# 1NC

## OFF

### OFF

First OFF is Topicality:

#### The role of the ballot is to determine the desirability of topical action:

#### “USFG should” means the debate is solely about a policy established by governmental means

Ericson 3 – Jon M. Ericson, Dean Emeritus of the College of Liberal Arts – California Polytechnic U., et al., The Debater’s Guide, Third Edition, p. 4

The Proposition of Policy: Urging Future Action In policy propositions, each topic contains certain key elements, although they have slightly different functions from comparable elements of value-oriented propositions. 1. An agent doing the acting – “The United States” in “The United States should adopt a policy of free trade.” Like the object of evaluation in a proposition of value, the agent is the subject of the sentence. 2. The verb *should*—the first part of a verb phrase that urges action. 3. An action verb to follow *should* in the *should*-verb combination. For example, *should adopt* here means to put a program or policy into action though governmental means. 4. A specification of directions or a limitation of the action desired. The phrase *free trade*, for example, gives direction and limits to the topic, which would, for example, eliminate consideration of increasing tariffs, discussing diplomatic recognition, or discussing interstate commerce. Propositions of policy deal with future action. Nothing has yet occurred. The entire debate is about whether something ought to occur. What you agree to do, then, when you accept the *affirmative side* in such a debate is to offer sufficient and compelling reasons for an audience to perform the future action that you propose.

#### Prohibitions must forbid by law.

LUNGREN 91 --- DANIEL E. LUNGREN Attorney General, State of California, OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, September 26, 1991 , https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/opinions/pdfs/91-306.pdf

In the recent case of City of Redwood City v. Dalton Construction Co. (1990) 221 Cal.App.3d 1570, 1573, the court drew the following distinction between a regulation and a prohibition:

". . . The distinction between a regulation and a prohibition is well understood in municipal law. [Citation.] The term `prohibit' means `[t]o forbid by law; to prevent; - not synonymous with "regulate."' [Citation.] The term `regulate' means `to adjust by rule, method, or established mode; to direct by rule or restriction; to subject something to governing principles of law. It does not include a power to suppress or prohibit [citation].' [Citation.]"

**Antitrust law refers to statutory law.**

**US Code**, Chapter 34—Antitrust Civil Process, https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/15/1311

(a)The term “antitrust law” includes:

(1) Each provision of law defined as one of the antitrust laws by section 12 of this title

**[Inserting Section 12]**

(a)“Antitrust laws,” as used herein, includes the Act entitled “An Act to protect trade and commerce against unlawful restraints and monopolies,” approved July second, eighteen hundred and ninety; sections seventy-three to seventy-six, inclusive, of an Act entitled “An Act to reduce taxation, to provide revenue for the Government, and for other purposes,” of August twenty-seventh, eighteen hundred and ninety-four; an Act entitled “An Act to amend sections seventy-three and seventy-six of the Act of August twenty-seventh, eighteen hundred and ninety-four, entitled ‘An Act to reduce taxation, to provide revenue for the Government, and for other purposes,’ ” approved February twelfth, nineteen hundred and thirteen; and also this Act.

“Commerce,” as used herein, means trade or commerce among the several States and with foreign nations, or between the District of Columbia or any Territory of the United States and any State, Territory, or foreign nation, or between any insular possessions or other places under the jurisdiction of the United States, or between any such possession or place and any State or Territory of the United States or the District of Columbia or any foreign nation, or within the District of Columbia or any Territory or any insular possession or other place under the jurisdiction of the United States: Provided, That nothing in this Act contained shall apply to the Philippine Islands.

The word “person” or “persons” wherever used in this Act shall be deemed to include corporations and associations existing under or authorized by the laws of either the United States, the laws of any of the Territories, the laws of any State, or the laws of any foreign country.

(b)This Act may be cited as the “Clayton Act”.

(Oct. 15, 1914, ch. 323, § 1, 38 Stat. 730; Pub. L. 94–435, title III, § 305(b), Sept. 30, 1976, 90 Stat. 1397; Pub. L. 107–273, div. C, title IV, § 14102(c)(2)(A), Nov. 2, 2002, 116 Stat. 1921.)

**[Section 12 Ends]**; and

(2) Any statute enacted on and after September 19, 1962, by the Congress which prohibits, or makes available to the United States in any court of the United States any civil remedy with respect to any restraint upon or monopolization of interstate or foreign trade or commerce;

#### Vote neg for two reasons:

#### First - predictable limits---allowing the aff to pick any grounds for debate makes engagement impossible by skirting a predictable starting point and undermining preparation and research. Radical aff choice shifts the grounds for the debate and puts the aff far ahead: they have incentives to cement their infinite prep by selecting the most one-sided ideas and can choose only orientations toward the word, not praxis with an actor or mechanism. Fairness is an intrinsic good, vital to the practice of debate, and logically prior to deciding any other argument.

#### Second- our Testing warrant:

#### A well-defined resolution is critical to allow an iterative process of argument testing and improvement---this does not require particular forms of argument, but does require a common point of disagreement.

Poscher ‘16

Director at the Institute for Staatswissenschaft and Philosophy of Law at the University of Freiburg (Ralf, “Why We Argue About the Law: An Agonistic Account of Legal Disagreement”, Metaphilosophy of Law, Tomasz Gizbert-Studnicki/Adam Dyrda/Pawel Banas (eds.), Hart Publishing, forthcoming. Modified for language that may offend)

Hegel’s dialectical thinking powerfully exploits the idea of negation. It is a central feature of spirit and consciousness that they have the power to negate. The spirit “is this power only by looking the negative in the face and tarrying with it. This […] is the magical power that converts it into being.”102 The tarrying with the negative is part of what Hegel calls the “labour of the negative”103. In a loose reference to this Hegelian notion Gerald Postema points to yet another feature of disagreements as a necessary ingredient of the process of practical reasoning. Only if our reasoning is exposed to contrary arguments can we test its merits. We must go through the “labor of the negative” to have trust in our deliberative processes.104

This also holds where we seem to be in agreement. Agreement without exposure to disagreement can be deceptive in various ways. The first phenomenon Postema draws attention to is the group polarization effect. When a group of like‐minded people deliberates an issue, informational and reputational cascades produce more extreme views in the process of their deliberations.105 The polarization and biases that are well documented for such groups106 can be countered at least in some settings by the inclusion of dissenting voices. In these scenarios, disagreement can be a cure for dysfunctional deliberative polarization and biases.107 A second deliberative dysfunction mitigated by disagreement is superficial agreement, which can even be manipulatively used in the sense of a “presumptuous ‘We’”108. Disagreement can help to police such distortions of deliberative processes by challenging superficial agreements. Disagreements may thus signal that a deliberative process is not contaminated with dysfunctional agreements stemming from polarization or superficiality. Protecting our discourse against such contaminations is valuable even if we do not come to terms. Each of the opposing positions will profit from the catharsis it received “by looking the negative in the face and tarrying with it”.

These advantages of disagreement in collective deliberations are mirrored on the individual level. Even if the probability of reaching a consensus with our opponents is very low from the beginning, as might be the case in deeply entrenched conflicts, entering into an exchange of arguments can still serve to test and improve our position. We have to do the “labor of the negative” for ourselves. Even if we cannot come up with a line of argument that coheres well with everybody else’s beliefs, attitudes and dispositions, we can still come up with a line of argument that achieves this goal for our own personal beliefs, attitudes and dispositions. To provide ourselves with the most coherent system of our own beliefs, attitudes and dispositions is – at least in important issues – an aspect of personal integrity – to borrow one of Dworkin’s favorite expressions for a less aspirational idea.

In hard cases we must – in some way – lay out the argument for ourselves to figure out what we believe to be the right answer. We might not know what we believe ourselves in questions of abortion, the death penalty, torture, and stem cell research, until we have developed a line of argument against the background of our subjective beliefs, attitudes and dispositions. In these cases it might be rational to discuss the issue with someone unlikely to share some of our more fundamental convictions or who opposes the (perspective) ~~view~~ towards which we lean. This might even be the most helpful way of corroborating a view, because we know that our adversary is much more motivated to find a potential flaw in our argument than someone with whom we know we are in agreement. It might be more helpful to discuss a liberal position with Scalia than with Breyer if we want to make sure that we have not overlooked some counter‐argument to our case.

It would be too narrow an understanding of our practice of legal disagreement and argumentation if we restricted its purpose to persuading an adversary in the case at hand and inferred from this narrow understanding the irrationality of argumentation in hard cases, in which we know beforehand that we will not be able to persuade. Rational argumentation is a much more complex practice in a more complex social framework. Argumentation with an adversary can have purposes beyond persuading him: to test one’s own convictions, to engage our opponent in inferential commitments and to persuade third parties are only some of these; to rally our troops or express our convictions might be others. To make our peace with Kant we could say that “there must be a hope of coming to terms” with someone though not necessarily with our opponent, but maybe only a third party or even just ourselves and not necessarily only on the issue at hand, but maybe through inferential commitments in a different arena.

f) The Advantage Over Non‐Argumentative Alternatives

It goes without saying that in real world legal disagreements, all of the reasons listed above usually play in concert and will typically hold true to different degrees relative to different participants in the debate: There will be some participants for whom our hope of coming to terms might still be justified and others for whom only some of the other reasons hold and some for whom it is a mixture of all of the reasons in shifting degrees as our disagreements evolve. It is also apparent that, with the exception of the first reason, the rationality of our disagreements is of a secondary nature. The rational does not lie in the discovery of a single right answer to the topic of debate, since in hard cases there are no single right answers. Instead, our disagreements are instrumental to rationales which lie beyond the topic at hand, like the exploration of our communalities or of our inferential commitments. Since these reasons are of this secondary nature, they must stand up to alternative ways of settling irreconcilable disagreements that have other secondary reasons in their favor – like swiftness of decision making or using fewer resources. Why does our legal practice require lengthy arguments and discursive efforts even in appellate or supreme court cases of irreconcilable legal disagreements? The closure has to come by some non‐argumentative mean and courts have always relied on them. For the medieval courts of the Germanic tradition it is bequeathed that judges had to fight it out literally if they disagreed on a question of law – though the king allowed them to pick surrogate fighters.109 It is understandable that the process of civilization has led us to non‐violent non‐ argumentative means to determine the law. But what was wrong with District Judge Currin of Umatilla County in Oregon, who – in his late days – decided inconclusive traffic violations by publicly flipping a coin?110 If we are counting heads at the end of our lengthy argumentative proceedings anyway, why not decide hard cases by gut voting at the outset and spare everybody the cost of developing elaborate arguments on questions, where there is not fact of the matter to be discovered?

One reason lies in the mixed nature of our reasons in actual legal disagreements. The different second order reasons can be held apart analytically, but not in real life cases. The hope of coming to terms will often play a role at least for some time relative to some participants in the debate. A second reason is that the objectives listed above could not be achieved by a non‐argumentative procedure. Flipping a coin, throwing dice or taking a gut vote would not help us to explore our communalities or our inferential commitments nor help to scrutinize the positions in play. A third reason is the overall rational aspiration of the law that Dworkin relates to in his integrity account111. In a justificatory sense112 the law aspires to give a coherent account of itself – even if it is not the only right one – required by equal respect under conditions of normative disagreement.113 Combining legal argumentation with the non‐argumentative decision‐ making procedure of counting reasoned opinions serves the coherence aspiration of the law in at least two ways: First, the labor of the negative reduces the chances that constructions of the law that have major flaws or inconsistencies built into the arguments supporting them will prevail. Second, since every position must be a reasoned one within the given framework of the law, it must be one that somehow fits into the overall structure of the law along coherent lines. It thus protects against incoherent “checkerboard” treatments114 of hard cases. It is the combination of reasoned disagreement and the non‐rational decision‐making mechanism of counting reasoned opinions that provides for both in hard cases: a decision and one – of multiple possible – coherent constructions of the law. Pure non‐rational procedures – like flipping a coin – would only provide for the decision part. Pure argumentative procedures – which are not geared towards a decision procedure – would undercut the incentive structure of our agonistic disagreements.115 In the face of unresolvable disagreements endless debates would seem an idle enterprise. That the debates are about winning or losing helps to keep the participants engaged. That the decision depends on counting reasoned opinions guarantees that the engagement focuses on rational argumentation. No plain non‐argumentative procedure would achieve this result. If the judges were to flip a coin at the end of the trial in hard cases, there would be little incentive to engage in an exchange of arguments. It is specifically the count of reasoned opinions which provides for rational scrutiny in our legal disagreements and thus contributes to the rationales discussed above.

2. THE SEMANTICS OF AGONISTIC DISAGREEMENTS

The agonistic account does not presuppose a fact of the matter, it is not accompanied by an ontological commitment, and the question of how the fact of the matter could be known to us is not even raised. Thus the agonistic account of legal disagreement is not confronted with the metaphysical or epistemological questions that plague one‐right‐answer theories in particular. However, it must still come up with a semantics that explains in what sense we disagree about the same issue and are not just talking at cross purposes.

In a series of articles David Plunkett and Tim Sundell have reconstructed legal disagreements in semantic terms as metalinguistic negotiations on the usage of a term that at the center of a hard case like “cruel and unusual punishment” in a death‐penalty case.116 Even though the different sides in the debate define the term differently, they are not talking past each other, since they are engaged in a metalinguistic negotiation on the use of the same term. The metalinguistic negotiation on the use of the term serves as a semantic anchor for a disagreement on the substantive issues connected with the term because of its functional role in the law. The “cruel and unusual punishment”‐clause thus serves to argue about the permissibility of the death penalty. This account, however only provides a very superficial semantic commonality. But the commonality between the participants of a legal disagreement go deeper than a discussion whether the term “bank” should in future only to be used for financial institutions, which fulfills every criteria for semantic negotiations that Plunkett and Sundell propose. Unlike in mere semantic negotiations, like the on the disambiguation of the term “bank”, there is also some kind of identity of the substantive issues at stake in legal disagreements.

A promising route to capture this aspect of legal disagreements might be offered by recent semantic approaches that try to accommodate the externalist challenges of realist semantics,117 which inspire one‐right‐answer theorists like Moore or David Brink. Neo‐ descriptivist and two‐valued semantics provide for the theoretical or interpretive element of realist semantics without having to commit to the ontological positions of traditional externalism. In a sense they offer externalist semantics with no ontological strings attached.

The less controversial aspect of the externalist picture of meaning developed in neo‐ descriptivist and two‐valued semantics can be found in the deferential structure that our meaning‐providing intentions often encompass.118 In the case of natural kinds, speakers defer to the expertise of chemists when they employ natural kind terms like gold or water. If a speaker orders someone to buy $ 10,000 worth of gold as a safe investment, he might not know the exact atomic structure of the chemical element 79. In cases of doubt, though, he would insist that he meant to buy only stuff that chemical experts – or the markets for that matter – qualify as gold. The deferential element in the speaker’s intentions provides for the specific externalist element of the semantics.

In the case of the law, the meaning‐providing intentions connected to the provisions of the law can be understood to defer in a similar manner to the best overall theory or interpretation of the legal materials. Against the background of such a semantic framework the conceptual unity of a linguistic practice is not ratified by the existence of a single best answer, but by the unity of the interpretive effort that extends to legal materials and legal practices that have sufficient overlap119 – be it only in a historical perspective120. The fulcrum of disagreement that Dworkin sees in the existence of a single right answer121 does not lie in its existence, but in the communality of the effort – if only on the basis of an overlapping common ground of legal materials, accepted practices, experiences and dispositions. As two athletes are engaged in the same contest when they follow the same rules, share the same concept of winning and losing and act in the same context, but follow very different styles of e.g. wrestling, boxing, swimming etc. They are in the same contest, even if there is no single best style in which to wrestle, box or swim. Each, however, is engaged in developing the best style to win against their opponent, just as two lawyers try to develop the best argument to convince a bench of judges.122 Within such a semantic framework even people with radically opposing views about the application of an expression can still share a concept, in that they are engaged in the same process of theorizing over roughly the same legal materials and practices. Semantic frameworks along these lines allow for adamant disagreements without abandoning the idea that people are ~~talking about~~ (discussing) the same concept. An agonistic account of legal disagreement can build on such a semantic framework, which can explain in what sense lawyers, judges and scholars engaged in agonistic disagreements are not talking past each other. They are engaged in developing the best interpretation of roughly the same legal materials, albeit against the background of diverging beliefs, attitudes and dispositions that lead them to divergent conclusions in hard cases. Despite the divergent conclusions, semantic unity is provided by the largely overlapping legal materials that form the basis for their disagreement. Such a semantic collapses only when we lack a sufficient overlap in the materials. To use an example of Michael Moore’s: If we wanted to debate whether a certain work of art was “just”, we share neither paradigms nor a tradition of applying the concept of justice to art such as to engage in an intelligible controversy.

#### Our testing arg *link turns* the Aff’s efforts to counter injustice. It’s also a reason to Negate their method based on external offense. Testing is the stronger mechanism for actualizing solvency for Aff and Neg impacts.

Connolly 17

William Connolly, Krieger-Eisenhower Professor of Political Science at Johns Hopkins University, Aspirational Fascism: The Struggle for Multifaceted Democracy under Trumpism, p. 694-777

If a dissident movement is to acquire momentum, the democratic Left must also identify more young leaders in multiple settings who are charismatic in democratic ways and who can inspire large constituencies as they counter the appeal of Trumpian authoritarian charisma. For Trump is a charismatic adversary whose rhetorical effectiveness has not yet been measured adequately by enough of his critics. He and Hitler are both right about one thing: there is a tendency in the professoriate to downplay the role of rhetoric in politics and the ubiquitous importance of the visceral register of culture to public life. We often love writing more than speech. There is thus a corollary reticence to working hard enough to counter a rhetoric organized around authoritarian leadership, militarism, whiteness, and aggressive national assertion with another mode that draws on our higher angels to encourage horizontal modes of organization and an ethos of presumptive generosity as it articulates the differential class, regional, and urban dangers of rapid climate change.

We both need to learn more about Trump and to rebut his rhetorical style with positive styles of engagement. Bernie Sanders shined a bright light here, too. For visceral group identifications do not always and only pass through the filter of a narcissistic leader, as a few steeped in Freudianism may think. They can also be mediated by horizontal connections on both the visceral and refined registers of cultural life— connections forged across a variety of associational meetings, church assemblies, blogs, family gatherings, classrooms, neighborhood groups, school boards, tavern conversations, unions, and so on— as we forge reciprocal ties of presumptive generosity and care.[ 12] Charismatic, pluralizing, egalitarian leaders support such horizontal connections and infusions in the ways they provide Democratic leadership.[ 13] It is possible to improve the internal ethos of the United States while coming to terms more nobly with its new condition in the world, even if the probabilities may point in another direction. Indeed, it is imperative to try to accomplish both together, because failure to do so risks unleashing the vast military power of the country in a series of destructive wars that could be calamitous for the world. Think merely of how climate change— a gathering planetary force massive in destructive power— is subject to denial in part because those who seek to return to an old “greatness” are told that such a return requires the modes of industry, mining, imperial power, triumphalism, and fossil fuel energy that powered growth the last time around.

Trump’s attack upon the media and the professoriate is strategically chosen in this respect. His tweets calling the media “the enemy of the people” and carriers of “fake news” must never be treated lightly. Above all, this is not a site, if there is any site, at which the Left should seek to “accelerate the contradictions” of the order to speed up its collapse.[ 14] The latter route, however unintentionally, is a route to fascism.

Trump’s goal is to trap the media in a bind: he hopes he can win if the media evades the charges he makes; he hopes he can win if they reply simply by correcting the evidence when he endlessly accuses them of fake news. The best strategy, perhaps, is to keep exposing how the Big Lie works, to respond with evidence-based claims to each Lie as you also explain why he pursues it, to play up dramatically how critical a press free from state control or intimidation is to a democratic society, and to explore the real and neglected grievances of those constituencies most tempted to embrace Trump tweets. Yes, the media often deserves intense criticism from the democratic Left for its softness on a neoliberal corporate culture, but the Left must also expose and attack Trumpian intimidation of it. It recently seemed unwise to me, for instance, when a few on the Left reenforced Trump and Putin denials of the Putin intervention in the election with statements that came close to describing this as fake news. The media and professoriate will both be vicious targets of Trump attacks for the next four years (at least), as he deflects attention from his probable collusion with Putin and the failure of his policies to uplift the working class. It is possible for critics on the Left to chew gum and walk at the same time, in this case, to hold the media accountable as you also defend it against vicious Trumpian assaults that could get worse as his false promises continue to encounter harsh realities.

I have doted a bit on the working class not because it could today become the center of a new movement toward egalitarian democracy oriented to both pluralism and the new planetary condition. We do not inhabit a Fordist era in which much of the working class is centered in large factories. That class is now even more dispersed geographically and underorganized into unions. It is often distributed in small clusters in fast-food restaurants, shopping mall stores, janitorial duties, farm work, small factories, prison work, security assignments, subordinate administrative duties, hospital services, and so on. Moreover, its dispersed distribution makes it easier for those outside those circumstances to ignore or deny its grievances, as they look merely at yearly income statistics and fail to register how differences in lifetime income and an evolving infrastructure of consumption make it harder for many with apparently decent incomes to make ends meet. Its very dispersion, disorganization, and uneven geodistribution, however, mean that, intelligently engaged, it could also forge indispensable elements in a vibrant pluralism that has been on the move for a while without its active involvement, a pluralism that can also constitute a key bulwark against aspirational fascism. That is why it is wise to appreciate the working class today as one dispersed minority among others.

### OFF

Next OFF is Frame Subtraction:

#### Two links:

#### 1 - The 1AC’s value stands on its own---responding to it with judgement and the ballot is a hollow validation that siphons off political energy and draws them into the oppressive gaze of the academy---vote Negative to decline affirmation

Phillips 99 – Dr. Kendall R. Phillips, Professor of Communication at Central Missouri State University, PhD in Speech Communication from Pennsylvania State University, MA in Speech Communication from Central Missouri State University, BS in Psychology and Sociology from Southwest Baptist University, “Rhetoric, Resistance, and Criticism: A Response to Sloop and Ono”, Philosophy & Rhetoric, Volume 32, Number 1, p. 96-101

My concern with this movement centers around an issue that Sloop and Ono seem to take as a given, namely, the role of the critic. On one hand, calling for the systematic investigation of existing marginalized discourses is a natural extension both of critical rhetoric (see McKerrow 1989, 1991) and of the general ideological turn in criticism (see Wander 1983). On the other hand, the ease of transition from criticism in the service of resistance to criticism of resistance may obscure the need to address some fundamental issues regarding the general function of rhetorical criticism in an uncertain and contentious world. Beyond licensing the critic to engage in political struggle, Sloop and Ono advocate the pursuit of covert resistant discourses.

Such a move not only stretches our understanding of rhetoric and criticism, but also alters significantly the relationship between critic and out- law. Critical interrogation of dominant discursive practices in the service of political/cultural reform is supplanted in favor of positioning covert out- law communities as objects of investigation. Invited to seek out subversive discourses, the critic is positioned as the active agent of change and the out-law discourse becomes merely instrumental. Rather than academic criticism acting in service of everyday acts of resistance, everyday acts of resistance are put into the service of academic criticism.

Rhetorical resistance

That we are "caught within conflicting logics of justice that are culturally struggled over" (Sloop and Ono 1997, 50) and that rhetoric is employed in these struggles seems an uncontroversial statement. Despite the theoretical miasma surrounding judgment, Sloop and Ono accurately note, the material process of rendering judgments (and of disputing the logics of litigation) continues in the world of actually practiced discourse. In the materially contested world, rhetoric is utilized both by those seeking to secure the grounds of dominant judgment and by those seeking to undermine or supplant dominant cultural logics with some out-law notion of justice.

The distinction between these two cultural groups, "in-law" and out- law, however, deserves some consideration prior to any discussion of the role of the critic as implied in the out-law discourse project. The discourse of the dominant or those within the bounds of superordinate logics of litigation is reminiscent of Michel De Certeau's (1984) strategic discourse. For De Certeau, strategies are utilized by those who have authority by virtue of their proper position. Strategies exploit the institutionally guaranteed background consensus by which power relations (and litigations) are maintained and advanced. In contrast, tactics are utilized by those having no proper place of authority within the discursive economy who must seek opportunities whereby the discourse of the dominant might be undermined and contested. To extend Sloop and Ono's definition, out-law discourses are those that can (and, by their analysis, do) take advantage of situations (e.g., race riots) to disrupt the regularity of dominant cultural groups.

The ongoing struggle between strategically instituted cultural dominants and the "out-law always lurk[ing] in the distance" (66) is acknowledged, even celebrated, by Sloop and Ono. What their acknowledgment fails to provide, however, is a clear need for critical intervention. Indeed, quite the reverse is presented: It is the critic (particularly the left-leaning critic) who needs out-law discourse. While the struggles over justice, equality, and freedom have gone on, the left-leaning critics are those who have theoretically excluded themselves from the disputes. The study of out-law dis- courses, then, provides a means to reinvigorate the intellectual and re-institute (academic) leftist thinking into popular political struggles (53-54). Thus, Sloop and Ono's project incorporates three types of rhetoric: the rhetoric of the in-law, presumably the traditional object of critical attention; the rhetoric of the out-law, the study of which may transform our understanding of judgment as well as reinvigorate leftist democratic critiques; and the rhetoric of the critics who, having lost their political po- tency, can exploit the discourse of the out-law to promote ideological struggles. It is to this critical rhetoric that I now turn.

Resistance criticism

Sloop and Ono (1997) clearly state the relationship they envision between the rhetorical critic and out-law discourse: "Ultimately, we will argue that the role of critical rhetoricians is to produce 'materialist conceptions of judgment,' using out-law judgments to disrupt dominant logics of judgment" (54; emphasis added). Here the critic seeks out vernacular discourse (60), focuses on the methods and values embodied in these communities (62), listens to and evaluates the out-law community (62-63), and chooses appropriate discourses for the purpose of disrupting dominant practices (63). Essentially, it is the critic who seeks out marginalized discourses and returns them to the center for the purpose of provoking dominant cultural groups (63).

