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#### There is indisputable evidence of god

Swinburne 4 (Richard, a British philosopher, Emeritus Professor of Philosophy at the University of Oxford, “The Existence of God,” pg. 7-11, 2004)

The most general phenomenon that provides evidence for the existence of God is the existence of the physical universe for as long as it has existed (whether a finite time or, if it has no beginning, an infinite time). This is something evidently inexplicable by science. For a scientific explanation as such explains the occurrence of one state of affairs S1 in terms of a previous state of affairs S2 and some law of nature which makes states like S2 bring about states like S1. Thus it may explain the planets being in their present positions by a previous state of the system (the sun and planets being where they were last year) and the operation of Kepler’s laws which state that states like the latter are followed a year later by states like the former. But what science by its very nature cannot explain is why there are any states of affairs at all. My next phenomenon is the operation of the most general laws of nature, that is, the orderliness of nature in conforming to very general laws of physics, from which the regularities of chemistry and biology follow. What exactly the most general laws are science may not yet have discovered - perhaps they are the field equations of Einstein’s General Theory of Relativity, or more likely there are some yet more fundamental laws, perhaps the laws of a „Theory of Everything’ Now science can explain why one law operates in some narrow area, in terms of the operation of a wider law in the particular conditions of that narrow area. Thus it can explain why Galileo’s law of fall holds - that small objects near the surface of the Earth fall with a constant acceleration towards the Earth. Galileo’s law follows from Newton’s laws, given that the Earth is a massive body far from other massive bodies and the objects on its surface are close to it and small in mass in comparison. But what science by its very nature cannot explain is why there are the most general laws of nature that there are; for ex hypothesi, no wider laws can explain their operation. That there is a Universe and that there are laws of nature are phenomena so general and pervasive that we tend to ignore them. But there might so easily not have been a universe at all, ever. Or the Universe might so easily have been a chaotic mess. That there is an orderly Universe is something very striking, yet beyond the capacity of science ever to explain. Science’s inability to explain these things is not a temporary phenomenon, caused by the backwardness of 21st Century science. Rather, because of what a scientific explanation is, these things will ever be beyond its capacity to explain. For scientific explanations by their very nature terminate with some ultimate natural law and ultimate arrangement of physical things, and the questions I am raising are why there are natural laws and physical things at all. However, there is another kind of explanation of phenomena which we use all the time and which we see as a proper way of explaining phenomena. This is what I shall call personal explanation. We often explain some phenomenon E as brought about by a person P in order to achieve some purpose or goal G. The present motion of my lips is explained as brought about by me for the purpose of delivering a lecture. The cup being on the table is explained by a person having put it there for the purpose of drinking out of it. Yet this is a different way of explaining things from the scientific. Scientific explanation involves laws of nature and previous states of affairs. Personal explanation involves persons and purposes. If we cannot give a scientific explanation of the existence and orderliness of the Universe, perhaps we can give a personal explanation. But why should we think that the existence and orderliness of the Universe has an explanation at all? We seek for an explanation of all things; but we have seen that we only have reason for supposing that we have found one if the purported explanation is simple, and leads us to expect what we find when that is otherwise not to be expected. The history of science shows that we judge that phenomena that are many and complex need explaining, and that they are to be explained in terms of something simpler. The motions of the planets (subject to Kepler‟s laws), the mechanical interactions of bodies on Earth, the behaviour of pendula, the motions of tides, the behaviour of comets, etc., formed a pretty miscellaneous set of phenomena. Newton‟s laws of motion constituted a simple theory that led us to expect these phenomena, and it was judged to be a true explanation of them. The existence of thousands of different chemical substances combining in different ratios to make other substances was complex. The hypothesis that there were only a hundred or so chemical elements of which the thousands of substances were made was a simple hypothesis that led us to expect the complex phenomenon. Our Universe is a complex thing. There are lots and lots of separate chunks of matter in the universe. The chunks have each a different finite and not very natural volume, shape, mass, etc. - consider the vast diversity of the galaxies, stars and planets, and pebbles on the sea shore. Matter is inert and has no powers that it can choose to exert; it does what it has to do. There is a limited amount of it in any region and it has a limited amount of energy and velocity. The Universe is a large and complex thing. The conformity of objects throughout endless time and space to simple laws is likewise something which cries out for explanation in yet simpler terms. For let us consider what this amounts to. Laws are not things, independent of material objects. To say that all objects conform to laws is simply to say that they all behave in exactly the same way, that they have certain powers which they exert on other objects, and liabilities to exert those powers in certain circumstances. To say, for example, that the planets obey Kepler‟s laws is just to say that each planet at each moment of time has the power of moving in the way that Kepler‟s laws state, and the liability to do so while the sun and other planets are there. There is therefore this vast coincidence in the powers and liabilities of objects at all times and in all places. If all the coins of some region have the same markings, or all the papers in a room are written in the same handwriting, we seek an explanation in terms of a common source of these coincidences. We should seek a similar explanation for that vast coincidence we describe as the conformity of objects to laws of nature - e.g. the fact that all electrons are produced, attract and repel other particles and combine with them in exactly the same way at each point of endless time and space. The hypothesis of theism is that the Universe exists because there is a divine person5 who keeps it in existence and that laws of nature operate because there is a divine person who brings it about that they do. He brings it about that the laws of nature operate by sustaining in every object in the Universe its liability to behave in accord with those laws. He brings it about that the Universe exists by sustaining at each moment (of finite or infinite time) objects with the powers and liabilities codified by laws of nature including the laws of the conservation of matter energy, i.e. by making it the case at each moment that what there was before continues to exist. The hypothesis is a hypothesis that a person brings about these things for some purpose. He acts directly on the Universe, as we act directly on our brains, guiding them to move our limbs (but the Universe is not his body - for he could at any moment destroy it, and act on another universe, or do without a universe). As we have seen, personal explanation and scientific explanation are the two ways we have of explaining the occurrence of phenomena. Since there cannot be a scientific explanation of the existence of the Universe, either there is a personal explanation or there is no explanation at all. The hypothesis that there is a divine person is the hypothesis of the existence of the simplest kind of person there could be. A person is a being who exists for some time with power to bring about effects, knowledge of how to do so, and freedom to make choices of which effects to bring about. A divine person is by definition an everlasting omnipotent (that is, infinitely powerful), omniscient (that is, all knowing), and perfectly free person; he is an everlasting person of infinite power, knowledge and freedom; a person to whose existence, power, knowledge and freedom there are no limits except those of logic. The hypothesis that there exists a being with infinite degrees of the qualities essential to a being of that kind is the postulation of a very simple being. And it is simpler to suppose that these properties are not accidentally correlated with each other but follow necessarily from the essence of the divine person. The hypothesis that there is such a divine person is a much simpler hypothesis than the hypothesis that there is a God who has such and such a limited power. It is simpler in just the same way that the hypothesis that some particle has zero mass or infinite velocity, is simpler than the hypothesis that it has 0.32147 of some unit of mass or a velocity of 221.000 km/sec. A finite limitation cries out for an explanation of why there is just that particular limit, in a way that limitlessness does not. It follows from God‟s perfect freedom that he wil be subject to no influences deterring him from doing what he sees reason to do. That is what he believes good to do; and since being omniscient, he will always know what is good, he will always do what is good. He will be perfectly good. That there should exist anything at all, let alone a universe as complex and as orderly as ours, is exceedingly strange. But if there is a God, it is not vastly unlikely that he should create such a universe. A universe such as ours is a thing of beauty, and a theatre in which humans and other creatures can grow and work out their destiny. The orderliness of the Universe makes it a beautiful Universe, but, even more importantly, it makes it a Universe which humans can learn to control and change. A good God will want to create creatures such as humans, having a free choice between good and evil, a deep responsibility for themselves and each other, and an ability to form their own character in such a way as to love God; and for that we need bodies, places where we can take hold of each other and so hurt or benefit each other. But we can only look after ourselves and each other (or choose not to do so) if there are simple laws governing a Universe in which humans are embodied. If we have bodies, then there are ways in which we can hurt or benefit each other. But only if there are simple laws of nature which we can come to know will there be ways in which my doing this or that will make a predictable difference to me or you. Only if humans know that by sowing certain seeds, weeding and watering them, they will get corn, can they develop an agriculture. And only if they know that by rubbing sticks together they can make fire will they be able (if that is what they choose) to burn the food supplies of others. Graspable laws of nature allow agents a choice of how to treat each other. So God has good reason to make an orderly Universe and, ex hypothesi, being omnipotent, he has the power to do so. So the hypothesis that there is a God makes the existence of the Universe much more to be expected than it would otherwise be, and it is a very simple hypothesis. Hence the arguments from the existence of the Universe and its conformity to simple natural laws are good arguments to an explanation of the phenomena, and provide substantial evidence for the existence of God.

