## 1NC

### 1NC – Kritik

#### Blackness exists as a metaaporia that interrogates the cyclical ways violence onto blackness is morphed and ultimately appropriated. The 1AC relies on a redemptive narrative of humanity that is fundamentally inaccessible for black people. Their project is ultimately meant to hide and recreate moments of black death for the sake of redeeming Human life.

Wilderson 20 [Frank B. Wilderson, professor of Drama and African American studies at the University of California, Irvine, “Afropessimism”, page 13-17, JMH]

For most critical theorists writing after 1968, the word aporia is used to designate a contradiction in a text or theoretical undertaking. For example, Jacques Derrida suggests an aporia indicates “a point of undecidability, which locates the site at which the text most obviously undermines its own rhetorical structure, dismantles, or deconstructs itself.” But when I say that Black people embody a meta-aporia for political thought and action, the addition of the prefix meta- goes beyond what Derrida and the poststructuralists meant—it raises the level of abstraction and, in so doing, raises the stakes. In epistemology, a branch of philosophy concerned with the theory of knowledge, the prefix meta- is used to mean about (its own category). Metadata, for example, are data about data (who has produced them, when, what format the data are in, and so on). In linguistics, a grammar is considered as being expressed in a metalanguage, language operating on a higher level of abstraction to describe properties of the plain language (and not itself). Metadiscussion is a discussion about discussion (not any one particular topic of discussion but discussion itself). In computer science, a theoretical software engineer might be engaged in the pursuit of metaprogramming (i.e., writing programs that manipulate programs). **Afropessimism**, then, **is** less of a theory and more of **a metatheory: a critical project that, by deploying Blackness as a lens of interpretation, interrogates the unspoken, assumptive logic of Marxism, postcolonialism, psychoanalysis, and feminism through rigorous theoretical consideration of their properties and assumptive logic, such as their foundations, methods, form, and utility; and it does so, again, on a higher level of abstraction than the discourse and methods of the theories it interrogates.** Again, Afropessimism is, in the main, more of a metatheory than a theory. **It is pessimistic about the claims theories of liberation make when these theories try to explain Black suffering or when they analogize Black suffering with the suffering of other oppressed beings. It does this by unearthing and exposing the meta-aporias, strewn like land mines in what these theories of so-called universal liberation hold to be true.** If, as Afropessimism argues, Blacks are not Human subjects, but are instead structurally inert props, implements for the execution of White and non-Black fantasies and sadomasochistic pleasures, then this also means that, at a higher level of abstraction, the claims of universal humanity that the above theories all subscribe to are ~~hobbled~~ [constricted] by a meta-aporia: a contradiction that manifests whenever one looks seriously at the structure of Black suffering in comparison to the presumed universal structure of all sentient beings. Again, Black people embody a meta-aporia for political thought and action— Black people are the wrench in the works. Blacks do not function as political subjects; instead, our flesh and energies are instrumentalized for postcolonial, immigrant, feminist, LGBTQ, transgender, and workers’ agendas. These so-called **allies are never authorized by Black agendas predicated on Black ethical dilemmas. A Black radical agenda is terrifying to most people on the Left**—think Bernie Sanders—**because it emanates from a condition of suffering for which there is no imaginable strategy for redress—no narrative of social, political, or national redemption**. This crisis, no, this catastrophe, this realization that I am a sentient being who can’t use words like “being” or “person” to describe myself without the scare quotes and the threat of raised eyebrows from anyone within earshot, was crippling. I was convinced that if a story of Palestinian redemption could be told . . . its denouement would culminate in the return of the land, a spatial, cartographic redemption; and if a story of class redemption could be told . . . its denouement would culminate in the restoration of the working day so that one stopped working when surplus values were relegated to the dustbin of history, a temporal redemption; in other words, since postcolonial and working-class redemption were possible, then there must be a story to be told through which one could redeem the time and place of Black subjugation. I was wrong. **I had not dug deep enough to see that though Blacks suffer the time and space subjugation of cartographic deracination and the hydraulics of the capitalist working day, we also suffer as the hosts of Human parasites, though they themselves might be the hosts of parasitic capital and colonialism**. I had looked to theory (first as a creative writer, and only much later as a critical theorist) to help me find/create the story of Black liberation—Black political redemption. What I found instead was that **redemption, as a narrative mode, was a parasite that fed upon me for its coherence. Everything meaningful in my life had been housed under the umbrellas called “critical theory” and “radical politics.”** The parasites had been capital, colonialism, patriarchy, homophobia. And now it was clear that I had missed the boat. My parasites were Humans, all Humans—the haves as well as the have-nots. If critical theory and radical politics are to rid themselves of the parasitism that they heretofore have had in common with radical and progressive movements on the Left, that is, if we are to engage, rather than disavow, **the difference between Humans who suffer through an “economy of disposability” and Blacks who suffer by way of “social death,” then we must come to grips with how the redemption of the subaltern** (a narrative, for example, of Palestinian plenitude, loss, and restoration) **is made possible by the (re)instantiation of a regime of violence that bars Black people from the narrative of redemption**. This requires (a) an understanding of the difference between loss and absence, and (b) an understanding of how the narrative of subaltern loss stands on the rubble of Black absence. Sameer and I didn’t share a universal, postcolonial grammar of suffering. Sameer’s loss is tangible, land. The paradigm of his dispossession elaborates capitalism and the colony. When it is not tangible it is at least coherent, as in the loss of labor power. But how does one describe the loss that makes the world if all that can be said of loss is locked within the world? **How does one narrate the loss of loss? What is the “difference between . . . something to save . . . [and nothing] to lose”?** Sameer forced me to face the depth of my isolation in ways I had wanted to avoid; a deep pit from which neither postcolonial theory, nor Marxism, nor a gender politics of unflinching feminism could rescue me. Why is anti-Black violence not a form of racist hatred but the genome of Human renewal; a therapeutic balm that the Human race needs to know and heal itself? Why must the world reproduce this violence, this social death, so that social life can regenerate Humans and prevent them from suffering the catastrophe of psychic incoherence— absence? Why must the world find its nourishment in Black flesh?

#### The 1AC’s focus on language as liberation reproduces the same racial hierarchies that they seek to dismantle- not only are their politics not able to capture to true magnitude of antiblackness, but they always assume language as a life force rather than an impossibility.

**Marriott 21** [David Marriott, Professor in the Histories of Consciousness at UC Santa Cruz, 2021, “Lacan Noir, Lacan and Afro-pessimism”, The Palgrave Lacan Series, <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-030-74978-1#authorsandaffiliationsbook>, Pages 6-10, JMH]

What does a “psychoanalysis of the signifier mean”? Not, primarily, a Saussurean theory of the sign, a grammatology, nor a rhetoric of tropes. Lacan, at the beginning of the Seminar, thus introduces the following algorithm (of the signifier (S)): not to think representation or writing; but to conceive of an entirely new topology; of the signifier as the crossing (of a bar) which also bars any access to its signified (s).7 But this also implies that the bar is the differential principle of resistance. Conversely, **only resistance can decline the signifier, and makes its difference an object of jouis-sens (‘enjoy-meant’) and misrecognition**. This is what the signifier is; the genetic element that reveals how difference is subjected to value. But the subject, even when it submits to the bar, limits active resistance, imposes limitations and partial restrictions on it and is already controlled by the x that (the signifier) represents. For the subject is merely represented in the set of signifiers. I say merely because the signifier is always a false witness to what the Other asks of me, for it is not really there. What the bar makes thinkable as resistant is nothing more than the restoration, without consolation, of a mirage (of a difference synonymous with the segregation of S1 from S2 ) to which the Other bears witness. With this in mind imagine the following illustration: This is not meant to be a parody of Lacan’s famous “image of two twin [toilet] doors”, but is a refection on what is at stake (E, 417). When discussing the image of the twin doors, and their identical appearance, Lacan is of the opinion that the segregation of the twin nouns (“man” and “woman”) is purely nominal, or arbitrary. To conceive of these signs as a naïve nominalism which confuses the signifier with the this, that, here, now of a recognition—like a Hegelian child pointing at the ruins of spirit—does not allow us to enter into gender, insofar it is permissible to write above either door with the appropriate modesty of symbolic law. As if gender had only one referential concept and one representation and all one had to do is choose the right door for its corresponding recognition to take place. But this is what the knowledge of difference is: an imaginary freedom to choose or reject what one believes to be different. **This is why Lacan refers to an imperative which is the signifier’s greatest achievement, but also its conquest as hoax, in its teleology and normative renunciation of failure and non-meaning. For the evaluation of this law, the delicate weighing of each signifier in its pure differentiation, Lacan says it depends on a subjugation and a segregation which the West shares with supposedly “primitive communities” (**E, 417). To interpret the algorithmic function of the signifier is always to weigh that which segregates. (But how are we meant to read the logic by which the primitive is used—that is, segregated—as an illustration of segregation? How are we to read the presumed equality of a universal equivalence? That we are all duped by the need for a fundamental difference whose sign gender is? But such a notion already presumes a universal desire for difference that the signifier represents as sex’s representative and the universal’s represented. But what would it mean to say that the signifier “goes” in the same way as that of gender? That it, too, is subject to the same arbitration, same atavism?) **The notion of (racial) hierarchy does not simply appear here but takes on a rhetorical significance, for not every subjugation has the same value of segregation or of referential difference.** What is the relation, then, between subjection and segregation? Are they synonymous? If segregation operates as a law, that is, as something forcibly enjoined on the speaking subject, are there differences in how different subjects take possession of it and are subjugated by it? There are seemingly forces which can only get a grip on something by giving it a segregated sense and a negative value. Consider the mania over choosing the right door or restroom. If it is a direct product of arbitrariness, why does choosing the wrong door signify the worst, recognized or not? But here again, who can conceive of the signifier as simply the acquisition of formally assignable values? Blackness, on the other hand, will be defined as that one, among all the senses of a right choice, which gives the being of what is said the form with which it has a segregating value. Of therefore being the wrong choice in general. Thus, segregare, meaning to set apart, isolate, divide; a word that shifts from a religious to a racist meaning in 1908 suggests an obvious difference in how modern subjects are subjected to the signifier; it also gives rise not only to the enigmatic question of arbitrary difference as such, but also of the racist historicity of such ordering. But which order has the maximum afinity with the symbolic? Which is the one where we can no longer know who subjugates, since it is subjugated by the force that segregates it? For all things this is a question of weighing, the delicate but rigorous art of knowing the imaginary object of blackness from the ab-sens by which it is necessarily taken away, cast down, served gall rather than the meat of a universal equivalent. Indeed, segregation shows how racial difference is inscribed (Lacan uses the word enters) across the two spaces, but also how the segregation of linguistic values that we find in the illustration is made to symbolize (Lacan uses the words complement, reinforce) racial difference in “the lived experience of truth” (E, 417). Does the image above allow a better understanding of what is being presupposed? **Everything about that illustration that, from the very beginning, was taken up with a linguistic explanation of the signifier, with Saussure, with signification, suggests that its importance resides solely in how difference is inscribed in language**. And yet. Even if we think that the placing of race here is a precarious pursuit, the sign of an inability to read properly, and one that risks being tripped up by the purely formal question of difference—nevertheless, the form in which signifiers are symbolically subjugated does suggest that there is something more going on here than how subjects are placed in language. Why? In the perspective of Lacan’s original reading, the signifier’s autonomy is equally caught between what it metaphorically affirms and at the same time metonymically denies, an ambiguous ambiguity in relation to which all linguistic values are deemed arbitrary. This is why Lacan is so fond of saying that the signifier reveals a hole in meaning. It is not that the signifier makes these holes appear, or that it reveals actual gaps: the signifier veils over a more primordial lack out of which meaning is woven and then draped over being like some discarded pelt. What people want from the signifier is thus what allows them to know without knowing, those pleasures and adventures that allow us to take our minds away from the fact that the signifier signifies nothing but what it lacks. Even if we remain enslaved or chained to the ways in which the signifier insists—and consists—in the signification of the lack of this lack, meaning offers us nothing else other than the lure of its capture. What language teaches us, then, is how our being is burdened by sense and by its expectation. **What meaning offers us, in short, is neither truth nor consolation, but a desire for a certain mastery in which blackness is once again figured as something enslaved, dominated by its appearance**. **That is why its symbol is that of the non-moi, for what it connotes is so fearful as to be inexpressible, like a Jabberwock, or the insatiable savage nature of some mythical beast.** This great fearful thought has often served to show certain truths and thus to prove the symbolic efficacity of blackness. But at the same time, it is impossible to gain access to it, to prove absolutely that it exists, since its sense always seems to be less than its differential value. For what is at stake is not knowledge, or seeing, but the thought that makes blackness itself into a state of terror or wretchedness. It is therefore not surprising to come across the following curious sentence in Lacan’s meditation on the signifier: “[T]he phenomenon is no different, which – making her appear, with the sole postponement of a “but,” as comely as the Shulammite, as honest as a virtuous maiden – adorns and readies the Negress for the wedding and the poor woman for the auction block” (E, 419).