Despite acknowledging the efficacy of out-law discourses, Sloop and Ono assume that the critiques generated and presented by the out-law community have only minimal effect. The irony, and indeed arrogance, of this assumption is evident when they claim: "There are cases, however, when, without the prompting of academic critics, out-law discourses serve local purposes at times and at others resonate within dominant discourses, disrupting sedimented ways of thinking, transforming dominant forms of judgment" (60; emphasis added). Sloop and Ono seem to suggest that such locally generated critiques are the exception, whereas the political efficacy of the academic critic is the rule. This seems an odd claim, given that the justification for their out-law discourse project is the lack of politically viable academic critique and the perceived potency of out-law conceptions of judgment. Their suggestion that out-law communities are in need of the academic critic contradicts not only the already disruptive nature of existing out-law discourses (the grounds for using out-law discourse), but also the impotence of contemporary critical discourse (the warrant for studying out-law discourse).

By this I do not mean that the critiques and theories generated by academically instituted intellectuals have not been incorporated into subversive discourses. Just as out-law discourses inevitably mount critiques of dominant logics, so, too, the perspectives on rhetoric and criticism generated by academics are used in resistance movements. Feminist critiques of patriarchy, queer theories of homophobia, postcolonial interrogations of race have found their way into the service of resistant groups. The key distinction I wish to make is that the existence of criticism (academic or self-generated) in resistance does not necessitate Sloop and Ono's move to a criticism of resistance.

What Sloop and Ono fail to offer is an adequate argument for "taking public speaking out of the streets and studying it in the classroom, for treating it less as an expression of protest" (Wander 1983, 3) and more as an object for analysis and reproduction within the political economy of the academy. Philip Wander made a similar charge against Herbert Wicheln's early critical project, and this concern should remain at the forefront of any discussion aimed at expanding the scope and function of criticism. Sloop and Ono offer numerous directives for the critic without addressing whether the critic should be examining out-law discourses in the first place. While it is too early to suggest any definitive answer to the question of criticism of resistance, some preliminary arguments as to why critics should not pursue out-law discourses can be offered:

(1) Hidden out-law discourses may have good reasons to stay hidden. Sloop and Ono specifically instruct us that "the logic of the out-law must constantly be searched for, brought forth" (66) and used to disrupt dominant practices. But are we to believe that all out-law discourses are prepared to mount such a challenge to the dominant cultural logic? Or, indeed, that the members of out-law communities are prepared to be brought into the arena of public surveillance in the service of reconstituting logics of litigation? It seems highly unlikely that all divergent cultural groups have developed equally, or that all members of these groups share Sloop and Ono's "imperial impulse" (51) to promote their conceptions and practices of justice.

(2) Academic critical discourse is not transparent. Here I allude to the overall problem of translation (see Foucault 1994; Lyotard 1988; Lyotard and Thebaud 1985; Zabus 1995) as an extension of the previous concern. Critical discourse cannot become the medium of commensurability for divergent language games. Are we to believe that the "use" of out-law dis- course by critics to disrupt dominant practices can fail to do violence to these diverse/divergent logics? Are out-law discourses merely tools to be exploited and discarded in the pursuit of returning leftist academic dis- course to the center?

(3) Perhaps the academic translation of out-law discourse could be true to the internal logic of the out-law community. And, perhaps the re-presentation of out-law logic within the academic community will bestow a degree of legitimacy on the out-law community. Nonetheless, the effect of legitimizing out-law discourse is unknown and potentially destructive. In an effort to siphon the political energy of out-law discourse into academic practice, we may ultimately destroy the dissatisfaction that serves as a cathexis for these out-law discourses. It seems possible that academic recognition might take the place of struggle for material opportunities (see Fraser 1997). But, will academic legitimation create any material changes in the conditions of out-law communities? I mean to suggest, not that it is better to allow the out-law community to suffer for its cause, but rather that incorporating the struggle into an (admittedly) impotent academic critique does not offer a prima facie alternative.

(4) Criticism of resistance denies the practical and theoretical importance of opportunity. Returning to De Certeau's notion of tactics, the crucial element of these discursive moves is their use of opportunity to disrupt the proper authority of the dominant. The kairos of intervention provides the key to undermining "in-law" discourses. But when is the "right moment in time" for the academic reproduction of out-law discourse? Mapping the points of resistance (ala Foucault and Biesecker) entails interrogating "in-law" discourses for their incongruities and contradictions, not turning the academic gaze upon those communities waiting for an opportunity. Out-laws do not lurk in the forefront (66), hoping to be exposed by academic critics; they wait for the right moment for their disruption. Rhetoricians can provide rhetorical instructions for seeking opportunities and for exploiting these opportunities (literally making the culturally weaker argument the stronger), but this does not justify interrogating (intervening in) the cultural logics of the marginalized.

The concerns raised here are not designed to dismiss Sloop and Ono's provocative essay. The divergent critical logic they outline deserves careful consideration within the critical community, and it is my hope that the concerns I raise may help to further problematize the relationship between

resistance and rhetorical criticism.

Rhetorical criticism

As I have suggested, my purpose is to use the provocative nature of Sloop and Ono's project to extend disputes regarding the ends of rhetorical criticism. Diverging perspectives on the ends of criticism have been categorized by Barbara Warnick (1992) as falling along four general lines: artist, analyst, audience, and advocate. Leah Ceccarelli (1997) discerns similar categories around the aesthetic, epistemic, and political ends of rhetorical criticism.

The out-law discourse project presents clear ties to the notion of critic as advocate. For Sloop and Ono, the critic is an interested party, discerning (and at times disputing) the underlying values and forces contained within a discourse. Additionally, however, the out-law discourse critic is an analyst focusing on the hidden, aberrant texts of the out-law and "rendering] an incoherent or esoteric text comprehensible" (Warnick 1992, 233). Now, I am not suggesting that a critic must serve only one function or that the roles of advocate and analyst are mutually exclusive; rather, these entanglings of power (political ends) and knowledge (epistemic ends) are inevitable. My concern is that we not neglect the complexity of these entanglements. Turning covert out-law discourses into objects of our analyses runs the risk of subjecting them both to the gaze of the dominant and to the power relations of the academy. As the works of Michel Foucault (especially 1979, 1980) aptly illustrate, practices presented as extending such noble goals as emancipation and humanity may endow institutions of confinement and objectification. Any justification for studying out-law dis- course because doing so may extend our political usefulness in the pursuit of emancipatory goals must not obscure the already existing power relations authorizing such studies. Our attempts to extend our domains of knowledge and expertise (authority) must not be pursued unreflexively.

#### 2 - Calling debate practices “anti-competitive business practices” flattens the nuance of the harmful norms and monopolization. Speech acts grow more potent when such deployments are removed.

Kipnis ‘7 Andrew Kipnis - Senior Fellow and Professor Andrew Kipnis in The Department of Anthropology, The Australian National University – “Neoliberalism reified: suzhi discourse and tropes of neoliberalism in the People's Republic of China” - Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute (N.S.) 13,383-400 - #E&F – modified for language that may offend - obtained via J-Stor database.

Another problem is that neoliberal policies, *however defined*, may be sincerely or disingenously pursued. Often enough, powerful *social actors* ~~mouth~~ (deploy) neoliberal slogans or ideology of one form or another in a crass attempt to grab power or exploit others. There may be no intention of actually enacting neoliberal policy or striving for neoliberal goals. This issue should be of crucial interest to those who believe (as the author of this article does not) that neoliberalism is systemic in the contemporary world. If neoliberalism is a systemic 'discourse' (as some governmen-tality theorists would have it), then it reproduces itself by producing 'responsibilized' subject/citizens who re-create neoliberal institutions. From this vantage, disingenuous applications of neoliberal discourse would thus work to undermine neoliberal-ism. But if neoliberalism is an 'ideology' that serves merely to mask the true workings of class domination, then disingenuous applications of neoliberal ideas are central to the reproduction of neoliberalism. In such a case, the actual production of autonomous, responsible citizen/subjects would undermine neoliberalism. Few who write as if neoliberalism were systemic in the contemporary world demonstrate awareness of this contradiction.

#### Neolib discourse *creates realities* which re-frame the social violence cited by the Aff. That link turns case … it’s also external offense via neolib’s perpetuation of sexualized, racialized, and socio-economic repression.

Della Faille ’15 Dr. Dimitri DELLA FAILLE (PhD, Sociology) is a professor in International Development and Social Sciences at Université du Québec en Outaouai - “A Sociological Understanding of Neoliberal Discourses of Development” - #E&F - https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/hal-02046915/document

This paper will attempt to show that social scientists studying development issues must consider these common ideas with considerable caution. We argue that words are, in fact, actions. And as such, they must be investigated. We contend that an examination of underdevelopment and "developing" societies must go beyond an artificial divide between discourse and action. But also, that it must not limit its definition of discourse to an act of deception. Otherwise, we run the risk of misunderstanding social problems, which is the basis for much social action and collective mobilization in the "developing" world. We will also propose in this paper a number of ways to examine language and discourse that go beyond received ideas. We will attempt to show that they are integral parts of action - whether scholarly, activist, administrative or otherwise - against underdevelopment. In the first place, we will focus most of our explanation on how neoliberal governance and policymaking use language, social representation and discourse to achieve their goals. Using example of neoliberal discourses, we will attempt to show how the main ideologies of the various contemporary development discourses transforms our perception and understanding of development problems. This transformation, we argue, exists both in imposing the use of specific words and in successfully controlling means of communication.

We will begin with a quick presentation of discourse and a definition of neoliberal ideologies. Then, we will demonstrate how discourse analysis could study neoliberal discourses by applying to documents about a natural disaster in the Philippines. After this demonstration, we present other various examples of discourse analysis as it applies to development discourses. Then, we present some of the major approaches and methodologies of discourse analysis. Before concluding, we will present some ethical considerations for the analysis of development discourses.

Words of Caution

A paper about language and discourse would fall short of its goal to draw attention to the use of language if it did not contain at least some form of criticism of usages of the word "development". We argue that calling societies "developing" is actually making a normative statement about the past trajectory, current status and expected future of these societies. Social scientists may contend that political, scientific, ethical or lay statements about development and underdevelopment are in fact "problematizations" of human societies. A problematization is a process by which social relations, practices, rules, institutions, and habits previously established are suddenly viewed as doubtful and problematic (Foucault 2001). The word "development" itself may carry different meanings around the world (Thornton et al. 2012). The understanding and expectations of actions in the name of "development" are conditioned by social representations and interpretations. However, we contend that development discourses are problematizations of the "developing" world because they transform the history of societies of Latin America, Asia, Africa and some parts of Europe into a long story of troubles and failures. They do that in order to justify social transformations and interventions (Escobar 1994). We also contend that they are problematizations because they produce cultural discourses that apply specifically to "developing" countries, and therefore reinforce ideas about the perceived superiority of "developed" countries over the rest of the world (Mohanty 1984).

This paper refuses to hierarchize societies based on perceptions of their economic achievement, their form of political governance or the global recognition of their cultural products. We recognize that discourses about "development" are problematizations, and that perceptions of any social, political or cultural inferiority of these regions, countries or populations must be criticized. We therefore use the term "developing" for some societies, not as a normative statement on regions, countries, and populations viewed as economically, socially, politically or culturally inferior to the "developed world", but rather as an unfortunate shortcut to describe regions and countries in which actors desire to act in the name of "development". There is a wealth of scholarly literature on criticism of the use of the word "development", some of which is evoked further in this paper.

We will give further explanations that might help you better understand why we must be cautious when comparing societies in terms of their perceived "development". Now that we explained why we, in this paper, are cautious of talking about "development" and "underdevelopment", let us very briefly present some aspects of discourse and its analysis.

Understanding discourse and its analysis

If discourse analysis is getting more recognition in development studies, before we further embark in this paper it must be noted that if you chose to study discourse, you might encounter disapproval (Ziai 2015). As we have argued elsewhere, discourse analysis is often viewed with reservations or criticized in the context of the study of "development" and "underdevelopment" (Delia Faille 2011; 2014). But very often, the criticism comes from misunderstanding of what discourse actually is. Discourse analysts face many commonly held ideas, as per the examples we have provided in the introduction of this paper. We believe that the best way for social scientists to justify the analysis of words, language and communication is to approach it with a clear definition of discourse that relates to the study of social relations and also to present convincing analysis. This section attempts to clarify our definition of discourse analysis and the following sections will attempt to illustrate how this analysis relates to the study of social relations and "development".

Social scientists studying discourses are examining the social and institutional constraints of language. At the conceptual level, language can be apprehended either as a social fact determined by material conditions and social domination, or as a field of social activity with specific rules and a social environment where meaning, social relations, and society are produced. Most discourse analysts adopt the latter conception. They attempt to reveal the strategies that aim to convey cultural values and ideologies, whether implicitly or explicitly. They define language as the production of meaning and the results of acts of communication that are conditioned by collective rules and social codes. Through the use of language, social groups and individuals come to build their identity, describe themselves, interact, and share ideas. Language is thus more than the use of specific vocabularies and grammars. It is an organized sequence of social acts that is not limited to speech or utterance. Some analysts study images and material artefacts as sequences of social acts and social strategies to convey ideologies.

In the 1960s French and British philosophers, sociologists and political scientists began to understand the production of language in terms of communication strategies. This new direction was dubbed the "linguistic turn" of humanities and social sciences (Rorty 1967). Based on several decades of debate in literary study, linguistics and anthropology, discourse analysis emerged as a new discipline. It proposed a way to see language as a field of social confrontation and struggles. Discourse is therefore understood as the social usage of language and studied as a social practice and a materialization of social relations. It means that discourse analysts are interested in the social practice of using language to put forward agendas, to express dissent, to defend a position, or to transmit values. They also study acts of silencing and censoring - such as prohibiting other worldviews from circulating and being heard. Therefore, discourse analysts see language as a series of social processes and they acknowledge that language is not limited to otherwise unrelated individual acts.

Discourse analysis could be described as a political understanding of the use of language in the context of unequal access to platforms of decision making, economic resources, and social recognition. As we will attempt to demonstrate throughout this paper, the study of discourse is not limited to looking for hidden agendas, lies or the uttering of meaningless and empty words. Deception is only one of the strategies used to convey worldviews, and it is not necessarily the most effective or even the most interesting for discourse analysts.

Some schools of discourse analysis criticize social reproduction of gender inequality, racism and social class. Critical Discourse Analysis is an example of this field. For this school of thought, discourse analysis is the social study of language, its social constraints and its effects (Fairclough 2001). Through language, social groups come to represent society in a way that perpetuates domination, positive or negative discrimination, and social repression. Critical discourse analysts look at the perpetuation of social conflicts and unequal relations of power. They examine issues related to gender, sexuality, social class, and ethnicity.

While our presentation of neoliberal discourses and its analysis does not fall totally under the umbrella of the school of Critical Discourse Analysis, this paper demonstrates how to analyse discourse in the context of the study of global inequalities, social discrimination and repression. We are critical of the current state of global politics, economy and society as it reproduces and reinforces inequalities. Therefore, the next section presents a critical analysis of neoliberalism understood as an ideology whose aim is to impose its ~~worldviews~~ (perspective) and the interest of the actors it attempts to defend and whose interests this ideology is putting forward in the context of development discourses.

#### We can defend the rest of the aff strategy and negate only certain parts. 2NR consolidation is best and we can subtract 2AC frames.

#### Only conditional tests of limited agreement incentivize narrow testing of their specific claims. Requiring us to disprove the entire aff forces extreme impact turns that lack nuance and political utility.

#### Nuanced testing is a better model of engagement to improve praxis.

Williams 15 – Douglas Williams, Third-Generation Organizer, BA in Political Science from the University of Minnesota at Morris, MPA from the University of Missouri Columbia, Doctoral Student in Political Science at Wayne State University, internally quoting Freddie DeBoer, Lecturer at Purdue University and PhD in Rhetoric and Composition from Purdue University and MA in English with a Concentration in Writing and Rhetoric from The University of Rhode Island, The South Lawn, <https://thesouthlawn.org/2015/03/10/the-dead-end-of-identity-politics/> [language modified]

What conversation is there to be had around that? It is as if the mere existence of her identity inoculates her from any critique. How did we get here?

—

Freddie DeBoer makes a great point in his piece on what he calls “critique drift“:

“This all largely descends from a related condition: many in the broad online left have adopted a norm where being an ally means that you never critique people who are presumed to be speaking from your side, and especially if they are seen as speaking from a position of greater oppression. I understand the need for solidarity, I understand the problem of undermining and derailing, and I recognize why people feel strongly that those who have traditionally been silenced should be given a position of privilege in our conversations. But critique drift demonstrates why a[n] [effective] ~~healthy~~, functioning political movement can’t forbid tactical criticism of those with whom you largely agree. Because critical vocabulary and political arguments are common intellectual property which gain or lose power based on their communal use, never criticizing those who misuse them ultimately ~~disarms~~ [undermines] the left. Refusing to say ‘this is a real thing, but you are not being fair or helpful in making that accusation right now’ alienates potential allies, contributes to the burgeoning backlash against social justice politics, and prevents us from making the most accurate, cogent critique possible.”

Look, I am Black. Also, sometimes, I can be wrong. Those two things are not mutually exclusive, and yet we have gotten to a point where any critique of tactics used by oppressed communities can result in being deemed “sexist/racist/insert oppression here-ist” and cast out of the Social Justice Magic Circle. And listen, maybe that is cool with some folks. Maybe the revolution that so many of these types speak about will simply consist of everyone spontaneously coming to consciousness and there will be no need for coalitions, give-and-take, or contact with people who do not know every word or phrase that these groups use as some sort of litmus test for the unwashed.

But for the rest of us who reside in a reality-based world, where every social interaction is not tailored for your idiosyncratic indignations, we know that casting folks out for the tiniest of offenses will lead to a Left that will forever be marginalized and ineffective. I have stated before that the kind of people who put out these lists and engage in the kind of identitarian caterwauling that has become rote copy on the Internet might actually want that, as a world where left-wing activism is made potent and transformative will be one where they cannot simply take comfort in their cocoon of self-righteousness. But damn them when I can turn on my computer and see one Black person after another being gunned down by police. Damn them when we have a president that can sit there with a straight face and speak the words of freedom and liberation while using the power at his disposal to deny those very concepts to others. And damn them when we can get thousands of words on Patricia Arquette drunk at a party or how it is privileged to not like the same musicians that they do, but we cannot seem to get any thoughts on how the biggest moment for communities of color since the 1960s is being squandered in a hail of intergenerational squabbling. And do not even get me started on people writing articles that malign long-standing activist organizations without a whiff of evidence that there has been any wrongdoing on their part.

### OFF

Next OFF is GND:

#### Counter-advocacy: we affirm the use of antitrust law as a method of queer haptic preservation against anticompetitive business practices of debate to revolutionarily enact a green new deal through the USfg.

#### It’s mutually exclusive – utilizes antitrust law instrumentally

Greer and Rice 21 (Jeremie Greer, Co-Founder and Co-Executive Director at Liberation in a Generation, a national movement support organization building the power of people of color to totally transform the economy, Soros Equality Fellow, racial justice activist who began his career as a community organizer in the Columbia Heights and Shaw neighborhoods in Washington, DC, and national policy expert on the causes and the policy solutions to close racial wealth gap, formerly working at the Government Accountability Office, the Local Initiative Support Corporation, and Prosperity Now, MPP (Master of Public Policy) George Mason University, BA Social Work, University of St. Thomas, currently working on an Executive Education Certificate in Nonprofit Leadership from Harvard University’s Kennedy School of Government; and Solana Rice, Co-Founder and Co-Executive Director at Liberation in a Generation, Soros Equality Fellow, former Director of State & Local Policy at Prosperity Now, former director for financial security initiatives at PolicyLink, MCP (Master of City Planning) MIT, BA architecture, Washington University in St. Louis; “Anti-Monopoly Activism: Reclaiming Power through Racial Justice,” Liberation in a Generation, March 2021, https://www.liberationinageneration.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Anti-Monopoly-Activism\_032021.pdf)

We at Liberation in a Generation believe that the power to change our economic systems rests with the organizers of color who are building the political strength of communities of color. Anti-monopoly research and advocacy need to better quantify, center, and reflect what people of color are experiencing and the ways that they are being harmed by monopoly power’s reach. These efforts should also better connect anti-monopoly policy and advocacy as tools to advance the existing priorities of leaders of color, such as the Green New Deal, Medicare for All, closing the racial wealth gap, and a Homes Guarantee. This paper aims to contribute a major step in the long journey of bridging the divide between anti-monopoly researchers and policy advocates and grassroots leaders of color. The first step on that journey is knowledge.

Recognizing that anti-monopoly work is a new policy issue to many grassroots leaders of color, this paper will serve as a primer to 1) educate grassroots leaders on the issue of corporate concentration, 2) connect the issue to racial justice, and 3) recommend a path forward for grassroots leaders as well as the researchers and advocates who need to embrace them. Our hope is that this paper provides a foundation of knowledge that grassroots leaders of color can use to build race-conscious solutions and mobilize for action to rein in runaway corporate monopoly power. To that end, the paper is organized into six sections.

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SECTION 1

Monopoly Power Is Corporate Power Magnified and Maximized

In 1975, millions flooded theaters to see the blockbuster thriller Jaws. The story follows a police chief in a small resort town as he risks his life to protect beachgoers from a monstrous man-eating great white shark.

Monopolies are a lot like the shark in Jaws. While enormous, ruthless, dangerous, and scary, the movie’s monster is just a shark, and the police chief uses tools and community to defeat it. Comparatively, while also enormous, ruthless, dangerous, and even scary, monopolies are just corporations, and we, together, can confront them. Their massive power controls the wages we earn, the prices we pay, and the actions of the politicians who are supposed to represent us in DC, the statehouse, and city hall. In a representative democracy, we the people are at the top of the food chain, and it is within our power to make these monopolies fear us— and end their existence in the first place.

Grassroots leaders of color are highly experienced and uniquely skilled at challenging corporate power, and these capacities can and should be used to curb monopoly power. For example, the Athena Coalition has successfully leveraged 8 grassroots power to challenge the monopoly power of Amazon, and Color of Change9 has effectively used grassroots digital organizing to challenge the monopoly power of social media platforms such as Facebook. Putting monopolies in the crosshairs of organizers is critical because they best understand the real human and structural devastation caused by monopoly power, which is otherwise all too easily neglected.

Though we believe that grassroots leaders of color have the experience and expertise necessary to challenge monopoly power, the question remains: Why should they lead this fight? Grassroots leaders of color are already engaged in high-stakes battles with the forces of corporate power on fundamental issues, including environmental justice, worker justice, housing justice, prison and police abolition, and voter and democratic justice. We believe that these efforts can be bolstered if anti-monopoly policy development and advocacy were incorporated into these existing efforts but then followed the lead of organizers. For example, the primary opponents of prison and police abolition are private prison monopolies, such as GEO Group and CoreCivic, which profit from the arrest and incarceration of Black and brown people. Opponents of the Green New Deal include energy monopolies BP and ExxonMobile, whose profits are derived from polluting Black and brown communities. Finally, opponents of the Homes Guarantee, 10 and its call for creating 12 million units of social housing outside of the for-profit housing market, include big banks that profit from the commodification of affordable and low-income housing. Challenging these opponents by diminishing their monopoly power could prove to be a powerful weapon in the fight to dismantle unchecked corporate power and its real-life economic impact on people of color.

#### AND, is mutually exclusive with refusing logistics – BUT is the only way to solve BOTH the case AND climate change

Heron and Dean 20 (Kai Heron, casualized academic with research interests in political theory, ecology, psychoanalysis, and political economy, editor at ROAR Magazine, and Jodi Dean, Professor of Political Science at Hobart and William Smith Colleges, “Revolution or Ruin,” e-flux, no.110, June 2020, https://www.e-flux.com/journal/110/335242/revolution-or-ruin/)

The Political Climate

Few are persuaded by the denial of the political nature of climate change. Persistent mobilization by grassroots activists has placed climate clearly on the political agenda. Polls in the UK and the US indicate that voters recognize climate change as a matter of politics: it’s an issue that simultaneously divides and necessitates a political response. Moreover, as is clear to nearly everyone, the scale of the catastrophe requires a state response.

The current most compelling framework for such a response is the Green New Deal (GND). As the leading progressive state-based response from US Democrats, the UK’s Labour Party, the Spanish Socialist Party, and others, the GND will play a huge part in the climate struggle over the next few years. In contrast to the failed neoliberal attempt to address rising CO2 levels by creating a market for carbon credits, the GND puts forward a green Keynesianism that places public job creation and enhanced social welfare at the center of its decarbonization strategy.

According to John Bellamy Foster, the term “Green New Deal” was coined in a 2007 meeting “between Colin Hines, former head of Greenpeace’s International Economics unit, and Guardian economics editor Larry Elliott.” Hines’s term for an FDR-style state program was also used by New York Times columnist and corporate hack Thomas Friedman for an eco-modernist, technocratic green capitalism. Over the next few years, the UN Environment Development Program and the Green European Foundation published similar proposals for a mildly reformed green capitalism. More recently, a radicalized version has been pushed by groups like Commonwealth, which advocates for democratic ownership, and the Climate Justice Alliance, which fights for environmental justice for frontline communities. This new GND, which took shape as a grassroots strategy during Jill Stein’s Green Party presidential campaigns in the US, linked the response to the climate crisis to the imperative of responding to the social crisis. The Stein campaign highlighted the role of US imperialism in both: not only is the US military the largest institutional carbon emitter on the planet, and not only does US militarism destabilize and immiserate millions across the planet, but cutting the military budget could pay for new energy infrastructure and decrease emissions in one go. Demilitarization—defunding the military and the police—is essential to climate justice.