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#### Empiricism has created a White Hyperreality

Gillespie 20. John Gillespie ’20, PhD student at UC Irvine, Comparative Literature, “ON THE PROSPECT OF BLACK BAUDRILLARD: NOTES ON THE PRECESSION OF SIMULACRA”, Mumble Theory, 7/14/20, Paper presented at Wake Forest University, https://mumbletheory.com/2020/07/14/on-the-prospect-of-black-baudrillard-notes-on-the-precession-of-simulacra/

In Baudrillard, the images and representations of the real have become indistinguishable from the real itself such that a simulation may stand in for reality without any semblance of reality being lost. The simulation is the reality. The reality would cease to be a scene of the Real without the simulation. Thus, in Baudrillard’s account of “How We Mistook the Map for the Territory”[1] the map has not so much as receded access to the territory itself, but has instead become so enmeshed in the territory that there is a hazard in being able to determine the difference. Thus, he begins Simulation and Simulacra with what he calls, “The Precession of Simulacra.” A precession is defined as, “the slow movement of an axis of a spinning body around another axis due to a torque (such as gravitational influence) acting to change the direction of the first axis.” With the use of this term, we can infer that at the start of Baudrillard’s magnum opus what he is attempting to describe in his philosophical sociology of his increasingly post-modern Euro-Western society is a transition in the spinning of its axis. This transition is a transition of which “due to a torque (such as gravitational influence)” has acted to change the direction of the first axis. This transition, according to Baudrillard, can be read in and through the axiomatics of Western relations to the technology and techniques of the sign. Baudrillard states: All Western faith and good faith became engaged in this wager on representation: that a sign could refer to the depth of meaning, that a sign could be exchanged for meaning and that something could guarantee this exchange – God of course… Representation stems from the principle of the equivalence of the sign and of the real (even if this equivalence is Utopian, it is a fundamental axiom). Simulation, on the contrary, stems from the Utopia of the principle of equivalence, from the radical negation of the sign as value, from the sign as the reversion and death sentence of every reference. Whereas representation attempts to absorb simulation by interpreting it as a false representation, simulation envelops the whole edifice of representation itself as a simulacrum. [2] Thus, what is brought about is the transition from the Modern axis of Representation to the Post-Modern regime of Simulation. The former presupposes a direct link between the word and its object, the linguistics of the category and the materiality of the thing being categorized, suggesting that what is spoken speaks to what is true. The Post-Modern axis of Simulation is an oscillation that negates the value of the word, the sign, and the category – moving from one pole of terminology to the other suggesting that what was once the opposite of the signified can also be found internally within its signification. For example, Television under a regime of Representation is an articulation of a re-presentation of the Real, but under Baudrillard’s description Television becomes a simulation of the Real – a reality TV, no longer separate and unequal, but integrated and enveloped. Is the President a real President or a President acting as President on TV? Baudrillard would say he is both, which is to say that he is a neither, which is to say there is no President. Thus, this transition in axiological relations to the real is a transition that he states, “is the generation by models of a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal.”[3] Thirteen years after his death, it would seem that such a characterization, like the proclamations of the death of God by Baudrillard’s philosophical predecessor Friedrich Nietzsche, had been proclaimed all too soon. Yet, here we are, we children of the dawn of the 21st Century, and we cannot help but find ourselves in a web of virtualities, simulations, fake news (which in itself is a perfect phrasing of the imbalance of opposites in accordance to Baudrillard), and viral videos of violence that pose no threat nor circulate any meaning. In a way, Baudrillard was the most absurd of the post-structuralist/post-modernist thinkers. In this I admire him, for he was the most willing to verbalize the fracturing of a Worldview that had begun to unfurl in the aftermath of the revolutions of the 1960s. In addition to this, what makes Baudrillard’s account of this turn in relation to the sign is the location in which he places the evidence of the transformation in axioms from the realism of modernity to the hyper-realism of post-modernity. While readings of Baudrillard and the post-modern often suggest that it was solely the technological transformations from within an increasingly cybernetic and algorithmic technocapitalism that drove Baudrillard’s insistence until death that the simulation had made the Real territory impossible to grasp, it is Baudrillard’s problematic meditations on the “Savage” which drive home the truth of the hyper-real built as it is on the grounds of a violent hyper-chaos. Indeed, for what the Savage reveals to Baudrillard is none other than that which Denise Ferreira Da Silva states boldly namely that, “We had something to do with the crisis of science; we, the others of Man, were upsetting history: our words and deeds unleashed the predicament of the ‘modern order.’” [4] Baudrillard, at the limits of his corporeal integrity, suggest a similar truth from the position of the fractured subject position of Man – elaborating the paradoxes of the capacities that bore him. He states, “Ethnology brushed up against its paradoxical death in 1971, the day when the Philippine government decided to return the few dozen Tasaday who had just been discovered in the depths of the jungle, where they had lived for eight centuries without any contact with the rest of the species, to their primitive state, out of the reach of colonizers, tourists, and ethnologists. This at the suggestion of the anthropologists themselves, who were seeing the indigenous people disintegrate immediately upon contact, like mummies in the open air.”[5] The genocidal encounter of ethnology with its object of investigation reveals the paradoxes of the Western real. In order for its real to live, its object must die. In order to prevent the death of the object, the strategies of procuring the real must die. In order to protect the real, the simulation of the real must rise. The Real is resurrected through a simulation. Thus, the Tasaday after being hoarded into ethnological description, categorical schemata and onto-ethico-epistemological accounts rooted in colonization which labelled the “newly found primitives” as exemplars of the primal vestiges of the Human species, will be returned to the jungles from whence they came to be a living museum to the past (which is also the present since the Tasaday are still with us) of Human evolution. In other words, the Tasaday/Savage reveals the simulation. In the Savage, the paradoxes of science, ethnology, and the Real are made to bear. Hence why Baudrillard states: The Indian thus returned to the ghetto, in the glass coffin of the virgin forest, again becomes the model of simulation of all the possible Indians from before ethnology. This model thus grants itself the luxury to incarnate itself beyond itself in the ‘brute’ reality of these Indians it has entirely reinvented – Savages who are indebted to ethnology for still being Savages: what a turn of events, what a triumph for this science that seemed dedicated to their destruction![6] Where Baudrillard takes his analysis both all too far and all too Human is in suggesting that the condition which has made the Savage, a Savage, is a condition which has not only become a universal condition by way of the universal expression of the simulation of signs, but a condition which belongs to the sign alone and not to the materiality of severed flesh, broken necks, and unreclaimable bodies. The absurdity of Baudrillard lies not so much in his claim that the Savage has been articulated in ethnology as an amalgam of simulations and simulacra but rather in his insistence that this relation of simulation and simulacra is the same for all Beings across the board (because post-modernity) including but not limited too Baudrillard’s own ontological capacity as a White Being and henceforth, the still long-enduring typological face of Humanity par excellence. In Baudrillard’s own words, “We are all Tasadays, Indians who have again become what they were – simulacral Indians who at last proclaim the universal truth of ethnology.”[7] It is at this point in Baudrillard’s work that “On the Prospect of Weaponized Death” begins not as a blackening of Baudrillard, but as a critique of its elaboration. For what one finds in Baudrillard’s theory of the Real is the limits of the sign to signify a universality for all positionalities thought to be interlocuting from within the social space of civil society. For in Baudrillard’s theory, there had once been a Real underneath the sign, and now the Real is the simulacrum. In this transition from the Real to the Hyper-Real, one can suggest that at one point there was a representation that adequately separated the Indian as Indian and Western Man as Western Man, just as one can suggest that now, with the triumph of the simulation, we have all become savages. Yet, such a theory has not read Hortense Spillers nor grasped the severity of her claims that “Sticks and stones might break our bones, but words will most certainly kill us.”[8] For what one gathers in this poetically poignant critique of the sign is the materiality of semiotics. A materiality that Baudrillard and most of the post-structuralist interest in the signifier occludes. To take account of the words that kill is to take account of the violence of the signifier and the materiality of the word. Put differently, Hortense Spiller’s “words will most certainly kill” is a reminder to remain conscientious about the materiality of the map – no matter its arrangement over and in-between the territory. Or better yet, Hortense Spiller’s “words will most certainly kill” is a reminder that language is haunted by a violence which is “the grammar and ghost of every gesture.”[9] That there can be a Being for which the sign – language nor image – is not enough to render coherent or legible its grammar of suffering is forgone as the attempt of procuring universal entrapment is announced in Baudrillard. Yet, the cataloguing of the World in accordance to hierarchical variations of difference – by way of axiological simulations of abstractions that begin to map the territory of the post-modern and hyper-modern landscape is neither equally distributed nor is it all a game of sign, signifiers and semiotics. In fact, the very conditions of possibility for such a cataloguing of personhood as well as its post-Sixties transformations begins with the bracketing off of Blackness as the nadir of ethnology. So that if we see this category of the damnés that is internal to (and interned within) the prison system of the United States as the analog form of a global archi-pelago, constituted by the Third- and Fourth-World peoples of the so-called “underdeveloped” areas of the world—most totally of all by the peoples of the continent of Africa (now stricken with AIDS, drought, and ongoing civil wars, and whose bottommost place as the most impoverished of all the earth’s continents is directly paralleled by the situation of its Black Diaspora peoples, with Haiti being produced and reproduced as the most impover- ished nation of the Americas)—a systemic pattern emerges. This pattern is linked to the fact that while in the post-sixties United States, as Herbert Gans noted recently, the Black population group, of all the multiple groups comprising the post-sixties social hierarchy, has once again come to be placed at the bottommost place of that hierarchy(Gans, 1999), with all incoming new nonwhite/non-Black groups, as Gans’s fellow sociologist Andrew Hacker (1992) earlier pointed out, coming to claim “normal” North American identity by the putting of visible distance between themselves and the Black population group (in effect, claiming “normal” human status by distancing themselves from the group that is still made to occupy the nadir, “nigger” rung of being human within the terms of our present ethnoclass Man’s overrepresentation of its “descriptive statement” [Bateson 1969] as if it were that of the human itself), then the struggle of our times, one that has hitherto had no name, is the struggle against this overrepresentation. [10] When Baudrillard reduces the Savages condition to a condition of hyper-reality that “we all” must undergo he forgets the ways in which his own present ethnoclass of Man still retains the overdeterminate grounds for authorizing and signifying its own “descriptive statement” as if it was the only meta-narrative that mattered and for that matter possessed Real matter. He also leaves unthought or never begins to consider the ways in which Blackness gets locked out of narrative capacity itself by virtue of occupying this ‘nadir’ of Humanity. Thus, what is the “nigger rung of being Human” in Wynter, I found to be “Blackness as Slaveness” in Wilderson and the Afro-pessimists. And the violence done to the Slave conditions the possibilities for the axiological signs and concepts which will come to set the scales and terms of il/legibility which will come to situate Man1 as the Rational Man, Man2 as the Biocentric Man, and what I have increasingly identified as Man3 and the Storytelling Man. All of these variations of the Human exists and persist on “bizarre axiological ground.” [11] A ground which drips in the Real of Black blood and paints this suffering over in simulation and simulacra, leaving the Hyper-Chaos of Black reality in the Hyper-Reality of an anti-Black World. What appeared as an account that can only wash away the Real, was the Hyper-chaotic ground of the Real, that situates Black death and its disavowal at the limits of signification. Thus, as Wilderson claims: “We need a new language of abstraction to explain this horror,”[12] a language of abstraction which we can say will not be found in the work or under the name of Jean Baudrillard.

