,” which—Sexton teaches us—is “the “paradigmatic condition of black existence in the modern world.”139 The notable difference between an Afro-pessimistic approach and a black feminist one, if any, is that Afro-pessimism accepts and leans into the paradigmatic structure of black antagonism, accepting the Historical alienation that typifies social death, it bears clarifying, not as a closed door to social life but as a portal into an/Other sociality—off the record. Without a name or referent, the “elsewhere and elsewhen” of black social life, which “sprouts out of the wet places in [our] eyes…the waiting places in [our] palms, [and] the tremble holding in [our mouths],”140 finds refuge in black femininity because (pace Spillers) the immateriality of gender in the black instance does not default the metaphysics of racial blackness to phallic masculinity but to invaginated femininity. Speaking to a different audience, Lewis Gordon explains that the racially black man as (pace Spillers) the personification “female flesh ungendered” is always already feminine. He writes,

The black man is caught. He cannot reject his femininity without simultaneously rejecting his blackness, for his femininity stands as a consequence of his blackness and vice versa. Standing in front of a white [human] wall, he appears as a hole, as a gaping, feminine symbol to be filled, closed up, by the being who has being.141

Doubly penetrable as hole—as the invaginated Other of Freud’s phallocentrism and the human-animal Other Fanon describes—the black (feminine) is a figure that awaits signification interminably. Powerless to “escape concealment under the brush of discourse, or the reflexes of iconography,”142 the black (feminine) conjures Other ways of being and knowing that “can be felt and perceived even though—or especially if—[they] remain unrecognizable or unintelligible to our current common senses.”143 Excommunicated from the historical frame, the black (feminine) gives sanctuary to our freedom dreams. Hers is the safe harbor that guards black life from humanism’s thieving reach. And, as “the historical evocation of chaos”144—as (pace Fanon) an im/ possibility for time—the black (feminine) rages against the machine to disarticulate the “historical categories” that engender human be(com) ing in the first place.

In an exchange with Wilderson, Hartman summons the life and writings of Harriet A. Jacobs to claim the non-negotiable centrality of the black feminine as “the space of death, where negation is the captive’s central possibility for action.”145 Black femininity as a “content [that] exceeds […] expression”146—recall that the black (feminine) “[presents as] a virtual blank” and has no shape or meaning—models the social life of social death and is the harbinger of an occult Otherwise. That is to say, the black (feminine) is pregnant/impregnable with possibilities for a non-Historical becoming. She disarticulates the spatialization of time qua the racialization of time to “[interrupt] the habitual formation of bodies;”147 her #blackgirlmagic indexes an/Other time—a gestational time—to induce “chaos” for the record and the record-keeper alike. Following Annie Menzel’s reading of maternal generativity, the black feminine as the site of maternity—the black womb—invokes “unspeakable violence with insurgent horizon.”148 Not just void, the black feminine-cum-maternal engenders another space for living, not in-time but divested from time as the marker of forward-movement and teleological development. Hers is not the time of History (i.e., Man’s chronopolitical order), which Walter Benjamin describes as a “homogenous, empty time”149 that dialectically (re)produces “the ‘time of the now’”150 in/as the time of tomorrow—of futurity, or humanism. Rather, hers is an embryonic and gestational time, which like the slow and stalled time of captivity qua the oceanic is the insurgent and occult time of waiting/wading and wanting.151 While the birth canal, in Christina Sharpe’s pointed rendering, is a “domestic middle passage” that “[disfigures] black maternity, [turning] the womb into a factory (producing blackness as abjection much like the slave ship’s hold and the prison)” and demanding from the black mother the reproductive labor of chattel slavery—Sharpe explains that the birth canal “[ushers children] into her condition; her non-status, her non-being-ness”152—the black womb, as a container for gestation and not the vehicle for entry, specifically, as embryonic space-time suspends black life to nurture its emergent but not-yet-emerging Otherwise.

Taking inspiration from Spillers’ exhortation in “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe” (1987) to “make a place for” the black (feminine) as a “[non-Historical] social subject,” not to make room for her in “the ranks of gendered femaleness”—in humanism’s liberal folds—but to claim her “insurgent ground,”153 which Menzel describes as Spillers’ call for a “maternal temporality of continuous upheaval,”154 I submit, in closing, that the black feminine qua maternal, as Rizvana Bradley describes her, a “(w)holeness”155 that, as Toni Morrison memorably insists, “consistently [defies] classification,”156 is at once void (i.e., socially dead) and pregnant (i.e., with social life). She summons the revolution that we—all of us, black and nonblack persons (of color) alike—seek, not (just) as a salve for Trump’s violence but as the escape hatch we can use to flee the White/Master’s house, the violence of liberal humanism as the architect of chattel slavery and colonialism, and the container for human be(com)ing—History—that constrains our movements generally. To live in the space-time of the black womb’s oceanic is to be swallowed up by the infinite expanse of racial blackness. As the site of an/Other social, this embryonic space-time disarticulates Man’s chronopolitical order and is the “elsewhere and elsewhen” that we have been looking for, to date, in the wrong place—in the letter of the law of a civil society that operationalizes humanism’s race/ism. We might find our freedom instead in the black mother, who uses the resources she does not have to hold and to carry, indeed, to make life-generat-ing black poetry from the grammar of this wor(l)d’s insatiably violent antiblack prose.

## Case

### 1NC---Case

#### Blackfemmephobia DA. The aff instrumentalizes black women’s scholarship while shaming them for theorizing resistance.

Douglass 16, Assistant Professor of Gender and Women's Studies at UC Berkeley. (Patrice, “At the Intersections of Assemblages: Fanon, Capécia, and the Unmaking of the Genre Subject”, in *Conceptual Aphasia in Black: Displacing Racial Formation*, Lexington Books)

Puar posits a reformulated radical queer subjectivity as a counter and corrective logic to black feminism and black political tactics more broadly. Staging a critique against formulations of intersectionality, Puar asserts:

For while intersectionality and its underpinnings—an unrelenting epistemological will to truth—presupposes identity and thus disavows futurity, or, perhaps more accurately, prematurely anticipates and thus fixes a permanence to forever, assemblage, in its debt to ontology and its espousal of what cannot be known, seen, or heard, or has yet to known, seen, or heard, allows for becoming beyond or without being (Puar 2007, 216).

While intersectionality is a broad encompassing theory, its underpinnings as alluded to in this passage, are again realized in the bodies of black women, as the subjects of black feminism, who come to stand in as Puar’s unspoken opponents. By assertion critical theory as the genealogy, which Puar is, writing into, like critics of Fanon, have already made an objective determination about where gender that is black specifically stands in relationship to narratives of liberation and that relationship is theorized into obsolescence. That is to say while the intellectual labor performed in Terrorist Assemblages is insidious and exemplary in its own right, in displaying the contentious relationship between radical politics and blackness, it is not exhaustive in its task. The formulation of the terrorist assemblage brings to the forefront an insistent framework that disavows black articulations of suffering at the same time as it posits a new revolutionary subjectivity that is in theory more dynamic than blackness. The concept of “blackfemmephobia” articulated by Sharpely- Whiting (1989) as indicative of the impulses of Capécia’s writing, is structurally linked to the conceptual maneuver Puar makes in arguing that the underpinnings of intersectionality, black feminists, disavow futurity through a supposed reliance on the permanence of what is termed “identity,” crowding out the possibilities of being and becoming, politically, those things that are simply unknown.

By drawing out what undergirds the push to “re-think” intersectionality, this argument is not insisting on a strident recuperation of its modes of theorizing and its premises for defining systems of oppression, as an oppositional strategy to the terrorist assemblage. Instead I am most concerned with why it is assumed that theory emerging out of a black gendered space has nothing to offer the political orientations of those situated seemingly outside of the bounds of blackness. What is it about black gender that disallows theory to sit within the optimism of positivist reinvisionings of subjectivity? My contention is that, these newly emerged theories makes very visible old standing relations of power that exist between blackness and the theoretical mobility of other subjects. This tendency demonstrates the manner in which theorists that attempt to problematize black subject theories as demonstrating an unrelenting focus on objective relations of power, also in the same breath use black bodies as objective proof to support their claims, and thus reify why theories of objectification continue to centrally figure in critical black theory. The question that demands engagement is, why then are we confronted with the figure of the black woman, why is this trope called upon?