#### The aff’s focus on the politicized nature of the Anthropocene disavows and erases racial antagonisms---their ignorance of black death relegates their ability to imagine any change

Karera, 19 - Axelle Karera, Wesleyan University, 2019(“Blackness and the Pitfalls of Anthropocene Ethics,” Critical Philosophy of Race, Volume 7, Issue 1, 2019, pp. 32-56, Accessed via Project Muse, bam)

It is precisely this formulation that I would like, in this article, to extend to the status of blackness both in the Anthropocene and its concomitant apocalyptic consciousness. More specifically, I would like to argue that apocalyptic sensibilities which have significantly monopolized Anthropocenean discourses are powerful in disavowing and erasing racial antagonisms. They foreclose “proper political framings” while, simultaneously, they continue to construct and maintain growing numbers of both new and old enemies along racial lines. Inspired by recent philosophical interventions in the area of critical Black Studies, I contend that the political Anthropocene (if there is or to ought be one) will remain an impossibility unless it is able to systematically grapple with the problem of black suffering. I assert that black suffering—especially in the figure of slain black bodies—indefinitely haunts the possibility of a post-apocalyptic political afterlife. What “black death” promises, instead, is a post-apocalyptic world without any signs of ethical transformation—that is, if we are willing to inflect the project of ethics in the Anthropocene with the radical politics it is much in need of.

I do not think that my claims are far-fetched or simply a polemical attempt to insert matters of race in a discourse that promises—to use the language of feminist philosopher Nancy Tuana—“a new ontological appreciation of interrelations of humans, environments, and societies.”7 Racially driven police brutality, the criminalization of climate refugees along racial lines, neocolonial tourism, the outsourcing of toxicity and littering or the militarization of practices of resources extraction—all of which are performed in accordance with a very specific racial geography—deeply problematize what Colebrook names the “fetish of unity.”8 To politicize the Anthropocene—or perhaps, more accurately, to politicize “ethics in the Anthropocene”—and, therefore, to avoid also the haunting setbacks of surrendering to a discourse’s mere potential to no transformative ends, will require—I think—refusing to lose sight of those for whom both the Anthropocene and its apocalyptic imaginaries do not necessarily hold any emancipating value. Given the pervasive silence on matters of race in this emerging discourse, nothing guarantees thus far that the world we could inherent, in the event of successful post-apocalyptic/post-Anthropocenean times, would de facto be non-racist. This is to say that the Anthropocene erasure of race rather anticipates a post-apocalyptic “recalibration” of anti-black racist practices. And it does so, I believe, by our indulging in two clandestinely insidious discursive inclinations. The first, I argue, is a type of “hyper-ethics” predicated on the naturalization of relationality, mutual dependency, and other narratives of “species entanglements.” And the second, I contend, is an ahistorical and apolitical “hyper-valuation” of the concept of life.

#### Only the alternative’s unflinching interrogation into the continual enslavement of blackness can overcome the failures of past, present, and future systems of reform that describe enslavement as a contingent event and not a flat lined existence.

Wilderson 20 [Frank B. Wilderson, professor of Drama and African American studies at the University of California, Irvine, “Afropessimism”, page 100-104, JMH]

When in Dr. Zhou’s office, Stella had said, “What’s the matter, Frank? Are you afraid we’ll tarnish your father’s reputation?” she had put her finger on the pulse of a desire to be special that beat inside my heart. In my unconscious I wanted to latch on to an element of Whiteness, or Humanness (since Dr. Zhou wasn’t White), that would set me apart from other Blacks. But this desire was deeper than Stella or I suspected at the time. An unconscious wish for my father’s prestige (which was as faux as the prestige Solomon thought he had accrued from his skills as an engineer and his talents as a musician) to seep into my being by osmosis. I had dropped his name to get us the appointment. I would drop his name in the weeks and months to come to open other doors as well. This kind of reasoning is universal. But what is not universal, what belongs to Black people and Black people alone, is a deeper desire sparked by a deeper structure of oppression**. When you intuit for the first time in your life that you live in a soup of violence that is prelogical,** a kind of violence that is as legitimate if it’s wielded by “ordinary” citizens, such as Josephine, as it is if wielded by sanctioned enforcers of the law, and that your father’s position and prestige are no more the keys to a sanctuary than the position and prestige of someone who is Black and orphaned, **you are faced with two choices: stare unflinchingly at the abyss as it stares unflinchingly at you, or take it out on the Black person near you who won’t leave you to your fantasy of being truly alive.** Anything to not have to face the fact that your sense of presence is no more than “borrowed institutionality.”\* This dynamic, this intra-Black imbroglio, is harder to discern in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, for the simple fact that the personas of the master class are no longer solidified in evil White men and evil White women who wield real whips on a real plantation. The master has been dispersed across the entire racial spectrum of people who are not Black. Dr. Zhou is as much a master as Edwin and Mary Epps, the antagonists in *12 Years a Slave*. In fact, the twentieth century shot the Eppses through a prism—they are not just people, they are ideas. They are ideas and personas that a young middle-class Black man like me had consciously fought against to the point of being kicked out of college, while deep in my unconscious I was a loyal supplicant who cared more about not simply the master’s feelings, but the stability of the master’s world, than I did about my own suffering and the suffering of Stella. It is hard to be a slave and feel that you are worthy, truly worthy, of your suffering as a slave. One hundred twenty-seven years before Josephine, before Cody, before Urban Risers, and before Dr. Zhou, the riff between Stella and me would have been clearer to see. We wouldn’t have walked home in symptomatic silence; our discord would have been played out in the open. At times, Stella would throw her sense of herself as a being from a special, quasi-Black dimension at me the way I threw my father’s status and my Dartmouth pedigree at her. She would let me know of the competence exhibited by the White men she had been with and the Jew she had married; she held them up as object lessons that I could never be or learn. That’s how most Black couples fight and argue, by firing White and non-Black people at each other. No, it’s more subtle than that. The bullets aren’t the White or non-Black people themselves but the ambience of recognition and incorporation in a world beyond the plantation. **We load our guns with deadly intangibles and shoot straight for the heart. Anyone who thinks nineteenth century slave narratives are reports on the past isn’t paying attention.** **Such a person will experience the analysis of Afropessimism as though they are being mugged, rather than enlightened; that is because they can’t imagine a plantation in the here and now.** But Afropessimism is premised on a comprehensive and iconoclastic claim: **that Blackness is coterminous with Slaveness: Blackness is social death**: which is to say that **there was never a prior metamoment of plenitude, never equilibrium: never a moment of social life**. Blackness, as a paradigmatic position (rather than as a set of cultural practices, anthropological accoutrements**) is elaborated through slavery. The narrative arc of the slave who is Black** (unlike Orlando Patterson’s generic Slave, who may be of any race) **is not an arc at all, but a flat line, what Hortense Spillers calls “historical stillness”: a flat line that moves from disequilibrium, to a moment in the narrative of faux-equilibrium, to disequilibrium restored and/ or rearticulated.** This kind of change, the transformative promise of a narrative arc, belongs to White men and their junior partners in civil society (non-Black immigrants, White and non-Black people who are queer, and non-Black women) but only in relation to each other. By transformative capacity I mean that, through struggle, non-citizens (in the legal and libidinal sense of the word—legal being Latinx undocumented immigrants, for example, and libidinal being anyone from a documented immigrant of color to a gay person to a nonBlack woman) can become citizens, because they are still Human; they are simply oppressed and therefore not so fully vested. But their transformative capacity stems not from their positive attributes but from the fact that they are not Black, they are not slaves. These fully vested citizens and not-so-fully vested citizens live through intra-communal narrative arcs of transformation; but where the Black is concerned, their collective unconscious calls upon Blacks as props, which they harness as necessary implements to help bring about their psychic and social transformation, and to vouchsafe the coherence of their own Human subjectivity. Nevertheless, the slave is a sentient being. Therefore, an existence void of transformative promise, which narrative holds out to human subjects, is a painful lesson for the slave to learn, much less accept. **I am not suggesting that Black people should resign themselves to the inevitability of social death—it is inevitable, in the sense that one is born into social death just as one is born into a gender or a class; but it is also constructed by the violence and imagination of other sentient beings**. Thus, like class and gender, which are also constructs, not divine designations, **social death can be destroyed. But the first step toward the destruction is to assume one’s position** (assume, not celebrate or disavow), and **then burn the ship or the plantation, in its past and present incarnations, from the inside out**. However, as Black people we are often psychically unable and unwilling to assume this position. This is as understandable as it is impossible. I was a lot like that when I met Stella. Stella was skeptical about the willingness of the FBI to help us unravel the skeins of aggression that were coming our way (from Josephine and Cody’s violence to the violence of whoever did not want Stella to bring her evidence against Urban Risers to court). Looking back, I realize that I believed that my father had standing in the community, that his position on multiple boards and his vice presidency at the university had somehow imbued us both with Human capacity, the capacity to be recognized and incorporated as something other than Black. I had no idea that the FBI had tracked me for four years, that there was a file on me; nor did it dawn on me that Stella’s social-change activism, especially her civil disobedience against the war and her plethora of counterculture and revolutionary friends, would militate against our being helped. But those aren’t even the fundamental reasons why I should have been skeptical: If the FBI has been tracking Black creative writers since 1919, if the FBI has been constantly updating and revising its list of Black writers earmarked for preventative detention (concentration camps**?),\* if the FBI, like every law enforcement agency in the United States, is organically anti-Black, then where is the line between prison and home?**