#### Their politics of hope forward the very same antiblack agenda

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The politics of hope masks a particular cruelty under the auspices of “happiness” and “life.” It terrifies with the dread of “no alternative.” “Life” itself needs the security of the alternative, and, through this logic, life becomes untenable without it. Political hope promises to provide this alternative—a discursive and political organization beyond extant structures of violence and destruction. The construction of the binary “alternative/no-alternative” ensures the hegemony and dominance of political hope within the ontoexistential horizon. The terror of the “no alternative”—the ultimate space of decay, suffering, and death—depends on two additional binaries: “problem/ solution” and “action/inaction.” According to this politics, all problems have solutions, and hope provides the accessibility and realization of these solutions. The solution establishes itself as the elimination of “the problem”; the solution, in fact, transcends the problem and realizes Hegel’s aufheben in its constant attempt to sublate the dirtiness of the “problem” with the pristine being of the solution. No problem is outside the reach of hope’s solution— every problem is connected to the kernel of its own eradication. The politics of hope must actively refuse the possibility that the “solution” is, in fact, another problem in disguised form; the idea of a “solution” is nothing more than the repetition and disavowal of the problem itself. The solution relies on what we might call the “trick of time” to fortify itself from the deconstruction of its binary. Because the temporality of hope is a time “not-yet-realized,” a future tense unmoored from present-tense justifications and pragmatist evidence, the politics of hope cleverly shields its “solutions” from critiques of impossibility or repetition. Each insistence that these solutions stand up against the lessons of history or the rigors of analysis is met with the rationale that these solutions are not subject to history or analysis because they do not reside within the horizon of the “past” or “present.” Put differently, we can never ascertain the efficacy of the proposed solutions because they escape the temporality of the moment, always retreating to a “not-yet” and “could-be” temporality. **This “trick” of time offers a promise of possibility that can only be realized in an indefinite future, and this promise is a bond of uncertainty that can never be redeemed, only imagined.** In this sense, the politics of hope is an instance of the psychoanalytic notion of desire: its sole purpose is to reproduce its very condition of possibility, never to satiate or bring fulfillment. This politics secures its hegemony through time by claiming the future as its unassailable property and excluding (and devaluing) any other conception of time that challenges this temporal ordering. The politics of hope, then, depends on the incessant (re)production and proliferation of problems to justify its existence. Solutions cannot really exist within the politics of hope, just the illusion of a different order in a future tense. The “trick” of time and political solution converge on the site of “action.” In critiquing the politics of hope, one encounters the rejoinder of the dangers of inaction. “But we can’t just do nothing! We have to do something.” The field of permissible action is delimited and an unrelenting binary between action/ inaction silences critical engagement with political hope. These exclusionary operations rigorously reinforce the binary between action and inaction and discredit certain forms of engagement, critique, and protest. Legitimate action takes place in the political—the political not only claims futurity but also action as its property. To “do something” means that this doing must translate into recognizable political activity; “something” is a stand-in for the word “politics”—one must “do politics” to address any problem. A refusal to “do politics” is equivalent to “doing nothing”—this nothingness is constructed as the antithesis of life, possibility, time, ethics, and morality (a “zero-state” as Julia Kristeva [1982] might call it). Black nihilism rejects this “trick of time” and the lure of emancipatory solutions. To refuse to “do politics” and to reject the fantastical object of politics is the only “hope” for blackness in an antiblack world.