#### Colonialism does not explain anti-blackness, orienting politics around it is anti-back.

Sexton 16, Associate Professor of African American Studies and Film and Media Studies at the University of California, Irvine. (Jared, “The Vel of Slavery: Tracking the Figure of the Unsovereign”, *Critical Sociology*, Vol. 42(4-5) pg. 591-593, DOI: 10.1177/0896920514552535)

Abolishing Sovereignty

There is by now a literature on the historical relations between black and native peoples in the Americas, including, in the US context, the award-winning work of Tiya Miles (2006, 2010) and the signal contributions of Barbara Krauthamer (2013).18 But Frank B. Wilderson, III’s Red, White and Black may be the first sustained attempt to theorize, at the highest level of abstraction, the structural positions of European colonists, Indigenous peoples, and African slaves in the ‘New World’ encounter and to think about how the conflicts and antagonisms that give rise to those positions in the historic instance establish the contemporary parameters of our political ontology. At this writing, Wilderson’s text has not been taken up in the field of Native Studies, despite dedicating fully 100 pages to addressing directly the machinations of settler colonialism and the history of genocide and to critically reading a range of indigenous thinking on politics, cosmology, and sovereignty. This is not a brief in favor of Wilderson’s project as resolution or answer. The upshot of Red, White and Black is a provocation to new critical discourse and just such an invitation is offered midway, even as it acknowledges the grand impediment: ‘What, we might ask, inhibits this analytic and political dream of a “Savage”/Slave encounter? Is it a matter of the Native theorist’s need to preserve the constituent elements of sovereignty, or is there such a thing as “Savage” Negrophobia? Are the two related’ (Wilderson, 2010: 182)?

We might understand something else about the historical relations between black and native peoples if we bear in mind that the dynamics of Negrophobia are animated, in part, by a preoccupation with sovereignty. We have learned already that settler colonialism is governed by a genocidal commandment and that, as a direct result, survival becomes central to indigenous movements for settler decolonization. We have also learned that sovereignty, even disarticulated from the state-form, is the heading for thinking about this survival as a matter of politics.19 Yet, in its struggle against settler colonialism, the claim of native sovereignty – emerging in contradiction to the imposition of the imperial sovereignty of Euro-American polities20 – ‘fortifies and extends the interlocutory life of America [or Canada or …] as a coherent (albeit genocidal) idea, because treaties are forms of articulation, discussions brokered between two groups presumed to possess the same kind of historical currency: sovereignty’ (Wilderson, 2003: 236).

This point is not mitigated by the fact that native sovereignty is qualitatively different from, not simply rival to, the sovereignty of nation-states. What links these statements discursively is an ‘ethico-onto-epistemological’ (Barad, 2007) point of contact: ‘At every scale – the soul, the body, the group, the land, and the universe – they can both practice cartography, and although at every scale their maps are radically incompatible, their respective “mapness” is never in question’ (Wilderson, 2010: 181).21 Capacity for coherence makes more than likely a commitment ‘to preserve the constituent elements of sovereignty’ (2010: 182) and a pursuit of the concept of ‘freedom as self-determination’.22 The political de-escalation of antagonism to the level of conflict is mirrored by a conceptual domestication at work in the field of Native Studies, namely, that settler colonialism is something already known and understood by its practitioners. The political-intellectual challenge on this count is to refine this knowledge and to impart it. The intervention of Native Studies involves bringing into general awareness a critical knowledge of settler colonialism.

We might contrast the unsuspecting theoretical status of the concept of settler colonialism in Native Studies with its counterpart in Black Studies: racial slavery. I remarked above that any politics of resurgence or recovery is bound to regard the slave as the position of the unthought. This does not suggest, however, that Black Studies is the field in which slavery is, finally, thought in an adequate way. The field of Black Studies is as susceptible to a politics of resurgence or recovery as any other mode of critical inquiry. Which is to say that the figure of the slave and the history of the emergence of the relational field called racial slavery remains the unthought ground of thought within Black Studies as well. The difference, provisionally, between these enterprises is that whereas Native Studies sets out to be the alternative to a history of settler colonialism and to pronounce the decolonial intervention, Black Studies dwells within an un-inheritable, in-escapable history and muses upon how that history intervenes upon its own field, providing a sort of untranscendable horizon for its discourse and imagination. The latter is an endeavor that teaches less through pedagogical instruction than through exemplary transmission: rather than initiation into a form of living, emulation of a process of learning through the posing of a question, a procedure for study, for black study, or black studies, wherever they may lead.

Native Studies scholars are right to insist upon a synthetic gesture that attempts to shift the terms of engagement. The problem lies at the level of thought at which the gesture is presented. The settler colonial studies critique of colonial studies must be repeated, this time with respect to settler colonialism itself, in a move that returns us to the body in relation to land, labor, language, lineage – and the capture and commodification of each – in order to ask the most pertinent questions about capacity, commitment, and concept. This might help not only to break down false dichotomies, and perhaps pose a truer one, but also to reveal the ways that the study of slavery is already and of necessity the study of capitalism, colonialism and settler colonialism, among other things; and that the struggle for abolition is already and of necessity the struggle for the promise of communism, decolonization, and settler decolonization, among other things. Slavery is the threshold of the political world, abolition the interminable radicalization of every radical movement. Slavery, as it were, precedes and prepares the way for colonialism, its forebear or fundament or support. Colonialism, as it were, the issue or heir of slavery, its outgrowth or edifice or monument. This is as true of the historic colonization of the Third World as it is the prior and ongoing settler colonization of the Fourth.23

‘The modern world owes its very existence to slavery’ (Grandin, 2014a).24 What could this impossible debt possibly entail? Not only the infrastructure of its global economy but also the architecture of its theological and philosophical discourses, its legal and political institutions, its scientific and technological practices, indeed, the whole of its semantic field (Wilderson, 2010: 58). A politics of abolition could never finally be a politics of resurgence, recovery, or recuperation. It could only ever begin with degeneration, decline, or dissolution. Abolition is the interminable radicalization of every radical movement, but a radicalization through the perverse affirmation of deracination, an uprooting of the natal, the nation, and the notion, preventing any order of determination from taking root, a politics without claim, without demand even, or a politics whose demand is ‘too radical to be formulated in advance of its deeds’ (Trouillot, 2012: 88).25

The field of Black Studies consists in ‘tracking the figure of the unsovereign’ (Chandler, 2013: 163) in order to meditate upon the paramount question: ‘What if the problem is sovereignty as such’ (Moten, 2013)? Abolition, the political dream of Black Studies, its unconscious thinking, consists in the affirmation of the unsovereign slave – the affectable, the derelict, the monstrous, the wretched26 – figures of an order altogether different from (even when they coincide or cohabit with) the colonized native – the occupied, the undocumented, the unprotected, the oppressed. Abolition is beyond (the restoration of) sovereignty. Beyond the restoration of a lost commons through radical redistribution (everything for everyone), there is the unimaginable loss of that all too imaginable loss itself (nothing for no one).27 If the indigenous relation to land precedes and exceeds any regime of property, then the slave’s inhabitation of the earth precedes and exceeds any prior relation to land – landlessness. And selflessness is the correlate. No ground for identity, no ground to stand (on). Everyone has a claim to everything until no one has a claim to anything. No claim. This is not a politics of despair brought about by a failure to lament a loss, because it is not rooted in hope of winning. The flesh of the earth demands it: the landless inhabitation of selfless existence.

# 2NC

## K

### 2NC---Framework

#### Re-imagining the future through fiated scenario planned imprisons radical theorizing in a vampiric grammar of time and becoming that siphons black energy into elaborating the redemption of an irredeemable anti-black superstructure.