#### The imposition of the Anthropocene an impossible move towards understanding the extent of black death. We need to go beyond the concept of vulnerability because that process is always a conditional experience for non-black people.

Murillo, 20—Assistant Professor, African American Studies School of Humanities, UC-Irvine (John, “Untimely Dispatch From the Middle of Nowhere 24,” Propter Nos Vol. 4 (2020), dml)

We work with the shards of Black life and death that called out to us because we knew and know that the critical, caring, and perilous work we need to do is bound up with destruction. These fragments of Black life and death surrounding us affirm our sense of our own untimeliness against the neatness of time, and of our stankiness in the middle of nowhere.

I have written elsewhere and at length about what I am calling “untime,” which describes the dereliction of Black temporality, and about “stankiness,”1 the defining characteristic of the nowhere of Black spatiality. The untimeliness that signals our destructive relationship to human models and experiences of time and the stankiness that signals our destructive relationship to human spaces and spatiality act as the Black prima materia, the Black and essential material, with which we must work to create these impossible stories we imagine, witness, bear, conjure, and live in and against the antiblack cosmos where and when we cannot be. What we knew, and now know with excruciating intimacy, to be the violent, distorted fabric of spacetime shaping the field of fragments around us is the material we must bend to create Black pocket universes from streets to pages (and everywhere and when between). We knew and know that in order to conjure Black spacetimes that might upend the antiblack cosmos, we would have to become avatars of destruction, able to bend the forces of untimeliness and stankiness and love toward the kinds of authentic upheaval that must be born if we are to save the earth and conjure the impossible story of a wholly unimaginable world.

Wherever and whenever we’ve ended up, nowhere is better or more apropos, and we’ve got no time to celebrate. We wordly wanderers wander wondering about the possibility of other worlds, word worlds that would warp and rend and otherwise radically reimagine the fabric of spacetime, especially since we understand the ways that our pain, terror, and subjection stitch that fabric together. We traverse the perilous folds in space and wrinkles in time in search of the fragments of a theory of Black spacetime because we recognized that understanding not only how time and space tear Black life, death, and creation absolutely asunder, but also how Black life, death, and creation unsettle and upend time and space,2 would be essential if we aimed to take time and make space for Black folk, in theory, in word, and in deed.

Our many lingering questions about the actual possibilities of Black creation are the connective force arranging the field of these fragmented, impossible stories we sought out and that sought us out, that we write and we tell, around us. For Jasmine, Shakara, Dajerria, Sandra, Kalief, Nephi, for my students across time and space, for my wife and my family, and for all the Black folk living and dying untimely lives and deaths in the middle of nowhere, these questions illuminate the path forward, propel and direct the vector of our imaginative journey, and shape our vision of a destination. Asking how we have marshaled, do marshal, and might better marshal the violent energy of our spatiotemporal dereliction and transmute it into the creative, caring energy required to conjure moments and sites for Black folk to disturb the air with our breath opens us into a serious consideration of the stakes and potentiality of Black creation. Our visitations with Black words and worlds created and lived by Black folk allow us to advance this consideration and to move ourselves toward taking the leap into the wholly Black black hole of it all.

Ultimately, our leap leads us to recognize that to make the arrangements, conjure ways out of no way, and take and make time when there is none to spare is to engage in dangerous work—and not in the least because the work tends to draw the fire, bullets, terror, and domination of the antiblack world, its institutions, and its agents;3 we work with volatile material, this stuff of untimely death and destruction, and this stank of nowhere, so we must negotiate how we imperil ourselves and the variously dead and living Black folk for whom we care. How we handle the forces that destroy us, that remove us from a subject position—that is, from a stable location relative to space and time—has significant import for us because our handling of these forces will impact those who encounter the creations we destructively produce.

How we alchemically transmute destruction determines the shape the product takes and the effects it might have on those for whom we endeavored to create it. How we treat this material across each step of the process of alchemical creation affects what form that material is able to take. Alchemy functions as a useful frame for this process because it requires the dissolution or destruction of our prima materia, our original material, as a necessary and first step toward the creation of something else. Nigredo, alchemy’s first step, signifies blackness and requires the dissolution of our source material, compelling us to think about how we break our material down to its volatile essential components. Albedo, alchemy’s second step, signifies whiteness and requires the distillation of the usable from what nigredo produces, compelling us to consider how we scrub clean or purify what we can or want to use of that material. And rubedo, alchemy’s final step,4 signifies redness and results in the synthesis of the fabled philosopher stone itself, compels us to consider how we alter and synthesize that destructive force into a radically different product. Alchemical transmutation is the process of radical breaking-apart/disordering, reorganization, and creation. When we think of Black creation, especially when that creation is inherently a ‘working-with-fragments,’ we must think (and have thought) about the ways we handle these fragments throughout the complex process of transmutation under untimely, spatially dislocated conditions.

This is a good way of thinking about what has been the subject and the work of the kind of impossible invention Black folk (vie to) perform: on the one hand, we spend pages trying to think about how this process works (its mechanics) and to what ends (its stakes and possibilities); on the other, we spend pages performing this work by unraveling the entanglement of Blackness, spacetime, care, and creation, extracting what is essential to this entanglement, and producing a theory of Black untimely creation out of nowhere. Across genres, styles, disciplines, and paradigmatic divides marked by woefully inadequate names, written account of a difficult and dangerous transmutation. Working with and through our destructive relationship with the fabric of the cosmos produces what we understand to be an essential contradiction of Black creative work: in this cosmos, our untimeliness and our displacement are constitutive to our capacities to make time or take a minute, and to make space or find our way; that which destroys our relationship to time, space, and each other remains inextricably bound up with our creative aspiration and imaginative aim. We knew this, and we know this, and we have created, and do and will continue to create under these conditions.

Fragment 117

Destructive Writing, and Fragmented Work

How

to tell

a

shattered

story?5

What is required to…tell an impossible story?6

I do not know

when or how else

to begin,

but I do know that

each and

e ver y Black frag ment

matters

Here are the fragments put together by another me7

The cord of cowrie shells drags across the polished dark wood of the floor beneath her feet, tracing a constellation through the small nodes of water she arranged before us. M. NourbeSe Philip conjures a liquid narrative arc from the watery remnants of the lost words and names, bodies and souls, and untimely timelines of Black lives lost at sea as she performs selections from Zong! for we who sought to bear water and witness.

Clamoring cowrie shells clatter a rhythm for our guided collective recollection. Like the beautiful fragments of shells to which she was condemned to beaches to search, they are their own w/holes, and their arrangement along the snaking cord traces the coordinate field of the event horizon that she asks us to cross. The wet drag of heavy, shelled rope through water scratch-splash-crashes above a low rumble, the drumroll of tidal forces altering the fabric of the small, dark cosmos of the theater. Overwhelming, oceanic, Black, chant, song, dance, breath, wake, word, and work warp, wrinkle, and collapse into one another. We get lost in the riff, rift, and riptide of the performance, rhythmically called by shell fragments to where and when the lost might be.8 In the cosmic Black magic being conjured, uncertainty is our familiar.

Zong! is M. NourbeSe Philip playing with fragments, a poiesis of destructive means and ends. There are orders of fragments at play, here, and play is only possible under the parameters set by Philip in an agreement with the limitations of the archive brokered by the 150 Black folk thrown overboard. The first order is comprised of the narrative bits of Black life and death that make up, but will always fail to fully add up to, the 150 souls lost beneath the waves. The second order is established by the fragmentary (and figmentary) nature of the available, historical account—the insurance claim and the court case. To become both magician and censor, the poet locks herself inside the limits of the available archive of the legal case, Gregson v. Gilbert, attempting to inhabit the same conditions endured by the slaves aboard the Zong/Zorgue. Sequestering herself to the language of the available record means situating herself in the “dysgraphia” characteristic of every untimely narrative fragment—of the Black lives thrown overboard from the deck of the Zong, of those left to die on a dinghy in the Mediterranean,9 of all of us. The “dysgraphia: the inability of language to cohere around the bodies and the suffering of [we] Black people who live and die in the wake and whose everyday acts insist Black life into the wake”10 is the condition of possibility for Philips’s magic. Incoherence makes her form of spellcasting—or spelling—possible. We read, we watch, and we are caught in the derangement of the spell.