#### Their faith in performance and conceptual rupturing as an act of emancipation trades off with structural analysis and puts false place in subjectivity

Wilderson 2010

Unfortunately, cultural studies that theorizes the interface between Blacks and Humans is hobbled in its attempts to (a) expose power relationships and (b) examine how relations of power influence and shape cultural practice. Cultural studies insists on a grammar of suffering which assumes that we are all positioned essentially by way of the symbolic order, what Lacan calls the wall of language—and as such our potential for stasis or change (our capacity for being oppressed or free) is overdeter-mined by our "universal" ability or inability to seize and wield discursive weapons. This idea corrupts the explanatory power of most socially engaged films and even the most radical line of political action because it produces a cinema and a politics that cannot account for the grammar of suffering of the Black—the Slave. To put it bluntly, the imaginative labor5 of cinema, political action, and cultural studies are all afflicted with the same theoretical aphasia. They are speechless in the face of gratuitous violence. This theoretical aphasia is symptomatic of a debilitated ensemble of questions regarding political ontology. At its heart are two registers of imaginative labor. The first register is that of description, the rhetorical labor aimed at explaining the way relations of power are named, categorized, and explored. The second register can be characterized as prescription, the rhetorical labor predicated on the notion that everyone can be emancipated through some form of discursive, or symbolic, intervention. But emancipation through some form of discursive or symbolic intervention is wanting in the face of a subject position that is not a subject position—what Marx calls "a speaking implement" or what Ronald Judy calls "an interdiction against subjectivity." In other words, the Black has sentient capacity but no relational capacity. As an accumulated and fungible object, rather than an exploited and alienated subject, the Black is openly vulnerable to the whims of the world, and so is his or her cultural "production." What does it mean—what are the stakes—when the world can whimsically transpose one's cultural gestures, the stuff of symbolic intervention, onto another worldly good, a commodity of style? Frantz Fanon echoes this question when he writes, "I came into the world imbued with the will to find a meaning in things, my spirit filled with the desire to attain to the source of the world, and then I found that I was an object in the midst of other objects." He clarifies this assertion and alerts us to the stakes which the optimistic assumptions of film studies and cultural studies, the counterhegemonic promise of alternative cinema, and the emancipatory project of coalition politics cannot account for, when he writes: "Ontology—once it is finally admitted as leaving existence by the wayside—does not permit us to understand the being of the black."6 This presents a challenge to film production and to film studies given their cultivation and elaboration by the imaginative labor of cultural studies, underwritten by the assumptive logic of Humanism; because if everyone does not possess the DNA of culture, that is, (a) time and space transformative capacity, (b) a relational status with other Humans through which one's time- and space-transformative capacity is recognized and incorporated, and (c) a relation to violence that is contingent and not gratuitous, then how do we theorize a sentient being who is positioned not by the DNA of culture but by the structure of gratuitous violence? How do we think outside of the conceptual framework of subalternity—that is, outside of the explanatory power of cultural studies—and think beyond the pale of emancipatory agency by way of symbolic intervention? I am calling for a different conceptual framework, predicated not on the subject-effect of cultural performance but on the structure of political ontology, a framework that allows us to substitute a culture of politics for a politics of culture. The value in this rests not simply in the way it would help us rethink cinema and performance, but in the way it can help us theorize what is at present only intuitive and anecdotal: the unbridgeable gap between Black being and Human life. To put a finer point on it, such a framework might enhance the explanatory power of theory, art, and politics by destroying and perhaps restructuring the ethical range of our current ensemble of questions. This has profound implications for non-Black film studies, Black film studies, and African American studies writ large because they are currently entangled in a multicultural paradigm that takes an interest in an insufficiently critical comparative analysis— that is, a comparative analysis in pursuit of a coalition politics (if not in practice then at least as a theorizing metaphor) which, by its very nature, crowds out and forecloses the Slave's grammar of suffering.

#### the neg is a semiotic intervention

Gillespie 18 (John D Gillespie, Undergraduate Researcher and Debater at Towson University, “On the Prospect of Weaponized Death,” *Propter Nos*, Volume 2: Issue 1, Insurgency / Exhaustion, Fall 2017, https://www.academia.edu/34839874/On\_the\_Prospect\_of\_Weaponized\_Death, Accessed: 8-18-2018, Ddub)

When the idea for this essay originally came to me, I was at a neighborhood vigil for the late rapper Lor Scoota, an influential figure in the Baltimore hip hop scene.1 After hours of Black tears and suffering, due to the murder of yet another Black person, a burst of black joy emerged as if from the ashes, as folks listened to Scoota’s hit single “Bird Flu” on repeat, and danced around the neighborhood. This burst of black joy must have shook the entire city. Consequently, the Black mourners-turned-dancers were met by the police state issuing a curfew, forcing everyone to go home. The police, in riot gear, surrounded the mourners with guns pointed in their direction and helicopters that circled the West Baltimore neighborhood. Newscasters and cameras poured into the neighborhood as flashing lights beamed down throughout the darkness, where the shiny metallic balloons that read “SCOOTA” still danced in the wind. We were occupied in every direction. There had been no riots, but the police prepared for war as if Baltimore was burning. I could not help but be mesmerized at the militarized guns, the riot shields, the coordination and discipline of the force. I could not help but observe the size and number of police officers-turned-domestic-military. I could not help but be enamored by the spectacular power of the State, and recognize this as the social utility of occupation—to stiffen black existence, to sustain the simulation of white superiority and black inferiority. I could not help but think about the need for a revolution. I was taken by an impulse to destroy the simulation and return to a new Real—a “zero degree of transformation,” a “turn toward blackness.”2 Yet I was also struck by the thought that if a revolution were to come, we could never win. We could never win a revolution, and the death that swallowed Lor Scoota is the same unceasing death that surrounds the people who mourned him, and anyone who attempts to challenge the anti-Black world. It was not easy to come to this conclusion. I still obtain glimmers of hope for the future, but the historical record shows that if the future is anything like the past, the only thing guaranteed is fungibility and accumulation. I remember running home, crying, and writing the beginning sketches of what would become this essay. These sketches became the building blocks for a theory of weaponization—one blackened answer to the question of “how should we live” in the unending age of anti-blackness. I did not write this out of self-righteous radicalism. In fact, I believe that those who write radicalism self- righteously forget that, “Normally people are not radical, normally people are not moving against the system: normally people are just trying to live, to have a bit of romance and to feed their kids.”3 I wrote this out of the sad belief that once we have lost all hope in the prospect of black lives ever being able to live, to matter, to sustain romance and feed their families without an unmoving proximity to death, once anti- Blackness has sucked every bit of spirit we have dry, our only hope is to lose hope, to recognize we cannot win. The end of the World begins once we recognize that a Black sentence is a death sentence, and learn to weaponize it. II. learning to die in the anthropocene must be done for those who were never invited to the anthropos too —Anthropos Black life is lived in a white hyper-reality. By this I mean, black life is lived inside a constituted white fiction which concretizes itself as fact. Black life is a life lived in non-existence; blackness “exists” as a symbol of death that is, but is not. Blackness “exists” only insofar as White Being structures it onto a map of anti-black violence.4 Achille Mbembe corroborates this in his Critique of Black Reason, stating: Racism consists, most of all, in substituting what is with something else, with another reality. It has the power to distort the real and to fix affect, but it is also a form of psychic derangement, the mechanism through which the repressed suddenly surfaces. When the racist sees the Black person, he does not see that the Black person is not there, does not exist, and is just a sign of a pathological fixation on the absence of a relationship. We must therefore consider race as being both beside and beyond being.5 The reality that replaces that which is is a white hyper-reality. This white hyper- realism fixes blackness as “a sign of a pathological fixation.” White hyper-realism is the paradigm whereby consciousness is unable to distinguish between the fictions created by White Being and the Real. It is this fact that permits black death to be subsumed in simulations by each and every (analytic) encounter with Whiteness and the World. Questions like, “Can the Black suffer?” and “Is it capable for the Black to be wronged?” arise due to the inability to access a grammar of suffering to communicate a harm that has never ended, a harm that can never end without ending the World itself. It is for this reason that viral videos of black death, more than opening the possibility for liberal notions of justice, seem to suture the relationship between the mythical and the real that perpetuates itself through the reification of black trauma. Black death, more than deconstructing the ontics of the Human, seems to extend its hyper-reality. Black death makes it harder to distinguish white fictions from any sense of real harm being done to human flesh. The Black is meant to experience its death over and over and over again; and the World itself recycles all its fictions-as-the-Real. Put differently, the White World subjects the Black to perpetual, gratuitous violence, and then uses that violence as evidence to further suggest that the Black is not Human. For how can a Human endure such a thing? The experience of gratuitous violence secures the semiotics of the white hyper-reality. White Disneyland stays intact. Blackness exists at the nexus of fact and fiction, possibility and (non)value, inclusion and exclusion. Blackness is trapped even in saying it’s trapped because the “trapped-ness” of the Black extends to locations where the diction and syntax of White “words don’t go.”6 The Black does not have the grammar to speak against where and how it is trapped since Blackness can only articulate itself through the semiotics of Whiteness. That White Being continues to center black death as the matrix of possibility for its hyper-realist structure indexes the promise of death insofar that White Being is promised futurity. The Black was rendered fungible through the conjunction of the political and the libidinal economy of the anti-Black world. Blackness gave birth to the commodity and the economy of signification that structures the cartography of the Human’s coordinates. This could be said to be a still birth, insofar as the nature of Black life in a white hyper-reality is conducted on a plane that guarantees natal alienation, social, and ontological death. The Black body lives to die; the specter of death shadows it everywhere. What matters crucially here, in our invocation of the hyper-real, is the importance of the Symbolic. The Symbolic is what “structures the libidinal economy of civil society.”7 The Symbolic here is understood as “the representational process” that structures “the curriculum and order of knowledge” and/or “the descriptive statement of the human” in our contemporary World.8 And in this World, white symbolism is everywhere.