Bernie Sanders’s version of the GND includes Stein’s anti-imperialist proposals. It also, as Alyssa Batisstoni and Thea Riofrancos point out, promotes regenerative agriculture, prioritizes a just transition, treats energy as a public good, and holds the fossil fuel sector accountable for climate change. This last provision is worth considering in some detail. The section of Sanders’s GND statement titled “End the Greed of the Fossil Fuel Industry and Hold Them Accountable” has seventeen separate proposals. These include banning fracking and mountaintop-removal coal mining, banning imports and exports of fossil fuels, banning offshore drilling, ending fossil fuel extraction on public lands, ending fossil fuel subsidies, and ending new fossil fuel infrastructure permits. Additional measures raise taxes “on corporate polluters’ and investors’ fossil fuel income and wealth,” and raise and enforce EPA penalties on fossil fuel–generated pollution. They pledge to bring criminal and civil suits against the fossil fuel industry and make it pay for the damages it has caused. Altogether the proposals wage a fierce battle against big carbon, doing everything but nationalizing the industry.

Given the radical nature of the measures proposed to hold the fossil fuel industry accountable, why doesn’t Sanders go all the way and propose to nationalize the industry, dismantling or restructuring it in the service of clean energy? After all, the plan invites the combined fury of the entirety of the capitalist class, threatening their profits, stranding their assets, and undermining their stock valuations. The answer must be that Sanders needs the carbon sector to survive, at least for a while. His GND plan is built on a contradiction: it requires the continued existence of the corporations responsible for climate change because it wants to make those corporations pay for the response. If the corporations were nationalized, or if they collapsed too quickly, they wouldn’t be able to pay. This contradiction is profound, much more disturbing than the tension between class war and green growth. If the oil and gas sector pays for the collective response to the climate crisis, then it cannot be abolished. In effect, the GND ends up on the same side as disaster capitalism’s climate change profiteers. Green social democrats end up having to defend the very industry that is destroying the planet.

The UK Labour Party made its version of the Green New Deal, the “Green Industrial Revolution” (GIR), a central plank of its 2019 election manifesto. The policy is unquestionably the most radical piece of climate legislation the UK has seen from a major political party. It promises more than one million green jobs, nationalized and affordable energy and transport sectors, a major buildout of renewable energy infrastructure, a ban on fracking, and an end to all UK Export Finance support for fossil fuel projects. Corbyn’s Labour Party also promised to decarbonize the UK’s energy sector—but not the whole economy—by the end of the 2030s, a full decade before the UK Conservative Party has proposed to. Had Labour won the 2019 election these policies would have transformed the UK for the better.

Nevertheless, like its US counterpart, Labour’s GIR is an effort to square decarbonization and global climate justice with a nationalist project of growth and development predicated on an exploitative system of wealth and resource extraction from the Third World. Labour’s manifesto explains that it plans to fund the GIR through a greenwashed public financial sector and taxes on wealth and capital. This neo-Keynesian approach is less immediately contradictory than Sanders’s GND, but Labour also aims to fund decarbonization by becoming a world leader in green technology and the provision of green loan programs to the Third World, while exploiting the Third World for the raw materials—rare earth minerals, copper, lithium, and more—that Labour’s industrialized transition demands. As Cooperation Jackson’s Kali Akuno argues in a different context, this amounts to a kind of green imperialism. The plan is to profit from the global transition to a post-carbon economy by doing what the ecologically destructive capitalist core has always done: extract raw materials and wealth from the world’s periphery. Little has changed, it seems, since Frantz Fanon first wrote that “Europe is the creation of the Third World” six decades ago.

Many involved in the progressive wings of the Democratic and Labour Parties are aware of these contradictions. And yet they deny their political consequences. Like Roosevelt’s New Deal before them, the GND and the GIR try to forge a social compromise between the exploiters and the exploited, the polluters and the polluted. Rather than naming the climate crisis as a space of class struggle—and following through with the consequences of this diagnosis—these policies aim to smooth over the cracks that are appearing in capital’s edifice as we hurtle headfirst into a warming world. By masking the brutal, exploitative, and unsustainable logic of capital accumulation, both plans serve an ideological function. They promise those of us in the imperialist core that nothing essential has to change as long as we transition from fossil-fueled capitalism and fossil-fueled imperialism to a greener capitalism and a greener imperialism. Climate breakdown demands that relations between the capitalist core and the super-exploited periphery be radically transformed. If we want to avert further compounding disaster we must abolish this distinction entirely. “Green growth” won’t cut it. A “steady-state economy” won’t cut it. We need to break from capitalism. It really is ruin or revolution.

Seizing the Means, Seizing the State

The green neo-Keynesianism of the GND and GIR is a dead end, but it would be a mistake to conclude that there is nothing to learn from these plans. Thea Riofrancos calls such left conclusions a “politics of pure negation.” With this she has in mind views like those expressed by Jasper Bernes and Joshua Clover who have argued that the GND is a materially unrealizable distraction. These authors think the left should critique the GND and move on. But to what? Yes, to revolution—no disagreement from us. But to build what? And how? Here we agree with Riofrancos that fully dismissing the GND and GIR is “neither empirically sound nor politically strategic” even as we reject her proposed alternative of “critical support.”

For Riofrancos, a politics of pure negation is unhelpful because it mistakes the GND for a “prepackaged solution” to the climate crisis that one either accepts or rejects wholesale. She proposes that the plan is better thought of as an ever-changing “terrain of struggle” with “the potential to unleash desires and transform identities” and reasons that if the final shape of the GND is still to be decided, then to reject it is to cede important territory to fossil capital. As an alternative, she suggests that we “take our cue from social movements that adopt a stance of critical support, embracing the political opening afforded by the Green New Deal while at the same time contesting some of its specific elements, thus pushing up against and expanding the horizon of possibility.”

“Critical support” for the GND is as unsatisfactory as a politics of “pure negation.” Like all democratic socialist strategy, it subordinates working class struggle to the task of electing progressive candidates. It gives up on the left’s revolutionary tradition to focus instead on the more “realistic” task of agitating for gradual leftward shifts in the Overton window. As with all political strategies, the efficacy of democratic socialism rests on the achievability of its aims. While Jeremy Corbyn’s election as Labour’s leader in 2015 and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez’s success in 2018 gave democratic socialism a boost, the Democratic National Committee’s opposition to Bernie Sanders and the 2019 UK election have shown the limits of mainstream parties’ tolerance for socialism. To think it possible to implement a progressive GND with the DNC that we have, the Supreme Court that we have, the House of Lords that we have, or the patterns of property and land ownership that we have—that is to say, with the capitalist state that we have—is to assume that the institutions of ruling class power can be used for mass benefit without removing the ruling class. Riofrancos proposes that “extra-parliamentary, disruptive action from below” should be combined with “creative experimentation with institutions and policies,” but surely by now—in the midst of compounding crises—we should be beyond experimenting with bourgeois institutions on bourgeois terms.

Riofrancos’s “critical support” excludes the option of building towards revolution. As her argument unfolds, it moves from defending the GND as an important site of struggle to arguing that it is the site of struggle. To question the GND’s electoralism is to make a choice for “resignation cloaked in realism,” to acquiesce to an endless “waiting for [the] ever-deferred moment of rupture.” The obvious but unspoken third option here, though, is to build toward the moment of “rupture,” or more concretely the seizure of power, outside of the Democratic or Labour Parties. No doubt this option remains unspoken because it is too “unrealistic,” too undemocratic, and too “authoritarian” for democratic socialists to countenance.

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

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

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

Against State Denialism

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Climate Lenin

Lenin recognized the difference between confiscation and socialization, or, more in keeping with the terms here, between abolition and communism. The latter requires creative, collective cooperation, which has to be organized. Through the reorganization of the modes and relations of production and reproduction, the many come to exercise control over their lives and work. Neither revolution nor communism occurs in a single moment. For communists, revolution is the process of building communism. The negation of prior practices, assumptions, and institutions doesn’t happen overnight. Acknowledging the “long haul” is not to capitulate to capitalism or social democracy. It is how we refuse to capitulate to capitalism and democracy and accept the complexity of the task of building free societies and the revolutionary organizations adequate to that task.

One of the lessons Lenin took from the experience of the Paris Commune was the revolutionary role of the state. He applied this lesson to the setting in which the Bolsheviks found themselves:

This apparatus must not, and should not, be smashed. It must be wrested from the control of the capitalists; the capitalists and the wires they pull must be cut off, lopped off, chopped away from this apparatus; it must be subordinated to the proletarian Soviets; it must be expanded, made more comprehensive, and nation-wide. And this can be done by utilising the achievements already made by large-scale capitalism (in the same way as the proletarian revolution can, in general, reach its goal only by utilising these achievements).

The state is a ready-made apparatus for responding to the climate crisis. It can operate at the scales necessary to develop and implement plans for reorganizing agriculture, transportation, housing, and production. It has the capacity to transform the energy sector. It is backed by a standing army. What if all that power were channeled by the many against the few on behalf of a just response to the climate crisis?

During the Covid-19 pandemic, multiple voices have called on the state to take control of hospitals and industries, to build field units, supply necessary equipment, and provide economic relief. State response has been uneven, typically coupling enormous benefits to corporations with minimal benefits to working people. Even worse, repressive regimes such as those in Hungary and the US have seized the opportunity to enact anti-trans, anti-abortion, and anti-environmental measures. Again, our situation is one of revolution or ruin.

As Ted Nordhaus argues in a pro-capitalist takedown of the contemporary left, the progressive response to climate change has failed because of the incoherence between its diagnosis and its solution. The left sees that capitalism is responsible for climate change. It recognizes the urgency of the situation. But instead of building its capacity to seize the state, it advocates small-scale, local, decentralized solutions and more protests and democracy. If we really are on the verge of catastrophe, shouldn’t we building a revolutionary party able to respond to the disaster and push forward an egalitarian alternative?

The left has offered moralism when it needs to offer organization. Consider the contrast between the widely popular Fridays for the Future protests and the mass strikes in France and India. The former attempt moral persuasion. The latter assert proletarian power as they interrupt capital’s circulation and stand up against capital’s state. What if electrical workers all over the world followed the lead of their French comrades and turned off the lights? What if all transport workers refused to drive or fly all vehicles that weren’t zero-emission? What if the global working class emulated the 250 million Indians who brought their country to a halt with their January 8, 2020 general strike? Such mass working class action creates the space for further radicalization, further organization, further conviction that we have the capacity to bring about a radical transformation of the global economy. Organization, not moralism, gives us the power.

Nordhaus pinpoints the cause of the left’s incoherence: its rejection of centralized, top-down power. Climate Leninism, however, doesn’t fall for this tired spatial metaphor. When the state is seized by a revolutionary party, it is turned bottom-up. Grappling with the challenge of working this out in practice occupied Lenin until the end of his life. Getting local soviets or worker’s councils functioning is a challenge. In a complex federated system like the US, there are already elaborate local, county-wide, state, and national governmental offices. Lenin himself was particularly enamored of the post office and libraries, seeing both as models for socialist accounting and distribution. Our problem today is not excessive centralization. After forty years of neoliberalism, it is disorganization, unaccountability, ongoing exploitation, and widespread accumulation by dispossession. We need a politics adequate to this context, a militant, disciplined, communist politics that doesn’t flinch from the enormity of the challenge, nor the coordination at scale required to address it.

We know that this is a tall order. We know that the forces of fossil capital and social democracy stand in our way. But to do anything less than build towards an international revolution today would be ruinous. As dire as both the coronavirus and climate crises are—and we really have seen nothing yet—we need to exercise some dialectical ambivalence. Global capital sees these crises as an opportunity to entrench its power, to break into new markets, to extract more wealth. Social democracy sees the crises as a chance to strike an impossible social compromise between capital and workers. We need to see these crises as both social and ecological catastrophes of unprecedented proportions and as an opportunity to end exploitation, oppression, imperialism, and inequality. We need to see this moment from the perspective of the revolutionary party that we must build as climate Leninists.

#### That turns case AND locks in ongoing extinctions

Demos 18 (T.J. Demos, Professor in the Department of the History of Art and Visual Culture, University of California, Santa Cruz, “To Save a World: Geoengineering, Conflictual Futurisms, and the Unthinkable,” e-flux, no.94, October 2018, <https://www.e-flux.com/journal/94/221148/to-save-a-world-geoengineering-conflictual-futurisms-and-the-unthinkable/>, dml)

The Anthropocene is proving to be an era of world war, or rather, worlds at war. Not that this is anything new. We are no doubt living in the continuation of longstanding onto-epistemological and politico-military conflicts set within (still unfolding) histories of colonial and global states of violence and dispossession. If catastrophe lies before us, then it flows from what’s come before. Consider two ideological formations that speak to our current situation. First, geoengineering’s techno-utopianism, which is premised on climate-change fixes for the symptoms of fossil capital’s centuries-long effect on the environment. Adherents suggest that solar radiation management and carbon capture can stabilize temperatures so as to avert calamitous environmental transformation. The Breakthrough Institute offers a futurist vision of the “good Anthropocene,” articulated as a coming world where “humans use their growing social, economic, and technological powers to make life better for people, stabilize the climate, and protect the natural world.” The second formation we should consider is the tragic and redemptive Afrofuturism appearing in Arthur Jafa’s shattering 2016 video Love is the Message, the Message is Death. As one model among numerous Indigenous and anticolonial futurisms embedded within social movements dedicated to justice-to-come, it foregrounds the heartrending violence of the present as the fundamental basis upon which any alternative—one of co-existence, equality, love, and peace—can be imagined.

Following the impulses behind the 2016 Movement for Black Lives Platform, which built on longstanding African-American approaches to environmental justice, it is crucial to bring these politico-ecological strands together in intersectional analysis. The above two modelings of the future offer an expedient comparison between the current techno-scientific rationality of climate-change response and the social in/justice concerns around racial capitalism. It invites a much-needed discussion of futures that could potentially be locked in for hundreds, even thousands of years, especially in light of the fact that technocratic climate science tends to ignore, or, at best, merely pays lip service to the differential impacts of environmental transformations on disenfranchised communities subject to ongoing racial and economic discrimination, and that social justice activism also tends to shunt ecological matters to the side due to an all-too-immediate confrontation with police brutality.

Jafa, a filmmaker by trade, unleashes an archive of citizen-journalist, dash cam, and media videos through which the black body is subjected to police brutality and other forms of violence. Set to (the artist formerly named) Kanye West’s transcendent gospel-rap anthem “Ultralight Beam,” the video quickly cycles through recent and historical footage, intermixing clips of horrific, civilization-destroying aliens from Hollywood films. It would appear that Jafa proposes an allegory for the destruction of the world that, in a parallel universe, geoengineering wishes to repair. My 2017 book Against the Anthropocene similarly criticizes the Anthropocene thesis for its regressive and narcissistic neo-humanism, its evasion of the differential causes and effects of climate breakdown, its disavowal of petrocapitalist culpability, and its ecology of affluence. That analysis extended to diverse visual-cultural expressions of remote sensing data, the kind that offers “whole earth” perspectives of the planet as not only devoid of social conflict but also safely in the grips of an emergent scientific mastery. These observations still plague theories, and the unfolding reception, of the Anthropocene today—despite parallel attempts to mobilize it critically, work progressively with its conceptualization, and also nominate additional terms to better comprehend current conditions, such as the Chthulucene or the Capitalocene. While Jafa’s video powerfully elucidates the problems with this formation—dramatizing the extreme costs of the social asymmetries that go unaddressed within engineering—the last couple of years have shown us, with increasing clarity, that the neoliberalization of the Anthropocene is ascendant. The growth in climate engineering theory and practice and its status-conserving technofixes threaten a future grounded in social justice.

Geoengineering unfolds directly from the Anthropocene thesis, beginning with the initial 2000 proposal made by atmospheric chemist Paul Crutzen and biologist Eugene Stoermer to designate a new geological era during which Earth systems are increasingly determined by “human activities.” As they explained, “an exciting, but also difficult and daunting task lies ahead of the global research and engineering community to guide man-kind towards global, sustainable, environmental management.” Crutzen soon followed up with more explicit suggestions that large-scale engineering projects, including his own one for stratospheric sulfur injections, may well be necessary to “optimize” the climate. Much dispute remains over the dating of this post-Holocene epoch: whether it began with the nineteenth-century industrial revolution, or nuclear science in the 1940s, or again much earlier with the Orbis Spike of 1610. The latter coincides with the geological implications of colonization and genocide in the Americas, which also unknowingly dropped atmospheric carbon levels thanks to large-scale afforestation of once-cultivated Indigenous lands. Its apparently causal connection to geoengineering shows that the Anthropocene is not only far from innocent in historical diagnosis (it matters both geologically and politically when we date it), but preemptive in techno-scientific prescription for future response. Essentially, by interpreting the past, we determine the future.

For Crutzen, engineering may be a last resort to forestall catastrophic breakdown, where reducing emissions proves insurmountable; for others, it represents an attractive first option to advance ecological modernization, merging climate solutions with economic opportunity. This becomes explicit with The Breakthrough Institute’s notorious proposal for a good Anthropocene, founded on the dubious “decoupling” of economic growth from environmental impacts. This “leading big money, anti-green, pro-nuclear”—and pro-geoengineering—“think tank in the United States” was founded in 2003 by Michael Shellenberger and Ted Nordhaus. In their 2004 essay “The Death of Environmentalism: Global Warming Politics in a Post-Environmental World,” Shellenberger and Nordhaus sought to dispatch what they termed the “politics of limits”—the kind based in the regulatory environmentalism of the 1970s emphasizing Earth’s finite carrying capacity—and replace it with a “politics of possibility” dedicated to technologically-driven economic growth. They count Carl Page, brother of Google founder Larry Page, among its funders, indicating the growing convergence of Big Tech with green economics. According to critics, The Institute remains singularly “dedicated to propagandizing capitalist technological-investment ‘solutions’ to climate change.”

The clearest articulation of the Institute’s position is “An Ecomodernist Manifesto,” written by eighteen authors including Shellenberger and Nordhaus. It advances this techno-solutions-based goal: “More-productive economies are wealthier economies, capable of better meeting human needs while committing more of their economic surplus to non-economic amenities, including better human health, greater human freedom and opportunity, arts, culture, and the conservation of nature.” Despite its familiar trickle-down economics and liberal-coated goodwill, the Manifesto’s expansive spatiotemporal scales and abstract rhetoric, like much of the Anthropocene’s planetary imagery and deep time frame, overshoot the figural, the actual, the experiential. It’s not surprising, then, that its “politics of possibility” fails to mention the terms “race,” “equality,” or “justice,” which would help connect to the actual antagonisms of current social experience, while the lofty and generalizing language of “human,” “technology,” and “growth” abound. By evading such key facets of justice-based environmentalism—which they do their best to consign to the grave—Ecomodernism’s color-blind formulations reflect yet another version of what Van Jones has called “the unbearable whiteness of green,” here doubly unbearable because the Manifesto’s utopianism utterly fails to reflect on the intolerable social conditions that it disappears and implicitly seeks to protect.

Alternately, if we can describe Jafa’s video as expressing an environmentalism of sorts—which I argue we can, even though the video’s reception to date has largely evaded such an analysis—then it’s one attuned to what Christina Sharpe terms “antiblackness as total climate.” And compared to the Ecomodernist Manifesto’s many conceptual loopholes, Love is the Message is laser-focused on figurations distorted within the everyday environments of racial-capitalism’s necropolitics. Indeed, Jafa’s stream of rhythmic edits cycles relentlessly through shots of police hitting, pummeling, punching, shooting, and brutalizing Black bodies (recalling and updating approaches of Third Cinema and specifically Cuban filmmaker Santiago Álvarez’s then-shocking portrayal of US racist policing set to Lena Horne’s rousing civil-rights number in his short 1965 film Now!). Visualizing the policing of distinct climates of life and death, Jafa includes the 2015 murder of Walter Scott in South Carolina, the abusive 2014 arrest of Kametra Barbour in her car with her four children in Dallas, and the cruel ground-tackling of fifteen-year-old, bikini-clad Dajerria Becton, who a white police officer violently forced to the ground at a pool party in McKinney, Texas in 2015. Where long-term environmental management is integrally related to social control with racial, gendered, and classed differentials, we can term these practices “climate control.” Elsewhere, Jafa contextualizes this historic anti-blackness with additional footage drawn from the historical archive, showing midcentury scenes of police fire-hosing Black protestors, striking civil rights activists with nightsticks, as well as whites brutalizing lunch counter protestors in North Carolina, and footage from D. W. Griffith’s notorious 1915 film The Birth of a Nation, with its scandalously positive portrayal of Klu Klux Klan members and white actors in blackface.

In returning to Ecomodernism, The Breakthrough Institute willfully contributes to the widespread invisibility of these scenes, divorcing what may be termed the Black Anthropocene—wherein ecology is inseparable from the social terms of racial capitalism—from its geoengineered future.

While these models are capable of climate control at the regional level, as in its solar radiation management proposals, Jafa’s video, which exhibits affinities with the fields of political ecology and climate justice grounds the environment as the realm of socio-political and techno-economic inequality. This equation is most explicit where his video includes passages of African-Americans wading through the flood waters of Hurricane Katrina. For many New Orleanians, years of structural negligence, municipal and infrastructure defunding, systematic racial inequality, and impoverishment were only compounded by the “unnatural” disaster. In fact, taking that context writ large, geoengineering appears to be a technological construct mobilized in part precisely so as not to address social injustice and to restrict our understanding of environment to the biogeophysical realm. Showing how police brutality enacts the every day (and sometimes spectacular) meanings of US environmental management, Love is the Message brings environmental control down to the racialized and classed figural scale. We witness how white supremacy, disaster capitalism, and authoritarian neoliberalism operate at such a granular level, models that today have come to represent Trumpism, itself a signature instance of the pathologies of Anthropocene rationality.

“Climate change is global-scale violence against places and species, as well as against human beings,” contends Rebecca Solnit. Naomi Klein extends that insight where she writes how “the reality of an economic order built on white supremacy is the whispered subtext of our entire response to the climate crisis,” which is far from accidental, but rather “the result of a series of policy decisions the governments of wealthy countries have made—and continue to make—with full knowledge of the facts and in the face of strenuous objections.” Attacking such decisions at UN climate summits, the Sudanese diplomat and climate negotiator Lumumba di Aping has predicted the results to be “climate genocide,” where limiting warming to two degrees Celsius means accepting a global average that will translate into 4-5 degrees in some places, meaning “Africa will burn.” Owing to the massive scales, delayed impacts, and tremendous complexity of climate science, as well as its networked agencies built of cybernetic systems, the challenge is urgent to render these insights into visual evidence capable of forming collective political subjects who act, so that we can shape the future we want to live in—at least while there’s yet time left to do so.

Even while Love is the Message doesn’t specifically reference geoengineering, it nonetheless offers a discernable cry of protest against the latter’s ambition to sustain our present culture with no alteration to its governing sociopolitical and economic arrangements, with mitigation technology only intervening at the level of regional weather control and atmospheric waste management. By virtue of its montage, Jafa’s video joins passages of black death and police violence to close-up shots of angry sun flares, as seen from NASA’s International Space Station’s near-live feed, offering an insight common in environmental justice circles that views global warming as a threat multiplier that exacerbates social conflict and inequality. According to well-documented research, disenfranchised and impoverished communities of color experience higher levels of exposure to climate-related disasters and their aftermath, food and water shortages, major health risks, and other forms of environmental vulnerability. In this vein, it’s feasible to understand the video’s footage of the alien’s dripping secondary jaws from Ridley Scott’s 1979 classic, and those of the city-destroying monster from Cloverfield, Matt Reeve’s 2008 faux-found-footage horror film, as further allegories, serving to elevate the tragic-but-quotidian documents of police violence and social oppression to the realm of cosmopolitical significance, the arena where worlds are annihilated and remade. In other words, any given police attack cannot be seen as a stand-alone local event, but rather, by virtue of Jafa’s stream of collected footage, part of systematic and widespread violence, and more, as a matter of civilizational threat akin to the horror of an alien assault on planet earth. As such, the monstrous here is a story of racial injustice, which Jafa sets in a post-natural dystopia resulting from runaway climate change.

The many film fables that the monstrous proposes might also be read variously as representing the greedy and senseless destruction of the world conducted by the rapacious power of carceral capital, bolstered by police climate control, the colonization of debt, and the chains of spectacle; the radical and threatening otherness of racial difference become a predatory behemoth; alternately, a justice-seeking revenge fantasy upon white-supremacist culture by what lies beyond recognition; or the materialization of contemporary fears of a genetically and geo-engineered Frankensteinian science in creating post-natural dystopias and runaway climate change—or indeed some element of each all mixed together without articulate or stable meaning.

The Breakthrough Institute also references our “contemporary Frankenstein”—enlisting no less than Bruno Latour in its theoretical armory, who argues that we must not disown the planetary monster we have created—the earth of the Anthropocene—but rather learn to love and care for it through further technological acts of “modernizing modernization.” While Naomi Klein overlooks Latour’s subtler call for a “compositionist” modernity as “a process of becoming ever-more attached to, and intimate with, a panoply of nonhuman natures,” she criticizes the presumptuousness of his proposal especially where it aids in the Institute’s pro-engineering agenda: “The earth is not our prisoner, our patient, our machine, or, indeed, our monster. It is our entire world. And the solution to global warming is not to fix the world, it is to fix ourselves.” Adding to mounting opposition to geoengineering, she highlights the unintended side-effects (e.g. interfering in Monsoons in South Asia, exacerbating drought in North Africa, widening the ozone hole); the lack of any regulatory protocol for climate interventions with trans-national implications; its lock-in effect making it next to impossible to abandon the technology once it’s been implemented; its anti-democratic basis in an era of globalism led by a handful of powerful developed nations; and, crucially, its directing of precious resources away from the causes of climate disruption, in favor of addressing symptoms.