The story of the Zong, the story that the dead demand to be told, can only be ‘un-told,’ or told in a deranged way by “re-presenting the sequence” of signs and symbols that index the available information. The writing becomes its own process of disfigurement and the process produces the second order of fragments: the language. The falling, failing, ripped-apartness of language, as an echo of the “seared, divided, ripped-apartness” of the “primary narrative” of Black flesh, becomes the manifestation of this destructive “praxis” and “theory,” “text for living and for dying, and…method for [writing] them both.”11 Spacing the words out and exploding their letters into the unintelligible disarray littering the pages of Zong! produces imaginative and physical strain. Eyes arrhythmically fail to track the lexical debris across, up, and down pages of the text, and the lack of an orthographic anchor subjects the imagination to a form of interpretive disorientation. The difference in legibility produced by a creative process that depends on the disfigurement of language and the refusal to impose meaning jettisons writer, reader, and witness into a state of imaginative vertigo.

M. NourbeSe Philip as Black poet, censor, and magician becomes something like a poetic Galactus: a Black cosmic entity and destroyer of words and worlds; a sentient, vigilant black hole in search of something in excess of meaning and sense, an “underlying current” subtending all that is written and all that the written account could ever mean. Against grammar, the “mechanism of force” structurally imposed onto the available language as symbolic order—the order of ideas, knowledge, and imaginations that ceaselessly and repeatedly murders Black beings—and the Black dysgraphia such grammar allows, Philip mutilates and disorders language, “literally [cutting] it into pieces, castrating verbs, suffocating adjectives, murdering nouns, throwing articles, prepositions, conjunctions overboard, jettisoning adverbs…[separating] subject from verb, verb from object—[creating] semantic mayhem” in the name of “reaching into the stinking, eviscerated innards…and [reading] the untold story that tells itself by not telling.” This “not-telling” is both vengeful and protective. It is vengeful because it is aimed at mutilating, jettisoning, murdering, suffocating, castrating, cutting, and exploding the archive in the same way the archive mutilates, jettisons, murders, suffocates, castrates, cuts and explodes Black being. And it is protective because Philip recognizes the need to avoid subjecting the dead “to new dangers and to a second order of violence,” one that not only affirms the violence of the grammar that imposes meaning and structure, but reproduces that violence (by ‘maintaining order’)—and this is a need recognized by Hartman, Spillers, Sharpe, myself, and countless others who know the perils of bearing fragmented witness and water.

Alchemically transmuting fragments is, in one sense, a form of violent play, a form of derangement and disorder that playfully transforms the violence that made them fragments into a form of violence that can challenge, or outright disintegrate, the symbolic order. Thinking in these terms frames Philip’s creative praxis as a form of offense. In this light, Philip poetically plays with language in order to conjure an assault on the normative constraints of language, grammar, and knowledge. Philip works with the lexical, political, and metaphysical refuse of the lost and dead Black folk thrown overboard by first recognizing them as such—as refuse, as effluvium, as whatever one might call the end product of spaghettification—and then by subjecting them to a form of destructively creative and creatively destructive alchemy that transmutes the violence that produced this refuse into something that attempts to dispose of the symbolic order and all its attendant limits. The organizing principle or grammar by which the antiblack fictions of the archive comes to be faces annihilation in the form of a poiesis that turns its refuse against itself.12 Reanimated13 or ghostly14 or deathly,15 the variously dead resurge in the breaks of word and meaning, and usher in an imaginative form of warfare waged at and against the limits of creative possibility imposed by the symbolic order that made Black folk deathly in the first place.

### 1NC – Case

#### 1---Vote neg on presumption---

#### a---Pornotroping---the 1AC speaks on instances of violence against black people without any material way to solve it---that makes the violence fungible, which turns case

#### b---This is offense. Symbolically affirming their method despite its lack of ties to material resistance strengthens power.

Rigakos and Law, 9—Assistant Professor of Law at Carleton University AND PhD, Legal Studies, Carleton University (George and Alexandra “Risk, Realism and the Politics of Resistance,” Critical Sociology 35(1) 79-103, dml)

McCann and March (1996: 244) next set out the ‘justification for treating everyday practices as significant’ suggested by the above literature. First, the works studied are concerned with proving people are not ‘duped’ by their surroundings. At the level of consciousness, subjects ‘are ironic, critical, realistic, even sophisticated’ (1996: 225). But McCann and March remind us that earlier radical or Left theorists have made similar arguments without resorting to stories of everyday resistance in order to do so. Second, everyday resistance on a discursive level is said to reaffirm the subject’s dignity. But this too causes a problem for the authors because they:

query why subversive ‘assertions of self’ should bring dignity and psychological empowerment when they produce no greater material benefits or changes in relational power … By standards of ‘realism’, … subjects given to avoidance and ‘lumping it’ may be the most sophisticated of all. (1996: 227)

Thus, their criticism boils down to two main points. First, everyday resistance fails to tell us any more about so-called false consciousness than was already known among earlier Left theorists; and second, that a focus on discursive resistance ignores the role of material conditions in helping to shape identity.

Indeed, absent a broader political struggle or chance at effective resistance it would seem to the authors that ‘powerlessness is learned out of the accumulated experiences of futility and entrapment’ (1996: 228). A lamentable prospect, but nonetheless a source of closure for the governmentality theorist. In his own meta-analysis of studies on resistance, Rubin (1996: 242) finds that ‘discursive practices that neither alter material conditions nor directly challenge broad structures are nevertheless’ considered by the authors he examined ‘the stuff out of which power is made and remade’. If this sounds familiar, it is because the authors studied by McCann, March and Rubin found their claims about everyday resistance on the same understanding of power and government employed by postmodern theorists of risk. Arguing against celebrating forms of resistance that fail to alter broader power relations or material conditions is, in part, recognizing the continued ‘real’ existence of identifiable, powerful groups (classes). In downplaying the worth of everyday forms of resistance (arguing that these acts are not as worthy of the label as those acts which bring about lasting social change), Rubin appears to be taking issue with a locally focused vision of power and identity that denies the possibility of opposing domination at the level of ‘constructs’ such as class.

Rubin (1996: 242) makes another argument about celebratory accounts of everyday resistance that bears consideration:

[T]hese authors generally do not differentiate between practices that reproduce power and those that alter power. [The former] might involve pressing that power to become more adept at domination or to dominate differently, or it might mean precluding alternative acts that would more successfully challenge power. … [I]t is necessary to do more than show that such discursive acts speak to, or engage with, power. It must also be demonstrated that such acts add up to or engender broader changes. In other words, some of the acts of everyday resistance may in the real world, through their absorption into mechanisms of power, reinforce the localized domination that they supposedly oppose. The implications of this argument can be further clarified when we study the way ‘resistance’ is dealt with in a risk society.

Risk theorists already understand that every administrative system has holes which can be exploited by those who learn about them. That is what makes governmentality work: the supposed governor is in turn governed – in part through the noncompliance of subjects (Foucault, 1991a; Rose and Miller, 1992). For example, where employees demonstrate unwillingness to embrace technological changes in the workplace, management consultants can create:

a point of entry, but also a ‘problem’ that their ‘packages’ are designed to resolve. … In short, consultants readily constitute certain forms of conduct as ‘resistance to technology’ as this gives them some purchase on its reform by identifying a space in which expertise can be brought to bear in the exercise of power. Resistance consequently plays the role of continuously provoking extensions, revisions and refinements of those same practices which it confronts. (Knights and Vurdubakis, 1994: 80)

This appears to be a very different kind of resistance from that contemplated by Rubin, but perhaps not so different from that of the authors whom he and McCann and March critique: those whose analysis ends at the discursive production of noncompliance. Instead, the above account is of a resistance that almost invariably helps power to work better. A conclusion in the present day that ominously foreshadows the futuristic, dystopic risk assemblage described by Bogard (1996).

Another example of the ‘resolution’ of resistance proposed above is the institution of a tool library described by Shearing (2001: 204–5). In this parable, a business deals with the issue of tool theft on the part of workers by installing a ‘lending library’ of tools instead of engaging in vigorous prosecution and jeopardizing worker morale. While the parable is meant to indicate a difference between actuarial and more traditional (moral) forms of justice, it also demonstrates how an act that may be considered ‘resistant’ is incorporated without conflict into the workplace loss-prevention scheme – an eminently preferable, ‘forward-looking’ solution within the logic of risk management. The same is possible in the case of more discursive forms of resistance. If I do not see myself as a Guinness man, for example, market researchers will do their best to adapt Guinness to the way I do see myself (Miller and Rose, 1997). The end result, of course, is that I purchase the beer. As manifested in a form of justice (Shearing and Johnston, 2005), it always consolidates, tempers emotions, cools the analysis, reconciles factions, and always relentlessly moves forward, assimilating as it grows. In this sense, therefore, Bogard’s ‘social science fiction’ actually pre-supposes and logically extends Shearing’s (2001) rather cheery and benevolent rendering of risk thinking. In this context of governmentality theory – as self-described and lauded for its political non-prescription by its own pundits – the acts or attitudes described as resistant are, in the end, absorbed by those who govern. Resistance as an oppositional force – that pushes against or has the potential to take power – is theoretically and politically neutralized. In the neutralization process, power is reproduced.

So, along with McCann and March’s observations that everyday resistance adds little to our understanding of false consciousness and that it denies the role of material factors in shaping identity, we can add Rubin’s two main criticisms of everyday resistance: it relies on an inaccurate understanding of power, and acts of resistance which supposedly emancipate actually may reinforce domination. All four of these criticisms demand the same thing: to know what is really going on, to get an adequate grasp of the social.

#### c---Debatability---they provide no concrete or new strategy that hasn’t already been done---that makes them undebatable because we can never predict what the 2AC spin will be---proves all our t arguments because even if its possible to debate them, it is not plausible

#### 2---Using capitalist metaphors to describe social conditions reinforces corporatization of education and normalizes inequitable power structures.