In fact, in an anti-Black paradigm, white symbolism is everything. White symbolism over-determines itself as the Symbolic itself, and denounces anything that challenges its genre-specific mode of knowing, seeing and understanding the World. In other words, white symbolism holds a monopoly on the Symbolic in ways that operate “lawlikely so within the terms of their/our order- specific modes of adaptive cognition-for, truth-for.”9 There is no outside to whiteness, to white semiotics, to white constructs of value and reality, to white structuring of libidinal value. And for this reason, like Wilderson, “[I] am more interested in the symbolic value of Whiteness (and the absence of Blackness's value)...”10 in a world of white hyper-reality. Propter Nos 2:1 (Fall 2017) 7 If Blackness is lived in the hyper-real, then there is a hyper-intensification—an overrepresentation—of semiology that dictates the coercive violence of the Black’s (non)existence. The semiotics of White Being is the factitious fiction that simulates the entire World. White Being and black death are part of a globally blood-soaked symbolic exchange that has extended itself over the terrain of the World to such an extent that there can be no distinguishing between the Real and the Non-Real. White Being is that Being for whom ontological capacity exists, whereas the Black is the antithesis to Being, that fleshly matter whose essence is incapacity.11 If “language is the house of being,”12 as Heidegger puts it, then Blackness is trapped at the very center of White Being. Dionne Brand puts it concisely when she writes, “We are people without a translator. The language we use already contains our demise and any response contains that demise as each response emboldens and strengthens the language it hopes to undermine.”13 This abject positionality was codified through a violence so epochal that Modernity itself can be said to have been inaugurated through it. However, at the same time, “the center is, paradoxically, within the structure and outside it.”14 **That black death and anti-blackness exist in this liminal positionality posits the impossible possibility of a rupture in the moment.** For that which is inside the structure, only through being outside the structure, enables the possibility of both sedimentation and disorientation. Jacques Derrida writes, “The function of this center was not only to orient; balance, and organize the structure— one cannot in fact conceive of an unorganized structure—but above all to make sure that the organizing principle of the structure would limit what we might call the freeplay of the structure.”15 If black death centers the structure, then it is somewhere in the perfection and expansion of this antagonism (the inside-outside antagonism) that the cartography of gratuitous anti-Black violence is laid out. **What might happen when what orients the structure becomes insurgent, attacking the structure through that which centers its very Being? What might happen if black death became weaponized in order to further limit the freeplay of the structure—the expansion of White Being?** Afro-Pessimist thinkers, in favor of a diagnostic analysis, tend to veer away from the tradition of critical social theory that prescribes solutions to the analysis in the conclusion of their work. However, **one finds throughout Afro-Pessimist literature a battle cry, a prophetic vision, a pulsing pessimist hope for the “end of the World.” For if Whiteness ended Worlds through its colonial simulations and violent transmutations of Africans into Blacks, then the only way out is an end to the White World.** White Being is irredeemable, and so is the World it fosters. Sexton says, “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’—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.’”16 It’s only through black vigilance that the simulacra of White Being is made clear and the spectacle of Propter Nos 2:1 (Fall 2017) 8 gratuitous freedom is made visible. It is somewhere in this structural antagonism, that on the one hand conditions the possibility of the World, and on the other hand conditions the possibility of its end, its limitations, its disorientation, that we found the language to say the unsayable and do the undoable. As **Frank Wilderson reminds us: Black Studies in general and Afro-Pessimism in particular present non-Black academics with more than an intellectual problem. It presents them with an existential problem. The reason is because there’s an aspect of Afro-Pessimism that we don’t talk about...which is that were you to follow it to its logical conclusion, it’s calling for the end of the world...it wants the death of everyone else in the same way that we experience our death, so that one could not liberate Blacks through Afro- Pessimism and be who one was on the other side of that. That’s the unspoken dynamic of Afro-Pessimism.17 If we are engaging in a war in which the symbolic value, the semiotics of this World itself, positions “the Black as death personified, the White as personification of diversity, of life itself,”18 then resistance needs an “unspoken dynamic.” It needs a space where “words don’t go”—a form of guerrilla linguistics, a submarined syntax, an undercommon communication. Perhaps, here, where the conversation is blackened, and the theory is phobogenic, and the journal is Propter Nos, we can allow ourselves to excavate insurgent dictions still lost in the lingua franca of White Being, but full of the specter of black terror, black disorientation. If the Black is death personified, then what might happen if we weaponized our death? What might happen if we recognized the inevitability of that death? What if we began to think that the non-uniqueness of that death was an opening towards the “end of Humanity?” In The Spirit of Terrorism, Jean Baudrillard writes, “When global power monopolizes the situation to this extent, when there is such a formidable condensation of all functions in the technocratic machinery, and when no alternative form of thinking is allowed, what other way is there but a terroristic situational transfer?”19 Terrorism consists of the militaristic tactics used by those who are facing globalized White Being with asymmetrical technologies of terror, violence, intimidation and war. A terrorist is any armed vigilante willing to rupture the system of semiotics through an equally cofounding semiotic. A semiotic that returns one to the “desert of the [Black] Real”—where a “project of total disorder” is unleashed upon the semiotic system.20 Black terrorism is a violence that re-appropriates the death embedded in the Black’s ontological incapacity in order to enable the possibility of a radical capacity—gratuitous freedom.** White Being itself is a decentralized onto- epistemic deployment of violence, **and if violent insurgency is necessary, then the decentralized approach of the black terrorist is necessary to counter the terror of White Being. This being said, black terrorism is perhaps better understood as counter-terror terrorism. We do not have the power to end the World with** life. We only **have the power to end the World through death.** As Baudrillard writes, “The radical difference is that the terrorist, while they have at their disposal weapons that are the system’s own, possess a further lethal weapon: their own deaths.”21 The United States has an international military force, a storehouse of nuclear arms, and the capacity, within their police state alone, to “terrorize” not just one block in Baltimore, but the whole entire world. **Black terrorism is what happens when we heed the Afro-Pessimist call that “A living death is as much a death as it is a living,”22 it is what happens when we take seriously the unsayable in Afro-Pessimism. Black Terrorism is (non)ontological fugitivity that disavows any need to focus on social life—black terrorism steals black death itself from White Being. It is for this reason that Baudrillard speaks to his own White Being and the specter of terror when he says: When Western culture sees all of its values extinguished one by one, it turns inward on itself in the very worst way. Our death is an extinction, an annihilation. Herein lies our poverty. When a singularity throws its own death into the ring, it escapes this slow extermination, it dies its own natural death. This is an immense game of double or quits. In committing suicide, the singularity suicides the other at the same time— we might say that the terrorist acts literally ‘suicided’ the West. A death for a death, then, but transfigured by the symbolic stakes. ‘We have already devastated our world, what more do you want?’ says Muray. But precisely, we have devastated this world, it still has to be destroyed. Destroyed symbolically. This is not at all the same undertaking. And though we did the first part, only others are going to be able to do the second.23 We are the others. Tasked with the (un)fortunate task of ending White hyper-realism, the White World, and White Being. Well aware that if White Fascism continues the project of black annihilation, the only choice we will have is to fight. Not because we want to, but because we have to. But, ultimately, we must remember the words of Huey Newton: “[T]he first lesson a revolutionary must learn is that he is a doomed man.” In the age of Trump, the perfection of slavery reaches its horizon.25** The disavowal of the lives of refugees is White Being attempting to reconcile the “Nation- State” simulation with the free track and flow of bodies it’s been attempting to murder; the deportation of undocumented immigrants in conjunction with the materialization of borders is White Being attempting to secure its linguistic and economic integrity; the rise of the private prison and the militarization of the police force is White Being attempting to innovate the system of enslavement and necropolitics for the 21st Century; the plundering of indigenous land and bodies is White Being attempting to finish off the project of genocide; the disregard for the Earth is White Being ensuring the Anthropocene will also be the Apocalypse. **Trump is a reinvigoration, a call to arms, for White Being, and White Being can only be “destroyed symbolically.” Black terrorism transfigures the symbolic stakes because** it steals **away that condition of White Being’s possibility in a kind of fugitivity that is a zero-transformation into Blackness. This being said, we all know that the only thing that follows the absolute loss of hope is this Black Spring, this Neo-Fanonian violence, this blackened terroristic situational** transfer. In Baudrillard’s words, in the Age of Trump, let us remember the gift of immorality, “Terrorism is immoral. The World Trade Center event, that symbolic challenge, is immoral, and it is a response to a globalization which is itself immoral. So, let us be immoral...”26