Indeed, in recent years popular resistance movements have formed around climate justice, asserting the fundamental principle of “system change, not climate change,” where justice means dedication to equality, fairness, and the inclusion of the most vulnerable and members of frontline communities in the deliberation of climate solutions. Think of the ongoing battle in central France to stop the new airport and invent a non-capitalist commons at the Zad; Standing Rock’s ongoing opposition to the Dakota Access Pipeline and expression of multi-national resurgence in the name of Indigenous and environmental rights; the many examples of Blockadia pitted against fossil-fuel infrastructure and extraction projects across the Americas, including protests in Louisiana against the Bayou Bridge Pipeline, in British Columbia against the Trans Mountain Pipeline, and those in Ecuador against oil drilling in Yasuní National Park; and the European climate camps and the Ende Gelände [Here and No Further!] movement in Germany, where the state is currently threatening to tear down the ancient Hambach forest to dig for coal, evicting activists along the way. These are all pledged variously to the goal of reinventing forms of life by refusing the imperatives of capitalist growth and market-based mechanisms for addressing climate breakdown, even while they also seek to expand the social technologies of equality and justice.

But despite such momentum and creative transitions, what’s becoming clear with the ongoing development of geoengineering is that massive resources and funding bodies are mobilizing the technology under the star of the neoliberal Anthropocene. If anything, that formation parallels and joins the same forces that support the militarization and technologization of police functions, growing economic inequality and generalized indebtedness, the privatization of and creation of for-profit prisons, and the criminalization of protest, to the point where the criminal justice complex increasingly treats both environmental and antiracist activism as terrorism. Consider Breakthrough Initiatives—no relation to the Institute other than sharing a trending term within the field of competitive tech development—which is one among many trying to “save the planet” and motivated in doing so by what some see as a $12 trillion opportunity. Funded in part by Facebook’s Mark Zuckerberg and Israeli-Russian venture capitalist Yuri Milner of Digital Sky Technologies, and counting the late Stephen Hawking among its collaborators, the project recently put $100 million into a radio wave project to search for alien life. Led by a libertarian entrepreneurialism that derides the outmoded and bureaucratic state agencies of the Cold War, Breakthrough Initiatives is part of a growing “colonial futurism” premised upon the neoliberalization of outer space. It connects to the projects of Silicon Valley’s modeling of “NewSpace,” as in the rhetoric of Elon Musk, set on off-planet resource mining, terraforming other planets, and extending property claims far into the galaxy. With the neoliberal corporate-military-state complex determined to occupy and settle the very place that certain Afrofuturists have long sought as a destination to escape colonized Earth, such starry-eyed fantasies are quickly becoming grim futures.

Other initiatives focus their attention on Earth, representing how the neocolonialist spirit haunts new wave environmentalism. There’s ScoPex, Harvard University’s current $20 million Stratospheric Controlled Perturbation Experiment, notable for its first-ever plans to test solar radiation management technologies outside the lab in the earth’s atmosphere above Arizona. Led by David Keith, Harvard professor of applied physics, founder and board member of the private corporation Carbon Engineering, and signatory of “An Ecomodernist Manifesto,” the project is supported by Microsoft’s Bill Gates and his Fund for Innovative Climate and Energy Research, as well as by the Hewlett Foundation and the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation (an appropriate beneficiary, considering it is named for the longtime CEO of General Motors). Notable for its funding model joining university engineering and climate-science research to Big Tech and fossil capital, ScoPex parallels a marine cloud-brightening field experiment in Moss Landing, California, led by the Joint Institute for the Study of the Atmosphere and Ocean (JISAO) at the University of Washington, directed by Thomas Peter Ackerman, Professor of Atmospheric Sciences, with Paul Crutzen as a senior advisor. With $16 million in funding from Gates and others, the project plans to shoot seawater droplets into the atmosphere from a ship with high-pressure nozzles, creating a solar shield to deflect sunlight. In light of Cameroonian theorist Achille Mbembe’s diagnoses of creeping precaratization as “the becoming-black of the world”—meaning the post-racial generalization of dispossession, indebtedness, and loss of powers of self-determination—geoengineering’s desire to save the world by whitening the sky reveals how completely detached the field is from the catastrophes currently occurring on the ground in the here and now. While geoengineering may profess to stem from love of earth, its message is death: the death of social justice, equality, and democratic inclusion.

The go-to guide for Zuckerberg and Gates is Yuval Noah Harari’s recent book Homo Deus: A Brief History of Tomorrow, which, tellingly, includes a chapter titled “The Anthropocene.” Driven by an endless quest for “bliss, immortality, and divinity,” anthropos, in this narrative, figures as ultimate self-creator, for whom no challenge—climate change, agricultural failure, artificial intelligence, planetary hunger, even death and extinction—will be beyond technological overcoming, especially when matched to Silicon Valley capital. At the same time, the cost will be greater inequality and technocracy, an expanding useless class, a new religion of algorithmic “dataism,” and the reduction of humanity to “biochemical subsystems” monitored by global networks. More prosaically, the Good—read: Neoliberal—Anthropocene emerges in this and the Breakthrough Institute’s narrations as the ideological mechanism of choice for suspending contradictions between economic growth and climate solutions. In fact, even climate-change denying Texas Republicans can get on board with geoengineering as a not-to-be-missed pro-tech economic opportunity, requiring no need to debate sources of environmental transformation or hold petrocapitalism responsible, as causality is sacrificed on the alter of techno-solutionism.

While the Trump administration has defied the scientific consensus on climate change and supported fossil-fuel deregulations, its February 2018 budget, supported by many in congress, included the first-ever tax breaks for new technologies of atmospheric carbon capture. Meanwhile, the Hoover Institution, The Heartland Institute, and the American Enterprise Institute—all key conservative think-tanks—support this move, the latter hailing geoengineering as nothing less than “a revolutionary approach to climate change.” Even more alarming is the current conceptualization by Keith and others of “counter-geoengineering,” the counteracting of the militarization and weaponization of climate manipulation technologies as deployed by imagined rogue states or non-state actors. This additional danger dramatizes engineering’s ungovernable status and potential for destructive instrumentalization in the era of Homo Deus. Even more than biologically regressive, neo-humanist and universalist, depoliticizing and neocolonialist, Anthropocene geoengineering is proving most threatening where techno-utopianism merges with military unilateralism in proposing near-future global weather wars, going far beyond anything imagined in the Cold War.

While the horror of those systems are devastatingly presented in Jafa’s video, Love is the Message also powerfully intercuts passages portraying the remarkable resilience, accomplishment, and beauty of African American culture—despite all—in activism, politics, speculative imagination, rhetoric, music, dance, literature, athletics, and, profoundly, everyday forms of creativity. The negative and the positive, love and death, repeatedly and relentlessly oscillate and converge in explosive combination in his piece, proposing something like a singular Vine compilation of cutting philosophical import, or an Instagram feed of alternating soul-destroying and restorative affects. Jafa terms it the “the abject sublime,” an extraordinary mix of beauty and horror, issuing from an archive of black visual culture that seems infinite in its range of experiences. For Jafa, this ultimately beyond-quantifiable record of being stems from an ontological construction inseparable from the wake of transatlantic slavery. Indeed, the video’s description-defying vastness, its overwhelming multivalence, is signaled in Greg Tate’s necessarily transgressive grammar used in describing the piece: “The viral outgrowth of an aborted found-footage exercise, the 7-minute video is an alternately mirthful-cum-melancholic-cum-cardiac-arresting meditation on race-agency wrapped in a visually sermonic recitation of race tragedy wrapped in a nuanced and feverish exultation of diverse Black American lives at various states of collapse and regeneration.”

Yet even though the video offers an amazing account of generative ambivalence and creative survival, even while it also gives rise to encompassing hopefulness in collective moments of love, solidarity, ethical conviction, and collective justice-seeking, it simultaneously obliterates any consideration of extending or sustaining its world of horror, one of beyond-grotesque inequality, impoverishment, and violence that renders Black life and lives matterless by the state and its techno-human apparatuses. Unlike The Breakthrough Institute, which proffers art and leisure as rewards, Jafa’s sci-fi reaches the realm of cosmopolitical magnitude without losing sight of vernacular instances of in/justice, of situated expressions that are future-oriented but historically informed, and which are dedicated to the reinvention of everyday life, art, culture, politics, mourning. It follows, then, that Jafa would extend solidarity to a younger generation by including artist Martine Syms. During her cameo, she reads from her 2015 “Mundane Afrofuturist Manifesto,” which reprises the longstanding black cultural aesthetic that draws on visions of a utopian time to come, one reached only by passing through the traumatic alienations of racial capitalism. No simple time travel or shapeshifting is possible, however. “Mundane Afrofuturists recognize that we are not aliens,” Syms explains, while facing the camera seated behind a desk.

Jafa borrows the clip from Syms’s eponymous documentary, which, over the course of its hour-long duration, eschews what its author sees as the depoliticized fantasies of past Afrofuturisms. According to Syms, they have sunk into hackneyed fashions, commodifiable styles and stale pop-cultural spectacles severed from any radical imagination inspiring collective liberation. More, she warns against acritical escapism, as when “magic interstellar travel and/or the wondrous communication grid” lead to “an illusion of outer space and cyberspace as egalitarian.” For her, “jive-talking aliens,” “reference to Sun Ra,” and “Egyptian mythology and iconography” are all out, calling instead for “a new focus on black humanity: our science, technology, culture, politics, religions, individuality, needs, dreams, hopes, and failings … Mundane Afrofuturism is the ultimate laboratory for world-building outside of imperialist, capitalist, white patriarchy.” While Love is the Message expresses potential solidarity with the oppressed and excluded, both human and non, Syms’s sentiment rejects equivalence between racial difference and the monstrous. It is expressive of what Aria Dean diagnoses as the conjunction of black accelerationism and Afrofuturism that entails both a catalytic movement toward “the end of the world” and a revolution beyond the in/humanisms of racial capitalism. In other words, a younger generation has elected to update Afrofuturism, asking us to witness a double move that rhymes negative critique with positive transformation.

The challenge here is bringing this vision of social critique and social liberation into explicit connection—and more importantly, direct conflict—with the neoliberal Anthropocene, and to oppose the threat of white supremacist tendencies and colonial, extractive futurism. These Ecomodernist agendas are intent on shaping the world to come; with resources and the political will to do so, it will not only set us on a track of unstoppable climate transformation but also interminably extend racial injustice and white supremacy. Against that scenario, we urgently need to invent and work toward cultivating futures beyond the world’s end, where that end is no longer unthinkable beyond current socio-political and economic arrangements, or where that end has already in fact occurred. It is urgent that we ask ourselves, why should cultures outside Afrofuturism—which remain comfortably shielded by whiteness and the current narratives that uphold its position—care?

One answer is to reiterate the desirable terms of a shared world where “injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.” Expressing a future-oriented imperative with new politico-ecological purpose, Fred Moten, in a recent public conversation with Robin D. G. Kelley, has updated that famous ethico-political formulation of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (who, it should be noted, makes a notable appearance in Jafa’s video). He posits the mission of contemporary Black studies as “on the most fundamental level to try to save the earth, and on a secondary level to save the possibility of human existence.” Kelley adds that this is a “project for liberation,” a “transformative project,” and if it doesn’t exist as a response to “the neoliberal, neo-fascist turn, then it’s worthless.” Why should this project for liberation not also be the overarching imperative of artistic practice today? If so, then art will name the practice of creative aesthetics that merges ecological insight with political engagement in the hopes of not only saving what good we have but securing a flourishing and emancipated future for all.

## CASE

### 1NC---Turn

#### Antitrust policy debates solve the historical inaccessibility of legal change and are prerequisite to AFF efficacy

Greer and Vallas 21 (**Jeremie Greer**, Co-Founder and Co-Executive Director at Liberation in a Generation, a national movement support organization building the power of people of color to totally transform the economy, Soros Equality Fellow, racial justice activist who began his career as a community organizer in the Columbia Heights and Shaw neighborhoods in Washington, DC, and national policy expert on the causes and the policy solutions to close racial wealth gap, formerly working at the Government Accountability Office, the Local Initiative Support Corporation, and Prosperity Now (formerly CFED), MPP George Mason University, BA Social Work, University of St. Thomas, currently working on an Executive Education Certificate in Nonprofit Leadership from Harvard University’s Kennedy School of Government; interviewed by **Rebecca Vallas**, senior fellow at The Century Foundation, work focuses on economic justice, formerly spent seven years at the Center for American Progress, built and lead CAP’s Poverty to Prosperity Program, and helped to establish CAP’s Disability Justice Initiative, the first disability policy project at a U.S. think tank, as well as the organization’s criminal justice reform work, her policy and advocacy work flows from her years as a legal aid lawyer, representing low-income individuals and families at Community Legal Services in Philadelphia, creator and host of Off-Kilter, a nationally distributed podcast about poverty, inequality, and everything they intersect with, JD University of Virginia, BA psychology, Emory University; “Reimagining Anti-Monopoly Activism Through Racial Justice — feat. Liberation in a Generation’s Jeremie Greer,” Off-Kilter Podcast, 3-26-2021, <https://offkiltershow.medium.com/reimagining-anti-monopoly-activism-through-racial-justice-feat-e3a124c1c61>) \*added [noncisheteronormative]

VALLAS: So, before we get into the report — and there is so much to talk about in this report — you co-founded Liberation in a Generation with Solana Rice, as I mentioned, up top. Talk a little bit about the organization’s vision, its mission. You talk a lot about an oppression economy and a liberation economy being the goal that you’re working to build towards. Talk a little bit about why you co-founded the program.

GREER: Yeah. Thanks for having me, and thanks for that question. Yeah, Liberation in a Generation, it’s really kind of a culmination of Solana and I (Solana Rice, my co-founder) and I really working. You know, originally, both of us have a similar background. Mine is in doing community organizing in the early part of the 2000s, but then also doing a lot of national work at the policy level for kind of Washington think tanks. And it really was birthed because we were really dissatisfied with the model at which a lot of national advocacy organizations were taking to how they were doing racial and economic justice work. And our kind of governing theory of change is that one, the ideas are not bold enough to actually deliver on changing the problems that we were seeing, that the story that we were telling about why these problems were created was actually just wrong, and that we weren’t working with the people that were building the type of political power that’s necessary to make that change. So, we launched Liberation in a Generation.

And what we hope to do is to dismantle what we call the oppression economy, which is an economy that is built on an uncomfortable truth: that racism is profitable in our economy, that institutions can build their wealth, that people can build their wealth based on the existence of systemic racism. And that happens by criminalizing people of color, by operating a dual financial system that extracts from people of color, that our political system and all of its inequalities is meant to prop up this racist economy that we operate in, and that corporate power has too much of a hold over the well-being of people of color in our economy. And that what we need to replace it with is a liberation economy that does real basic things like provides for everyone’s basic needs, creates safety and security, that compensates people for the value that they bring to the economy. And our economy has too long excluded people, but we need an economy that ensures that all people of color belong. And that has to be grounded in a set of economic rights that everybody has and holds and can be entitled to. And that, again, leaders of color that are doing grassroots power building and community organizing are the ones that deliver it. So, that’s who Liberation in a Generation partners with to deliver that future.

VALLAS: Well, and hearing you mention that you’d experienced, and I think very justifiable, dissatisfaction with the way that some of the kind of traditional Washington-based think tanks work on these issues, right? Often it’s about cutting poverty or reducing homelessness, right? And just the contrast with some of what you at Liberation in a Generation and Solana and the team that you guys are building there are, the things that you’re pushing for, right, are just on a different scale. And in some ways, it’s about helping people understand that maybe we can imagine a different world rather than just tinker at the edges.

I want to read another paragraph from this report. You write, “Imagine a world where the unemployment rate for people of color is zero, the unhoused rate for people of color is zero, a world in which 100 percent of people of color have quality healthcare, a livable wage, quality education. We at Liberation in a Generation,” you write, “believe that this is possible if we strive to create a liberation economy where all people of color have their basic needs met, are safe and secure, are valued and fully belong, including people of color who are immigrants, formerly incarcerated, LGBTQ [noncisheteronormative], and have a disability. You finally write, “In order to get to this liberation economy, we must dismantle the oppression economy that monopoly power has colluded with the government to maintain.” And this gets us into really talking about the topic in this report, which is anti-monopoly activism.

Start with a little bit of a primer of what we’re facing. I mentioned a couple of stats up top in the intro helping put sort of a recent and updated lens on how good it is to be a monopolist these days, right? By contrast to everybody else who’s living through this pandemic and not experiencing billions and trillions of dollars of wealth increases. Start with a little bit of a primer of what we’re facing: the rise of unchecked capitalism and monopoly power such that we’re essentially living in a new gilded era, as the report argues.

GREER: Yeah, and just, I mean, you have to, to fully understand the power of, monopoly, you have to understand it through the lens of people of color who have to deal with it. So, in Iowa, and, you know, there’s folks with People’s Action that are organizing people in rural communities around the threat of monopoly. But if you’re looking at Iowa, a corporation like Tyson Foods has managers who are sitting around on the floor (and this is documented in the media) making bets about what worker was going to get sick and die from COVID. Like, the inhumanity of that, I think, is just appalling. But it just shows the dehumanization that monopolies have created for workers, for consumers, for small businesses, and everybody that’s impacted.

And the reason why is because at the core, monopoly power is about exactly that: power, who has it and what they do with it. And what we have when you have monopolies, it’s not just about the size of the firm. There’s a lot of focus on the size of the firm. But what it’s really about is does that firm have a disproportionate amount of power, and what are they doing with that power? And what monopolies today are doing — Amazon, Moderna, Pfizer, JPMorgan Chase, Bank of America, Wells Fargo, Facebook, Google — they’re taking the power that they have around consumer prices, around workplace conditions, around wages, around the impact that they have in community, and the influence that they have on government, and they’re using that power to profit off of blatant systemic racism that is falling down upon Black and brown workers. And that is, for us, the real fight that we feel when you look at monopolies. And that the current system in which we use to try to govern monopoly power is totally inadequate in dealing with the kind of impact that the monopolies have on Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and Asian-American people in this country.

VALLAS: Now, folks who are listening probably all assume that they know what a monopoly is. But I’m going to sort of poke a hole in that and say, you may think you know what a monopoly is. But Jeremie’s got a slightly broader, and I think, more updated definition that’s used in this report. How do you define a monopoly for purposes of what you guys are doing in this work? And why do you propose a somewhat broader definition?

GREER: Yeah. So, you’re right. The current kind of anti-trust definition of a monopoly really focuses on the impact that monopoly power or corporate power has on consumers, and particularly on consumer prices. So, will you pay more for a product because of the monopoly power that a company has? And as I mentioned, we believe that that’s totally inadequate to really understand the full breadth of what a monopoly is. Monopolies have, yes, they have incredible control over consumer markets and prices. And we see that in healthcare, you know. So, the price of insulin is much higher because of the monopoly power that a company, that pharmaceutical companies hold.

But monopolies also have power over worker wages, the working conditions in which workers show up to work and have to live through. They have incredible power over small businesses. All across the country, we see small businesses being crowded out by monopoly power. They have the political power to almost dictate to local communities how much they’re willing to pay in taxes, which means the crowding out of essential services that are provided to communities. And what we observe in the report is that too often, the impact of that monopoly power falls squarely on the shoulders of people of color, whether they’re workers of color, consumers of color, whether they’re small business owners of color, or whether they’re just people of color living in communities that are looking to their local government to really help them navigate life in the economy.

VALLAS: And I want to quote you, because you offer, I think, a really, really smart definition here in the report. You say, “We define monopoly as a corporate entity — a single corporation, or a group of corporations — whose sheer size and anti-competitive behavior grant it disproportionate economic power and governing influence.” And as you’ve been describing, you say, “This negatively affects the well-being of workers, consumers, markets, local communities, democratic governance, and the planet.” That’s a somewhat broader definition than maybe the sort of technical antitrust definition of monopoly. But for all the reasons you’re starting to get into, you really, you argue in this report that it’s necessary that we think a little more broadly and a little more functionally about who’s operating like a monopoly, and therefore where we need to be thinking about challenging unchecked corporate power.

You’ve already started to delve into the link between unchecked corporate power, monopolistic behavior, and the numerous types of racial injustice and structural racism that run rampant throughout the U.S. economy and our broader society. But you have a very powerful way that you phrase this in this report. You say, “Racial wealth inequality,” and you specifically are talking there about racial wealth inequality, “is the consequential disease caused by the oppression economy.” I can’t remember reading another publication about monopolistic behavior and the need for an anti-trust movement that draws such a direct causal link between monopolies and the ways that they operate, and racial wealth inequality and structural racism. Talk a little bit about how monopolies are contributing to the immense and historic levels of racial wealth inequality that folks are maybe more familiar with, but not aware of that link.

GREER: Yeah. No, thanks for that question. And what I think of an important distinction around the framing there is that, yes, it is driving, monopolies are driving racial wealth inequality. And yes, monopolies are a product of an oppressive economy that is, you know, where racism is baked into the design of the economy. But they’re also a profit tier, they are gaining profit from the existence of that oppression economy. So, it is in their interest to sustain it and maintain it and to keep it going. And an example that we draw out in the paper that I think is so important and I think really illustrates this is, as we mentioned, one of the pillars that holds up the oppression economy is the criminalization of people of color. That people of color as criminals, or defined as criminals, and mass incarceration, the over-policing of Black and brown communities is something that upholds this oppression economy. And then when you have a company like Amazon who purchases the Ring Corporation —

And for those that may not be familiar, Ring is a product that’s provided by Amazon in which they provide surveillance and home security to everyone. You can get a little Ring doorbell where someone rings the door. You could be at work, you can open it. It’s like, “Oh, cool. Leave my package there.” That’s how they market it. But what that does is that that Ring device pulls in a lot of data. And what we have is cameras in homes all across the country that can be used to surveil people. And what we know is one of the things that police do is they over-surveil Black and brown communities, which leads to the type of mass incarceration that we’ve seen in this country. Well, Amazon has contracts, in fact, 770 contracts with police departments so that they can get the data from those Ring devices. So, I think that really illustrates that not only are monopolies driving racial inequality through the low wages that they pay workers, through the way that they crowd out Back businesses, from the way that they treat immigrants at the workplace, but they’re also actively doing things to prop up and uphold this oppression economy because they are profiting from it.

VALLAS: And I really want to encourage folks to read the report, especially activists and advocates who I know we have lots who listen to the show, folks in grassroots-based work who I think are really going to find this report very much geared towards them. That’s another really, I think, significantly unique aspect about what you guys have done here. This isn’t the kind of think tank report that you traditionally read, right? In a lot of ways, you actually really wrote this for, and almost to, grassroots leaders of color as sort of a primer on anti-monopoly activism, but also as something of the beginning of a tool kit that really could help people start to take this on as part and parcel of their work. I’d love to get a little bit into kind of why you structured the report this way, why you took this somewhat different approach in writing, not just for the media and for policymakers and for the Washington elites, but actually for grassroots leaders of color on the ground.

I’m going to quote you again. You write, “This paper aims to contribute a major step in the long journey of bridging the divide between anti-monopoly researchers and policy advocates and grassroots leaders of color.” And you write, “The first step on that journey is knowledge.” What does the current anti-monopoly fight look like? And why do you believe, and Solana as well, why did you guys prioritize bridging this divide?

GREER: Yeah, so, as I mentioned in my opening about Liberation in a Generation, we believe that the leaders that are going to lead us into having a liberation economy and dismantling this oppression economy that we’ve been talking about are grassroots leaders of color who are building power in communities. And the reason why we believe that is one, they are closest to the people who are experiencing the pain and harm of systemic racism. They are in there with them, they understand, they hear their stories, and they’re organizing them for change. The other thing that we believe is so important is that they are in the business of building the power, the political power, of those people. They’re not there to serve them, which there’s people that do that. And there’s a reason for that, and it’s important. But they see their role in helping those people build power so that they can have the agency to force their government, whether it’s a local, state or federal, to act on their behalf.

And we believe that if one of the government’s roles is to curb corporate monopoly power, they should be the ones driving that change. Because they will come with experiences, which we try to reflect in the report, of how monopoly power is impacting communities. You know, how a Amazon distribution center in the Inland Empire in California is impacting not just the economic life, but the quality of life of people in those communities. They could speak to that in real terms. And that not only does the advocacy need to be informed by that, but also the policy making needs to be informed by that.

So, what we did was, with that kind of assumption, we went to groups like the Athena Coalition, who is organizing people against Amazon across the country. We went to Color of Change, who’s an organization that is focusing on curbing the power of big tech: Facebook, Amazon, Google, Apple. We went to ACRE: Action Center for Race and the Economy. And they’re doing a lot of work focusing on big banks and the corporate and monopoly power of big banks. And we said, you know, what is holding the kind of grassroots movement back from really diving in, into this anti-monopoly issue? And they came up with, there was a lot of reasons, a lot of varies they identified, and some of them that we’re working with them to solve.

But one of them was, you know, we don’t have kind of a global understanding of how monopoly power impacts people of color in particular. We understand it through the lens of a particular firm, Amazon, Bank of America, like that. But we don’t really have a good grounding in how it happens globally. Therefore, our policymaking doesn’t have kind of an eye towards how could we globally and kind of more broadly address this problem in a way that impacts people across the economy? So, that’s what we hope that this paper would do: would provide that kind of grounding for grassroots leaders so that they can begin to build the type of strategies that kind of have that massive economy-wide impact for people of color.