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

Influence of an Economic Metaphor on Communities of Color

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### 3---The aff’s use of “dark” pedagogy repeats anti-black tropes and their focus on human-oriented solutions fails

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Such a self-proclaimed “dark aesthetic” is unfortunately endemic to speculative realism’s forms.29 This colorism has not been interrogated for the way it repeats certain tropes and, indeed, political ontologies of anti-Blackness. Ecotheory, we are told, is all too often “conducted in the shade of ‘bright green’” which as a hue symbolically calls forth problematic themes and modalities that require one to be “affirmative, extraverted, and masculine” as well as “sunny, straightforward, ableist, holistic, hearty, and healthy”.30 Such ecotheory may sound good as the natural framework for a popular documentary on climate change, but it is not a framework supported by a wider experience of the environment that includes biomes which exhibit a diversity of colors. To some the conceit of the *Prismatic Ecology* volume may sound arbitrary or even silly, but if the invitation to riff off of the associations produced by thinking through different colors produces a form of ecological thinking beyond the limitations of the problematic tropes associated with “bright green” then it would be worth it. So, the question then follows, does the volume live up to this promise? And yet to answer such a question within the bound of environmental theory we have to also ask if such a promise is itself ecological? These “bright green” tropes identified by Cohen (and explicitly drawn from Timothy Morton) are indeed problematic. Marxist and other radical left-wing theorists have identified these themes and frameworks as being shared with the ideology of fascism, particular in the form found in Nazi Germany, and these tropes haunt contemporary environmentalism in troubling ways. But a prismatic ecology also surfaces themes that are very clearly “human-oriented”, as most of the colors in the prism are specifically human ways of seeing. This attempt in speculative realism to link realism with an anti-anthropocentrism often fails. This is true even of the work of Quentin Meillassoux, who is not a proponent of OOO but who is rightly or wrongly taken as the inspiration behind the attempt to move beyond “correlationism” to realism. A clear-eyed reading of *After Finitude* will note that the supposedly realist ways of reaching the primary qualities of the ancestral realm are couched in numbers that are tied specifically to the rotation of the (human populated) earth around the sun. This is an issue because, for Meillassoux and those who align with his brand of realism, any real knowledge of primary qualities must be grounded on knowledge that is not dependent upon human subjectivity. All of the numbers that Meillassoux claims provide access to the reality of primary qualities are dependent upon the relative reality of the earth’s rotation as translated into “years”.31 So, despite rightly diagnosing a problem, *Prismatic Ecology* does not move past that problem. Perhaps a supporter of OOO would claim that this slippage is actually the result of rejecting the nature-culture binary. The supposed troubling of the nature- culture binary is a central element of OOO, but it is not particularly new in environmental theory. Cohen and others are persistent in their slippage between emphasizing the autonomy of objects from the human subject and the demand to attend to particular questions of social justice produced by thinking that autonomy. But this is not truly a deconstruction of the nature-culture binary, rather it is the refusal to think deeply the relationship between justice and object that runs throughout these three books. Such important problems are often elided in OOO- inflected environmental theory. Remaining with Cohen’s introductory remarks to *Prismatic Ecology*, he ends with a common sentimentality endemic to Morton’s work as well: “the binding of the elements is love.”32 Such a claim is made without any support, left to simply dazzle the reader, to impress upon her the importance of all these elemental colors and warn her off asking what exactly such a statement means. Is this not ideology rather than analysis? Are we allowed to ask about the relationship of bondage to love? Can we really pass by the auto-deconstruction manifested by such a statement appearing on a page numbered with the roman numeral “xxx” that causes us to ask if OOO doesn’t confuse love with a kind of pornotroping through the rainbow?

#### 4---Their theory is wrong and re-entrenches capitalist exploitation --- this is also a 100 percent solvency take out to the aff.

Wilkie 16—Professor of English at Wisconsin-La Crosse [Rob, “Ghostly Objectivity: Commodity Fetishism, Animated Monsters, and the Posthuman Object,” in Cotter et al., eds. *All Too (Post)Human: The Humanities after Humanism*, Lanham: Lexington Books, pp. 118-20]

If a stone becomes a flint axe, the foundation of an office building, an aesthetic element of a cultural practice like an engagement ring, or a weapon in a Palestinian slingshot, for example, it is not because "there is something in rock that is actively unknowable" 14 but the mode of production which shapes what labor can make of the stone and what ends that stone will be put to use. Material relations make "things" possible, but the way in which objects are reified and come to appear autonomous from historical relations-as if they have an elan vital or metaphysical life force of their own-is the manifestation of the extent to which all elements of the world around us have been subsumed within the capitalist mode of production. The nonrelational ontology of the object-turn - which addresses the contradictions between humans and things by, on the one hand, denying that any such contradiction exists outside of epistemology and, on the other hand, by claiming that all objects are equally unknowable and divided from every other object in an extreme form of autonomous isolationism - reproduces the material conditions of capitalism in which, as a result of the private ownership of the means of production, "living labour appears as a mere means to realize objectified, dead labour, to penetrate it with an animating soul while losing its own soul to it." 15 Thus, while the majority of the world's population are reduced by wage-labor to the status of commodities on the market, the posthumanist object-turn argues that objects cannot be reduced to their position in social relations. According to this logic, if you are treated like an object under capitalism, as people are when they are dependent on the sale of their labor-power for survival, what is necessary is not changing the social relations that create such conditions of exploitation, since all relations operate in essentially the same ways by reducing the other to a false epistemology, but realizing that "you" are not reducible to any of them. In fact, the reification of wage-labor in capitalist society becomes the basis for an existential individualism in which humans and things alike can find "freedom" by embracing the ultimate unknowability, contingency, and emptiness that the majority of people face living under capitalism.

The object-turn is a defense of capitalism which shifts theory away from the revolutionary praxis of red critique and towards a descriptive postcritique mode of writing Jane Bennett calls "a childhood sense of the world" 16 and Steven Shaviro describes as "a kind of 'autistic' thought" 17 which seeks "not to deduce and impose cognitive norms or concepts of understanding, but rather to make us formally aware of how reality escapes and upsets these norms." 18 If objects take on a "ghostly objectivity" wherein they seem to exist as autonomous agents above and beyond the human - as it appears with seemingly "nonhuman" agents like stock markets, drones, or climate change-it is because the process of commodification in which the products of human labor are stripped from the worker creates "an autonomy that seems so strictly rational and all embracing as to conceal every trace of its fundamental nature: the relation between people." 19 Capitalism is the historical reality that the object-turn reifies and renders as unhistorical and therefore untransformable ontology.

What is particularly telling is just how comfortable global capitalism is with the anti-instrumentality that object-turn proponents claim is resistant to all cultural logics. The 2014 big-budget Hollywood "reboot" of Godzilla, for example, firmly locates the cause of contemporary crises in the fundamentally flawed logic of human instrumentality and through the actions of a nonhuman other "exposes" the limits of human understanding. Like left theory's "ghostly objectivity," Godzilla expresses a similar inability of capitalist ideology to address the crises of the contemporary by, first, turning the contradictions of capitalism into the trope of a conflict between giant prehistoric kaijii ("monster"), and, second, representing these contradictions as operating beyond human control and understanding. Both "left" theory and popular culture today work to absolve the contradictions of capitalism by eliminating all investigation of "relations" and, through the figure of the nonhuman object, placing the blame on an abstract and empty notion of "humanity" while looking to an equally empty and ahistorical notion of the nonhuman object for solutions. The idea that "the true principle of dynamism, in human society as well as inanimate nature, is that real objects always exceed their contexts, always withdraw from our control, and are always filled with surplus and surprise" 20 is the ideology of commodity fetishism which erases the fundamental role of labor in the production of surplus value and obscures the possibilities of transformation by representing the historical relations between people as "the fantastic form of a relation between things." 21 The object-turn is now taking its turn in the spotlight of ruling class ideology because, as is the case with all ideology, it dispenses with the notion that exploitative social relations can in any way account for the contradictions that result from production for profit. Instead, it places any "blame" on unforeseen and unknowable events. It does so not [END PAGE 119] declaring that ontology exceeds explanation and cannot be reduced to historical relations. In proposing that "entities are never exhausted by any of their relations or even by their sum of all possible relations" and "no entity is capable of fully registering the depths of another," 22 the object-turn fosters the illusion that the problems facing society are not reducible to capitalism since it claims the problem of nonrecognition exists within all relations. This is to turn the effects of capitalist property relations-in which individuals become "autonomous" beings who see themselves as disconnected from the social by the very fact that they must compete against others to sell their labor on the market-into the condition of being as such. It is a theory of ontology that turns the effects of historical (class) conflicts into the actions of wayward objects. In this way, the object-turn acts as the theoretical arm of advanced capitalism in promoting the idea that social crises are the consequence of the "regulations" that are placed on life and the forms it can take, and which must be removed for life to flourish. Returning the conditions of labor to discussions of the object is the means by which we can understand why the object has become a theoretical "problem" and turn toward an examination of the world around us in a way that enables fundamental social transformation from an exploitative society to one focused on meeting human needs.

## Block

### Kritik

#### The role of the judge is to abolish the white community as a mode of surrendering your life to black life.

**Moten 13** PhD, professor at UC Riverside, researcher and philosopher on black studies, literary theory, poetic studies, and performance studies, (Fred Moten, http://www.minorcompositions.info/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/undercommons-web.pdf)

The mission then for the denizens of the undercommons is to recognize that **when you seek to make things better, you are not just doing it for the Other, you must also** **be doing it for yourself.** **While** **men may think they are being “sensitive” by turning to feminism, while white people may think they are being right on by opposing racism, no one will** really **be able to embrace the mission of tearing** “this **shit down” until they realize that the structures they oppose are** not only bad for some of us, they are **bad for all of us.** Gender hierarchies are bad for men as well as women and they are really bad for the rest of us. Racial hierarchies are not rational and ordered, they are chaotic and nonsensical and must be opposed by precisely all those who bene t in any way from them. Or, as Moten puts it: “ **e coalition emerges out of your recognition that it’s fucked up for you, in the same way that we’ve already recognized that it’s fucked up for us. I don’t need your help. I just need you to recognize that this shit is killing you, too, however much more softly, you stupid motherfucker, you know?”**

#### The 1AC narratively attempts to invoke a sympathy around black flesh but relies on a sense of porntroping to lock blackness into a scene of death. The 1AC Kidner card replicates the ruse of analogy through the call for human-nonhuman sympathy.