#### It solves, they remain stuck within the history of the present.

Dr. Anna M. Agathanaglou 20, Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science at York University, “Time, Decolonial Ethics, and Invention”, in The Routledge Handbook to Rethinking Ethics in International Relations, Ed. Schippers, p. 50-66

Introduction

IR’s timeless morality? Kant’s postulation of a timeless morality necessarily precipitates a disjunction between morality and the empirical/social/political world. That disjunction, in turn, demands a philosophy of history to bridge the gap. For Kant, the process is logical. He sets out ‘to secure an independent morality unfettered by the outside phenomenal world and the passage of time and then tries to bridge the chasm between morality and the world by reintroducing time and history into the equation’ (Russ 2013, 6–7). Heidegger critiques Kant on the grounds that the transcendental power of imagination, as time, is the grounds for finitude and, therefore, for the receptivity and spontaneity of the subject, making it essential for all ontological knowledge (1996, 98). Ultimately, the knowing object in the world is finite; the transcendental power of imagination gives the object by giving itself in the form of time. This means the structure of time is programmed by a ‘history of the present’, as recognized by Hutchings. This ‘history of the present’, though, cannot be read as a given, because of the visions/struggles/impulses/confrontations which rupture the temporal continuity. What appears, then, in the arrival of any event heterogeneous to the teleological work of time, even if ‘we assume that history is a weave of traces and memories outside of time’ (Marriott 2011a, 54), is a challenge of the cosmopolitan temporal linear trajectories of judgement dividing politics and ethics, history and pragmatics, backward and developed, especially if we want to think ethics as not separated from the political. Ethics, seen as the ‘decolonial’ or decolonization, becomes pivotal in conversations of the political and its radical transformation. Decolonization is ‘the moment as event and the moment as a new inscription’ (Marriott 2011a, 35). In ‘arriving from the future’, these moments ‘materialize from out of their irremediable disappearance … opening a movement of temporalization that is never simply present, or timely’ (54). The questions of philosophical history and the transcending of time arise, not when the ‘present’ is historically faithful to its ‘subsumed temporal judgement’, but when it pretends to ‘know the past’ and to ‘know the end of the world’ (54). In a brilliant introduction to Red, White and Black: Cinema and the Structure of U.S. Antagonism, Frank Wilderson tells a story about a black woman standing in front of Columbia University gates accusing all students, staff and faculty who enter as ‘having stolen her sofa and of selling her into slavery’ (2010, 1). He adds a second story, this time from Berkeley; a Native American man sits on the sidewalk of Telegraph Avenue with ‘an upside-down hat and a sign informing pedestrians that here they could settle the “Land Lease Accounts” that they had neglected to settle all their lives’ (1). Wilderson draws on these grammars to ask an imperative question: ‘What are we to make of a world that responds to the most lucid enunciation of ethics with violence?’ (2). For him, these claims are concise and lucid; as **the only ‘ethical grammar available to modern politics and modernity writ large, for [they draw] our attention not to how space and time are used and abused by enfranchised and violently powerful interests, but to the violence that underwrites the modern world’s capacity to think, act, and exist spatially and temporally’ as well as ethically** (2). This articulation points to the notion of an ‘ethical modernity’ which itself is an oxymoron. Structure/world/society argues that it attends to claims of regions, subjects, and violence. And yet these two characters described by Wilderson make their demands in the United States whose invention of and dependence on a notion of a state of nature and an autonomous rational Man (Wynter 2003) is a justificatory system to determine those who are ethical and are therefore to be self-preserved at all costs and those who are degenerate and lost in the state of nature, that is, those whose co-constitutive raciality with a notion of a time that works through our concepts by keeping certain subjects out of time and out of politics (Agathangelou and Killian 2016). These categories or the ‘temporalization of forms’ (da Silva 2014, 88; Agathangelou and Killian 2011) is what assembles dominant and even critical grammars making racial narratives (dialectical, existential or dramatic) viable. For instance, the qualities necessary for human progress—strength of will, duty and work, morality, knowledge acquired through discipline are subject to the ‘scientific’ law of nature governing all living organisms: Darwin&$3pos;s law of evolution. To survive, the species must adapt, and ‘degeneracy’ which is attached in systems of thought to blackness and ‘primitiveness’ indicates a failure to adapt. Degeneracy is hereditary, a moral and physical decay: ‘a morbid deviation from an original type’ (Nordau 1993, 16). The ‘crazy’ people described by Wilderson are co-constituted as degenerate by a system whose ethical syntax and grammars work through and as international financial institutions and the liberal-democratic state; they do not make sense within a structure of time whose premise is to use the evolutionary and scientific laws of nature/laws of society to decipher who is the figuration of the ethical subject who possesses time and who is the figuration of ‘species’, whose grammars are ethical, and whose are not. Robin Dunford sets up decolonial critique to allow us to think about decolonial and global ethics in the contemporary moment. Decolonial theory, he tells us, makes ‘a distinctive and valuable contribution to global ethics’ (2017, 15) by engaging with coloniality as the darker side of modernity: Decolonial approaches reject abstract global designs in favour of inter-cultural dialogue amongst multiple people(s), including peoples who deem collective and non-human entities to be of fundamental moral importance. In addition, decolonial global ethics rejects universality in favour of ‘pluriversality.’ Decolonial global ethics provides an ethical lens fit to challenge the enduring legacies of colonialism. This is not an abstract global design. It goes beyond the individualistic and cosmopolitan approach articulated by Kant. Decolonial theory’s focus on violence and the emerging forms of relations through and as the ‘colonial matrix of power’ or the ‘intersectionality of multiple, heterogeneous global hierarchies (heterarchies) of sexual, political, gender, epistemic, economic, spiritual, linguistic and racial forms of domination and exploitation’ (Dunford 2017, 7, citing Grosfoguel 2011, 11) point to an important fact: formal colonial rule is not over. While Dunford does not theorize time, he points to the notion of history (historicism) infused in the work of realist and liberal theorists, especially their attention to a sovereign or an international society whose ethical claims are legitimacy via Reason and self-determination (2017, 4).