Warren 21, Associate Professor of African American Studies at Emory University. (Calvin, “Abandoning Time: Black Nihilism and the Democratic Imagination”, *Amerikastudien / American Studies* 66.1, pg. 247-51, Accessible at: <https://www.academia.edu/46897379/Abandoning_Time_Black_Nihilism_and_the_Democratic_Imagination?from=cover_page>)

Does time heal all wounds? Or does time require certain wounds to sustain itself? Is the curative function of time an onto-metaphysical fantasy, one concealing the internecine operations of temporal subjugation? What happens to existence, or life itself, once we abandon time, its unquestioned positivity, and its presumed givenness (as gift, indispensable resource, or a priori condition)? Furthermore, is the activity of imagining even possible without recourse to time, temporality, or its durative schemas? Is the imagination a temporal captive, and does abandoning (or dare I say abolishing) time liberate the imagination to perform different tasks and pursuits? Questioning time is a difficult task, since thinking requires it (to re-orient existence beyond Newtonian, post-modern, or neo-liberal time and eschatology). Questioning, as meta-commentary, would require an exceptional position, both within and without time simultaneously, a position capable of investigating the very thing that enables investigation—holding time in abeyance. But the seeming impossibility of this enterprise would require a different noetic apparatus, since thought (as questioning) depends on time as its oxygen. The imagination, then, offers the promise of liberation from temporal tyranny, an enterprise contravening the conditions of reason, knowledge, forms, and, indeed, the possible itself. The potential “transgression”—to use a hackneyed term in American Studies—of the imagination is diminished, however, when it is bound to democracy. Democracy tethers the imagination to time, since democracy is an elaborate schematization, instrumentalization, and defense of time. During any moment of political and social crisis, we are importuned to re-imagine democracy, as imagining the future. To consider democracy futureless, or that its time has run out, or that futurity (and progress) is its devastating temporal myth, is to open oneself up to charges of theoretical heresy, despair, hopelessness, and any other abject calumny. In times of crisis, when the authoritarian kernel of democracy is exposed, theorists call on time to hold inconsistencies, resolve contradictions, blackmail hope, and repair brokenness. Once again, we land in the terrain that “time heals all wounds,” political or otherwise. Samuel A. Chambers defines the imagination as a “synthetic power of creation and re-creation—an ability to combine the uncombinable, to surpass binaries without merely collapsing them, to fashion something new” (620). And from such synthesis, we are told that a democratic imagination is possible, since we would “think the limits (and their transgression) of democratic theory and of democracy as well” (620). Here, we see that the democratic imagination recasts limits as possibilities rather than complete failures. Limits become the resource for creation and re-creation rather than evidence of destruction and uselessness. A couture Kantianism / Hegelianism (mixed with a splash of deconstruction) salvages democracy from the perils of its absurdity, devastation, and brutality. Why this investment in democracy’s “intrinsic” creative power? Can this creativity finally bring an end to anti-Black violence and Black suffering? Or is the knowledge of democracy’s fabulousness enough to sustain Blacks through police terrorism, environmental racism, re-enslavement through incarceration, and food / housing insecurity and discrimination? I would suggest that what makes such creative synthesis possible is an unacknowledged dependence on time. For proponents of democracy, it is time that is malleable for creative enterprises of re-imagination, of progress fetishization, and an “ontology of change” that need not justify (or prove) itself, declaration of change seems to be enough (Badiou, “Ontology”). What if, however, democracy is clinging to a depleted resource? What if time is no longer enough to orient existence, especially for those inhabitants of an abyss—within which time, space, ethics, and law are weaponized against existence? Put somewhat differently, democracy has exhausted the imagination. It is a speculative vampire that drains the imagination of any vital resource for its own survival. This speculation is an outrageous expenditure of energy, an enjoyment without end, a scholarly surplus-pleasure requiring an incessant (and useless) political repetition (Johnston). I would describe this speculation—the conjoining of time, democracy, and the imagination—as an interminable quest, or a certain “stuckness” in a scene of failure (a constant encircling of political and legal vacuity). This repetition is most dramatically demonstrated, for me, in Black political participation—voting, protesting, keeping hope alive, returning to the kernel of authoritarian violence (i. e., anti-Blackness) with unbridled hope, temporal determination, and an investment in the ontology of change (Warren; Farred). Time mocks Blacks, requiring historical déjà vu to be re-imagined, redeemed, rethought, or ignored, rather than accepting time as anti-Black enmity and democracy as the permanence of anti-Blackness. Chants of “yes we can!” “your vote matters!” “we have power!” “we’re moving forward,” etc., serve to neglect the failure of Black political participation and to imprison the imagination within futurity. As I am writing these remarks, I am witnessing the absurdity of this democratic imagination and its unrelenting time. On one news program, I hear that police shot unarmed Andre Hill, a forty-seven-yearold Black resident of Columbus, Ohio, without cause, and rather than offering him medical assistance, decided to handcuff him (just in case the supine, dying man finds a gun, magically, I guess). On the other news program, I hear Black politicians importuning, begging, and guilting Blacks into voting for change. Black political pundits assure voters that the ontology of change is realizable if you just exercise your right to vote. “Never again!” “We will transform police practices!” “This time will be different!” Did Blacks not vote when police shot twelve-year-old Tamir Rice as he was playing with his toy gun on the playground? (By the way, no federal charges will be brought against the police officers who shot him). Did Blacks not vote when Sandra Bland lost her life in police custody? Did Blacks not vote after police deprived Eric Garner and George Floyd (and apparently 70 other people) of breath (Baker et al.)? In answer to my inquiry “why should we continue to vote if anti-Black violence is not changing?” I am told, “Just keep believing, we can vote people in that can change things!” When I then ask, “But I voted for President Obama (suspending my nihilism in an intoxication of hope-affect), I thought things were going to change for Blacks? I feel just as unsafe and endangered post-Obama as pre-Obama,” I am told, “Obama wasn’t a ‘magic Negro.’ He did the best he could.” Then I ask, “So why vote if it will take an act of magic to address the existential threat of anti-Blackness?” Time mocks the cyclical movement of such inquiries, they are, indeed, unanswerable within the creative, synthetic, and powerful democratic horizon. Voting becomes the premier instrument of the democratic imagination—supposedly, it activates the imagination with futurity, avoids paralysis with action, and can be repeated. What type of creativity will finally eradicate anti-Black brutality? And could such creativity even operate within time? Could we still call such creativity democracy? Must we abandon time to enable the imagination to perform the mystical, the magical, and the ineffable? If we have understood nihilism as the entrapment (and misery) of metaphysics, the reduction of Being to value circulation (axio-ontology) and Being’s forgottenness, and the neutralization of various hierarchies of existence and legitimacy (Vattimo), then Black nihilism would suggest that time is not a natural right or intrinsic resource. Time is a supreme onto-metaphysical value that traffics in anti-Black violence, subjugation, destruction, and must also be reduced to myth, fantasy, and displaced. Rather than providing the resource for creativity and power, time is a racial privilege that embeds itself in Being and metaphysics—it anchors the human and engenders extreme brutality and destructive pleasure. It is impossible, then, to de-link time from the anti-Black violence saturating it. Enterprises such as Black politics and democratic imagination reproduce the “same” rather than introducing a break in violence. Put differently, the democratic imagination takes time for granted as a natural right or unquestioned condition of existence, rather than bringing this condition under investigation and suspicion; reproducing time, as a creative and synthetic activity, is its primary preoccupation. Black existence exposes time as an unreliable lure, one vested in certain onto-metaphysical fantasies. I would add to Vittorio Possenti’s remarkable anatomizing of nihilism—theoretical, moral, theological, technological, and judicial—spatio-temporal nihilism, since both space and time provide problems for Black thinking in the abyss and demand a protocol of thinking (or imagination?) that is released from the preconditions of Being and ethics. Black nihilism de-idealizes both space and time as offering anything intrinsically or potentially transformative. Thus, the limit of space and time, for Black existence, cannot be re-worked into anything life-affirming or synthesized into anything meaningful. To put a finer point on this reflection: Anti-Blackness is a problem of time and the democratic imagination. Police shootings and COVID-19 deaths, for example, foreground the failure of time to alleviate Black suffering. Time is not curative; it is a weapon of tremendous violence. Despite the optimism of Black political theorists, time entraps Black thinking in a web of contradictions, absurdities, and impasses. The pathetic theorizing of Melvin Rogers, for example in his “Between Pain and Despair: What Ta-Nehisi Coates Is Missing,” presents an incredibly impoverished, unreliable, and inept reading of Black pessimism and the crisis of Black existence—it links democratic action to the imagination and clings to an “ontology of change” despite all evidence to the contrary in Black life. His work, however, represents a coterie of Black political optimists so ~~blinded~~ by democracy’s promise that they consider Black pain a form of political possibility. It is a perverse enterprise capitalizing on what we might call black jouissance—futurity constitutes the “temporal material” for surplus-pleasure in Black suffering, travail, and political failure. If there is any hope for the imagination and its endless circulation in contemporary Black thought, it will need to abandon time and refuse its seductions. The future is but one temporal value we must de-idealize and insert into an anti-Black will to power—one wreaking havoc across the globe. In these desperate times, Black existence needs a liberated imagination, an imagination liberated from formal thought, the world, destructive transcendence and immanence, and dogmatic preconditions. So, why continue to expend energy re-imagining the future and democracy? Let us focus Black imagining on enterprises that sustain us in the abyss. Outlining and presenting such enterprises requires tremendous spiritual and intellectual energy—but such investment is all we have.