David W. Kidner, 01-01-2021 (PHD in psychology from London University, former professor at Nottingham Trent University. “Anthropocene Subjectivity and Environmental Degradation.” Ethics & The Environment 26, no. 1 (2021) 57-83. <https://www.proquest.com/openview/78dcd07e1de26797acf284e45073efad/1.pdf?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=33535&casa_token=O0z9H5GgsfAAAAAA:jpm8HaZqWtCQBBOfQQjXtmU9dq2E1Bb98zyD7CGtdU1h07J3-rw9gPff1_r_mUCjB3Y2NoN6lg> Published 01-01-2021; Accessed 07-01-2021; Wally)

Rediscovering relationality Ecological grief is only possible if we retain the higher-order organization that relates us to the world and to our nonhuman kin. But this higher-order organization is not just a matter of relations, connections— terms that assume a prior separation, in the almost inescapable language of industrialism. Rather, it also embodies a tacit recognition that through our own embodiment, we are already part of the natural world. I realize that **my subjectivity can reach out, through my senses, beyond my bodily boundaries to access qualities of the world.** **I might also exist in the trees I have planted or things I have made. Such entities illustrate the way that my own, pre-existing subjectivity can extend into the world, imaginatively and physically**. But the reach of the ‘I’ does not include only those places that I have had a hand in creating, and that could therefore be considered a materialisation of my thoughts. Jesper Hoffmeyer gives an example: Kidner Anthropocene Subjectivity 77 As I can see houses more than four kilometres away on the other side of the fjord, it seems as if part of myself reaches out over such a large area. And if, for example, a lightning bolt strikes the other side, ‘I’ will see it in an instant, even before ‘I’ hear the thunderclap. ‘**I’ exists, so to speak, in places over there**. (2008, 25) Now consider a different situation—one that I have experienced: I am a visitor to the Pacific Northwest. I stop my car for a moment in a layby surrounded by magnificent Douglas Firs, and decide to wander into the forest for a few minutes. I walk a few meters down the trail into the woods, but quickly come across a shocking scene: for I realize that the trees I have walked through are merely a shield designed to conceal a scene of vast destruction. For half a mile in front of me there are only stumps and torn branches. . . . I retrace my steps, stunned and appalled by what I have seen. **My reaction illustrates the way that our bodies inform us about the sort of world we have evolved to fit into, revealing a natural resonance or revulsion depending on the character of our environment.** Unlike capitalist ownership, which reduces what is owned to a means of fulfilling our instrumental needs, felt relationality meets the Other on equal terms, and is open to the subjectivity of the Other as much as experiencing the Other through our own subjectivity. A subjectivity that expands and contracts momentarily to recognize (or not) other entities will experience injury to these entities as injury to itself. While there are great rewards for this recognition, we also suffer when the world is mutilated, **inviting a certain vulnerability**. In Judith Butler’s terms, it is not so much a matter of ‘possession’ as one of potential ‘dispossession’ if our bonds with the other are broken, a risk of being “undone by the other” (2006, 24). **The world’s vulnerability becomes our own vulnerability, and ecological grief needs to be recognised in these terms**. Our industrialized conceptual system is based on relations that form a very limited subset of those that we are potentially aware of, and moreover, the permitted relations tend to be those that promote our emotional detachment from the world. So as Butler points out, **this is a form of connection that “is trying to minimize its own relationality” (**2006, 23). Through our technological prowess, we construct a world that embodies these drastic reductions, so that a reduced subjectivity is both a product of and a cause of a world that excludes felt relationality. **Such a world is hostile to almost all aspects of life, including much of what has in the past defined the human, minimizing qualities such as feeling, judgement, intuition, sensory awareness, passion, and sensuality. Such reductions of human awareness are not innate, and have to be taught**. Thus Gene Myers, researching children’s interaction with animals, 78 ETHICS & THE ENVIRONMENT, 26(1) 2021 found that we are educated to see animals as part of ‘food chains’ rather than as fellow creatures we can empathize with, and that these learnings are accompanied by a good deal of protest and pain (1998, 149**). When such learned ‘rational’ understandings replace rather than complement our instinctive relationality, they subdue our emotional awareness.** For example, the psychoanalyst Adam Phillips suggests that our sense of tragedy indicates a violation of “our mostly unconscious assumptions about how the world should be”, and remarks that “we wouldn’t think of anything as a tragedy if we did not have a deeply ingrained sense of order already there to be affronted” (1998, 121). The implication is that this emotional sense recognizes an order that exists in the world—that is, it is a more deeply rooted order than the conceptual order we have been taught to apply to the world. It is therefore both an aspect of our subjectivity and a part of the world, existing at a level where we are not separated from the world, and anger, grief, and passion express our outrage when this deeply embedded sense of order is trashed. Consequently rage, argues Phillips . . . is only for the engaged; for those with projects that matter (not the indifferent, the insouciant, the depressed). That is to say, it is for those for whom something has gone wrong, but who know, in their rage, that it could be otherwise. (1998, 125) **The individual who comfortably complements industrialism cannot recognize this ‘otherwise,’** **since**, as Adams (2003) convincingly demonstrates, **the reflexive self scrutinizes and orders itself through a tacitly assumed perspective that is constrained within the industrial realm**. While **armored against environmental grief by the detachment from other entities, such a self**, as we saw earlier**, is devastatingly vulnerable to the emotional and ecological return of a natural order it has long pushed to the periphery of awareness and material existence.** Language is generally inadequate to convey experiences that depart from the industrialist narrative in this respect, particularly as the words we need—words such as ‘tragedy’, ‘poignancy’, ‘passion’, ‘grace’, ‘wildness’, and ‘authenticity’— seem to belong to a world that existed before we retreated into the mind, when we could describe the meaning of situations in ways that were continuous with our feelings. As the novelist Richard Powers suggests**, Most of us are so deeply colonized [into believing] that meaning is a private thing, a personally generated thing, and that nothing else really has agency, and that the rest of creation is here basically to be a resource to us** . . . [**So] it shocks us to think that there might actually be another way of looking at the world, and that there was another way of looking at the world for most of human history and for most cultures**. (Powers, 2018) Kidner Anthropocene Subjectivity 79 As Powers adds—“what if there really is meaning out there?” If so, then **there is also meaning in the destruction of the natural world—a meaning that is deeply horrifying and traumatic for us to the extent that we have retained our higher-order relationality. But for those for whom nature has already become a ‘social construction,’ a ‘concept,’ a ‘resource,’ or a ‘projection,’ environmental grief will remain a mystery, since they have already retreated into the conceptual realm that observes the world rather than experiences it**. Recovering an ecological subjectivity Embodied inclusion in nature is something we may be predisposed towards, in much the same way that we naturally find it easy to fear certain creatures and situations. **But it may also be learned—or rediscovered— through one’s cultural roots or through direct experience.** Consider, for example, a study by Irene Miles, who explored the benefits of participating in ecological restoration. Her findings suggest that these **benefits are not simply individual ones**—that is, they cannot easily be categorized as ‘psychological.’ Some of the terms used by volunteers to describe these effects were “feeling I can play a role in nature” and “feeling I belong in nature,” “meaningful action,” “fascination with nature,” and “participation” in nature. These imply not so much individual gains and benefits, but—as one volunteer described it—“a sense of communion” and as “self-transcending” (2000, 223), **hinting at the opening up of a self that can be more inclusive of, and more continuous with, the natural world**. This process of opening oneself up will not exchange of one way of being for another, but will rather expand one’s subjective repertoire, so that one will eventually be responsive to contexts that will either invite one’s participation or cause one to contract away from it. For example, in a multi-story car park I am likely to shrink inwards, finding little resonance between myself and the situation; whereas hiking through wilderness, I feel my spirit extending into the surroundings so that through the senses, my self reaches out into the context. **To refer to this process as ‘self-discovery’ is to fall into the trap of allowing the experience to be assimilated into industrialism**, **since this is not about discovering a pre-existing and assumed self, but rather about our realization**, to use Roger Brooke’s insight, **that ‘our’ spirituality may be better understood as an openness to the spiritual character of the world** (1991, 60–61). **Recognizing this spiritual character requires a dynamic self that is capable of moving fluidly between individuality and a much wider participation in the world, according to the context**. There are similarities here to the deep ecological view of selfhood, but also important differences that I will briefly refer to. Firstly, the dynamic quality of the form of selfhood I am suggesting—by which I mean the 80 ETHICS & THE ENVIRONMENT, 26(1) 2021 capacity of subjectivity to reach out to encompass the other, or to shrink inwards in response to unsympathetic environments**—overcomes the problems associated with non-systemic, static views of selfhood in which the self is either viewed as part of an undifferentiated whole or remains a thinly disguised version of the egoic individual** (see Diehm 2007). Secondly**, the form of selfhood implied here, as I suggested above, does not so much expand in order to include the other within its own boundaries, as to open itself to the subjectivity of the other, recognizing its role as part of the larger natural system;** so accusations of anthropocentrism, for example, are not applicable. And finally**, the self I am positing should not be viewed in opposition to the contemporary reflexive self, since it includes the latter as one facet of a self that can also reach beyond the limits of the industrial sphere. Given our industrialist confinement, however, our participation in higher-order natural structure shrivels like an under-used muscle. At best, it becomes fossilized within conceptual orthodoxy, surviving tokenistically in words such as ‘community,’ ‘sustainability,’ or ‘ecological.’ Today, the transformation of beauty into ugliness reinforces our individualistic retreat into the self and away from a nature that is in the process of being abandoned, so that while we remain outwardly unchanged, we are ecologically zombified in ways we cannot articulate, and are left to deal with the residues of objectless emotion**. This is the situation that underlies the otherwise mysterious feelings encapsulated by the term ‘Anthropocene horror.’ **A prerequisite for reversing this process is to recognise that the environmental crisis is also, in ways much more radical than we have previously appreciated, a crisis of human being—one that is insoluble without acknowledging that the forces that have so extensively degraded the world have also degraded us in complementary ways**. **To address this mutual degradation, we need to begin, not from the position of the ‘reflexive’ self that is unknowingly embedded within industrialism, but rather from an embodied subjectivity that can embrace its own continuity with the natural world.**

#### Blackness is structurally positioned in society as an absolute non-Other in relation to humanity at the levels of phenomenology, mythology, psychology, and spirituality.