#### end of the world itself

Wilderson ‘10 (Frank B., Assistant Professor of African American Studies & Drama at UC Irvine, Red, White & Black: Cinema and the Structure of U.S. Antagonisms, pages 1-5)

Leaving aside for the moment their state of mind, it would seem that the structure, that is to say the rebar, or better still the grammar of their demands—and, by extension, the grammar of their suffering—was indeed an ethical grammar. Perhaps their grammars are the only ethical grammars available to modern politics and modernity writ large, for they draw our attention not to the way in which space and time are used and abused by enfranchised and violently powerful interests, but to the violence that underwrites the modern world’s capacity to think, act, and exist spatially and temporally. The violence that robbed her of her body and him of his land provided the stage upon which other violent and consensual dramas could be enacted. Thus, they would have to be crazy, crazy enough to call not merely the actions of the world to account but to call the world itself to account, and to account for them no less! The woman at Columbia was not demanding to be a participant in an unethical network of distribution: she was not demanding a place within capital, a piece of the pie (the demand for her sofa notwithstanding). Rather, she was articulating a triangulation between, on the one hand, the loss of her body, the very dereliction of her corporeal integrity, what Hortense Spillers charts as the transition from being a being to becoming a “being for the captor” (206), the drama of value (the stage upon which surplus value is extracted from labor power through commodity production and sale); and on the other, the corporeal integrity that, once ripped from her body, fortified and extended the corporeal integrity of everyone else on the street. She gave birth to the commodity and to the Human, yet she had neither subjectivity nor a sofa to show for it. In her eyes, the world—and not its myriad discriminatory practices, but the world itself—was unethical. And yet, the world passes by her without the slightest inclination to stop and disabuse her of her claim. Instead, it calls her “crazy.” And to what does the world attribute the Native American man’s insanity? “He’s crazy if he thinks he’s getting any money out of us”? Surely, that doesn’t make him crazy. Rather it is simply an indication that he does not have a big enough gun. What are we to make of a world that responds to the most lucid enunciation of ethics with violence? What are the foundational questions of the ethico-political? Why are these questions so scandalous that they are rarely posed politically, intellectually, and cinematically—unless they are posed obliquely and unconsciously, as if by accident? Return Turtle Island to the “Savage.” Repair the demolished subjectivity of the Slave. Two simple sentences, thirteen simple words, and the structure of U.S. (and perhaps global) antagonisms would be dismantled. An “ethical modernity” would no longer sound like an oxymoron. From there we could busy ourselves with important conflicts that have been promoted to the level of antagonisms: class struggle, gender conflict, *immigrants* rights. When pared down to thirteen words and two sentences, one cannot but wonder why questions that go to the heart of the ethico-political, questions of political ontology, are so unspeakable in intellectual meditations, political broadsides, and even socially and politically engaged feature films. Clearly they can be spoken, even a child could speak those lines, so they would pose no problem for a scholar, an activist, or a filmmaker. And yet, what is also clear—if the filmographies of socially and politically engaged directors, the archive of progressive scholars, and the plethora of Left-wing broadsides are anything to go by—is that what can so easily be spoken is now (five hundred years and two hundred fifty million Settlers/Masters on) so ubiquitously unspoken that these two simple sentences, these thirteen words not only render their speaker “crazy” but become themselves impossible to imagine. Soon it will be forty years since radical politics, Left-leaning scholarship, and socially engaged feature films began to speak the unspeakable. In the 1960s and early 1970s the questions asked by radical politics and scholarship were not “Should the U.S. be overthrown?” or even “Would it be overthrown?” but rather when and how—and, for some, what—would come in its wake. Those steadfast in their conviction that there remained a discernable quantum of ethics in the U.S. writ large (and here I am speaking of everyone from Martin Luther King, Jr., prior to his 1968 shift, to the Tom Hayden wing of SDS, to the Julian Bond and Marion Barry faction of SNCC, to Bobbie Kennedy Democrats) were accountable, in their rhetorical machinations, to the paradigmatic zeitgeist of the Black Panthers, the American Indian Movement, and the Weather Underground. Radicals and progressives could deride, reject, or chastise armed struggle mercilessly and cavalierly with respect to tactics and the possibility of “success,” but they could not dismiss revolution-as-ethic because they could not make a convincing case—by way of a paradigmatic analysis—that the U.S. was an ethical formation and still hope to maintain credibility as radicals and progressives. Even Bobby Kennedy (a U.S. attorney general and presidential candidate) mused that the law and its enforcers had no ethical standing in the presence of Blacks.[[1]](#endnote-1) One could (and many did) acknowledge America’s strength and power. This seldom, however, rose to the level of an ethical assessment, but rather remained an assessment of the so-called “balance of forces.” The political discourse of Blacks, and to a lesser extent Indians, circulated too widely to credibly wed the U.S. and ethics. The raw force of COINTELPRO put an end to this trajectory toward a possible hegemony of ethical accountability. Consequently, the power of Blackness and Redness to pose the question—and the power to pose the question is the greatest power of all—retreated as did White radicals and progressives who “retired” from struggle. The question’s echo lies buried in the graves of young Black Panthers, AIM Warriors, and Black Liberation Army soldiers, or in prison cells where so many of them have been rotting (some in solitary confinement) for ten, twenty, thirty years, and at the gates of the academy where the “crazies” shout at passers-by. Gone are not only the young and vibrant voices that affected a seismic shift on the political landscape, but also the intellectual protocols of inquiry, and with them a spate of feature films that became authorized, if not by an unabashed revolutionary polemic, then certainly by a revolutionary zeitgeist. Is it still possible for a dream of unfettered ethics, a dream of the Settlement and the Slave estate’s[[2]](#endnote-2) destruction, to manifest itself at the ethical core of cinematic discourse, when this dream is no longer a constituent element of political discourse in the streets nor of intellectual discourse in the academy? The answer is “no” in the sense that, as history has shown, what cannot be articulated as political discourse in the streets is doubly foreclosed upon in screenplays and in scholarly prose; but “yes” in the sense that in even the most taciturn historical moments such as ours, the grammar of Black and Red suffering breaks in on this foreclosure, albeit like the somatic compliance of hysterical symptoms—it registers in both cinema and scholarship as symptoms of awareness of the structural antagonisms. Between 1967 and 1980, we could think cinematically and intellectually of Blackness and Redness as having the coherence of full-blown discourses. But from 1980 to the present, Blackness and Redness manifests only in the rebar of cinematic and intellectual (political) discourse, that is, as unspoken grammars. This grammar can be discerned in the cinematic strategies (lighting, camera angles, image composition, and acoustic strategies/design), even when the script labors for the spectator to imagine social turmoil through the rubric of conflict (that is, a rubric of problems that can be posed and conceptually solved) as opposed to the rubric of antagonism (an irreconcilable struggle between entities, or positionalities, the resolution of which is not dialectical but entails the obliteration of one of the positions). In other words, even when films narrate a story in which Blacks or Indians are beleaguered with problems that the script insists are conceptually coherent (usually having to do with poverty or the absence of “family values”), the non-narrative, or cinematic, strategies of the film often disrupt this coherence by posing the irreconcilable questions of Red and Black political ontology—or non-ontology. The grammar of antagonism breaks in on the mendacity of conflict. Semiotics and linguistics teach us that when we speak, our grammar goes unspoken. Our grammar is assumed. It is the structure through which the labor of speech is possible.[[3]](#endnote-3) Likewise, the grammar of political ethics—the grammar of assumptions regarding the ontology of suffering—which underwrite Film Theory and political discourse (in this book, discourse elaborated in direct relation to radical action), and which underwrite cinematic speech (in this book, Red, White, and Black films from the mid-1960s to the present) is also unspoken. This notwithstanding, film theory, political discourse, and cinema assume an ontological grammar, a structure of suffering. And the structure of suffering which film theory, political discourse, and cinema assume crowds out other structures of suffering, regardless of the sentiment of the film or the spirit of unity mobilized by the political discourse in question. To put a finer point on it, structures of ontological suffering stand in antagonistic, rather then conflictual, relation to one another (despite the fact that antagonists themselves may not be aware of the ontological positionality from which they speak). Though this is perhaps the most controversial and out-of-step claim of this book, it is, nonetheless, the foundation of the close reading of feature films and political theory that follows.