### 2NC---Ontology/State Good

#### Legal focus replicates a cycle of cruel optimism and empirical failures that solidify the settler state’s authority and redirect black energy from community-building to courtrooms.

Ramsey 21, J.D.-M.Div. candidate at Harvard Law School and Harvard Divinity School. (James Stevenson, “Lawyering in the Wake: Theorizing the Practice of Law in the Midst of Anti-Black Catastrophe”, 24 *Cuny L. Rev. Footnote Forum* 12, pg. 18-22)

Conversely, wake work is about paradoxically clinging to life amidst death and catastrophe. The game has been lost. There is no pre-slavery Blackness. There is no un-murdering, no un-spilling of blood. There is no available expulsion of a foreign power, as in the case of Gandhi's India, nor is there any reason to foresee or hope for a surrender of our government structures to Indigenous folk, as in Mandela's South Africa; apartheid is perfected here. Outside of worldwide upheaval, the state – this crystallized settler colony – is here to stay, as are the scars on the peoples residing in the underbelly of society, which holds up the rest of it. 30 The hold is sturdy, and those who have been disposable are still disposable; as a matter of policy, the starved in history can still be starved, the historically captured can still be captured (e.g., arrested and incarcerated), and so on. 31 What would it mean for lawyers to practice from this place of containment, from apparent defeat? Not primarily from an obligation to universal ideals or political affiliations as Delmas describes, but from a collective mourning and hunger? How might "politics" and "obligations" be recast in the wake, and how might we triage them? Starting from the first analysis of divided loyalties, how might lawyers thinking from within the wake determine the relative weights of our obligations to the law and to those on the margins? What does the law mean to us who are already always the living dead, those whose deaths make the world possible?32

As scholars and movement lawyers have long explained, a singular focus on legal remedies for the marginalized in our context has several pitfalls and other shortcomings. First, concentrating solely or even primarily on the systemic reform of the legal system and/or direct client services has not worked. To be sure, it is no longer legal, strictly speaking, to segregate schools based on race, 33 but housing and school segregation persist.34 Lynching is technically illegal, but it persists. 35 Police still kill Black people, Black children, legally and illegally. 36 Mass incarceration has been decried by some, 37 and yet prisons, along with a visceral, systemic need to punish, also persist and are levied against Black people in particular, who have always been necessarily capturable.38 Some voting rights for Black people were secured on paper,39 but they have since been both resisted in practice and rolled back formally. 40 Wealth inequality between Black people and white people has ballooned over time, and, even more harrowingly, inequalities in life expectancy between Black people and white people still exist. 41 I do not mean to dismiss the steps toward reducing these inequities that have been made through the law or by legal actors. But, as discussed earlier, these injustices are not accidents or anomalies; they are constitutive parts of the system as it currently exists, and they mean something about who in this country can (still) be hurt and stolen from and about what this country is. Appealing to such a system to change itself has not been proven effective on its own, as many scholars have observed; forms of state oppression merely shift from one form to another.42 These so-called reforms leave the violent core of the nation intact because they must; the underlying, necessary penchant for anti-Blackness and the domination of Indigenous peoples has remained as the lifeblood of the nation-state. 43

Second, along these lines, appealing to the state for relief reinscribes the state, the coercive power it uses to effectuate its ends, and our own status as Black (non)subjects. 44 As Anthony Farley explains, praying to the state for relief is to accept the power of the state to say "yes" but also its power to say "no": "To request equality is to surrender before one begins. To request equality is to grant one's owners the power to grant or deny one's request. To grant one's owners such a power is to surrender oneself to one's owners entirely and completely." 45 To recognize this power is to submit to the law's (necessary) privileging of its interests those that give it coherence and legitimacy: the erasure of Native American peoples and the infliction of perpetual suffering upon Black people as punishable, malleable, detestable flesh 46 -over our own:

To pray for legal redress is to bow before the authority of law .... Law is only the relation of white-over-black to white-over-black to white-over-black. When we follow a legal rule we follow only the track that we have ourselves laid down. In other words, we ourselves are track, we become the track when we lay down, and we follow that track white-over-black into the future that lasts forever.47

Third, as various scholars have observed, focusing on legal redress to the exclusion of other tactics and remedies, which lawyers are prone to do, has the potential to block the building of power in the communities those lawyers serve, creating serious problems in movement work.48 For example, such a focus often contains social action and energy within the domain of the courts, as opposed to building sustainable structures and practices within the community itself." There is a lurking tendency for lawyers, because of our conservative, risk-averse training, to quell radical thought and tactics-in the name of precedent and rationality-and instead bow to the law.5 Because strictly legal approaches often rely on the unique credentials, skill set, and language of lawyers, such approaches can center and empower lawyers in movement strategy, rather than empower activists and members of the community.51 A law-focused approach tempts lawyers and community members alike to conflate the lawyer's role with that of an organizer, which is problematic because lawyers and organizers tend to employ different frameworks and techniques." Our legal system tends to atomize legal disputes and claims, often forcing legal proceedings into person-against-person conflicts and making it difficult for collective legal action, coalition building, and redress of harms on a community level.53

#### Prioritize specificity---libidinal economy holds black women captive.

Douglass 18, Assistant Professor of Justice, Community, and Leadership at Saint Mary’s College of California. She received her PhD in Culture and Theory from the University of California, Irvine. (Patrice, January 2018, “Black Feminist Theory for the Dead and Dying”, *Theory & Event,* Volume 21, Number 1, <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/685972>)