More, 21—professor of philosophy at the University of Limpopo (Mabogo, “The Body, Racism, and Contingency,” *Sartre on Contingency: Antiblack Racism and Embodiment*, Chapter 5, 122-130, dml) [language modifications denoted by brackets]

Why then is the black person in an antiblack world the absolute Other or a non-Other? Phenomenological ontology reveals that Otherness is a fundamental category of human thought. In The Second Sex, Simone de Beauvoir asks several critical questions about the being of woman, which led her to study the notion of Otherness and subordination. These critical questions may, mütãt´ĭs mütãn´dĭs, apply to blacks in an antiblack world except that for blacks, Otherness takes on a different form of “not-other.” Echoing Hegel and Sartre, she states: “We find in consciousness itself a fundamental hostility towards every other consciousness; the subject can be posed only in being opposed—he sets himself up as the essential, as opposed to the other, the inessential, the object” (de Beauvoir, 1989: xxiii). She first notes that a man would never write a book on the situation of the human male. Thus, the relation between man and woman is not symmetrical. Male represents both the positive and the neutral aspects of humanity while female stands only for the negative aspects. The male describes himself in his theories as standing for the normal and the ideal while the female is depicted as the deviant. This means that man defines woman as relative to him, in oppositional terms. Thus, her well-known declaration: “He is the Subject, he is the Absolute— she is the Other” (de Beauvoir, 1989: xxii).

The key to the solution lies in Sartre’s ontology of “being-for-Others” or what is commonly called “the problem of other minds.” His model of our relations with other human beings is grounded not on Heidegger’s Mitsein but on Hegel’s master/slave relations. Otherness, for him, arises from the attempt of consciousness to understand itself. In its upsurge, consciousness, by a stroke of internal and external negation, has to be other than another being. Through the negation of not being the Other, I make myself be and the Other arises as the Other. This negation in my relations with the Other constitutes a relation of conflict. Accordingly, my sense of self is constituted not only by my assumptions about who I am, but also by a sense of who or what I am not. In Hegelian fashion, Sartre emphasizes that self-consciousness is possible through the existence of another self-consciousness which reflects it. There can be no self-consciousness or self-knowledge without the presence of an Other who appears as my mirror. This however implies the reverse idea about Otherness, namely: that the image we construct of the Other also emerges out of a particular sense of who we are and who or what we are not. At the origin of every self-image, argues Charmé, “lies an idea of the Other, an ‘Other-image’ that delineates what one’s own self is not” (1991: 5). The models of the self and the Other which we thus create are called “mythic” by Charmé in order to “indicate that the essential qualities by which we define self and other, as well as the boundaries we trace between them, consist of a delicate web of our most primordial assumptions about what is real and of value” (1991: 5). These mythic images include the distorted and hidden images we sometimes create of Others. In this distortion we experience what is Other as either potentially good or evil. In short, we construct a Manichean myth. For the anti-Semite, the embodiment of the Other is the Jew; for the colonizer, it is the native; for the bourgeoisie, it is the proletariat; and of course, for the antiblack consciousness, it is the Negro or black person.

But, as pointed out earlier, it is worth keeping in mind that in an antiblack world, black Otherness—unlike other Othernesses—takes on a different mode of relationality. This constitutes antiblack racism as unique and different from other forms of racisms and oppressions. While the relation between the oppressor and the oppressed, bourgeoisie and proletariat, anti-Semite and Jew, male and female is that of self-Other, that is, shared category of humanness, the relation between white and black is a relation of non-relationality since the non-humanity of the black is the operative category. In such a condition the self-Other relation is eradicated and what remains is the self-not-Other relation. This non-relational relation is given credence through the construction of myths by the antiblack as a flight from the reality of its contingency.

The antiblack consciousness constructs such “myths” in relation to itself and the racial not-Other in an effort to transcend the reality of its contingency. The very creation of myths constitutes itself as contradiction, that is, the very necessity to create myths is itself a recognition and admission of the humanity of the group for whom myths have to be created. The power and importance of myths of whatever kind—racial or otherwise—was recognized by a former rector of the former Rand Afrikaans University (now University of Johannesburg) in South Africa, who later rose in the apartheid regime to become Minister of National Education and finally the vice president of the country, Gerrit Viljoen. He said the following about the racial solidarity of the Afrikaner people in a speech delivered in 1971:

The Volk has the need for myths to help support its ethnic existence. Even in those cases where their content is incongruent with the objective external historical or contemporary reality, they may yet mirror certain internal values and ideals that bind the community together through their acceptance of and faith in it. The point isn’t whether myth is objective, true or fictitious, but whether the community accepts it as a veritable rendering of what they regard as a truthful and authentic value or ideal. (cited in Schutte, 1995: 31)

This is a classic example of bad faith, that is, the attempt to flee a displeasing truth for a pleasing falsehood. By his own admission, Viljoen acknowledges that falsification is necessary in order to achieve the objective of the myth.2 In antiblack mythic imagination, the racist consciousness conceives human beings racially (through the color of the body) different from itself as the absolute non-Other, as antithetical to itself in the order of humanity, in the Great Chain of Being.

As indicated in the early chapters, Sartre conceives of racism in contrast conception of the Other. For him, blacks, women, homosexuals, Jews, and other marginal groups, “represent paradigmatic Others in his culture, i.e. inverted images of the normative archetypes of white, male, heterosexual, Christian culture” (Charmé, 1991a: 253). In his work on anti-Semitism, he characterizes the Jew as a contrast conception whom the anti-Semite needs. The presence of the Jew is an imperative necessity for the anti-Semite. “To whom else could he be superior? Better still, it is in opposition to the Jew, and the Jew alone, that he realizes the legality of his own existence” (Sartre, 1948: 22–23). It is in opposition to the Jew, and the Jew alone, that the antiSemite realizes the justifiability of his own existence. The existence of the Jew or the black allows the racist to persuade himself at birth that his place in the world was pre-given or pre-ordained and therefore that he has a divine or traditional right to occupy it. Such a consciousness does not only persuade itself to believe that its existence is justified and necessary and therefore that it has a right to live but also questions the right of others to exist. However, Sartre’s conception of racism as “Other—Thought” is, as we have shown earlier, not adequate as a convincing account of antiblack racism according to which a black person is not an Other but a non-Other.

It is generally recognized that the main differentiating racial characteristics of the black are phenotypical, for example, skin color, texture of the hair, facial bone structure, shape of the nose and lips, in short, the body. Other alleged characteristics such as intellectual inferiority are predicated upon the contingent fact of black bodily being. The antiblack seized upon this contingent fact and transformed it into a myth that serves as justification for racism. In Barthes’s opinion, myth has “the task of giving an historical intention a natural justification and making contingency appear eternal” (1972: 142). The myth takes the form of three arguments, namely (1) the Naturalistic Argument, (2) the Psychological Argument, and (3) the Religious Argument.

NATURALISTIC ARGUMENT

Consider all things in nature that are good, pleasant, beautiful, and desirable. These are always symbolically associated with whiteness, light, or brightness. On the contrary, whatever is evil, repulsive, ugly, and undesirable is always symbolically associated with blackness and darkness. In nature, there are permanent pairs of binary oppositions: day and night, growth and decay, life and death, cleansing and dirtying, and so on. Vegetation flourishes in the sunlight of day. In the absence of sunlight, and consequently the presence of darkness, vegetation would die. In blackness or darkness there cannot be life. Blackness is fundamentally opposed to life while whiteness or light promotes life. Similarly, night and its accompanying darkness bring about all that is dreaded; horrible things happen in the darkness of night. Cleanliness brings about health and life, while dirt is the repository of sickness and death (Austin, 1979). Each pair of the binaries from nature, therefore, has the dual characteristic of being good or evil. That which is evil is associated with blackness and the good with whiteness. A Manichean world emerges from which the cosmos is conceived in terms of a struggle between Good and Evil.

To repeat what I pointed out earlier, there are no white people in the sense of the whiteness of snow. The “whiteness” of people is a constructed or imagined whiteness. At the most, phenomenologically speaking, there are light and dark human beings, not white and black. People with “white” skin color became evaluated or evaluated themselves positively in line with the positive or good characteristics associated with whiteness, light, brightness in nature. “Black” skinned people, on the other hand, became negatively evaluated and associated with all the bad or evil things of darkness. In other words, for a racist consciousness, that which is good is white and that which is bad is black. After all, God and Jesus are assumed to be white while the devil is portrayed as black. No one, even black people, can imagine God as not white. As a result, Gordon argues that “from the standpoint of the white in an antiblack world, God is the hoped for ‘we’ upon whom the white assumption of being God can be deferred. Since whiteness is the ideal, the white man is either God or as close to God as anyone can be on earth” (1995: 149). Gordon then concludes, “Hence only the white can reflect upon himself as being pre-reflectively linked to God in his essential feature of value: his whiteness” (1995: 150).

To substantiate this myth, the racist develops an a posteriori proof of the specific incarnation of evil. Like Penny Sparrow, the antiblack claims that one need only look at these blacks and one will immediately perceive the “nature of their vile being.” In dictionaries and encyclopedias, the word “Negro” is defined in negative terms. All the characteristics attributed to the Negro in such definitions are those that are assumed to be antithetical to or in opposition to those attributed to Europeans (whites). If Negroes are ugly, whites are beautiful. Binaries are constructed: flat-nose–pointed nose, thick lips–thin lips, idleness–industriousness, cruelty–merciful, lying–truthful, revengeful–forgiveness, and so on. Thus, antiblack racism, in its origin, is Manichean; it explains the way of the world through the struggle between the forces of Good and Evil.

This myth, Sartre argues, is inscribed in the very languages of Europe in which “white” and “black” are connected on a hierarchical system. “The Negro will learn to say ‘white like snow’ to indicate innocence, to speak of the blackness of a look, of a soul, of a deed. As soon as he opens his mouth, he accuses himself . . . can you imagine the strange savor that an expression like ‘the blackness of innocence’ or ‘the darkness of virtue’ would have for us?” (Sartre, 1988: 304).