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Brady 12 --- Nicholas Brady is a PhD Candidate at the University of California, Irvine // “*The End is Here: Thoughts towards a Blackened World”* // https://outofnowhereblog.wordpress.com/2012/12/21/the-end-is-here-thoughts-towards-a-blackened-world/ // Accessed on 1/31/18 // MWilliams

I demand for the end of the world that began and continues to live with my end. I am talking about the end of the life-worlds of my ancestors — denied the status of being my kin — that began with the raiding of the continent, the forced opening of its limbs, dragging black flesh east and west. If it is true to consider Africa as the womb of humanity where all of us can trace our origin to, then the unconsensual invasion of Africa that can be dated back to 625 a.d. unmakes the continent into a disfigured and silenced womb, what Marlene Nourbese powerfully describes in her essay “Dis Place” as a radical “innerspace to repopulate the outer space” that gave birth to Asia, Europe, and the New World as we know it. This is to see the middle passage as a womb, a pregnancy, a violent birth – an end that is a beginning, a beginning that is an end. An end of life-worlds that produced black people was the beginning of the white/non-black world. The end is near, for the end was already here for us. Later today, an activist I respect greatly, Dominique Stevenson, will make a journey toward a prison to demand for the reinstatement of a program began by her, political prisoner Eddie Conway, and other men on the inside named Friend of a Friend. The program was terminated for being “subversive” and “revolutionary.” On the day that many people will post either sarcastic statuses or ones denouncing the Mayan calendar, she will stand up to a system built on warehousing and murdering black flesh. She and others will scream into the abyss, demand to be heard by those who could not bear the sight, let alone the sound, of their existence. Against the end of the program, they will demand the end of an order built on ending us. For all you out there skeptical about the end of the world, this is what it means to end the world: tear down the institutions built on using our end as a means to their ends. Fuck civility and democracy, this is not a deconstruction, this is the destruction of an order that attempted to destroy us! Destruction is an act of love for a community made impossible by machinations of violence that use us a means for an end. It is irreconcilable to love the world and love those destroyed for its very existence. For too long black politics has been sitting in that zone of indecision and confusion, trying to love Amerikkka and ourselves at the same time. We have been trying for too long to heal a nation through the brute strength of our own bodies, willing to be murdered to protect a nation inflicting the unspeakable and unspoken pain. These sacrifices are to be revered, but not repeated. I respect past generations and those of us currently who use this methodology, but I will accept it for myself no more. Slavery is not a scar on the foundation of a nation, it is the scar that is the foundation — the point of no return that gave birth to its terrible existence. Slavery is not something to get past or beyond. The beginning was the end and we can never go home again. So the road to the future is not a road at all, it is destruction as an act of love. Against the world that [could not hear Anna Brown scream](http://thefeministwire.com/2012/10/louder-than-the-dark-towards-an-acoustics-of-suffering/) as she slowly died as she was being dragged out of a hospital into a prison cell. Against a world that murders a black person [every thirty-six hours](http://mxgm.org/report-on-the-extrajudicial-killings-of-120-black-people/). Black suffering is so normal and redundant that when it occurs, when the police rape and murder, when 4 year children are suspended, when schools are closed while youth jails are opened, it registers little emotion, little response aside from further infliction of pain and punishment. How can some deaths be mourned nationally while others occur in a space of unthought? Everyday we are blackened, beaten, bruised, until we meet our demise at their hands, clubs, guns, ropes, whips, chains. This world loves to destroy us and we must demand its end through a radical form of love, a love of blackness. The world that blackened Africa and its people in order to bring itself into standing must now be made black. This is the destructive process that the radical black tradition has called for. The end is this process of making the world black. This is to demand the world to pay the costs of blackness, the cost we pay everyday with our flesh and our lives. The demand has been called abolition or reparations, black nationalism or even the pan-Africanism of W.E.B. Dubois and third-worldism of Frantz Fanon and the Black Panthers to name only a few. The demand for the world to be black is an ethical call with political dimensions, a call for the world that began with our end to meet its end too, to fall into the black hole of the dark continent and become the dark world. A friend just told me a few days ago that I was a “black partisan” and I responded, “if such a thing as a black party could exist, I certainly would be.” Across the globe groups with the stated purpose of blackening the world, of demanding for it to meet its end at the point of our own creative oblivion have sprouted up and I feel nothing but solidarity with the revolutionary forces [in this world](http://septembernationalimbizo.org/sni-welcomes-end-of-the-world/) and [in this nation](http://lbsbaltimore.com/). If one black party is not possible, then a cold war fought on multiple fronts, led by forces underground and outer-space, making incoherent demands, using tactics of the unthought, speaking from the inner-most point of unspeakability might bring about the impossibility of a creative destruction, an end without means. A revolution that truly irrupts out of nowhere. The end is not about a day, an hour, or a minute. The world will not end when my clock turns midnight or when it turned midnight in Australia or California. We are lost at sea, ripped apart and divided into the singularity. Time has no meaning for the black. We exist in a non-time in a radical state of non-being. Time ended for us long ago, and, in a way, it did for you as well. This end is not an event, but an event horizon, an endless end. This is a different type of calendar, a black form of time not governed by the setting sun or changing seasons, but the end of an epoch. Let December 21st be stretched across the horizon, elongated and divided infinitely, spaghettified until sub-atomic presence is ripped apart and the world meets the singularity of our suffering. Let us pray for the end of the end. The end is not near, for it is here!

1. After the Watts Rebellion, RFK observed: “There is no point in telling Negroes to observe the law…It has almost always been used against them…All these places—Harlem, Watts, South Side [of Chicago]—are riots wating to happen.” Quote in: Clark, Kenneth B. “The Wonder is There Have Been So Few Riots.” *New York Times Magazine*, September 5, 1965. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. “Slave estate” is a term borrowed from Hortense Spillers. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. See Emile Benveniste. *Problems in General Linguistics*. Trans. Mary Elizabeth Meek. Coral Gables: Univ. of Miami Press, 1971. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)