The conceptual framework of women of color, I argue, similarly performs an erasure of the antagonistic relationship Black genders hold with the structuring paradigm of gender. At the level of experience women of color, as a broad association, are subjected to violence at the intersections of at least their race and gender. However, the structural positioning of Blackness blurs the lines of difference demonstrating an intimate proximity to violence that troubles the water of gender as an explanatory category.31 Andrea J. Ritchie explains how the assumption of gender transgression places women of color at an increased risk of experiencing police brutality. Ritchie argues, women framed as ‘masculine’ – including African American women, who are routinely ‘masculinized’ through systemic racial stereotypes – are consistently treated by the police as potentially violent, predatory, or noncompliant regardless of their actual conduct and circumstances, no matter how old, young, disabled, small, or ill.32 Black women here representing a convergence of supposed gender lines. The significance of this gesture by Ritchie is that is hones into the peculiar relationship between Blackness and gender. Gender here is not accounted for by how Black women identify or perform. Nor can it be taken as misrecognition of real gender by the police. Black gender occupies a position that is captive to a libidinal economy of différance.33 Theorizing the power that disorients Black gender deconstructs the assumptive logic of gender violence. What is revealed is that Black gender functions as a demarcation of difference at the level of existence. Ritchie goes on to offer a critical analysis of beliefs held by police officers that 7rely on racialized and gendered preconceptions of women of color to justify the use of force. Ritchie writes, Use of force against women of color is also uniquely informed by racialized and gendered stereotypes – officers often appear to be acting based on perceptions of Black women as “animalistic” [End Page 114] women possessing superhuman force, Latina women as “hot-tempered mamas,” Asian women as “devious,” knife-wielding martial arts experts, and so on.34 Although these descriptions are presented in a list, the assumptive framing of them are not the same. Latina and Asian women are portrayed as hypersexualized and deviant variants of womanhood, while Black women are not seen as women at all. Black women are positioned outside of the scope of humanness. Though, I would caution to suggest that the hum-animal distinction does not mark the essence of Black feminine gender. Instead the description of Black women given above situates Black identity into a void. As Zakiyyah Iman Jackson critically argues, “…at the moment when the conception of ‘the human’ was reorganized such that humanity was understood as coincident with ‘the animal,’ humane discourse relying on this new understanding simultaneously reformulated blackness as inferior to both “the human and “the animal.”35Jackson demonstrates how the animal possesses a conceptual framework in a manner Blackness is barred from. The Black, can be everything and nothing simultaneously. Blackness is gendered through violence that structures it outside of humanity and defines the perimeters of what it means to be for the Human and its discontents.36 The archive of gender is structurally anti-black. Its assumptive logic, whether explicit in its presentation or not, maintains that all women have the same gender. This orientation of thought does more than render Black gender invisible or silent. It makes it conceptually impossible to think of gender violence as orienting more than the realm of gender. Rather than engaging a politic fixated on what binds women together in life, I want to draw focus to what separates Black women in death. What creates the conditions of (im)possibility for Black women to die like Korryn Gaines? How might we augment the lens to theorize the issue of Black gender as much larger than it appears? Blackness brings into focus a paradigm of existence that rests on a gratuitous structure of violence that unhinges Black people from a possessive relation to categories of identity. Anti-black violence bleeds across demarcations of difference. When examining the contexts of Black gender, what emerges through theory is Blackness obscures the intensity and scope of violence such that Black suffering becomes indiscernible from violence experienced by others. Thus, the intimate relationship between Black gender and violence becomes a crisis for non-blacks, as this structural proximity is assumed as applicable to all. The Women’s March principles are exemplary of the transfusion of myth and reality. As Saidiya Hartman so critically poses, “How can we understand the racialized engenderment of the black female captive in terms other than deficiency or lack in relation to normative conditions and instead understand this production of gender in the context of very difference economies of power, property, kinship, race, and sexuality?”37 The implications of this provocation by Hartman are a critical lens to understanding the policing of Black women38 and the generative possibilities of theorizing gender through Blackness. So, what does the lens of Blackness offer introspections into gender? In the same respect as the proclamation by Beth E. Ritchie that is it dangerous to produce theory for all women, can the same be said for Blackness? The short answer to latter is, no. While there is no place in history where all women have stood subjected equally to violence, there is such a place for the black, the hold of the slave ship. I would like to privilege an analysis of the hold and the world produced from it as predicated on Black social and political death. The hold is marked by the putridness of unattended matter. A critical theory of Blackness rooted in the urgency and immanence of that death must attend to the specter of Black gender unhinged by a dispossessed status. As Jared Sexton posits, “The slave’s cause is the cause of another world in and on the ruins of this one, in the end of its ends.”39 Black gender as a theorem, not a thing, dismantles the predicate of gender. When gender and Blackness converge, Black people are found wavering in an ocean of violence. The core of Black feminist concerns is how to account for the gravity of gender violences that lack a proper name.

### 2NC---AT Hope/Futurity Good

#### The existence of social life doesn’t negate the thesis of social death.

Sexton 12, Professor of African American Studies and Film and Media Studies at the University of California, Irvine. (Jared, “Ante-Anti-Blackness: Afterthoughts”, *Lateral*, https://csalateral.org/issue/1/ante-anti-blackness-afterthoughts-sexton/)

Elsewhere, in a discussion of W. E. B. Du Bois on the study of black folk, Gordon restates an existential phenomenological conception of the anti-black world developed across his first several books: “Blacks here suffer the phobogenic reality posed by the spirit of racial seriousness. In effect, they more than symbolize or signify various social pathologies – they become them. In our anti-black world, blacks are pathology.”46 This conception would seem to support to Moten’s contention that even much radical black studies scholarship sustains the association of blackness with a certain sense of decay and thereby fortifies and extends the interlocutory life of widely accepted political common sense. In fact, it would seem that Gordon deepens the already problematic association to the level of identity. And yet, this is precisely what Gordon argues is the value and insight of Fanon: he fully accepts the definition of himself as pathological as it is imposed by a world that knows itself through that imposition, rather than remaining in a reactive stance that insists on the heterogeneity between a self and an imago originating in culture. Though it may appear counter-intuitive, or rather because it is counter-intuitive, this acceptance or affirmation is active; it is a willing or willingness, in other words, to pay whatever social costs accrue to being black, to inhabiting blackness, to living a black social life under the shadow of social death. This is not an accommodation to the dictates of the anti-black world. The affirmation of blackness, which is to say an affirmation of pathological being, is a refusal to distance oneself from blackness in a valorization of minor differences that bring one closer to health, life, or sociality. Fanon writes in the first chapter of  Black Skin, White Masks: “A Senegalese who learns Creole to pass for Antillean is a case of alienation. The Antilleans who make a mockery out of him are lacking in judgment.”47 In a world structured by the twin axioms of white superiority and black inferiority, of white existence and black non-existence, a world structured by a negative categorical imperative—”above all, don’t be black”48—in this world, the zero degree of transformation is the turn toward blackness, a turn toward the shame, as it were, that “resides in the idea that ‘I am thought of as less than human'”49 resides in the idea that ‘I am thought of as less than human’. And yet, the very shame that floods through at that thought, a shame that, were we not human, we would have no capacity to feel, is our best internal evidence that the thought is wrong and vulgar: I feel (shame), therefore I am (human). Acknowledging the permanence of our shame, and its usefulness, may mark the beginning… [of a response to the call] to ‘begin enjoying the humor’ again. The point may not be to become individual and modern, to ever achieve a kind of prophylactic invulnerability to the [discourse] that says ‘Shame on you! Shame on you for being black!’ We do not, at this late date, need yet newer formulations of pride to negate this shame. The point may be to locate, within the transformations of our shame, a way out of scapegoating, and thus, out of the bloodletting that accompanies with such monotonous reliability our attempts to regain our innocence” (389).] In this we might create a transvaluation of pathology itself, something like an embrace of pathology without pathos.  To speak of black social life  and  black social death, black social life  against  black social death, black social life as black social death, black social life in black social death—all of this is to find oneself in the midst of an argument that is also a profound agreement, an agreement that takes shape in (between)  meconnaissance  and (dis)belief. Black optimism is not the negation of the negation that is afro-pessimism, just as black social life does not negate black social death by vitalizing it.

A living death is a much a death as it is a living. Nothing in afro-pessimism suggests that there is no black (social) life, only that black life is not social life in the universe formed by the codes of state and civil society, of citizen and subject, of nation and culture, of people and place, of history and heritage, of all the things that colonial society has in common with the colonized, of all that capital has in common with labor—the modern world system.50  Black life is not lived in the world that the world lives in, but it is lived underground, in outer space. This is agreed. That is to say, what Moten asserts against afro-pessimism is a point already affirmed by afro-pessimism, is, in fact, one of the most polemical dimensions of afro-pessimism as a project: namely, that black life is not social, or rather that black life is  lived  in social  death. Double emphasis, on lived and on death. That’s the whole point of the enterprise at some level. It is all about the implications of this agreed upon point where arguments (should) begin, but they cannot (yet) proceed.

Wilderson’s is an analysis of the law in its operation as “police power and racial prerogative both under and after slavery.”51 So too is Moten’s analysis, at least that just-less-than-half of the intellectual labor committed to the object of black studies as critique of (the anti-blackness of) Western civilization. But Moten is just that much more interested in how black social life steals away or escapes from the law, how it frustrates the police power and, in so doing, calls that very policing into being in the first place. The policing of black freedom, then, is aimed less at its dreaded prospect, apocalyptic rhetoric notwithstanding, than at its irreducible precedence. The logical and ontological priority of the unorthodox self-predicating activity of blackness, the “improvisatory exteriority” or “improvisational immanence” that blackness is, renders the law dependent upon what it polices. This is not the noble agency of resistance. It is a reticence or reluctance that we might not know if it were not pushing back, so long as we know that this pushing back is really a pushing forward. So, in this perverse sense, black social death is black social life. The object of black studies is the aim of black studies. The most radical negation of the anti-black world is the most radical affirmation of a blackened world. Afro-pessimism is “not but nothing other than” black optimism.52, 53

### 2NC---Oh the aff is labor focus? Bet

#### Labor focus is a liberal discourse of inclusion that conceals the singularity of Black fungibility.

King 14, Assistant Professor of Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies at Georgia State University. (Tiffany, 6-10-2014, "Labor’s Aphasia: Toward Antiblackness as Constitutive to Settler Colonialism", *Decolonization*, https://decolonization.wordpress.com/2014/06/10/labors-aphasia-toward-antiblackness-as-constitutive-to-settler-colonialism/)

For the past few weeks a convergence of social media discussions on reparations, Shona Jackson’s book Creole Indigeneity: Between Myth and Nation in the Caribbean, and her recent post “Humanity beyond the Regime of Labor,” as well as my own thinking about Black Studies’ engagement with Conquest have all compelled me to think critically about the issue of Black labor.[1] I would like to take a moment to focus on the conceptual limits of labor as an epistemic frame for thinking about Blackness (as bodies and discourse) and its relationship to settler colonialism. I am particularly concerned about the ways that Black labor may crowd out Black fungibility as a conceptual frame for thinking about Blackness within settler colonial discourses.