VALLAS: And it might be eye-opening for grassroots leaders who are learning about this issue, who are exploring whether this is something that they can get involved with. But it’s also potentially eye-opening for people who already think they know the antitrust movement or the anti-monopoly movement, given that it is incredibly rare, as you point out, for conversations about the economy to really discuss human impacts. They’re often extremely technocratic conversations, right, that have lots of facts and figures and jargon. But something that you really make a point of doing in this report, which I can’t say I’ve ever seen in a report on monopoly power or anti-trust, is you really walk through the human impacts on people of color as workers, as consumers, as residents in local communities, as small business owners and entrepreneurs, and also as subjects of surveillance, similar to the Amazon Ring concerns that you were raising before. Share some of the examples in the report of those kinds of human impacts on people of color who can obviously be more than just one of those things in that list of categories.

GREER: Yeah, I’ll share a couple. There’s one that really, I mean, really broke my heart when I first read about it was Alec Raeshawn Smith, whose mother — and this is something that’s in the media. So, it’s not as if I’m violating any confidentiality here — but Alec Raeshawn Smith, whose mother, he aged off of his mother’s insurance plan. And this is a story we heard a lot during the ACA kind of debate and the debate around universal healthcare. But he aged off of his mother’s insurance plan, and he made this diff-, had to make this difficult choice about whether he continued to allow his mother to bear the burden of his insulin medication that he needed to regulate his diabetes, or whether he would try to do it kind of on his own. And he determined, he decided to do it on his own. And it’s a hard decision that people have to make every single day, but the cost of that insulin was so high that he was rationing it, that he wasn’t taking what the doctor prescribed. And he passed, and he died from his diabetes.

And this is the type of story that we see all too often. You know, his insulin costs were $1,300 a month without insurance. And we see that a corporation that can control pricing of pharmaceuticals for a lifesaving drug like insulin is how this plays out in real life. And we can get into a law, you know, you can get into a law classroom or into a debate on Congress, and you can start to forget about the real lives that are impacted by these policies. And the reason why we wanted to talk about these stories is because that is what organizers are dealing with every day: They’re working with people that are on insulin, you know. They are working with people who are working at a Amazon fulfillment center. They’re working with people who can’t get a bank account because Bank of America has all these fees on their credit cards and their checking accounts and things like that. So, bringing these stories out is what is going, and this real human impact, is what is going to mobilize, we believe, the type of effort that’s needed to fight back against monopoly power.

VALLAS: And I think we’ve got time for a few more examples, because it just, it isn’t the part of the conversation that usually gets any airtime. And it’s part of why I wanted to have you on the show is really to put a human face on some of the impacts. Share a few more examples that really, that popped for you as you were pulling this report together.

GREER: Sure. I’d love to talk about John Ingram, who is a Black farmer in Jackson, Mississippi, and he’s a chicken farmer. He grows chickens, and he sells his chickens to Koch Foods, K-o-c-h Foods. And they are the fifth largest poultry company in the country that provides food to places all across the country. But the model which they work with John is very much in the model of the sharecropping model from post-Civil War and on into the Jim Crow era. You know, they determine the way in which John must run his farm, like to how much he feeds his chickens, to the types of facilities he keeps his chickens in, all the way to the price that they will pay to buy his chickens. And what this does is create incredible power over Black farmers like John. And what you have is — And this is pretty much allowed to take place by the USDA.

He had complained, and Black farmers, many Black farmers complained to the Obama-era USDA. And because of the power of those poultry monopolies — you know, I mentioned one in the beginning, Tysons and Koch is another — they really didn’t do anything. And what we see across the country are Black farmers being forced out of business because of the power that these monopolies have.

Another example that I think is really good is also in Mississippi. There’s a Nissan plant that was built in Canton, Mississippi. They relocated there. And they had gotten there because they had gotten a lot of tax breaks from the local government, from the state of Mississippi. And they did so with the promise of good jobs. They talked about jobs would be between $26 and $26 an hour. Well, the type of jobs that they provided were called perma-temp jobs. And these are basically permanent temporary jobs, which I can’t really wrap my mind around what that is, because those are conflicting. Like, what is something that’s permanent and temporary? But they created these jobs that were permanent and temporary, which basically meant that they could at will fire people from their jobs.

So, these aren’t real sound jobs. The wages were low. They did not get great benefits. So, a lot of the promise that was offered was not delivered upon. And that these were primarily the jobs that were provided in this part of Mississippi, despite the millions in tax breaks that Nissan got from, again, the state of Mississippi and the local government there.

VALLAS: And there’s so many more examples throughout the report. We’ve got a link and show notes so folks can go in and can sort of page through. It’s written in an incredibly accessible way, right? So, I want to just make that point. You intentionally set this up so that you don’t have to be a lawyer to read this. You don’t have to be a deep antitrust expert to be able to read this. This is actually really for people who might be a little bit newer to the issue.

And one of the big kind of frames of the report as well is you spend a lot of time discussing how, you know, hey, we know folks are busy. We know folks are fighting a lot of fights right now and probably don’t feel like they’ve got one more to take on, space for one more to take on. But you really make the point that for folks who are working on, say, advancing the Green New Deal or the Homes Guarantee or other policies within the social and the economic and the racial justice advocacy sphere, you really make the point that challenging monopoly power is actually a prerequisite to succeeding in those other fights. What’s your message to advocates and to activists and policy folks, anyone who’s listening or who might read the report, what’s your message to them about why they should see the anti-monopoly fight as their own, even if they feel like that’s not the space that they work in?

GREER: Yeah, I mentioned Action Center for Race and the Economy. Mo BP-Weeks, who is a co-director there, often says, You just have to follow the money.” And I think organizers know that when you follow the money, you usually find exactly the targets that you need. And there’s a section in the report called Monopoly Power Is Corporate Power Magnified and Maximized. And we believe, and I think that we’re right, that if you focus in on and treat these monopolies like corporate entities, you can begin to see change in a lot of the transformative movements that people are having, for example, the Green New Deal and efforts to create a more equitable and healthy environment and to curb climate change. You know, the targets are Big Oil and Big Energy. And those institutions, while they’re large, still operate like corporations. They have a CEO, they have Board of Directors, they have shareholders. And all of those people have some stake in the company and have some culpability to the issues that you are trying to solve. So, it becomes another tool in the toolbox.

We believe that anti-monopoly advocacy is just another tool in the toolbox that could be used to curb corporate power so that you can begin to get wins on other issues that you may be focusing on, whether it is the environment, whether it is affordable housing, whether it’s creating higher wages for workers, whether it is to create a safer community free of police violence. We think that by focusing on curbing the monopoly power of the corporations that are causing that pain is just another tool that can be used in the advocacy for those broader kind of movement priorities that we hear a lot about.

VALLAS: Now, one of the things that you and I have talked about a good amount before, and something that we actually get into a lot on this podcast, is the narratives that are out there that we’re often sort of fighting against that might be invisible, but that shape people’s views about, say, the economy and economic policy, even if they’re not aware that that’s the sort of lens that they’re looking through or the pair of glasses that they’re looking through. It’s also something that you really spend a lot of time working on. And it’s very, it’s central, really, to a lot of what Liberation in a Generation is advancing, is narrative change, right? Especially dismantling, for example, the neoliberal narratives that are really at the root of so many of the social injustices that folks who listen to the show are out there fighting every day.

You talk about government, in the case of the anti-monopoly fight, as a villain and as complicit with corporations in allowing unchecked corporate power to do the damage that you’ve been talking about, that we’ve been discussing up to this point. But you actually talk about them in the context of the anti-monopoly fight government as the villain who could turn into the hero. Talk about why you think it’s so important to construct a narrative with a villain, with a hero. And we’ll get back now into kind of the policy conversation of this, why government has the potential to turn from being a villain to being a hero in this context.

GREER: Yeah, I mean, it’s really, when you look at the history of anti-monopoly advocacy, you see that there once was a time where the government was an active participant in curbing corporate power and was doing so on behalf of workers. You know, you see there were passages of transformative legislation like the Sherman Act or the Clayton Act or the Federal Trade and Commissions Act. And these were all passed in the early 20th century. And they were meant to curb this kind of corporate monopoly power in, you know, back in the Gilded Age when we saw the trust corporations, the railroads, the Carnegie steel industry. And there was this active role of government doing this.

But what we’ve seen since then is, as corporate power grew, begin to influence government more, a real devolution of that activist role the government played. And what we began to see really, you know, and probably the heyday of this for the monopolies began in the 1980s and continues on today, was actual collusion between the government and these monopolies. And that what we saw, what we see today is there have been, there were more mergers and acquisitions under Obama administration than any other administration before it. So, we’re at the point now where the government is really seen as a, it’s really a collaborator in building monopoly power.

What we need to get back to is a place where the government is playing its role in making sure that not just the, it’s not just about the size of the company, but that the company’s power is not getting to the point where they’re bringing down the standard of living for workers, particularly Black, Latinx, Indigenous, and Asian-American workers. That consumers are seeing the type of prices so that they can afford the things that they need to live a daily life. That small businesses, particularly Black businesses, are not being crowded out. And that that is a role for government. So, government can be the hero, and it should be the hero because it is our government, you know.

We are a democracy. We should have say, each and every one of us, in what our government does, and our government should be working on our behalf, not on behalf of Jeff Bezos, Warren Buffett, or Elon Musk. We should be expecting the government to play that active role, and not just recognizing that it should be done for all workers, but ensuring that workers of color in particular and people of color, households of color in particular, are being protected against the tyranny of monopoly power.

VALLAS: And one of the later chapters in the report really offers kind of a primer in some of that early 20th century history that you were just summarizing around the time when government in the U.S. actually did take action to rein in monopoly power. You mentioned the Sherman Act and the Clayton Act and the creation of the Federal Trade Commission, all of that, I would encourage folks to go in and read. And there’s probably a lot that folks don’t know about that era following the gilded era, that really was the time when the federal government in the U.S. did actually take action to check corporate power. Who are the key players with power in the federal government to do something about this? And what are some of the existing solutions that are being advanced?

GREER: Yeah. So, today, I mean, it’s your Congress, of course, has a lot of power. Because there’s an, I believe, there’s a need for new kind of legislation that new powers be created, new constructions of how we regulate monopoly that only Congress could do by passing laws. But under our current laws, the Federal Trade Commission is responsible for responding and kind of being the first, the cop on the beat to make sure that companies aren’t violating any of our current antitrust laws. They can issue criminal and civil penalties, and they are the ones who are in charge of enforcing those kind of monumental legislation that we’ve talked about.

The Justice Department also has a important role in moving legislation forward. In fact, they are the entity that when you hear about breaking up corporations, the Justice Department is the one that usually does that. And they’ve done it in the past. You know, they did it. They broke up the big railroad monopolies of the past, and they broke up AT&T in the 1970s into what they call the Baby Bells. And they currently have a lawsuit today against Google to look at Google’s monopoly power. And in the lawsuit, there’s a call for breaking it up into smaller pieces. So, there’s that.

And then there’s other agencies, you know. As it relates to banking, it’s the Department of Treasury with the Comptroller of the Currency and the Federal Deposit Insurance Agency, the CFPB in banking. In agriculture, it’s the U.S. Department of Agriculture. In energy, it’s the Department of Energy and the Environmental Protection Agency. Each of these industries kind of have their own government entity that is responsible for regulating the work that they do. And they play a role in curbing corporate power. And one other one that I’d mention is states. State Attorney Generals also have a lot of power to curb corporate power, because one thing that’s little known is that states are the ones that incorporate corporations. And so, they have a lot of ability and a lot of power to regulate agencies.

As far as solutions go, there’s a lot of solutions that are kind of out there. And what this report does not do is propose to put forth a particular solution that would work for people of color, because we actually think that that’s the work that grassroots leaders of color should embark on in the future, is designing and developing those particular solutions. But some of the solutions that we have in our toolbox today are, for example, breaking up large corporations. That is something that we can do today. We can also regulate, tightly regulate corporations using the existing tools in the toolbox. The CFPB and what it’s done in the banking industry is a good example of that.

But one idea that’s been batted around, and I think Elizabeth Warren proposes for big tech in particular, is new enforcement agencies that are more in line with the realities that we see in the economy today and the way in which monopolies form. A lot of our laws are meant, were developed to regulate railroad and steel monopolies, and those aren’t the monopolies that we’re seeing today. So, there is a group of folks out there talking and saying that there’s a real need to think about new agencies with new authorities that could regulate monopoly power.

VALLAS: And of course, it’s not exactly a pie-in-the-sky idea to think about creating those new agencies. Elizabeth Warren, who you mentioned, right, was the godmother of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, the CFPB, which is pretty young as far as federal agencies go. It was created during the Obama years. Although that may feel like a different lifetime at this point in a lot of ways.

We’re going to run out of time. But the last couple of minutes that we have, I’d really love to spend delving into the recommendation that really is, in a lot of ways, the kind of central call of this report. A lot of it is really addressed to grassroots leaders, and for the reasons you’ve discussed, right, about bridging that divide. But it’s also addressed to the existing anti-monopoly tent: the folks who are already working within research and advocacy spaces on these issues. And you say very pointedly, “The anti-monopoly movement, within research and advocacy spaces especially, should embolden grassroots leaders of color to deliver anti-racist policy solutions aimed specifically to curtail monopoly power.” So, there you’re describing that agenda that you think grassroots leaders really should be centered in developing. But you continue. You actually, you sort of raise the ante with this call. You also say, “It’s not enough to speak virtuously about racial equity and economic justice. We have to intentionally center people of color in the development of policy change.”

And you call explicitly for a reimagination of this movement through a racial justice lens that broadens the tent and intentionally makes this work more accessible and more human-impact focused so that it’s not just about bringing folks in and centering the work differently. It’s actually about doing the work differently, entirely, so that it’s not just that technocratic and sort of small-tent D.C. elite approach to changing these policies. Talk a little bit about what that actually would look like. You have some pretty specific ideas that, I agree with you, would actually transform the anti-monopoly movement in ways that would reimagine it and approach the work differently. Get concrete. What would that actually look like?

GREER: Yeah, and thank you for this question, Rebecca. You know, I mentioned that history. And I think what we know about public policy and the history of public policy in the United States, whether it was this antitrust movement in response to the Gilded Age, whether it was the New Deal, is that when it’s done in a race-neutral way, it doesn’t just leave people of color behind — Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian Americans — it also harms people of color. And what we need to do is, of course, what we can learn from that history is that we should not repeat it. And we should not repeat it, by centering people of color as the core beneficiaries of the policy. Because we believe if that is done, not only will they be served, but we will all then be served because we’re ensuring that we’re not leaving anyone behind, and we’re not intentionally harming anyone. And we think that that’s so critically important in this kind of new era of antitrust policy that could come forth.

You know, we talk about this renaissance of antitrust back in the early part of the century, but at the time, many Black people could still not join a union. Many, many Black people could not get jobs in these new corporations that were being formed by the railroad, by the breaking up of the railroads. So, we have to acknowledge that the implementation of policy and ensuring that all people are a part of it are critically important. And we believe that no one is better at that than people that organize, that are in fellowship, and work with people of color every single day closest to the problem can do. And that that knowledge that they have, that expertise that they have in those folks’ lived experience, is exactly what policymakers need to craft the type of policies necessary. It is what the think tanks in Washington need. It is what the policymakers on Capitol Hill need. It is what the entire advocacy apparatus needs. And we would like to see that being applied to this area.

But what that means is not bringing people to the table in a kind of like, you know, tell us what you think, and then we’ll get back to you. We actually believe that those folks should be leading those conversations. They should be leading the crafting of that policy. And that the role of the think tank or of the policymaker or the antitrust lawyer should be to support them in that endeavor, but with them at the helm. And we think that that is critically important in all areas of policy, but especially in this one that has been so technocratic, so legalistic, so academic, and really devoid of many of the lived experiences that people have navigating the economy and fighting back against these monopolies.

VALLAS: And you’ve got some really, really, really concrete and tangible recommendations in there that I feel like if researchers or Hill staff or think tankers are listening — and I know that’s a lot of the folks who listen to this show, too — there’s stuff in there that folks can just literally put on their to-do list, like creating measures that actually assess impacts on Black and Latinx and Indigenous and Asian and Pacific Islander people, right, as they’re actually thinking about how we evaluate solutions.

GREER: Right.

VALLAS: Or you also call for just using less jargon and less abstraction and focusing maybe a little bit less on just like the markets and the efficiencies and all of those terms, right, in favor of talking a little bit more about the impact of corporate decisions on people, human people, right: the folks that are actually at the core of why we need to be challenging corporate power.

GREER: Think bold. Think big. We need to think big. We need to think boldly. We can’t get caught up into the minutia of what can get done today. We need to think big about what could happen tomorrow. So, yeah, that’s another one. Mmhmm.

### 1NC---AT: Thesis

#### Pessimistic frame is bad---rejecting cruelly optimistic fantasies is experientially worse than letting them play out

Cornell & Seely 16 (Drucilla Cornell, professor of political science, Rutgers University, and Stephen Seely, Ph.D. candidate in political science, Rutgers University, *The Spirit of Revolution*, 2016, p.11-14)

Optimism: Duty or Cruelty? More recently, further objections have been made within queer and affect theory in particular to the normativizing tendencies inherent in politics in general: perhaps political optimism or revolutionary hope are simply ways of interpellating queer subjects into compulsory7 affective circuits in which "negative" feelings and emotions must be renounced in the name of "positive" ones, or into certain hetero- or homonormative visions of the "good life" that is to be sought in revolutionary movements. Such a process, according to some queer theorists, thus installs a form of affective normativily into politics, which demands certain investments and obscures the distribution of "positive" and "negative" feelings across gender, sexual, racial, class, and national axes (see Duggan and Munoz 2009 and Berlant 2011). As such, much recent queer theory has drawn on certain forms of psychoanalysis to advocate the political use-value of precisely these "negative" and "non-normative" affects and feelings—including hopelessness, melancholia, shame, unhappiness—in the name of queer resistance (see Eng and Kazanjian 2002, Duggan and Munoz 2009, Ahmed 2010, Halperin and Traub 2010). In its most extreme form (which we take up extensively in Chapter 3). queer theorist Lee Edclman (2004) has argued that any politics whatsoever is always already both heteronormative and conservative insofar as it imagines "the Child" as the horizon and beneficiary of any political action. The focus on the future inherent to any political agenda, according to Edelman, involves a compulsory renunciation of the present in the name of the children who will inherit that "better" future. Queers are, according to Edelman, those not fighting for the children and are thus figured as the death drive of the social order—a status Edelman forcefully exhorts queers to actively take up in the "insistence] that the future stop here" (2004: 31). So does all of this mean that we are, to use Lauren Berlant's (2011) term, "cruel optimists"?3 We would answer this simply: there is surely nothing crueler than to say that there is no way out of the horrific and brutal exploitation of advanced capitalism that leaves the majority of the world's population in conditions of dire poverty and targeted for extinction. Embracing the death drive, or what amounts to the same thing, abandoning oneself to the impending doom of the species and the planet when you have no possibility of life is not such a big deal, and is certainly not an act of "queer" or "posthumanist" resistance. Centuries ago, Immanuel Kant argued that we have a duty to be optimistic, not because things are necessarily going to get better, but because they might. For Kant, we are not obligated to believe in any particular vision of the future or its possibility, but the fact that ideals such as perpetual peace (and we would add: the end of capitalism) cannot be *proven impossible* obliges us to *live as if* (not necessarily believe) they were. To quote Kant: for there can be no obligation ... to believe something [i.e., a specific end]. What is incumbent upon us as a duty is to act in conformity with the idea of that end, even if there is not the slightest theoretical likelihood that it can be realized, as long as its impossibility cannot be demonstrated either. Now morally practical reason pronounces in us its irresistible veto: there is to be no war... So the question is no longer whether perpetual peace is something real or a fiction, and whether we are not deceiving ourselves in our theoretical judgment when we assume that it is real. Instead we must act as if it is something real, though perhaps it is not... and even if the complete realization of this objective always remains a pious wish, still we are certainly not deceiving ourselves in adopting the maxim of working incessantly toward it. For this is our duty ... (1996: 490-1, emphasis added) And, moreover, as spectators (if not participants) in revolutionary struggle, we actually shape the way those struggles will be read. So for Kant, the spectators who cheered on the French Revolution played a role in history in that the significance they gave to that revolution became part of the new reality that that revolution constituted. And cannot the same be said for those who cheered on the "Arab Spring," as well as those who heroically participated in it? Can it not be said of those who stayed up all night watching the votes be counted in recent elections in Greece, Spain, and South Africa to see if new socialist parties would be voted in? The deep irony of much recent feminist and queer theory is that it effectively tells us that, in the name of "queerness" and "posthumanism," everything must ultimately remain exactly as it is, given that the hope for a different future is heteronormative and any idea of transforming the world is humanist delirium; that we should instead embrace ephemerality, extinction, and the death drive (all of which capitalism has conveniently made readily available); and that anyone who writes or claims otherwise is nothing but a nostalgic, humanist fool providing deluded idiots with cruel optimism. How do these thinkers know that we are fated to fragility, death, extinction, poverty, war, capitalism, depression, melancholia, and unbearable sex? In this book, we want to show that the "truth" they tell us about the ultimate impossibility of a more just future can, and should, be deconstructed in the name of a queer-feminist future beyond Man, a future that by the very appropriation of the word "queer" tells us that nothing is ever what it seems and that the psychic and bodily prisons that we live in are always in the process of being undone by collective revolutionary processes. Indeed, as the late queer theorist Jose Esleban Munoz insisted in his disagreements with much recent queer theory, queerness is itself a form of utopianism or "revolutionary consciousness." As he put it: It is difficult to hold onto a phrase like "revolutionary consciousness." It seems stark, out-moded, universalizing, and prescriptive. Yet I nonetheless deploy it because I want to link it specifically to the world of affect and feeling ... It is not about announcing the way things ought to be, but, instead, imagining what things could be. (Duggan and Munoz 2009: 278) We do not wash to rehearse here the hope versus hopelessness, future versus anti-future debates that have dominated queer theory over the past decade. We do, however, want to point out the resonances of Munoz's contention that "queerness is an ideality" (2009:1) with the Kantian duty of optimism, explicitly putting queer politics on the side of revolution: that we can imagine beyond what we can know both enables and obligates us to live according to ideals of freedom as we also struggle to bring such a world into existence. Certainly, Kant's point is that as we put ourselves into the story, we are part of it and thus pessimism becomes just as much a part of that story as optimism. And moreover, as we will discuss in Chapter 4, these stories have a profound power to materialize and rematerialize the world that we live in together. Thus, if what many contemporary theorists tell us is *not* truth, then it is just their own conviction—itself a form of political faith. And why have faith that we are thoroughly fucked if there is any way for us to queer ourselves out of it? It would thus seem like many theorists have their own form of cruel attachment—a cruel pessimism?—to the idea that revolution is something we (can) no longer desire. Perhaps this is a form of immunity to the inevitable disappointments of political struggle: we can no longer be disappointed if we no longer hope for a more just future or believe it is possible. And yet, as political theorist Jane Anna Gordon eloquently said at a recent event in New York City, “Poltiical theory is incoherent if we accept that we are in a post-revolutionary time. All we can do the is poetically discuss resignation and impossibility.”4 The philosophy of the limit means that the very limit to any idea of the “impossible,” that is, to any metanarrative of postrevolutionary doom, leaves us with the responsibility to fight for a politics that is both revolutionary and that is constantly challenging the reign of Man in the form of colonialism, capitalism, racism, phallocentirsm, and heterosexism (see Cornell 1992). As we have suggested, and will argue throughout, thinkers in the global South have been engaged in precisely this project for centuries. These thinkers, however, have been too involved in revolutionary struggles themselves to spend too much time hand-wringing about the humanistic arrogance of politics and the failures of feminism and socialism, or debating the value of hope versus pessimism, because there is simply too much work to be done in the struggle for total decolonization. They, in a deep and profound sense, are on the side of life, understood not as abstract "life itself," but as part of political spirituality: the struggle for different ways of living individually, collectively, and with the other beings with which we share the planet. And perhaps it is precisely to these thinkers that we must now look for the spirit of revolution and for a new practice of the human beyond Man. We close this introduction and open our book with the words of Gilles Deleuze castigating the so-called "New Philosophers" of the 1970s who critiqued Marxism and socialism for manipulating the supposedly ignorant masses: What I find really disgusting is that the New Philosophers are writing a martyrology: the Gulag and the victims of history. They live off COtpses ... But there never would have been any victims if the victims had thought or spoken like our New Philosophers. The victims had to live and think in a totally different way to provide the material that so moves the New Philosophers, who weep in their name, think in their name, and give us moral lessons in their name. Those who risk their life most often think in terms of life, not death, not bitterness, and not morbid vanity. Resistance fighters are usually in love with life. No one was ever put in prison for powerlessness and pessimism-on the contrary! From the perspective of the New Philosophers, the victims were duped, because they didn't yet grasp what the New Philosophers have grasped. U I belonged to an association, I would bring a complaint against the New Philosophers: they show just a little too much contempt for the inmates of the Gulag. (2007: 144-5) With very little adjustment, could these same words not be said of our new prophets of queer hopelessness, posthumanist renunciation, and postrevolutionary pessimism?

#### Envisioning state-based solutions within educational settings is critical to queer flourishing—we control uniqueness because queer youth are politically mobilizing in the status quo---it’s just a question of whether we support them

Greteman 18 (Adam Greteman, Department of Art Education, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, “The Idea of Queer Children,” *Sexualities and Genders in Education*, p.67-87, springer, dml)

I begin with this general sense of queer youth and the complicated relationship they have to queer adults to draw attention to the everyday complexities that go into being and becoming queer in the twenty-first century. It is, to put it simply, not a straightforward process or experience. I forgo specificity to think broadly about the diverse ways in which queer youth, in varied contexts and realities, are generally going about their day and becoming in relationship to the broader worlds they inhabit. They are, by means of being youth, going about their days thinking less about many of the issues queer scholars engage—including myself in the coming pages—and more about the possibilities and limitations that lie before them. They, with their youthful zest, see a world filled with potential and possibility. It is not a perfect world, as queer youth inching toward an explicit queer relation to the world are far from ignorant of the issues queerness raises in and for their lives. However, it is a world that they are increasingly sure they have a right to inhabit, engage, and transform. They are, unlike other generations, asserting themselves earlier in life and, as such, could benefit from queer opportunities that connect them with queer generations (a topic for the next chapter). This is, for me, a hopeful image of queer youth and an image that I try to hold with me in my own daily engagements where conversations, by and large, focus on queer youth as victims. It is also the image that propels the purpose of this book—a book that as you will read builds upon decades of queer scholarship that has pushed and prodded the world to become kinder to queers (to put it quite simply). After decades of generating queer scholarship that honors (often perversely) queerness, emerging generations have expanded opportunities to come into presence. To be clear, while I hold this image of queer youth with me, this book is not about queer youth, but about the histories and futures of queer realities that were once youthful and a push for recognizing unseen queer potentials in the youth of the future. This may, for some, sound a bit wishy-washy. The lack of specificity might read unsure or unaware of the specific challenges and realities queer youth and adults face in the present. And this may be the case—I am not an expert in specific realities beyond my own and those within my vicinity. My refusal to specify here is a recognition that queerness—at its heart—is ever shifting and difficult to pin down. Any specific mention of a queer youth, for instance, one who became prom king (or queen) or one who recently committed suicide, would already begin to foreclose other queer possibilities and the complexities therein. For me, the move to specify also feels like a move to use a queer youth to make an argument. I sense queer youth—particularly queer youth who are victimized, bullied, or commit suicide—are taken up in the grind of the media and academy to become a “cause,” often simplified or reduced to a particular talking point. There is, to be sure, a political salience to this and one I myself will take up on several occasions. However, I begin with and honor the general because for me it is helpful in allowing readers to read in their own specifics, in their own contexts, given the diversity of experiences and intersectional realities of our lives. Additionally, I am a “generalist” in education, so I tend toward the general “big picture,” leaving specificity to those more suited to such work. For now, as readers, hopeful queers might see their optimism reflected back at them, but with a recognition that there is work to be done; while pessimistic queers might scoff at such optimism while secretly realizing the world can (and should) be different. Bored queers may simply remain bored, bored by the incessant academizing of queer experiences. But, back to the issues at hand—childhood, children, and queerness. When I was a child, Whitney Houston taught me that it was her belief “the children are our future.”1 It was an important lesson for me as a child, because I was allowed to imagine the future. I was the future and it was important to teach me well so that I, and other children, could lead the way in that, what seemed then, rather distant future. The future is, to be sure, a rather complicated concept. I am here in the future of my then-imagined childhood, although it is both more and less fabulous than I could have imagined. The future is always there, in the distance, and there are always more children for whom that future is. However, which children are allowed to be children and have a future is, as significant scholarship has shown, quite narrow (Greteman & Wojcikiewicz, 2014; Letts & Sears, 1999; Meiners, 2017; Pritchard, 2013; Weems, 1999). Children, particularly queer children, and the future have been something educational scholars and queer theorists have contemplated for some time. In this chapter, I assemble some of the ways in which queer children and the future have been contemplated to build upon such work in further elucidating what I am calling “queer thrival.” If children are our future—and in some sense, they always are—the ways in which we imagine or are allowed to imagine both “children” and the “future” greatly impact the ways in which those very concepts come to function in our daily work, particularly in education. In assembling previous work addressing children, the future, and queerness, I attend closely to such work that exposed—through their paranoia—the violence, the limits, and challenges faced by queerness in education. Such paranoia has been central in recognizing the challenges queer youth face, yet changes have happened that would do well to be engaged to not only push for the safety of queer youth, but their ability to thrive. We need, to harken back to the last chapter, heterogeneous reading practices that recognize the contributions of paranoid readings while opening space for contingently, reparative readings and their possibilities. Queerness and Challenges to Liberalism The challenge of children “growing up” is central to the work of schools where children are presumably taught well to lead the way when they become “grownups.” We know for sure, however, that many students are not taught well and are never able to lead the way due to any number of cultural, institutional, interpersonal, and disciplinary barriers (Collins, 2010). Students that are in such a marginalized position are, at the same time, more often than not, the students that push the limits, demanding recognition and access through various means—be that walk-outs, protests, or other forms of resistance. It is in fact, as we have seen since desegregation, children who lead the way into hostile environments so that the future has the possibility of being different. While there are demands to protect children and arguments made “for their own good,” I suspect history shows us that children, when faced with adversity, are able to survive and thrive, leading the way not there in some imagined future but in their present, as they demand they have a future. This is not meant to romanticize children or childhood, but to call attention to the material lives of children who we have historically seen push the limits of democratic liberalism. Cris Mayo (2006) recognized the need to push the limits of liberalism in education because, “liberalism has been suspiciously unwilling to extend its analysis of freedom to sexual freedom, its embrace of autonomy to queer critique, its sense of progression toward new possibilities to queer futurities” (p. 471). Liberalism, to put it bluntly, has been uninterested in queerness. In liberal discourses, as Mayo noted, There is a tension between discussing how people, such as lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (lgbt) people, might be recognized by law and given (or denied) certain legal rights on the basis of their identity and how queer people, not always fully recognizable as inhabiting particular identity categories, might also live their potentials. (p. 469) Liberalism requires recognizable identities by which to protect. Recent gains in LGBT rights illustrate this requirement as LGBT persons have gained rights and recognitions, be it to marriage, the military, or anti-discrimination. Yet, queer—as a political stance—is tasked with pushing against such recognitions and norms (Ford, 2007). LGBT people are a voting block more and more recognized through LGBT advocacy groups. Queer people, on the other hand, fall outside and beyond such recognitions to illustrate the persistence of exclusion and the possibility for alternatives. Or, as Puar (2007) illustrated, LGBT rights can be used as a cudgel against other queer forms of being. Mayo focused part of her argument on the issue of gay marriage as a struggle for access to a particular liberal institution. While gay marriage may be, from certain queer vantage points, quite conservative, on an educational level, it is an issue that opened some possibilities for queer students in seeing a queer future. “The drawback,” Mayo (2006) noted, “ paralleling gay rights with marriage rights is that while kids may eventually decide to enter into unions, that is not the only form of gay (or, for that matter, heterosexual) life open to them” (p. 485). However, something is better than nothing, particularly because no “thing” can encapsulate all queer possibilities. The issue is that some things become sanctioned by the state and, in becoming so, present a double-edged sword—both providing approval for types of relationships while also imposing a penalty on those who refuse such approval. To be sure, any given time will see some battles waged as they gain traction (and funding) while others unable to break through. The task, particularly for education, is to grapple with broadening possibilities, both those limited in scope and those more radical. This, however, cannot be done without the insights and views of youth themselves. We need to provide youth more agency in decision making, not less, particularly if they are, themselves, “our future.” As Mayo noted, “access to queer possibilities and futures is not just a right crucial to queer adults, it is critical to queer youth, for their current flourishing as well as for their future participation in communities and as citizens” (p. 486). Queer youth and adults cannot only access narratives of their marginalization. Such narratives inform them, more often than not, that there is no future. Yes, it is true that for most of education’s recent past, queer children have been denied access to representations and access to queer futures, but with the explosion of youth expression on social media and elsewhere, such denials look more and more outdated. Queer youth have faced innumerous forms of physical violence and emotional turmoil, as illustrated by, for instance, GLSEN’s School Climate Research, for close to 20 years. However, there is need to address such research and push beyond it, not to deny such realities but work to change them (Thorpe & Greteman, 2015). “Arguably ,” Mayo (2006) concluded: queer communities are populated by paradigmatically modern citizens, and, as much as one may tire of citing dire statistics and want instead to point to innovations and resiliency among queer youth, it remains a fact that liberal theory and the liberal state need to provide more support for queer possibilities, through education and other institutions, and to recognize the particular challenge to traditional family forms, autonomy, and sexuality that queer youth bring. (p. 487) The liberal state—whether one cites dire statistics or examples of resiliency—has work to do. The future for queerness has looked rather grim for some time, in part, because the liberal state has failed to attend to queer possibilities and institutional support. However, queerness has also survived into and against such threats and assaults. It has benefited from the liberal state’s slow movement while continuing its slow march demanding that queerness stays. Kevin McDonough (2007), took up Mayo’s challenges to liberalism and explored the possibility of liberalism in addressing the challenges that queer youth raise for schools. “Can the common school ideal, and the liberal political principles that underwrite it,” McDonough (2007) asked, “coherently accommodate reasonable and legitimate forms of moral and cultural diversity, especially those forms that have historically been marginalized, discriminated against, or excluded” (p. 795)? The demands of queer people and queer communities have, for decades now, pushed up against the liberal political principles that ground American public education. And these demands have over those very decades seen some progress in achieving some forms of recognition and rights. McDonough is, however, skeptical of an uncritical embrace of queer recognition for fear that such an embrace will get “distorted into forms that are both anti-liberal and against the best interests of queer children” (p. 797). This is a key skepticism, as he argued, given that if identities are poorly understood then the danger may arise that schools will socialise children into pre-existing moulds based on educators’ distorted and inauthentic conception of what a queer identity should be, rather than leaving children free to choose and endorse their own conceptions of queerness through an examination of how queer people actually might live worthwhile lives. (p. 797) One of the matters at hand, for McDonough, is not limiting the queerness of children to those that are imagined to potentially grow up to be queer adults. “It is precisely because we cannot pick out beforehand which children will be [queer],” he maintained, “that all children require exposure to alternative models of identity, including queer models, upon which to base their individual sexual identities” (p. 798). No one, as we remember from the introduction, is born queer. Rather, one must decide to become queer and such a decision requires lessons in such matters. Queerness is then a matter that must be visible to all as a possible way of becoming in the world, recognizing that there are also other ways of becoming in the world, often that are yet known, to be created by new generations. The simple task, in all of this, may be that the rule of becoming is that we shouldn’t be mean to those who decide to live and join and create the diverse possible ways of being and becoming in the world. This was a lesson Kate Bornstein offered in her contribution to the “It Gets Better Campaign” started in 2010 after a spate of queer youth suicides. While there have been important critiques of this project (see Gilbert, 2014), Bornstein refused to tell youth “it gets better” because she is not sure it does. Rather, she offered youth advice to stay alive to find out if it would, the one rule being “don’t be mean.” Of course, such a simple task is not in fact that simple, as all kinds of institutional, structural, cultural, and interpersonal barriers emerge that impact the lives of those who become in ways rarely, if at all, recognized. Meanness seems to be more palatable and easier to engage in than kindness. After all, we do prefer Mean Girls, which ironically ends quite kindly. McDonough’s argument developed a prima facie reason that queer children’s autonomy “depend[s] on actual engagement with queer options” (p. 800). It is necessary, in other words, that queer children gain access to queer options in order to imagine possible futures. To not have such access denies children opportunities to encounter a wide range of possibilities by which to develop and see their own futures. Quoting McDonough: If the communities of which children are a part (here I do not just mean those children who turn out to be queer, but all children) fail to include expansive visions of queer possibilities, then the ability of queer children (i.e. those who turn out to be unable to live their lives as heterosexuals) to develop into independent practical reasoners will be constrained to the extent that they will be unable to link up their reasoning to realistic and expansive ‘imagined futures’ involving valuable and worthwhile queer roles, communities, and identities. (p. 801) His argument that expansive possibilities are necessary, particularly for liberal education, connects us back to the subjectification function of education. Schools inevitably play a significant role in the ways students can imagine their futures. And for much of the history of American public education, what futures are open to students has been limited. When it comes to providing students—queer and otherwise—actual engagement with queer roles, communities, and identities, however, a number of issues have emerged. For McDonough these included the reality that queer communities are often few and far between and located primarily in urban areas; that queer communities are often viewed disapprovingly by parents and society; and that queer children often come from families that are disapproving of queerness (p. 802). Such issues are, I sense, still present, but I want to suggest that there have been gains in accessibility to engaging queer roles, communities, and identities. It is, in fact, one of the purposes of this book to highlight such gains in order to further push for and cultivate ways in which schools could provide queer lessons for their students. It may be, in part, following Airton’s (2013) advice—more fully addressed shortly—to “leave ‘those kids’ alone” (p. 532). Diverse queer lessons are, for me, less about reiterating the data that illustrates “hatred in the hallways” or reproducing the paranoid arguments that queer students and teachers have enemies. We’ve been hearing that for decades . Eric Rofes (1983), in “I Thought People Like That Killed Themselves”: Lesbians, Gay Men, and Suicide, offered an assessment of then emerging discourses on suicide and homosexuality. “Perhaps the most pernicious trick played on lesbians and gay men,” according to Rofes , “has been the creation of the dual myth of homosexual suicide” (p. 1). This dual myth “asserts that lesbians and gay men not only commit suicide at a rate higher than society-at-large, but that somehow a person’s homosexuality is itself the source of self-destruction” (p. 1). Rofes , to be clear, is not contesting the reality of “gay” suicide, but drawing the reader’s attention to the ways in which arguments centered on suicide and homosexuality are intimately tied to the discourses of the time, particularly those of the medical profession and media. The futures that were visible to queer people (then defined largely as gay and lesbian) were quite narrow. The gay liberation movement was little over a decade old and the known AIDS epidemic in its infancy. The social world, with its homophobia and violence against queer people—notably through expert discourses—was literally killing queers, but blaming such deaths on queer individuals. Rofes refused such a place for gay men and lesbians, offering insights on intervention, postvention, and prevention for the living taken from the dead. Such queer lessons were, returning to McDonough, provided in recognition that to envision “queer futures,” there are things that education can and should do, both in making sure queer youth survive the precariousness of childhood and can thrive. School is, after all, one institution among many that, to go back to Mayo’s earlier comment, needs to provide support to queer youth—be this at the K-12 level or higher education. Schools, as spaces where people meet diverse ideas and practices, continue—despite or in spite of neoliberal rationalities—to be spaces where futures can be envisioned. It is, to be sure, a challenge to broaden such futures given neoliberal rationalities, but try we must. McDonough (2007) himself offered five recommendations that schools could, perhaps should, take up to support queer youth. These included the need to address the persistence and pervasiveness of bullying, developing a curriculum that provides “detailed and rich examples of queer role models,” engages teacher education around queer life, promotes the development of anti-discrimination policies, and includes queer communities in such work (pp. 805–807). Such recommendations, practical to be sure, illustrate for McDonough the potential of common schools in accommodating “moral and cultural diversity” (p. 795). If we expect an institution to provide lessons that open up possibilities, we have the task of contemplating ways in which such lessons could be done. Queer commentary in education cannot only repeat hatred in the hallways or advocate for the protection of “out” queer youth. It must also envision practices that open up queer futures for “out” queer youth or youth who are queer by means of being children.

### A-to Undercommons/Halberstam

#### Aff doesn’t solve – Undercommons fails.

It’s worse than that – the Aff doesn’t even read the parts of the Undercommons book that convey solvency. They read an intro by Halberstam – who argues that “something must be done”. That’s not akin to “doing something works”. Our ev picks-up where their books’ intro leaves-off. The implicit reference is to a “solvency strategy” that winds-up boosting racial domination.

Lloyd ‘15

This is a forthcoming chapter from the Book: Grace, Governance, and Globalization: Theology and Public Life, edited by Lieven Boeve, Stephan van Eip, and Martin Poulsom, Bloomsbury Press – “Chapter Title is “Afro-Pessimism and Christian Hope” - Dr. Vincent Lloyd researches and teaches about the philosophy of religion, religion and politics, and race at Syracuse University. Previously taught at Emory University and Georgia State University. At Emory, Vincent also served as a Visiting Scholar. The author holds a Ph.D. and M.A. from The University of California, Berkeley’s Rhetoric Department. The author also served and Exchange Scholar at the Divinity School at The University of Chicago. The author also holds a B.A. from Princeton University’s Religion Department – with Graduate Coursework in Religion and Philosophy. The author made this piece available online at: <http://vwlloyd.mysite.syr.edu/afro-pessimism-christian-hope.pdf> - #CutWithKirby.

Another approach to deep racism found in recent secular scholarship is to reject hope altogether. Such approaches propose two different sorts of alternatives: an embrace of grief or an embrace of the present. Anne Cheng's The Melancholy of Race exemplifies the former approach.14 She agrees that racialization has an enormous, persistent impact - in the context of her study, on African Americans and Asian Americans. She agrees that race shapes the ideological foundations of the West. On her view, the usual response to racism, articulating grievances and pressing for them to be addressed, does not adequately address the depths of the problem; indeed, it masks those depths. By formulating a list of grievances and putting one's hopes in the possibility that they will be rectified, the racialized subject imagines that she will achieve equality and dignity. Then, she will be just like everyone else: the world will be post-racial. Cheng argues that grievances obscure grief, the deeper process that afflicts the psyche of racialized subjects who know they will never be "normal" - and grief distorts the psyche of white subjects as well since white identity is constituted in relation to the racialized other. In the face of deep pessimism, the proper response, *on this view*, is to look beyond the specific grievances (and hopes) of a racial minority and instead explore the varied ways that the wound of racism sabotages the affective economy of that minority. Acknowledging and interrogating rather than rejecting grief - racial melancholia - is the only way to see the world rightly and so is the prerequisite for any properly directed social or political action.

Cheng's response to deep racial pessimism is decidedly secular and *decidedly individualist.* Her critique of grievance, which could be read as a critique of hope directed at specific objects or as desire for specific goals masked as hope, is in a sense of critique of idolatry, but her response to idolatry is to reject transcendence altogether in favor of the folds and wrinkles of immanence - of our affective economies. *But* what if we consider grievances not as ends in themselves but as instrumentally used in collective (anti-racist) struggle? Might the process of collective struggle, and not any particular goal, provide a means of healing psyches damaged by racism? Tracking and probing this damage seems less important than commending the forms of collective practice and community organizing that could cultivate the virtues which serve as a buffer against disabling grief. Indeed, this is a point made forcefully by the first and second generations of Black theologians: Black communities are essentially communities of struggle and, as such, shape character in a way that holds off despair.

Like Cheng, Lee Edelman rejects hope and acknowledges the radical exclusions faced by minority communities.15 Edelman is particularly concerned with queer men, and for him queer identity is fundamentally opposed to any future orientation - and so to any hope. The normative, heterosexual world is concerned with the future because it is concerned with reproduction: individuals with reproducing themselves through their children and societies with reproducing themselves from generation to generation. The figure of the child is sanctified, according to Edelman, because she or he represents this reproduction of the way things are. Yet queers, as incapable of reproduction, are excluded from this heterononnative way of seeing the world. Indeed, queers disrupt the smooth reproduction of the ways of the world - and, Edelman contends, they ought to embrace this role. They ought to embrace pleasure in the moment rather than pleasure deferred to the next generation; they will not suffer now so that a child can have a better life. In short, queers are a minority structurally excluded from Western metaphysics, and the proper response for the minority is to happily embrace hopelessness along with all temporality other than the now.

Edelman helpfully demonstrates the way that interest in the future is closely tied to self-interest and to the powers that be in the present. He also helpfully demonstrates the way that minority groups whose exclusion is fundamental to regnant ideology can potentially short-circuit that ideology by refusing to participate in normative future-directed practices. Indeed, there is at times a messianic tone to Edelman's project, finding the fullness of time in the present moment. Yet the heart of Edelman's project is an extension of Cheng's, an extension from the critique of idolatry to the critique of ideology. Where Cheng took issue with specific hopes, Edelman presents himself as taking issue with hope as such - but in fact he is taking issue with hope motivated by present social structures and institutions. In other words, Edelman is warning against an embrace of hope that is really not about the wholly new, hope that advances the interests of the old with the rhetoric of the wholly new. For Edelman, as for Cheng, the only alternative is making ourselves into gods: an even deeper form of idolatry (an even subtler rouse of ideology). Black theologians grappling with Afro-pessimism can learn much from these secular- efforts and their sharp critical perspectives, but Black theologians also bring to the problem of racism a view of hope directed towards a God who is irreducible to worldly terms or desires.

The quick and easy response of Black theologians to Afro-pessimism is to simply present Christ as the solution. In the Afro-pessimist framework, Black being is an oxymoron: Blackness has no being, is defined by its exclusion from being. Christ raises the dead, turning non-being into being, flesh defined by death into flesh defined by life. Participation in Christ means participation in His resurrection: denying the world's denial of being. Such a stance does not take the form of overcoming Blackness, of becoming white. That Blackness is defined by death does not mean that whiteness is defined by life. To the contrary, whiteness hubristically claims life, being, on its own - whiteness claims ontology without theology and that is idolatry. Blackness is not outside of being but paradoxically inside and outside at once, being that is not counted as being, that thus disturbs the regime that would define being. J. Kameron Carter, working along these lines, labels Blackness "paraontological."16

Concealing the being of the slave, or the prisoner, or the native, takes much ideological work, for the principle of Black non-being must overcome the stubbornness of lived reality. Blackness points to the precariousness of ontology, reminds that the present order of being is not natural, not universal. Blackness essentially destabilizes the order of things, so the resurrection of Black being is not the assimilation of Blackness into the order of things, into whiteness, but rather is triumph of the theological over the ontological. What does this mean concretely? The resurrection of Black being means Black agency: Black writing, Black art, Black rhetoric, Black creativity that is unexpected, unauthorized, and, from the perspective of the white world, often unintelligible. The slave writes, the prisoner paints, or the native imagines. The objects of these verbs, these acts, need not be God - indeed cannot be God, for that would be idolatry. Independent of their object, these verbs represent participation in God because they represent the resurrection of non-being into being, Blackness triumphant, Christ triumphant.

This account of Black theology responsive to Afro-pessimism is appealing but ultimately deeply flawed. It suffers from individualism, a profoundly secular ailment - the ailment that defines the secular. The creativity and strength of the Black man (for such creative agency is gendered) will save the world from itself. In this theology there is no space for community, for love, or, crucially, for hope. There are no virtues of Blackness developed in community, just the act of individual rebellion against the powers that be. And there is no vision of a future world transformed, just a set of disconnected Black men doing art in their attics, as it were. The Black theologian inclined to such a view may respond that "church" would consist of the informal networks created among these, what Fred Moten calls the "undercommons” FN 17. But such networks seem a far cry from communities of virtue that could nurture, sustain, and properly order the Black rebellious spirit. Indeed, such a theological perspective suffers from an extreme Christocentrism, the theological vice corresponding to the secular vice of individualism. Christ cleaved from God and Spirit defines all value; indeed, what matters on this account is not even a Christ who loves or suffers but exclusively a Christ who is risen.

What is needed is a Black theology responsive to Afro-pessimism but also concerned with the social world, with love, and with justice. The theological reflections of Edward Schillebeeckx offer a useful if unexpected resource to accomplish this task. Of Schillebeeckx's extensive, learned corpus, I will focus exclusively on one essay, "The New Image of God, Secularization and Man's Future on Earth," the final chapter of God the Future of Man.1\* This is a particularly important essay, consolidating much of Schillebeeckx's thought and clearly developing the themes that are central to much of his writing over the decades before and after. In this essay, Schillebeeckx makes three key points. First, he offers a new way to think about secularization. Christians, instead of lamenting declining church membership rolls, should see secularization as part of a re-orientation away from the past and towards the future. Science and teclmology hold new possibilities while changing social arrangements create new ways of living. Life no longer consists of repeating the past or interpreting the past for lessons on the present. Instead of looking backwards we now look forwards. To determine what ought to be done now we look less to what has always been done than to what might eventually be done. We act on our hopes instead of on our memories.

FN 17 - Stefano Harney and Fred Moten, The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning and Black Study (Wivenhoe: Minor Compositions, 2013).

### AT: Winnubst

#### The method of the 1ac turns inward on itself and reinforces Eurocentric paternalism. Individuation isn’t inherently violent.

Ruti, 17—Distinguished Professor of critical theory and of gender and sexuality studies at the University of Toronto (Mari, “The Ethics of Precarity: Judith Butler’s Reluctant Universalism,” Remains of the Social: Desiring the Postapartheid, Chapter 4, pg 98-108, dml)

Basing an ethics on our capacity to identify with the suffering of others rather than, say, on a priori principles of human rights, carries some risks, the first of which is that the failings of identification are so endemic that such an ethics might end up being unacceptably erratic. Though I wholeheartedly agree with Butler’s contention that global power imbalances make it hard for Westerners to acknowledge the equal humanity of non-Westerners, I do not think that the matter is quite this simple, for if Americans have a hard time mourning the Iraqis and Afghans killed by the United States military, Iraqis and Afghans might also have a hard time mourning those who are far away from them, including each other. Butler suggests that we identify with the suffering of some people more than others because their names and faces are familiar to us in the sense of being culturally and ethnically similar to us, and undoubtedly this is true. But there are other ways that alliances based on familiarity are forged, ways that cut across cultural and ethnic differences. For instance, that my friend is black, my colleague is Chinese and my downstairs neighbour is Muslim does not change the fact that if this friend, colleague or neighbour is harmed or killed, I – a white atheist woman – will mourn more intensely than I would mourn another white atheist woman harmed or killed somewhere in Sweden. In other words, there seems to be an important link between familiarity (and thus our ability to mourn), on the one hand, and intimacy, proximity and shared history, on the other, that is not necessarily in any way based on similarity of culture or ethnicity. From this perspective, the ability to mourn the other may be too haphazard, too random a basis for ethics.