While many scholars who understand themselves as humanists have long ago conceded that strict or heavy-handed Marxian (political economic) analyses are generally impoverished and wanting; labor as an analytic persists. Indeed, labor as a discourse, or what Shona Jackson would call a “metaphysics” and “ontoepistemology”—a way of living and a way of articulating this mode of living— still haunts our critical theories (Jackson, 2012, p. 217).[2] This is particularly true as scholars undertake the difficult work of understanding and naming how racialized people are situated within White settler colonial states. Configuring People of Color into the calculus of settler colonial relations is onerous and in fact laborious. It is especially difficult when trying to conceptualize the unique location of Blackness. I commend scholars for taking on this task.

In order to do this cumbersome work, scholars tend to rely on the tried and true rubric of labor. Labor becomes the site and mode of incorporating non-Black and non-Indigenous people into settler colonial relations in White settler nation-states. People of Color scholars often rehearse histories of arrival as populations of coerced labor as a way of explaining their presence, as well as distance or proximity to the category of the Settler. Labor also becomes a liberal discourse that allows immigrants and migrants to narrate the terms of their belonging and citizenship within White settler colonial states. In this way, labor functions as another discourse of inclusion. Recently, Jamilah Martin in response to Ta-Nehisi Coates’ article “The Case for Reparations” made a similar and astute point in her blog post “On Reparations: Resisting Inclusion and Co-optation” that reparations work as a discourse of inclusion within the project of American Democracy within the “U.S. anti-Black settler-imperial state.” While the integrationist project of reparations may be a liberal project of inclusion, it also relies on a “teleology of modern labor” (Jackson 2012, p. 147). It holds out hope for Black inclusion into a human family of laborers/workers. Yet, despite the claim of the Black laborer as “subject”, embedded within the metaphysics of labor, the bill H.R. 40 (otherwise known as the Reparations Bill) has not gained traction.

H.R. 40’s lack of success partially speaks to the inability of Blackness to become fully legible through human categories like the laborer/worker. Further, it evinces the ways that laborer and worker do not explain the ontological state of Blackness. In Red, White and Black, Wilderson attends to the ways that Afropessimists “have gone considerable lengths to show that, point of fact, slavery is and connotes an ontological status for blackness; and that the constituent elements of slavery are not exploitation and alienation but accumulation and fungibility (Wilderson 2010, 14). The “alienation” and “exploitation” that the human worker experiences through labor are contingent conditions resulting from human conflicts.

Many people can and have occupied these temporary and conditional abased human coordinates. White, Asian and South Asian, Latina/o and Middle Eastern indentured and other kinds of laborers have long inhabited White settler territories and nation-states and, as laborers, immigrants and migrants have all helped build the settler nation. Black laboring bodies have even been used to build the settler nation. However, Black labor is just one kind of use within an open, violent and infinite repertoire of practices of making Black flesh fungible.

One way that I have explained fungibility to my undergraduate students in my course “Gender and Sexuality in the African Diaspora,” is to think about the slave owner Madame Delphine LaLaurie’s use of enslaved bodies in the FX television series, American Horror Story: Coven. LaLaurie uses Black flesh to meet uses and desires beyond those of labor and profit. She runs a torture chamber in order to satisfy lusts that include and exceed the sexual. In one episode, she murders and then uses the blood of an enslaved newborn child as an elixir that wards off the aging process. One gets a sense that the possibilities for Black flesh are unending under her ownership.

The infinite possibilities for fungible Black flesh mark a fundamental distinction between fungible slave bodies and non-Black (exploited) laboring bodies. Further, Black bodies cannot effectively be incorporated into the human category of laborers. If Black laboring bodies were incorporated into the category; “laborer” would have no meaning as a human condition. Blackness is constituted by a fungibility and accumulation that must exist outside the edge and boundary of the laborer-as-human. If there were no Black fungible and accumulable bodies there could be no “wage laborer” that cohered into a proletariat.

While labor as a discourse may work for non-Black and non-Native people of color as a way of interpellating themselves within settler colonial relations, it does not explain Black presence, Black labor or Black use in White settler nation-states. Theories that attempt to triangulate Blackness into the Settler/Native antagonism in White settler states do so by positing Blackness as the labor force that helps make the settler landscape possible.[3] It is true that Black labor literally tills, fences in and cultivates the settler’s land. However, this singular analysis both obscures the issue of Black fungibility and reduces Blackness to a mere tool of settlement rather than a constitutive element of settler colonialism’s conceptual order.

Fungibility represents a key analytic for thinking about Blackness and settler colonialism in White settler nation-states. Black fungible bodies are the conceptual and discursive fodder through which the Settler-Master can even begin to imagine or “think” spatial expansion (King, 2013). The space making practices of settler colonialism require the production of Black flesh as a fungible form of property, not just as a form of labor. In Scenes of Subjection, Saidiya Hartman argues that the enslaved embody the abstract “interchangeability and replaceability” that is endemic to the commodity (Hartman, 1997, p. 21). Beyond, the captive body’s use as labor, the Black body has a figurative and metaphorical value that extends into the realm of the discursive and symbolic. What Hartman names as the “figurative capacities of blackness,” allows the Settler-Master to conceptualize Blackness as the ultimate sign for expansion and unending space within the symbolic economy of settlement (Hartman, 1997, p. 7; and King, forthcoming). Blackness is much more than labor within both slavery’s and settler colonialism’s imaginaries.

Like Hartman, I argue that Blackness’ figurative capacity and interchangeability has a life—or afterlife—within the discursive and spatial projects of settler colonial expansion (King, forthcoming). Settler colonialism requires a symbol of infinite flux in order to animate and imagine its spatial project (King, 2013). In my dissertation, In the Clearing, I argue that Jennifer Morgan’s book Laboring Women: Women and Reproduction in New World Slavery, configures Black women as spatial agents who are [symbolically] essential to the settlement of land during the colonial period in the coastal regions of the South and the West Indies. In fact, the Black female body must be discursively constructed in order to make it possible to even conceive of planting settlements during the “first generations of settlement and slave ownership” in South Carolina and Barbados (Morgan, 2004). Morgan argues that 18th century settlement required particular symbolic constructions and particular uses of the Black female body (Morgan, 2004, p. 26).[4]

Black fungibility represents this space of discursive and conceptual possibility for settler colonial imaginaries. Black fungible bodies work beyond the metrics and “metaphysics of labor” in White settler colonial states (Jackson, 2012, p. 215). Labor becomes a limiting frame for conceptualizing Blackness on White settler colonial terrain. Reimagining Blackness and theorizing anti-Black racism on unusual landscapes requires that we rethink the usefulness of convenient and orthodox epistemic frames. We must venture beyond labor and its limits in order to think about settler colonialism’s anti-Black modalities. Fungibility and other frames deserve our attention as we continue to think about anti-Black racism, Native genocide and the US settler-slave (e)state.

#### Black subordination is the stage for class conflict---focus on the political economy obscures libidinal violence AND ensures white solidarity trumps working-class coalitions.

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To be sure, the pivotal political-economic role of slavery in fuelling national and global capital accumulation is not new. A plethora of scholars throughout the twentieth century, though with differing emphases, have shown how nineteenthcentury capitalism was inextricably dependent on Black slave labour. As Du Bois argues, ‘Black labor became the foundation stone not only of the Southern social structure, but of Northern manufacture and commerce, of the English factory system, of European commerce, of buying and selling on a world-wide scale.’58 Yet, revisiting the ways racial slavery and capitalism were linked remains important given the tendency in certain strands of Marxism to categorise slavery as pre-capitalist because the slave was not ‘free’ and the liberal freedom of the worker is taken to be the sine qua non of capitalism.59 In opposition to this tendency, the anti-Black relation reveals the ways slavery, as a mode of racialised expropriation, anchors the ‘unfree’ end of the labour spectrum and, like the colonial relation though in a radically different way, forms a precondition for the exploitation of normative wage-labour.

Looking at racial slavery solely through the lens of productive labour, however, fails to capture the ‘libidinal economy’60 of slavery. That is, the specificity of slavery as a regime of violence, domination and accumulation, including but not limited to the ways gendered, sexual and reproductive labour enabled and was conscripted to capital accumulation.61 Rather than bracketing the libidinal economy from the political economy, the anti-Black relation offers a dialectical reading of these constitutive aspects of racial slavery withoutreducing gratuitous anti-Black violencesolelyto a function of capital**.** Saidiya Hartman, for instance, troubles Du Bois’s and C. L. R James’s use of the category ‘worker’ to represent the slave, arguing that this move ‘obscures as much as it reveals’.62 In demonstrating how Black women’s labour exceeds the figure of the Black worker as conceptualised by two exemplars of Cedric Robinson’s Black radical tradition, Hartman at once draws attention to the ‘presumptive masculinism’ of this tradition, while simultaneously deepening this tradition’s insights.63 We can build on Hartman’s insights to connect two interconnected levels of gendered, racialised expropriation at the heart of racial slavery: the labour of the slave as a worker and the gendered labour of social and biological reproduction.64 In the context of the capitalist world-system, these two layers of political-economic and gendered, reproductive expropriation congealed in the institution of chattel slavery, accumulating profit for not only planters and slave owners, but also a vast intercontinental network of merchants, financiers, industrialists, states and corporations. In a direct sense, capital’s exploitation of wage-labour in the North and in Europe was premised on the expropriation of Black slave labour, including the reproductive capacities of Black women.

At the same time, the Black slave, by being confined to the ‘unfree’ end of the labour spectrum, gives stability and meaning to the ‘free’ white male proletariat. Here, the role of racial slavery in the social order troubles any simplistic binary between the political and libidinal economies of anti-Blackness. Expanding on Du Bois’s insight about the ‘public and psychological wage’, a compensatory set of privileges extended to poor whites in lieu of their status as ‘not Black’, scholars such as David Roediger and Joel Olson have argued that the ‘wages of whiteness’ helped consolidate a white cross-class alliance.65 This class collaboration between capitalists and a significant segment of white workers is the foundation of the white supremacist racial order, ensuring the undisturbed accumulation of capital in and through the preservation of Black subordination. White supremacy, in other words, stabilised the inherently exploitative system of American capitalism by [obstructing] ~~retarding~~ the development of a strong interracial working-class movement. Drawing on Du Bois’s Black Reconstruction, Olson states,

Du Bois shows that racial oppression is a form of social control that perpetuates class relations. The white working class serves as a buffer control stratum between capitalists and the rest of the working class, facilitating social stability by holding down Black workers. But Du Bois shows that race does more than exclude, divide, degrade, and repress. It is also a productive form of power that accumulates humans into particular groups in order to produce relations of docility-utility. It does this through a peculiar arrangement of class relations, which are secured through various privileges granted to members of the dominant race. This cross-class alliance between the capitalist class and a section of the working class is the genesis of the American racial order.66

What is especially insightful about Olson’s analysis of anti-Black racial domination, emerging from his reading of Du Bois, is that race is not simply exclusionary, divisive and repressive. Rather, race is also productive, generating a web of social relations that manages the contradictions between capitalist society and egalitarian visions of a democratic order.67 Resting on the structural relegation of enslaved (and free) Black populations to the bottom of the social order, the historical effect of this white cross-class collaboration is that it has provided stability for American democracy ‘by reconciling political equality with economic exploitation through a system of racial privilege and subordination that deflects attention from class, gender, and other grievances’.68

The expropriation of Black labour is a key motive force structuring Black subordination. I use the term expropriation to emphasise the distinction between capital’s extraction of surplus value from Black labour and capital’s subjection of ‘free’ wage-labour. Even with the transition from slavery to wage-labour following the Civil War, it remains necessary to avoid collapsing anti-Black domination as simply a product of capitalist exploitation.69 This is because racism, and antiBlack racism in particular, remains productive of the American social order in a way that the concept of ‘capital relation’, by itself, cannot capture. Two important clarifications are necessary here. First, the argument I am making is not transhistorical. The relations between race, labour, capital accumulation and resistance are mutable and variable across time. However, I am suggesting that there are certain historical continuities in the ways white supremacy and identification with whiteness have fractured working-class struggles across the history of American capitalism.70 Second, in connecting the libidinal economy of slavery and anti-Blackness to political economy, I am not arguing that white supremacy is merely an extension of capital’s logic. While the psychic and material effects of gratuitous anti-Black violence do indeed reinforce and reproduce capitalism, the framework of the libidinal economy affords insight into how ‘white sadism’, ‘white enjoyment’ and the pleasures derived from this violence more generally exceeds the grid of political economy.71

### 2NC---Cap Bad Link---Root Cause

#### Black abjection is the root cause of capitalism---AND even if class struggle preceded slavery, fungibility shapes contemporary markets

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W. E. B. Du Bois suggested the white worker’s choice and the black slave’s absence of choice were important components of the capitalistic distinction between blackness and whiteness. Du Bois argued white workers always held out hope that “they themselves might also become planters by saving money, by investment, by the power of good luck.”71 Black slaves come into existence not as exploited, which is to say “free” to sell their labor (choice), but expropriated in ways that mirror the extraction of natural resources.72 Another way to say this is that the slave, much like the tree or cattle, for Frank Wilderson,73 is the ground on which human capitalist exploitation stands. Julia Ott’s comprehensive review of research on slave capital bears this out: the transatlantic slave trade and slave-based Southern US commodity production created modern capitalism, financing transformations in technology, industry, and economy more thoroughly than any other capital input.74

Ian Baucom explains the connection between the objecthood of black slave bodies and the economic rationality of finance.75 According to Baucom, it was the transatlantic slave trade that birthed the modern financial calculation of value through insurance on slaves. The value of slave bodies as chattel, which could, if circumstances demanded, be cast overboard from a slave ship facing turbulent seas, was guaranteed in advance for the owners of slave ships by insurance policies. The calculation of the cost of that insurance was a foundational form of what Baucom variously terms “actuarial historicism” or “theoretical realism,” which are forms of rationality that “ground value in the loss of the singular and the invention of the average.”76 In other words, insurance on slave bodies evacuated their singularity more completely even than enslavement, rendering them placeholders of value, which could be converted into paper money either through exchange or through the exercise of an insurance contract once they were cast overboard. For Baucom, the modern credit economy and finance capitalism itself are founded on the reification of speculative values that the insured transatlantic trade in black slaves inaugurated. In his formulation, it is the white slave trader or actuary who can see through the “thingliness” of the objects of slavery to calculate their speculative value, embodying the “speculative culture of finance capital” that has much in common with the economic rationality invoked in the calculation of the abstract cost of “free” checking accounts, despite their very real lived costs for poor customers.77

These dynamics did not end with slavery. The twentieth century is rich with examples of outerdetermined black objecthood within capitalism.78 The 1939 Federal Housing Authority Underwriting Manual that served as both guide and tool for suburbanization in the US not only ratified the practice of “redlining” whereby neighborhoods of black families were drawn out of mortgage lending, but actually directed homeowners to use racial covenants to prevent black people from moving into their neighborhoods.79 Both redlining and racial covenants acted on black homeowners and potential buyers, making them objects to be circumscribed and excluded. They also prevented black people from becoming privileged subjects of the American mortgage boom, which was built and protected for those consumers who fit within the racialized subject position of homo economicus.