The second risk that accompanies an ethics based on our ability to identify with the suffering of others is that it can replace political action with paralysing grief. Grief can be privatising, and thus potentially depoliticising, because it tends to result in a retreat from the social world. This retreat may, in part at least, be a defence against our own vulnerability, for grief reminds us of the immensity of our dependence on others: the fact that we can be undone by the loss of others highlights the flimsiness of our fantasies of sovereignty. Indeed, besides acute bodily suffering, there are few things in life that ‘interrupt’ the coherence of our being more than the anguish we feel when we have lost someone who feels irreplaceable to us. If desire, intimacy and sexuality already challenge our aspirations of autonomy, grief often results – at least momentarily – in the utter dissolution of the self. As Butler correctly remarks, we ‘cannot invoke the Protestant ethic when it comes to loss’ (Precarious Life 21); we cannot decide how the task of grieving is to be performed or when it is going to come to an end. Rather, we are forced to ride waves of sadness that mock our attempts at self-mastery, that call us back to prior experiences of dispossession. Some of these experiences relate to losses we can name, but, ultimately, what grief touches is the unnameable core of melancholia that connects us to our constitutive inability to attain closure (to disavow our dependence on others). Butler describes such melancholia as a kind of timeless enigma that ‘hides’ in each loss we mourn, as an indelible trace of a primary vulnerability that we can no longer access directly but that our losses touch indirectly. In a more Lacanian vein, one could say that every loss reanimates the primary loss – the loss of das Ding (the primordial non-object of desire) – that constitutes the melancholy core of our being. That is, when we lose another person, we not only mourn that loss but we also mourn, with renewed energy, our own incompleteness, our own helplessness, even if we are not aware that this is what we are doing.

Butler asserts: ‘On one level, I think I have lost “you” only to discover that “I” have gone missing as well’ (22). This can be understood to mean that when I lose you, I no longer know who I am because who I am is so intimately tied to you that losing you makes me unintelligible to myself. But it can also be understood to mean that in losing you I have come up against melancholy realms of my being that I usually keep at bay through my efforts to lead a self-sufficient and reasonably organised existence. Butler implies that there are ethical lessons to be learned from such an encounter with the melancholy foundations of my being in the sense that my heightened sensitivity to my own precariousness leads (or should lead) to my heightened sensitivity to the precariousness of others. As she posits: ‘Despite our differences in location and history, my guess is that it is possible to appeal to a “we,” for all of us have some notion of what it is to have lost somebody. Loss has made a tenuous “we” of us all’ (20).

Unquestionably, this is a poignant way to characterise the solidarity of suffering. But would it not be equally possible to argue that melancholia might lead to the kind of preoccupation with the self – the kind of solipsistic turning inwards that excludes all others from the self ’s sacred crypt of sadness – that represents the very antithesis of ethical accountability? Melancholia, even more than mourning, fends off others; it sacrifices present and future objects for the sake of the one that has been lost. As Sigmund Freud already argued, the melancholic copes with his or her loss by incorporating the lost object into his or her psyche, thereby translating a loss in the external world into an internal possession, with the result that this psyche, for the time being, becomes closed to other objects. The memory of the lost object, as it were, crowds out the possibility of new affective ties, which is why, for instance, we find it hard to cathect to a new love object when we are still mourning a lost one. In this sense, while grief may well function as an ethical resource in the way that Butler suggests, the melancholia that grief awakens may pull us in the opposite direction, away from others, from alterity, from the stimulation of new bonds. In addition, melancholia is difficult to translate into the vocabulary of ethical intervention because it arrests action; it is hard to get a depressed person out of bed, let alone into a political rally.

IV Though grief may be a potent source of indignation, as an ethical resource it may also be somewhat unreliable precisely in so far as it conjures up the melancholy ghosts of our constitutive despair. Moreover, it would be relatively easy to stage a critique of Butler’s ethics of mourning akin to the one that Wendy Brown stages in relation to Western notions of tolerance, namely that mourning – like tolerance – can function as a distraction from political and economic solutions to global problems. In the same way that discourses of tolerance make us feel that we are accomplishing something when in fact nothing has changed in concrete terms, the ethics of mourning can obscure the fact that mourning by itself does not transform things. If anything, as long as we get to focus on our grief, we do not actually need to do anything; we can feel good about ourselves because we experience ourselves as benevolent Western subjects who feel the appropriate remorse about the suffering and death of those far away from us. One could even propose that Brown’s argument about tolerance being what the powerful extend to the disempowered – about how tolerance merely debases the tolerated even further – applies to grief as well in the sense that the objects of our grief may become all the more disempowered (pitiable, pathetic) by that grief.

Along similar lines, there might be an argument to be made about the potentially patronising implications of Butler’s insistence that Western subjects are somehow uniquely responsible for grieving those who are less fortunate. Though she does not state the matter in these terms exactly, the implication of much of her discussion of shared precarity is that it is the Western subject in particular who must develop the capacity to mourn the violated other. The non-Western subject is, in this model, invariably the one who is the more violated, the more victimised and therefore in need of ‘our’ grief, while we, the Westerners, do not deserve the grief of non-Westerners but should, first and foremost, feel our guilt. There are of course excellent historical reasons for this line of reasoning. Obviously, the West should feel guilty about the colonial past and about the ways in which its ongoing aspirations of empire-building contribute directly to the suffering of non-Westerners. Yet there is also something questionable about the branding of the Western subject as one who is supposed to be racked by grief while it is the lot of the non-Westerner to be the suffering object of this grief. One could even say that, within this model, grief becomes the way in which Western subjects suffer. Does that mean that other forms of suffering have, once again, been relegated to the rest of the world (so that, say, they have their poverty while we have our grief)?

Yet Butler is also right in insisting that, under certain circumstances, grief can furnish a sense of political community, and that it can furthermore do so on a basis that is both more fundamental and more complex than mere identitarian identifications. If our goal is to transcend identity politics without thereby discarding our understanding of the reasons why various individuals and populations have sought shelter under identitarian labels (black, Muslim, queer and so on), then shared grief is a potentially powerful place to start. If I can get to the point where the other’s grief becomes my grief, then the other’s outrage about her oppression also becomes my outrage, with the consequence that I may be willing to overlook the differences between self and other to act on behalf of this other. There are alternative ways to arrive at the same place, and these include my rational assessment that the other has been unjustly treated, but Butler is correct in suggesting that there is something viscerally powerful about the grief we feel when the other’s vulnerability, particularly the other’s bodily vulnerability, has been exploited. Accounts of genocide, torture and rape, for instance, tend to move us even when we have no personal connection to the victims, which is precisely why Butler’s call for a rethinking of grievability as a foundation for alleviating the power imbalances of the global order strikes a chord, why her ethics of precarity makes such intuitive sense, why it is hard to deny her basic insight that ‘there can be no equal treatment without a prior understanding that all lives have an equal right to be protected from violence and destruction’ (Parting Ways 21).

This is precisely why public acts of grieving are so important, why it is essential to see the pictures, to apprehend the names and faces of those who have been wounded even when these names and faces are not immediately familiar to us. Butler is right that the prohibition against mourning is the flipside of the derealisation of loss, of the indifference we are asked to display with respect to the other’s suffering or even death. Furthermore, even when it comes to losses that are avowed, that ‘count’, we are encouraged to mourn as expediently as we can, so as to leave no debilitating residue of sadness that might impede the nation’s general robustness, let alone interfere with capitalism’s demand for efficiency; we are urged to grieve quickly, to get back on our feet, to brush ourselves off, to get back on track, to get ‘back to business’. After a catastrophe, such as 9/11, there is a haste to return the world to its previous order, whether by sending people back to work, by resorting to nationalist slogans of renewed prowess, or by staging flamboyant architectural competitions to prove technological (and, by implication, military) invincibility. In the Western world, money, the Protestant work ethic and extravagant displays of power are used to bandage the wounds of violence, to reestablish the fantasy of being inviolable, beyond the reach of dangerous, ‘irrational’ others. This is one reason Butler maintains that there might be ‘something to be gained from grieving, from tarrying with grief, from remaining exposed to its unbearability and not endeavoring to seek a resolution for grief through violence’ (Precarious Life 30).

V I appreciate Butler’s claim that overcoming grief too quickly might eradicate one of our most important ethical resources. But I also want to note the masochistic tendencies of her ethics of precarity because these, in my view, complicate the task of theorising (not to mention attaining) social justice. Butler has always been quick to equate subjectivity with subjection (disempowerment), but the masochistic strain of her outlook has become acutely pronounced with her turn to Levinas, who famously quotes Fyodor Dostoyevsky: ‘We are all guilty for everything and everyone, and I more than all the others’ (105). The obvious problem with this formulation is that it implies that I am responsible for the other regardless of what the other has done – that is, regardless of any normative considerations. This, indeed, is the crux of the Levinasian ethical attitude. However, Levinas does not stop here. He draws a clear distinction between ethics (where normative considerations have no place) and justice (which arbitrates between different ‘faces’ on the basis of a priori norms of right and wrong). Levinas, in short, recognises that justice places limits on our ethical accountability. Butler, in contrast, ignores for the most part the distinction between ethics and justice, attempting, as it were, to apply Levinasian ethics to questions of global justice. Moreover, undoubtedly in part because of her anti-Enlightenment poststructuralist predilections, she resists the ideal of a priori principles of justice, with the result that she sometimes speaks as if normative judgements had no place in her theory.

Levinas argues that our ethical responsibility for the other is unconditional and inescapable, that the other is inviolable and that, unfortunately for us, even the executioner, even the Nazi guard, has a face. We may feel tempted to attack such a face, but ethics demands that we resist this temptation. This seems reasonable: I do not take issue with the idea that I should not counter murder with murder, particularly given that, as I just stressed, Levinas maintains that it is the task of justice – as opposed to ethics – to mediate between different faces. The trouble begins when Butler translates this Levinasian (ethical) injunction into a general theoretical stance, which means that assigning responsibility – in the sense that normative justice strives to do – becomes virtually impossible. In this manner, Butler arguably – though no doubt unintentionally – shifts the burden of responsibility from the victimiser to the victim; after all, in the absence of normative judgements regarding the behaviour of the victimiser, what matters is not the content of this behaviour but rather the response (and responsibility) of the victim. As Butler, chillingly enough, writes in Precarious Life, ‘our responsibility is heightened once we have been subjected to the violence of others’ (16).

Consider also the following statement from Parting Ways: ‘The responsibility that I must take for the Other proceeds directly from being persecuted and outraged by that Other. Thus there is violence in the relation from the start: I am claimed by the other against my will, and my responsibility for the Other emerges from this subjection’ (59, emphasis added). The basic idea here is that because the other ‘interrupts’ the coherence of my being, impeding my self-closure, I am, in a sense, always ‘persecuted’ and ‘outraged’ by the other; yet because the other is always already an ingredient of my self, I cannot denounce my responsibility for this other. In this model, responsibility is the flipside of being impinged upon by the other in ways that sometimes feel persecuting and outrageous. As Butler reminds us, according to Levinas ‘precisely the Other who persecutes me has a face’ (Giving an Account 90). Consequently, ‘I cannot disavow my relation to the Other, regardless of what the Other does, regardless of what I might will’. Responsibility, in this sense, is ‘not a matter of cultivating a will, but of making use of an unwilled susceptibility as a resource for becoming responsive to the Other’: ‘Whatever the Other has done, the Other still makes an ethical demand upon me, has a “face” to which I am obliged to respond’ (91).

I understand why Butler’s appropriation of Levinasian ethics represents an effective critique of Enlightenment rationality, particularly of the individualistic pretensions of the autonomous subject, who – to borrow from Adriana Cavarero – is ‘too preoccupied with praising the rights of the I ’ (in Giving an Account 32). This critique, for good reasons, is longstanding in posthumanist theory. But does Butler’s version of it not swing too far to the other extreme, making a virtue out of masochism? Is there not, say, from a feminist perspective, something quite uncomfortable about the idea that I am responsible for others who violate me ‘against my will’? Along related lines, Butler’s critique of ‘the rights of the I’ tends to backfire whenever it comes up against accounts of extreme oppression, such as Frantz Fanon’s The Wretched of the Earth, which voice the need of a traumatised collectivity to re-establish its autonomy and self-determination in the face of subordination. Likewise, individual trauma narratives – such as Holocaust memoirs or chronicles of rape – often emphasise that being able to recover a degree of agency is an essential part of surviving trauma. In other words, they reveal that the quest for sovereignty is not invariably a synonym for arrogant individualism. And they also illustrate the problematic nature of an ethics that operates wholly without norms, that asks us to sustain others indiscriminately, irrespective of how appallingly they might behave.

VI More generally speaking, the problem with Butlerian theory is that it consistently sets up a rigid dichotomy between bad autonomy and good relationality. Indeed, one could say that this is an instance where a vehemently anti-essentialist thinker falls into the kind of poststructuralist essentialism where some possibilities – such as the idea that autonomy might sometimes be an important component of human life – become unthinkable. Butler often talks as if the fact that we are not fully autonomous creatures means that we have no capacity for autonomy whatsoever. Yet in the same way that having an unconscious does not erase the conscious mind but merely complicates its functioning, our lack of seamless autonomy does not render us completely devoid of it. Moreover, as Jessica Benjamin, among others, has illustrated, autonomy is not necessarily always the repugnant antithesis of relationality, so that Butler’s depiction of autonomy as intrinsically violent comes off as overly simplistic. Butler asserts that there is ‘no recentering of the subject without unleashing unacceptable sadism and cruelty’: ‘To remain decentered, interestingly, means to remain implicated in the death of the other and so at a distance from the unbridled cruelty … in which the self seeks to separate from its constitutive sociality and annihilate the other’ (Giving an Account 77).

### Racial Cap

#### Racial capitalism oversimplifies.

**Walzer, 20** [Michael, editor emeritus of Dissent Magazine “A Note on Racial Capitalism,” <https://www.dissentmagazine.org/online_articles/a-note-on-racial-capitalism>]

I have been puzzled for many months by the appearance of the phrase “racial capitalism” in the left press (see, for example, the article by K. Sabeel Rahman in the Summer 2020 issue of Dissent). What does it mean?

Perhaps the adjective “racial” is simply an ordinary qualifying adjective. Racial capitalism is one kind of capitalism, and then there must be other kinds, requiring other adjectives. Here in the United States we have a kind of capitalism where the majority of exploited workers or a majority of the most exploited workers are people of color. The underclass and the reserve army are defined both racially and economically. Of course, no leftist writer would be indifferent to the exploitation of white workers, who might still make up the majority of the American workforce—and who are certainly the majority of exploited workers in Europe. The point of the adjective, then, is simply to focus our attention, for good reasons, on non-white workers. But is the exploitation of these workers a necessary feature of American capitalism?

The phrase “racial capitalism” leaves us unclear about whether the hierarchical location of non-white workers is determined by race or by capitalism or by the two somehow working together. To begin to answer that question, we need to look at some examples of non-racial capitalism.

The form of capitalism sponsored by the Chinese communists is obviously non-racial. Though the exploited workers are, in Western terminology, people of color, Western terminology is out of place here. If the Chinese imported white workers to take on the most menial jobs, that might make Chinese capitalism “racial,” but no such importations have been reported. The predatory version of capitalism that prevails in Putin’s Russia is also non-racial. It may be that Muslims are among the most exploited workers in Russia, but they are mostly Caucasian (some of them the original Caucasians), so we would have to talk about religious capitalism—where Orthodox Christians, not white people, are the privileged group. But no one is doing that. I have no statistics, but from what I read about China and Russia, I doubt that the rate of exploitation is higher in the United States, in racial capitalism, than it is in those two countries, where capitalism is non-racial. Capitalism “works” with and without a racialized underclass and reserve army.

But is that right? The adjective “racial” sometimes makes a much stronger claim: it isn’t a qualifying but rather a definitional adjective. Capitalism is necessarily, inherently, racist. Forget about China and Russia, which are capitalist latecomers. Western capitalism is the prototypical version, and it has been racist from day one (if we can agree on day one)—always and forever racist. Does this mean that Manchester in 1844, as Engels described it, where all the exploited workers were white, wasn’t capitalist? No, for those workers were producing fabrics from cotton raised and harvested by Black slaves in the American South.

That’s true enough, but I am not sure it is sufficient for an argument about necessity. Consider a counterfactual possibility: had no Black slaves been available, the recruitment of Irish workers would have started much earlier than it did. The rise of capitalism would not have been halted had the slave trade never begun.

But the Manchester/Southern plantation example suggests what we all now know: capitalism is a global economic system, and it depends on the exploitation of people of color around the world. Here, however, it seems clear that the key issue is exploitation, not racism. Given global demography, the majority of workers in any global economy will be people of color. Even in a democratically or social democratically regulated global system, the majority of workers and the majority of managers—the underclass and the overclass—will be non-white. Indeed, it would be the refusal of any transnational corporation to hire people of color that would rightly be called racist. (In the Pennsylvania town where I grew up, the local steel company did not hire, and therefore did not exploit, Jews or Black people. I suppose that this is also an example of racial capitalism.)

All this suggests that capitalism and racism have to be analyzed separately. They overlap sometimes, as they do today in the United States. But the overlap is circumstantial, not necessary. The two phenomena are distinct. They don’t rise and fall together. Each one, for different reasons, requires severe criticism and sustained opposition. Many years ago, socialist writers argued that the triumph of the working class would liberate women, Jews, Black people, and everyone else. Separate political struggles against sexism, anti-Semitism, or racism were unnecessary—indeed they were a distraction from the all-important class war. Today some people on the left seem to believe that the end of racism will bring with it the downfall of capitalism. Both these theories are wrong.

Overthrowing racism will still leave us with capitalism; overthrowing capitalism will still leave us with racism. Putting the adjective and noun together gives us a false sense of the relationship between the two phenomena.

### Logistics

#### State-based legal restrictions are a key and continuingly relevant site for control of logistics---their description of pure privatization is a total misread

Cowen 18 – Deborah Cowen, Associate Professor of Geography at the University of Toronto, “Editors’ Interview with Deborah Cowen”, South Atlantic Quarterly, Volume 117, Number 2, http://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/138358/4/Interview%20with%20Deborah%20Cowen%20-%2015%20July%202017.pdf

*3. How does the perspective on logistics allow to move beyond a state-centered analysis? And how do you see it play out in some concrete cases?*

I cannot think of a way to tell a story about logistics without the state. The state has long been a key force in the field and remains so, although in changing form. From a North American perspective, we might say that the state functions like the Robin to a bolder and more dynamic corporate Batman. Robin follows Batman’s lead, but Batman needs Robin, intimately. We see this cooperation and collusion between the state and the corporate sector clearly in the recent disclosure of the role of the (public) police in protecting the private pipelines of oil logistics companies over Indigenous peoples and their supporters at Standing Rock. And this only echoes long histories of private security protecting imperial states, for instance in the use of the Pinkerton men to protect rail infrastructures that enabled the movement westward and to discipline workers who made these systems move. We also see it in the ‘public-private- partnership’ of war and extraction in places like Iraq, where (public) militaries hand over detention facilities to private oil logistics companies once they have ‘secured’ the spaces of circulation. Today Camp Bucca is known as the Basra Logistics City.

But the bigger story of logistics, as I have suggested repeatedly, is not simply the privatization of state force or the militarization of trade. The entanglement is a feature of a much more profound imperial co-production – making the separation between spheres seem recent and strange. The complex political-legal production and regulation of piracy is one domain wherein this is evident. So is the history of colonial rule through the Hudson’s Bay or East India Company where the state and the corporate sector together crafted a deadly logistical life. Even the revolution in logistics of the mid twentieth century emerged out of a deeply logistical form of mass state warfare that was supported by corporations. The achievements of military logistics in managing mass technoscientific warfare were then deliberately brought back to the corporation by figures like Robert McNamara (himself a perfect hybrid of these entangled worlds). Post WWII efforts to transform the military art of logistics into a corporate science saw the logic of efficiency of movement, measured historically by military concerns for minimizing the time and cost of movement, superceded by corporate models of (exchange) value maximization. With the example of the flag of convenience, we see one of the essential roles of the state, in terms of crafting the legal infrastructures for corporate rule. It is the state that creates the legal infrastructure that allows corporations to transgress the national borders that they continue to mobilize and exploit.

# 2NC

## T

### 2NC---AT: USFG

#### “Federal Government” means the government of the United States of America

Ballentine's 95 (Legal Dictionary and Thesaurus, p. 245)

the government of the United States of America

#### [ ] That’s distinct from the people.

AHD 92 (American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, p. 647)

federal—3. Of or relating to the central government of a federation as distinct from the governments of its member units.

### 2NC---TVA

#### Antirust K all wrong. Reductionist *and* rejects tools that curtail violence.

* … post-dating oddly matters bc past examples don’t assume how the Aff/Khan might deploy anti-trust.
* … more than link D – Alt forgoes workable option to re-shape the very power they criticize.
* Author = uber-qual’d… peer-reviewed cultural theory journal recent lit..

Paul ‘22

Sanjukta Paul - Assistant Professor of Law, Romano Stancroff Research Scholar, Wayne State University - J.D., Yale Law School - From the article: “A Democratic Vision for Antitrust” - From the Journal – Dissent - Published by University of Pennsylvania Press - Volume 69, Number 1, Winter 2022, pp. 56-62 (Article) – modified for language that may offend - available via Project Muse

Last spring, prominent Big Tech critic Lina Khan became the new chair of the Federal Trade Commission (FTC)—an appointment widely ~~seen as~~ (considered) a coup for progressive reform. In her confirmation hearing, she characterized the agency’s overarching goal in terms of “fair competition.” This choice of emphasis is significant for understanding the antitrust reform project of which Khan is a leader. At its core, the project is a policy paradigm aimed at creating fair markets—markets characterized by socially beneficial competition, fair prices, and decent wages.

While both proponents and detractors of this reform project sometimes conflate competition policy with the goal of maximizing economic competition for its own sake, in reality, competition law has always assessed economic rivalry and coordination in relation to broader social ends. For a long time, that assessment has been obscured—not to mention insufficiently tethered to the original goals of federal antitrust law. The reform project aims to reorient the use of antitrust in expressly egalitarian and democratic directions.

For decades, competition law and policy have been dominated by the neoclassical law and economics paradigm, which claims that visible market design and coordination interfere with competitive dynamics that would otherwise lead to an efficient allocation of social resources, and thus to the maximization of social welfare. While recent shifts in mainstream economic thinking have led to more discussion of imperfect competition, particularly in labor markets, the “market failures” and power imbalances that justify interventions are on this view still essentially special cases. Moreover, this idealized picture of markets still obscures certain forms of background coordination—especially the often hierarchical and extractive coordination that happens within business firms—while treating other coordination mechanisms as exceptional, with the potential to distort ideal market outcomes.

Conventionally organized business firms are just one of the many means we have to coordinate economic activity; others include labor unions, producers’ cooperatives, and public price boards, to take just a few examples. Because competition law makes ground-up decisions about many forms of economic coordination, and influences the regulatory stance toward others, antitrust reforms hold the potential to affect a broad set of economic policies.

We should not act as if putatively neutral, technocratic appeals to idealized competition can replace moral and political choices about economic life. Nor, however, should we treat actual competition as inherently tainted by its association with neoclassical theory. Channeled appropriately, competition is healthy rivalry: it encourages technological and operational innovations that can have broad social benefits, and it represents an important check on arbitrary bureaucratic power by preserving outside options for workers, consumers, and businesses. Channeled inappropriately, competition can lead to the destructive undermining of rivals (in contrast to constructive outperformance), overwhelm socially valuable independent enterprises, and destroy existing market settlements characterized by fair prices and decent wages. There is no universal logic of competition for policymakers to apply, either dark or redemptive: it is legal, social, and political choices (almost) all the way down.

To move from principles to some specifics, we can ~~look at~~ (consider) the approach the reform project might take in three policy areas: policing corporate mergers and acquisitions, accommodating horizontal and bottom-up economic coordination, and re-regulating the law of vertical restraints. *These* reforms, which are mutually reinforcing, all have the power to help build a more equal and democratic legal organization of the economy.

### 2NC---AT: Halberstam

#### Halberstam’s K *fails* and *violently obscures the perspective of identities that lack socio-economic privilege*.

* Yes, your Halberstam – directly quotes “The Queer Art of Failure” – which is the mode of “Planned Failure” that the Aff’s Hunt ev expressly references. It also connects-the-dot to Harney and Moten – which the Aff quotes on the regular;
* Halberstam’s K – including moments of “unpredictability” and “unbounded forms of speculation” that are very Aff adjacent – do not stop neolib and get absorbed by it;
* Halberstam’s K also reifies the modes of power it seeks to critique by setting solvency “only for the future” and positing (falsely) that the present is, indeed, an all-encompassing world of economic powerful. That premise fortifies the might of neolib;
* Halberstam’s K commits violence against those lacking socio-economic privilege by leading with a contestable and encompassing read of the present. Shahani argues that non-dominent identities don’t share Halberstam’s read of the present and don’t want to build Halberstam’s equivocal future based on a sweeping denunciation of the “now”.