## Case

### 2NC---Solvency---Courts

#### Courts circumvent.

Newman 19, University of Miami School of Law professor and a former attorney with the U.S. Department of Justice Antitrust Division. (John, 4-5-2019, "What Democratic Contenders Are Missing in the Race to Revive Antitrust", *Atlantic*, https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2019/04/what-2020-democratic-candidates-miss-about-antitrust/586135/)

But the federal courts represent a massive stumbling block for any progressive antitrust movement. Reformers have identified two paths forward; both lead eventually to the court system. The first is relatively moderate: appoint regulators who will actually enforce the laws already on the books. Warren’s plan rests in part on this straightforward idea. The second, more audacious path requires congressional action to amend and strengthen our current laws. Warren’s call for a new ban on technology companies’ buying and selling via their own platforms falls into this category. Klobuchar has also proposed new antitrust legislation that would make it easier to block harmful mergers and acquisitions. But no matter its content, enforcing a law requires persuading a judge. When it comes to U.S. antitrust laws, federal judges—not Congress, and not regulatory agencies—are the ultimate arbiters. The Department of Justice Antitrust Division, one of our two public enforcement agencies, files all its cases in federal courts. And although the Federal Trade Commission (the other) can decide cases internally, the inevitable appeals eventually end up in court as well. No matter how strongly worded a law may be, ideologically driven judges can usually find a way around enforcing it. The cyclical history of U.S. antitrust law is proof that judges wield nearly limitless institutional power in this area. Soon after Congress passed the Sherman Act in 1890, a conservative Supreme Court began to chip away at its effectiveness. Congress reacted in 1914 with the Clayton Act, which sought to ban anticompetitive mergers. In 1936, at the height of the New Deal era, Congress passed the Robinson-Patman Act, which prohibits price discrimination (charging different prices to different buyers for the same product). These laws were actively enforced for decades. But starting in the late 1970s, conservative judges began to erode the Clayton Act. Today, megamergers among competitors such as Bayer and Monsanto barely raise eyebrows. So-called vertical mergers, which combine suppliers and their customers, are now all but immune from antitrust enforcement—see the DOJ’s failed challenge to AT&T and Time Warner’s recent tie-up. Under the business-friendly Roberts Court, the Robinson-Patman Act has similarly been eviscerated. By the 2000s, the ideas of the conservative Chicago School had become mainstream in antitrust circles. Robinson-Patman, a law intended to protect small businesses, was an easy target for Chicago School critics narrowly focused on efficiency and low consumer prices. Their attacks found a receptive audience in the federal judiciary. Among insiders, Robinson-Patman is now known as “zombie law.” It remains on the books, but regulators no longer bother trying to enforce it. If Democrats want to change antitrust law, they will first and foremost need to change the judges who apply it. Yet none of the 2020 contenders championing antitrust reform have even mentioned the possibility of appointing progressive antitrust thinkers to the bench. Conservatives, on the other hand, have long recognized the centrality of antitrust to broader questions about the apportionment of power in society. In his seminal work, The Antitrust Paradox, Robert Bork called antitrust a “microcosm in which larger movements of our society are reflected.” Battles fought in this arena, Bork wrote, “are likely to affect the outcome of parallel struggles in others.” Strong antitrust enforcement keeps powerful monopolies in check. Toothless antitrust allows the unlimited accumulation of corporate power. Recognizing the high stakes, the Republican Party has gone to great lengths to appoint conservative antitrust experts to the federal judiciary. Bork was an antitrust professor at Yale Law School before becoming an appellate judge in 1982.\* Frank Easterbrook practiced and taught antitrust before donning the black robe in 1985. Douglas Ginsburg served as the head of the Justice Department’s Antitrust Division before he became a federal judge in 1986. None of the three managed to join the Supreme Court, but not for lack of trying. Reagan nominated both Bork and Ginsburg to serve as justices, though Ginsburg withdrew and Bork was famously rejected after a contentious Senate hearing. And whom did the GOP select as its very first U.S. Supreme Court nominee during the Trump Administration? None other than Neil Gorsuch, who practiced antitrust law for more than a decade before joining the Tenth Circuit. Even as a judge, Gorsuch continued to teach a law-school course on antitrust until his confirmation to the Supreme Court in 2017. Once upon a time, progressives demonstrated similar concern about judicial treatment of antitrust laws. Justice Stephen Breyer, for example, served as special assistant to the head of the DOJ Antitrust Division before his judicial appointment by President Jimmy Carter. Earlier still, Justice John Paul Stevens was an antitrust lawyer, scholar, and professor before his appointment to the bench. Today’s Democratic 2020 hopefuls seem to have forgotten the lessons of history. Their antitrust proposals focus exclusively on appointing the right regulators and amending our current statutes. These are right-minded ideas, but they overlook the central role judges play in our political system. There is an old saying in the legal community: “Hard cases make bad law.” That may be true, but it is just as often the case that bad judges make bad law. Real antitrust reform will require more than regulatory and legislative tweaks; it will require the right judges.

# 1NR

## K

### 1NR---Perm

#### Damage control DA. The perm is a liberal corrective that interposes Black radical theorizing between genocidal logics.

King 17, Assistant Professor of Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies at Georgia State University. (Tiffany, Spring 2017, “Humans Involved: Lurking in the Lines of Posthumanist Flight”, *Critical Ethnic Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 1, pg. 173-174)

As an example of how the protocols, codes of conduct, and politesse of postcolonial “business as usual” unfold in the university, I reflect on my encounters as a student and now professor in the graduate classroom, reading scholarly texts, listening, and taking part in scholarly critique and the collegial repartee that occurs at academic conferences. Within these scenarios, I have observed the decorum of supposedly “engaged and rigorous” critique proceed in the following ways. Often postcolonial interventions into colonial or critical theory travel through phases, stages of progression, and levels of engagement with continental philosophy. First, in order to demonstrate your scholarly due diligence, capacity for rigor, and abstraction, you must learn and rehearse the origins of and become fluent in the language, idioms, and grammar of Deleuze and Guattari or whichever white scholar is in fashion. Second, you must figuratively inhabit and empathize with the white scholar’s very personal and particular existential and ethical questions (even if you cannot relate to her particular kind of situatedness or experience). It is often in graduate seminars where you have been asked—and we have been trained as faculty—to have you think about what it must have been like to be Karl Marx, Michel Foucault, or Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari in the moment in which they lived. Imagine the trials and tribulations of being a European bourgeois male maverick in the academy and civil society. In other words, you must internalize and perform this worldview as if it applies to you. After you internalize and perform, the third thing that you are allowed but by no means required to do is list the problems with this theory or worldview. Once you have identified the problems, even irreconcilable ones, you are encouraged to make an intervention or slight adjustment to the discourse or theory by asserting that you will now put Indigenous or Black life at the center of this body of thought. The challenge or intervention usually reads as “what if we put Native or Black studies at the center of Deleuzoguattarian thought?”

Although we may become disillusioned with and challenge a metanarrative, we are rarely encouraged to do what Eve Tuck does when she “Break[s] Up with Deleuze.” We are often prevented from getting to this stage of exasperation or justified disgust because we are not allowed to stop, look at, and more importantly feel the violence of Western turns in critical theory. Because of academic respectability politics that impose a kind of bourgeois politesse on all “communicative acts,” be they in person or in writing, it is impolite and more importantly irrational to be rendered devastated, enraged, mute, or immobile by the violent terms on which continental theory proceeds. One must tolerate that Deleuzoguattarian rhizomatic movements require Indigenous genocide. In fact, it is a necessary evil in order for the West to model the kind of unfettered nomadic movement that Deleuze and Guattari privilege. The neoliberal temporality of productivity also requires that scholars keep moving unaffected in the midst of the violence. In fact, one is required to work through and repair or do damage control for Deleuze and Guattari. This is what a “good scholar” does: puts Black or Native studies at the center of rhizomes rather than contesting the very terms in which lines of flight become epistemic entities. But how do we perform or act otherwise in the face of this kind of violence?

I am not arguing that academics should not read Deleuze and Guattari. As scholars committed to decolonial thought, we should read their work and understand how genocide and colonialism flow through it. However, we can read without becoming seduced and attached to the work. I turn again to the writings of Black and Native feminists as an example of what this critical disinterest and refusal might look like.32 As Simpson and Tuck and Yang argue, refusal can reroute one set of concerns and questions and redirect them toward other pursuits. Better yet, disenchantment and pessimism can compel one to perceive or think about new questions. Refusal and misandry can move you out of the circuit that the corporate university imposes on critical thinking: know, internalize, perform, disagree, and then center yourself**.**