Shahani ‘13

Dr. Nishant Shahani, Associate Professor, Department of Critical Culture, Gender, & Race Studies at Washington State University. The author’s research and teaching interest areas include queer theory, LBGT studies, postcolonial studies, globalization, critical pedagogy, twentieth-century American literature, film studies, and popular culture. “The Future Is Queer Stuff: Critical Utopianism and Its Discontents” - Gay and Lesbian Quarterly (GLQ), Volume 19, Number 4: 545-558. Modified for language that may offend - #E&F - Obtained via e-Duke Journals Scholarly Collection: Expanded

An even more explicit engagement with critical utopianism is theorized in relation to the book’s archive of animation and “Pixarvolt” films, which, according to Halberstam, make “overt connections between communitarian revolt and queer embodiment and thereby articulate . . . the sometimes counterintuitive links between queerness and socialist struggle” (29). But the most provocative utopian gesture comes at the outset of the book, when The Queer Art of Failure argues for a radical transformation of the university and its disciplines, which, according to Halberstam, are obsolete modes of normalization that funnel knowledge produc - tion through technologies of power. In their place, Halberstam calls for antidisciplinarity and unprofessionalization. Drawing on Fred Moten and Stefano Harney’s critique of the university, Halberstam asks: And what does the undercommons of the university want to be? It wants to constitute an unprofessional force of fugitive knowers, with a set of intel - lectual practices not bound by examination systems and test scores. The goal for this unprofessionalization is not to abolish. . . . Not the elimination of anything but the founding of a new society. And why not? Why not think in terms of a different kind of society than the one that first created and then abolished slavery? (8) The Queer Art of Failure thus calls for a radical transformation of disciplinary thinking and knowledge production — like Cruising Utopia , it is invested in a move beyond the here and now of political and intellectual ~~myopias~~ (narrowness). While both texts invest in the futurity of critical utopianism, it might be useful to apply heuristic pressure on this characterization of the “here and now” in these critiques. If utopianism in these frameworks offers alternative possibilities that are available only in the future, the calls for queer futurity risk not only obscuring “subjugated knowledges” in the present but also inadvertently reifying a common sense of what constitutes that present. For example, Halberstam suggests that “as the big disciplines crumble like banks,” we might use the university in ruins as an opportunity to reject their “ragged boundaries” (7) in favor of “unpredictability” and “unbounded forms of speculation” (10). Yet with the economic collapse and crumbling banks, the existence of “the big disciplines” (like the 1%) is not, in fact, where “crisis” is located at present. “Crisis” instead seems to be the occasion to jettison academic freedoms and shared governance, to terminate the system of tenure, and to threaten the existence of more vulnerable fields like women’s studies, ethnic studies, or cultural studies. This is not, of course, to privilege the tired (and co- opted) notion of interdisciplinarity as a prescriptive response to Halber - stam’s refreshing call for disciplinary disloyalty. But rather than crumbling, it is these very “big disciplines” that seem to “absorb” the “lesser” ones into a manageable interdisciplinarity under conditions of neoliberalism and the university’s corporatization.

# 1NR

## GND

#### State-based legal restrictions are a key and continuingly relevant site for control of logistics---their description of pure privatization is a total misread

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## Frames

### Solvency---2NC

### Alt---2NC---1

### Perm---2NC

### 2AC 1 – Policing and Silencing Disads

#### It presumes a regressive understanding of discourse as static and intentioned that’s been disproven by waves of theoretical advancement in rhetorical studies---attempting to confine and restrict the meaning of performance renders their speech powerless, which link turns the case, and denies the excitability of speech, which is critical to progressive re-appropriation to challenge systems of oppression

Young 11 – Dr. Kelly Michael Young, Professor of Communication at Wayne State University, PhD in Communication Studies from Wayne State University, MA in Communication Studies from Ball State University, BS in Secondary Education from Ball State University, “IMPOSSIBLE CONVICTIONS: CONVICTIONS AND INTENTIONALITY IN PERFORMANCE AND SWITCH-SIDE DEBATE”, Contemporary Argumentation & Debate, p. 6-19

Despite the fact that the theorists who provide the strongest defense for the performative power of discourse draw from Austin (1975) and Derrida (1988), very few debaters read evidence or base their arguments within the performative frameworks articulated by these theorists. As a result, much of academic debate’s engagement with the exciting possibilities offered by this literature is lost as the students selectively adopt in self-serving fashion from this work. Examples of these self-serving practices include the debaters who present a hodge-podge of arguments from various critical theorists to generate offensive responses to opponents’ arguments with no understanding of the implications and contractions created at the intersections of those theorists’ ideas. Or, they realize that there are contradictions but know that it would take the other side too long to explain them and so these problems are simply glossed over. Worse, many of the debate practices adopted to defend elements of performance debate may run contrary to this literature base. For example, opponents of performative arguments will often run quasi-counterplans that select and advocate parts of the 1AC performance or permute part of the negative’s performative framework. In response, teams will contend that their opponents cannot “just snatch [the performance] and add it [to their speech]….Kritik is a verb, and not a noun, which means you have to do it in order for it to be done” (Evans, 2011a, para. 15). Similarly, teams will contend that their opponents’ attempt to capture part of their performance is inauthentic and insincere because they did not initiate the performance (Zompetti, 2004). However, given Butler’s (1997) and Derrida’s (1988) perspectives on the performative, which will be discussed at length later in this essay, these claims to an authentic and sincere performance are perhaps problematic. Before we turn to that discussion, I want to explore a second recent development that relates to sincerity and convictions: the contemporary debate about the ethics and effect of switch-sides debate (SSD).

The Debate about SSD

1950-1960s: SSD as Unethical Indoctrination

Speech communication journals have hosted a number of debates about the ethical implications of the debate tournament practice of having students debate both sides of a given proposition. With the rise of tournamentstyle debate competitions in the 1930s, debate educators became highly concerned about the ethical and pedagogical value of having students debate against their convictions by having to switch sides on a topic each round. In 1954, the selection of the national college debate topic, Resolved: that the United States should extend diplomatic recognition to the communist government of China, generated a great deal of controversy (English, Llano, Mitchell, Morrison, Rief, & Woods., 2007). At the height of the Cold War and McCarthyism, a number of schools such as the military academies refused to affirm the topic in fear that affirmation would “indoctrinate America’s youth, while giving aid and comfort to the enemy” (English et al., 2007, p. 222).

Within this context, Murphy (1957) outlines the fundamental objection to SSD in arguing, “debate…is a form of public speaking. A public statement is a public commitment. Before one takes the platform, [he/she] should study the question, [he/she] should discuss it until [he/she] knows where [he/she] stands. Then [he/ she] should take that stand” (p. 2). In his review of public speaking ethics literature, Murphy (1957) contends that when students argue against their convictions, they are both immoral and “public liar[s]” (p. 2). To avoid this, Murphy (1957) argues that students should debate only from their sincere beliefs.

In their response to Murphy (1957), both Cripe (1957) and Dell (1958) maintain that tournament-style debating is a unique form of analytic speaking that is different than persuasive debate about political conviction. As such, both scholars suggest that there is great pedagogical value to viewing controversies from both sides within an educational setting. Additionally, Dell (1958) contends that because all ethics are contextual, SSD should be seen as an ethical practice. Of the many arguments raised and debated, the two most frequently discussed were: (1) that debate tournaments are or are not public speaking situations; and (2) that SSD does or does not teach essential logical skills necessary to avoid dogmatism (Cripe, 1957; Galloway, 2007; Murphy, 1957). Put differently, Cripe (1957) explains, “the whole problem seems to be one of definition, of defining what ‘debate’ is, and what ‘ethical’ means” (p. 209).

Central to these broader ethics arguments is the status of students’ convictions. For instance, according to Murphy (1957), students are most likely to have welldeveloped convictions prior to engaging in debate and SSD only creates confusion for students in what they sincerely believe. In response, Cripe (1957) and Dell (1958) maintain that debaters can separate their true feelings while making the best possible case for a different side for the purposes of competition. In addition, they refute Murphy’s argument that students have firm convictions on a number of complicated topics prior to debating. As they conclude, students’ true beliefs are likely underdeveloped and can be best clarified and strengthened by SSD. Additionally, according to Cripe (1957) and Dell (1958), SSD helps develop good future citizens because it best guards against the development of rigid ideological views. Summarizing the debate aptly, Greene and Hicks (2005) conclude, “at the heart of the ‘debate about debate’…was the idea of conviction and how it should guide the moral economy of liberal citizenship” (p. 100).

In their later review of the controversy, Klopf and McCroskey (1964) maintain that the debate over the ethics of SSD is over. As they explain,

The relative ethic has been accepted by a large majority of those involved directly with academic debate. Both by their opinions and their actions they believe switch-sides debating is ethical. So do we. The controversy over the ethics of debating both sides is [finished]! (para. 25-26)

While the majority of coaches and directors may have declared SSD ethical, the status and importance of student convictions remained up for debate, as we see in another debate 40 years later.

2000s: SSD as Cultural Technology of Imperialism

Greene and Hicks (2005) revisited the 1950-1960s debate to interrogate the cultural effect that results from the promotion of SSD debate as a corrective for intransigence. Rather than assess the ethical implications of SSD on students, Greene and Hicks (2005) examine: The articulation of the debate community as a zone of dissent against McCarthyist tendencies developed into a larger and somewhat uncritical affirmation of switch-side debate as a “technology” of liberal participatory democracy….tied to a normative conception of American democracy that justifies imperialism. (English et al., 2007, p. 223-224) In advancing this argument, Greene and Hicks (2005) contend that SSD creates a gap between a student’s “embodied speech act and his/her speech convictions” that allows for the privileging of a method of conflict resolution that is based on reason rather than beliefs or authority (p. 120). As they conclude, the controversy “pre-figures how a deliberative theory of democracy requires a moral theory of the subject to prepare that subject for the transformational potential associated with the ‘gentle force of the better argument’” (Greene & Hicks, 2005, p. 120). Greene and Hicks’ implied alternative to SSD returns to the earlier form of debate that “privileges personal conviction” as the governing element of debate (Stannard, 2006, para. 32). In doing so, they suggest that academic debate should close the gap between the speech act of debate and the individual’s first order convictions.

Following Greene and Hicks’ (2005) lead, Massey (2006a) calls on academic debate coaches to reform SSD in order to allow students debating on the affirmative of a topic the space to express their true beliefs. Somewhat mirroring Murphy’s (1957) concerns, Massey (2006a) maintains that “we should not separate speech from conviction…discourse creates reality, and we must examine the effects that verbalizing things [students] might disagree with could have on the [audience]” (para. 17). In a different argument, Massey (2006a) is concerned that students are harmed by SSD because recent debate resolutions always require the affirmative to defend action by the United States federal government and state action. As he further explains, affirmative debaters must always debate from an “exceptionalists view” without ever interrogating the federal government’s role in causing a host of problems (Massey, 2006a, para. 11). Consequently, Massey (2006a) contends that SSD

…forces a one way ideological conformity, rather than a give and take reflection that most proponents of switch side debate want to presume. My position is debate can be a training ground for discussing those issues that are important to debaters, and giving students agency for dealing with your own personal oppressions and inequalities. (para. 11)

To best capture the benefits of SSD, Massey (2006b) claims that students on the negative are required to refute whatever the affirmative team presents, which gains “all the benefits of switch side debate” (para. 2). Ultimately, Massey’s criticism has less to do with Greene and Hicks’s (2005) concern with the cultural effect of promoting a certain model of liberal citizenship and more with the potential exceptionalist effect that having to defend the United States federal government has on students. However, like Greene and Hicks, Massey privileges the verbal expression of conviction as what should regulate student advocacy.

In response to Greene and Hicks (and as an effect, responding to Massey as well), English et al. (2007) defend SSD in arguing that “rather than acting as a cultural technology expanding American exceptionalism, switch side debating originates from a civic attitude that serves as a bulwark against fundamentalism of all stripes” (p. 224). Similarly, Stannard (2006) contends that conviction-driven debate would produce “simultaneous zones of speech activism” that cause students to be:

…so wrapped up in their own micropolitics, or so busy preaching to themselves and their choirs, that they will never understand or confront the rhetorical tropes used to mobilize both resource and true believers in the service of continued material domination. (para. 35)

Thus, for English et al. (2007) and Stannard (2006), SSD is a technology that prevents the very moral and cultural problems that concern Greene and Hicks (2005) and Massey (2006a).

In an additional defense, Galloway (2007) outlines a dialogic model of competitive debate that “preserves the affirmative team’s obligation to uphold the debate resolution” while, at the same time, allowing the speech act of the debater to take a number of forms (e.g., critical, performative, policy) (p. 2). Once offered, the affirmative speech act awaits response from the negative. The promise of the model, according to Galloway (2007), is that it preserves the stable predictability of a resolution while allowing debaters to engage these propositions in a number of ways. In making this argument, Galloway (2007) responds to advocates of conviction-driven debate in contending that SSD does not cause students to lose their beliefs. Instead, “conviction is not a priori to discussion, it flows from it” through the testing of ideas and beliefs (p. 11).

Ultimately, both debates about SSD are founded on the idea that student convictions are important. However, what is disputed is the impact that communication has on these convictions. For instance, for the opponents of SSD, conviction exists prior to public debate and is grounded in the sincere intentions of the speaker (Murphy, 1957). Yet, these beliefs are fragile, as they are always at risk of being corrupted and lost in public argument. For the supporters of SSD, conviction is something discovered, tested, and sustained through public speech acts. While both of these positions bank a great deal on the importance and role of student convictions in speech acts, there is no discussion in these debates about how students construct or convey these beliefs through communication and performance. Given that academic debate remains a communication activity, how we convey our sincere beliefs and what effect those speech acts have are rather important issues to explore. In that vein, the next section of this essay explores the speech act theories of Austin, Butler, and Derrida and their implications for these debates about sincere beliefs and performance.

Speech Act, Performance Theory, and Convictions

As my review of both performance debate theory and the reoccurring debate over SSD suggests, a number of questions about the expression of convictions remain unanswered. For instance, how do we recognize that students are debating from their true beliefs? What effect do these convictions have on debates? What are the effects of using convictions as the governing principle to evaluate speech acts or promote competitive debate? Before answers to these questions can be discerned, I now turn to speech act theory, as it may provide a number of insights into the underlying concerns about student convictions in competitive debate.

Austin’s Speech Act Theory

For many years in linguistic and rhetorical study, the prevailing explanation of the operation of linguistics was that the conscious speaker and his/her sincere intentions controlled the meaning of communication within a rhetorical situation (Culler, 1981). Argumentation and communication scholarship also often presumed that the “primary purpose of language was to be descriptive or make true or false (constantive) statements about the world” (Alfino, 1991, p. 144). However, Austin (1975) maintains that several statements do not fit within the constantive category. Rather, many utterances “actually perform the action to which they refer (e.g., ‘I promise to pay you tomorrow’)” (Culler, 1981, p. 16). In his work, Austin (1975) argues that these performative statements, rather than being a special case, constitute a majority of statements while the constantive is a special case of the performative.

Austin (1975) also identifies two levels of effect for any speech act to further clarify the nature and use of performative utterances. The first is the perlocutionary effect, which is the psychological consequences of the speech act, which include motivating and persuading an immediate audience. In swaying or moving the audience, the speech act may convince someone to change his/her feelings or thoughts or even take action. But these changes may be indirect as they affect an intermediary person and occur over time as a result of the original speech act (Butler, 1997). The second level is illocutionary force, which is the performative effects of declaring, identifying, promising, and requesting. As Austin (1975) explains, illocutionary force is the “performance of an act in saying something as opposed to performance of an act of saying something” (pp. 99-100). Illocutionary force is a direct consequence of a speech act; however, the force of the speech act is not located within “merely a single moment” and cannot succeed with just a simple utterance (Butler, 1997, p. 3). Rather, illocutionary effects rely on a number of prior conventions and rituals. For example, as Austin (1975) suggests, successful illocutionary acts depend on a number of conditions:

(A.1) There must exist an accepted conventional procedure having a certain conventional effect, that procedure to include the uttering of certain words by certain persons in certain circumstances, and further, (A.2) the particular person and circumstances in a given case must be appropriate for the invocation of the particular procedure invoked. (B.1) The procedure must be executed by all participants both correctly and (B.2) completely. (pp. 14-15)

In outlining these various conditions for effective performances, Austin seeks to demonstrate that the conditions and conventions of a given context are what control the illocutionary effect of discourse. In doing so, he privileges convention and context over the consciousness and intentions of speakers as the source of performative effect.

While elevating the importance of context over speaker’s intentions, Austin (1975) also awkwardly seeks to exclude non-serious, or what he calls “parasitic,” speech acts (p. 22). For instance, he considers performances by an actor or statements made in jest as intelligible yet parasitic uses of language. Yet, in excluding these fake or infelicitous speech acts, Austin (1975) inadvertently privileges the conscious speaker and his/her sincere intentions as the center of his speech act system—the very thing he sought to avoid (Bérubé, 2004).

Derrida and Butler’s Speech Act Theory

In highlighting the shortcoming of Austin’s (1975) desire to preserve conscious intentions and sincerity, Derrida (1988) asks: can communication have an inherent, intended and sincere meaning? In responding to his own question, Derrida (1988) maintains that sincere intentions cannot control a speech act because it is constantly repeatable—iterable—as it is cited and recited by different speakers in different contexts. While the speaker might have a genuine purpose in making a statement, as the statement is used and repeated by other speakers in different contexts, the meaning and the force of the statement changes. For example, if debate students use this article as evidence in a debate brief, I cannot control how they use material from this essay in their arguments. As more and more students cite the argument, we all become multiple “authors” of the speech act. Likewise, my citation of various scholars within this essay creates an assemblage of ideas that have very different meaning and force once combined into this article. Thus, while many people helped create this document, the absence of their intent and presence allows me to deploy their ideas and thoughts in different ways.

Influenced by de Saussure’s (1972) notions of linguistic structuralism, absence and presence, and diachronic studies of meaning and Barthes’s (1977) work on the “death of the author,” Derrida contends, that the “structure of absence” in all uses of language allows all utterances to be endlessly cited and iterated (Alfino, 1991, p. 146). This inherent possibility of continuous citation and repetition, according to Derrida, is the very condition in which discourse remains meaningful and has effect, even if the meaning is different in each new context (Alfino, 1991). Within Derrida’s (1988) system of speech acts, authorial intent does not disappear, but instead must be understood as an effect that “no longer [is] able to govern the entire scene and the system of utterance” (p. 20). Additionally, the privileging of the author’s sincere intentions and beliefs in an appropriate context for a performance should be understood as an attempt to restrict the infinite meanings of the performance (Stocker, 2006). In addition, Derrida (1988) contends that sincere intentions and beliefs cannot control systems of meaning because we cannot read the speaker’s mind, our communication always expresses more than we anticipate, and intention and belief is never fully present to the speaker due to the unconscious. Consequently, what matters most in a speech act is how context makes possible the structure, conventions, and meaning of communication.

In making these arguments, Derrida (1988) maintains what Austin wants to exclude—the non-serious and infelicitous performance. In doing so, Derrida argues that the possibility of non-serious or fake performances and reiterations of performances demonstrate that intentionality and sincerity do not regulate the absolute meaning of a speech act. Instead, the system is never fully closed. Rather, it is porous and constantly open to change due to the context and conventions within and outside the immediate context in which the performance occurs (Derrida, 1988).

In her ruminations about the nature of injurious speech and the problems associated with censorship, Butler (1997) builds on Austin’s and Derrida’s works to argue that a structural gap between intention and sincerity and an utterance is necessary in order for language to have agency. Like Derrida, Butler (1997) contends that language and speech acts are always plagued with excess. As she further explains, the speech act is “always to some extent unknowing about what it performs, that it always says something that it does not intend” (Butler, 1997, p. 10). Even in the situation where a predetermined topic is up for discussion – like a resolution for debate – Butler (1997) would contend that meaning remains unsettled because the words in the topic and the arguments made for either side of the topic do not have stable meaning. For instance, thousands of debates each year occur under a shared national debate resolution, yet each debate is significantly different than the other, even when they deal with similar sub-sets of the resolution. The very fact that there is no consensus on what a debate resolution precisely means at the end of a debate season and debates are performed so differently under one topic throughout a season demonstrates the play and excess of speech acts. This structural inability to master or control our performances and speech acts for Butler (1997) does not mark the failure of communication; instead, it serves as its radical potential. For example, without a gap between intention and beliefs and utterance, discourse is unrecoverable and fixed. However, if a gap does exist, contested and once harmful words like “queer” can be re-appropriated and given new meaning within different contexts by different speakers. This does not mean that the discourse is acceptable uncritically; rather, the new use of the terms demonstrate the exclusive nature of the rhetoric and produces a democratic contestation over formerly racist or misogynist discourse that extend the range of the term. For instance, the activist group Queer Nation re-appropriates the term “queer” in order to contest the exclusive nature of labels such as “gay,” “lesbian,” or “homosexual.” In doing so, the group seeks to highlight the homophobic fear of what is “queer” by turning the term against itself, as the group’s motto, “We’re here. We’re Queer. Get used to it!” signifies (Brontsema, 2012). Another example of re-appropriation can be seen as a result of the recent decision by Arizona’s Tucson Unified School District to ban certain books from the district’s Mexican-American Studies program. The action caused several activists to form the Librotraficante Caravan, an underground and traveling library featuring the work of writers who were banned by the district. The group’s name – book trafficker – and tactics reclaim a number of negative stereotypes surrounding immigration, like the underground smuggling/trafficking of goods (Steiner, 2012). Through this re-appropriation over time, these terms lose their harmful effect and can be used in new and powerful ways through iteration (Butler, 1993, 1997).

Due to this break between belief, intent, and rhetoric, the force and power of discourse cannot be located in a single speech act. As Butler (1997) explains in the context of hate speech, “racist speech works through the invocation of convention; it circulates, and though it requires a subject for its speaking, it neither begins nor ends with the subject who speaks or with the specific name that is used” (p. 34). In other words, the illocutionary force of a speech act comes from the prior conventions and citational history that both precedes and conditions the use of particular discourse. While an individual can be liable for what is said at a perlocutionary level, reprimanding and rejecting the speech act does little to curb the force and power of the discourse at an illocutionary level of uptake. Indeed, such attempts actually lock into place injurious speech, “preserving their power to injure, and arresting the possibility of a reworking that might shift their context and purpose” (Butler, 1997, p. 38). Instead of preserving this injurious history, efforts to reclaim or re-signify discourse require laying claim to a term or utterance and using it against its “constitutive historicity” (Butler, 1993, p. 227). Yet, to Butler (1993), re-signification or the queering of language through performance is not simply a question of will or conviction. Rather, performance requires both the enactment of the utterance and the transference of binding power onto that utterance. The authority of the act is not determined by an external judge or the intent and convictions of the speaker; instead, it is located in the citational history of the discourse (Butler, 1993).

### Ballot

### Link---Neolib Frames

#### This also address every Aff link claim about the surrounding “context of its deployment”. These terms provide an opening for the neoliberal encroachment. It is bett*er* to endorse the 1AC sans any such rhetoric.

Budd ‘97

John Budd is an Emeritus Prof in the College of Education and Human Development at the Univ of Missouri –“A Critique of Customer and Commodity” - College & Research Libraries – vol 58:4 - #E&F – obtained via the EBSCO Open Access Journals Database

Discussion

One of the most important things to keep in mind with regard to customers and commodities is that the language librarians use to describe their purpose and activities inevitably will define, even if they do not initially reflect, thought. For instance, even though Brown says that "it is useful to understand more about the service interaction and what it is that makes 'buying' and evaluating a service (such as reference service) different for the customer than 'buying' and evaluating a material product," she proceeds to speak of consumption and retail analogy to describe reference work in academic libraries.34 The language employed is a powerful shaping force, and that force, in this context, is tied to the discourse of consumption. Baudrillard says that "consumption is the virtual totality of all objects and messages constituted in a more or less coherent discourse. Consumption, in so far as it is meaningful, is a systematic act of the manipulation of signs [italics in original]."35 Signs, in the Saussurean linguistic sense, are composed of the totality of the signifier and the signified. The focus on the customer approach and information as commodity embodies a shift from primary attention on the signified to attention centered on the signifier. The signified is the content, concept, or idea; the signifier is an expression, a sound-image, or form. In other words, the transformation is one from substance to form.

In another sense, the transformation moves from semantics (meaning) to rhetoric (expression). Emery writes that "'Without consumers, the marketer of economic goods and services does not have a market.' Similarly, without readers the library lacks its raison d'etre. Though in one case an individual may be called a 'consumer' and in the other a 'reader,' the difference is purely semantic."36 In actuality, Emery is dismissing the semantic and championing the rhetorical. In the more thoughtful connections of library purpose to capital, a kind of schizophrenia reigns. The schizoid tendency is evident in the conflict that Repo struggles with. Although he advocates economic analysis of information, he repeatedly reminds the reader (and himself) of the use value of information ("The value of information is fully explicated in its use."37) In less thoughtful treatments certainty governs. For example, in urging the customer approach, Weingand advocates the "paradigm" of consumerism as superior to the view of the library as a public good (noted above). It seems to matter little that the language adopted is a usurpation of ideas that either do not apply or apply imperfectly to the library's situation.

Weingand's statement is not value neutral. In fact, it is an exemplar of the Foucauldian will to truth and knowledge which, as Foucault observes, "like the other systems of exclusion, relies on institutional support: it is both reinforced and accompanied by whole strata of practices," and is "profoundly accompanied by the manner in which knowledge is employed in a society, the way it is exploited, divided and, in some ways, attributed. . . . [T]his will to knowledge, thus reliant upon institutional support and distribution, tends to exercise a sort of pres-sure, a power of constraint upon other forms of discourse."38 The impact on knowledge is profound and debilitating. The effect is best expressed by Lyotard:

The nature of knowledge cannot survive unchanged within this context of general transformation. . . . The relationship of the suppliers and users of knowledge to the knowledge they supply and use is now tending, and will increasingly tend, to assume the form already taken by the relationship of commodity producers and consumers t

Marked

o the commodities they produce and consume—that is, the form of value. Knowledge is and will be produced in order to be sold, it is and will be consumed in order to be valorized in a new production: in both cases, the goal is exchange. Knowledge ceases to be an end in itself, it loses its "use-value."39

Finally, the discourse on customer and commodity in the academic library takes on the characteristics of ideology. Specifi-cally, it is ideological in that it asserts a dominance over other discourses, and does so through distortion of context that all but eliminates any teleological sense. As Hawkes points out, two aspects of ideology —"instinctive deferral to 'the facts' as they are immediately represented to us, and blind faith in instrumental science —are the most dangerous effects of commodity fetishism. In order for a thing to become a commodity, the coercive power of human reason must be exerted over the thing-in-itself: we must represent it as what it is not, and then take the representations for the reality."40 Ultimately, librarians need to take care with the language they adopt, and with the facility with which they use it to shape concepts. That the language of consumerism and commodification dominates beyond the sphere of libraries is not sufficient reason to accept it uncritically. The library's language, and practice, should flow from as clear an idea of purpose as possible. And librarians should examine purpose independently from the pressures of capitalism and consumption.