Nature, from the point of view of this argument, has condemned inferior races and consecrated the superior race. Accordingly, antiblack racism is natural because it “is in Nature since it is a natural fact that the black is inferior to the white. It is by divine right since Nature in a created world is ordered according to the will of God” (Sartre, 1992: 269–270). But what parcels out the superior from the inferior race is their genetic or physical structure. Connect this to the conception of the pairs attributed to nature above, the superior race would be the one associated with whiteness and the inferior associated with blackness. The antiblack, therefore, produces the black in order to found and justify himself or herself [their self] by giving himself a sens and raison d’être. For, blackness in and by itself has no value or meaning except the value and meaning we confer on it.

PSYCHOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

Every group requires the Other for self-consciousness, self-knowledge, and self-essentiality. Hence, because of certain biological contingencies rather than historical events, antiblack consciousness has succeeded in turning the black subject into an Absolute Other, that is, into non-Otherness. To maintain this unique alterity (non-Otherness), it was necessary, therefore, to construct all kinds of myths about blacks. Fanon, using Carl Jung’s “collective unconscious” as a theoretical point of departure, argues that Europeans construct myths, collective attitudes, and prejudices (what Jung calls the “collective unconscious”) about the black person. In these myths, blacks are the uncivilized primitive savages and often animals. This European collective unconscious is responsible for the myth and symbolism of evil associated with black personhood. In Europe, Fanon says, the black man is the symbol of Evil. To an antiblack consciousness, black people symbolize everything negative. Put differently, for Fanon, “In the collective unconscious of homo occidentalis, the Negro—or if one prefers, the color black—symbolizes evil, sin, wretchedness, death, war, famine” (1967: 190–191).

Another form of psychological argument, which is a product of projection, and even repression, is the whites’ ascription to black of animalistic behavior, the most important of which is the presumed inexhaustible black libido. Projection is the endowment of attributes which the subject him/ herself possesses and which are perhaps socially unacceptable to another person. Another way of putting it, projection is a form of dealing with anxiety, whether moral, neurotic, or reality anxiety by attributing the source of this anxiety to another individual. An example of projection might come in this form; instead of “I hate him,” a person projects his hatred to another person and say: “He hates me.” In the case of white people’s attribution of sexual libido to blacks, Ephraim writes:

The attribution of an inexhaustible libido to black people has made them more susceptible than any other people to social transgressions, not necessarily because of any wrongdoing on their part, but primarily because of the European’s terror of the sexual instinct before which he feels [they feel] powerless, irredeemably impotent. It is this terror that he projects onto the world and onto black people in particular (2003: 327)

Chabani Manganyi, a clinical psychologist, who I shall later discuss, writing about the “the body-for-others” has the following to say about projection as a means of scapegoating or bad faith:

The negative values associated with blackness (blackness as dirt, impurity, smell) become vehicles in race supremacist cultures for the racist’s attempts to adapt to his [their] estrangement from the reality of his [their] body. The projection of these undesirable attributes of the human body to the victim of racism as a convenient scapegoat, is part and parcel of the process of denial and self-deception which characterises the culture heroics of Western culture and civilisation. (1981: 113)

As indicated above by Judge Mabel Jansen’s and Louise Mibille’s ascription of rape to black men, one of the myths by antiblack racists is inextricably connected with sex. Always lurking behind antiblack racist practices is the fantasized fears and desires about the sexuality of black people. This is what is sometimes referred to as the psychosexual explanation of antiblack racism, a psychological creation of the sexual Frankenstein’s monster in blacks who comes back to haunt the creator. Throughout the history of the encounter between African people (blacks) and Europeans, sex has been a hidden dominant feature that determined relations between the two groups. Because of this, the black man has become a phobogenic object to non-black peoples, a stimulus of anxiety and extreme fear. In their fantasy claims, Europeans have spread the myth that black people are aggressively libidinous, people possessed by an indomitable, indefatigable sex drive, and oversexed creatures. By the eighteenth century, the sexuality of the black, both male and female, had become an icon for deviant sexuality. If their sexuality and their sexual parts could be shown to be inherently different, this would be a sufficient indication or demonstration that the blacks were a separate and lower species from whites and as different from the European as the proverbial Orangutan. The difference was mainly confined to the sexual parts of black people: the black man’s assumed extra-large penis and the black woman’s (Hottentot Venus—Saartie Bartmann) extended buttocks and the “remarkable development of the labia minoria, or nymphae” (Flower and Murie, 1867). For the antiblack white person the black man is the object to which real or imagined fears of sexual impotency or inadequacy are transferred and fixed. In other words, the black man (African) is phobogenic, that is, he instills fear and anxiety. Thus, from this point of view, black men, on the one hand, are lascivious, potential rapists—each desiring to go to bed, especially with a white woman. Black women, on the other hand, are presumed to be wanton temptresses, wild seductresses of white men, or “amazons” (Cleaver, 1968).

RELIGIOUS ARGUMENT

In an antiblack world, the religious argument appeals to the scriptures to establish black non-Otherness.3 The Bible which most black people revere is heavily laden with negative images, symbolisms, and narratives of blackness. It identifies blackness with evil, disaster, famine, plagues, doom, ugliness, and with the invocation of the story of the curse of Ham to account for racial difference, antiblack racism in the Bible becomes evident. From this biblical narrative, blackness is the color of those who have been condemned to perpetual servitude of being “the hewers of wood and drawers of water.” Even the Ku Klux Klan, John L. Jackson argues, used the Bible and Christian religion to justify their racist beliefs. According to him, the Ku Klux Klan was more a religious cult than anything else. As he puts it: “It was the Klan’s commitment to the Bible, a literal reading with racial inflections, that provided moral weight for their holy crusade against racial amalgamation and blacks’ shortlived political gains during Reconstruction” (2008: 58). Another popular version of this religious argument is that of the “Chosen People.” This argument has had a number of adherents in the world, more so in countries founded on imperialist aggression. America has been described as “God’s own country.” Herman Melville is reported as saying: “We Americans are peculiar, chosen people, the Israel of our times” (Degenaar in Sundermeier, 1975: 25). Cecil John Rhodes justified British imperialism in the following words:

Only one race . . . approach God’s ideal type, his own Anglo-Saxon race; God’s purpose then was to make the Anglo-Saxon race predominant, and the best way to help on God’s work and fulfil His purpose in the world was to contribute to the predominance of the Anglo-Saxon race and so bring nearer the reign of justice, liberty and peace. (Degenaar in Sundermeier, 1975: 25)

The myth of the chosen people has also been a dominant feature of the Afrikaner justification for Apartheid in South Africa. Time after time the neo-Fichteans (Dr Nico Diedrichs and P. J. Meyer) and the Kuyperian Calvinists (H. G. Stoker and L. J. Du Plessis) described themselves as God’s chosen people to oversee both South Africa and the blacks. Some of their pronouncements as cited by Degenaar include: “Afrikanerdom is not the work of man, but a creation of God. We have a divine right to be Afrikaners” (in Sundermeier, 1975: 25). Afrikaners considered themselves chosen by God and destined to control and rule blacks through the grace of God and his holy wisdom. Now recently in the “post”-apartheid South Africa, this religious justification of racism played itself out through a white owner of a Guest House (Sodwana Bay Guest House) in northern KwaZulu-Natal, who after refusing to accommodate black people as guests, claimed that, according to the Bible, blacks are not people and that apartheid is dictated by God. In an interview with Jacinta Ngobese, a black presenter of the radio show, The Brunch, Andre Slade, the owner of the Guest House, said to the presenter: “You are classified in the Bible as an animal, you are not homo-sapiens” (June 24, 2016). The religious concept of “the chosen people” has its origin from this desire for justification.4

A variant of this argument sometimes incorporates the naturalistic argument to justify black oppression. Since nature is the creation of God, and since blacks are by natural design, by God’s will, inferior to whites, then white superiority is a divine right. Sartre cites Thomas Dew’s assertion about natural and divine order of superiority and inferiority among races: “It is the natural and divine order that those endowed with superior faculties . . . make use of and control the inferior beings” (Sartre, 1984: 570). This religious justification of antiblack racism introduces a theodicean problematic which ultimately led William Jones to pose the question as a title of his book: Is God a White Racist? (1998).5 This is a legitimate question given the fact that the Bible itself gives credence to racial oppression through narratives such as the “Curse of Ham.”

#### The impact to that is futurity and apocalyptic fear – the threat of crisis locks in attachment to the structures of whiteness and acts as a mechanism to uphold itself

Baldwin 12 – prof of geography @ Durham University (Andrew, Whiteness and futurity: towards a research agenda, Progress in Human Geography April 2012 vol. 36 no. 2 172-187)

This paper argues that research on whiteness and geography is oriented almost exclusively around some notion of the past. While this is perhaps to be expected given that whiteness studies builds off two past-oriented bodies of scholarship – US labour studies (Roediger, 1991) and postcolonial theory (Said, 1994) – the argument is that privileging the past when researching geographies of whiteness risks overlooking the ways in which whiteness and hence various forms of racism are configured in relation to a different temporal horizon: the future. In pressing this claim, the argument is not to suggest that history is irrelevant for understanding the politics of whiteness. Analysing the past remains indispensable for understanding the numerous forms whiteness can take. Instead, the argument is that analysing discourses of ‘the future’ can reveal important insights about the ways in which white geographies are configured that might otherwise be foreclosed if the past is privileged as the exclusive time-space through which such geographies are produced and maintained. As such, any politics seeking to challenge whitenesses and their hold on racist social imaginaries may benefit by analysing how the future is invoked in articulations of white identity and how such future-oriented articulations shape geographies of all kinds.¶ Why the future? By future I refer to an imagined time that is yet-to-come. The future can be understood to follow sequentially from a past-present trajectory, or it can be understood as a form of absent presence. From tropes of uncertainty, Utopia, apocalypse, prophesy, hope, fear, possibility and potentiality, the future shapes the present in all manner of ways. For instance, in politics, rights are often suspended to safeguard against future events of insurrection, catastrophe and terror. In religion, moral judgements in the present are shaped by a concern for one’s safe passage into a future afterlife, and, in finance, the pricing of securities necessarily entails some calculation of future risk. Given the ubiquity of the future in the present, it is perhaps no surprise that the future is an important object of inquiry in contemporary thought (see, for example, Adams and Groves, 2007; Anderson, 2010b; Jameson, 2005; Luhmann, 1993).¶ Ben Anderson (2010a) provides a useful sketch of this research in a recent article in this journal. His point is that the future is rendered knowable through specific practices (i.e. calculation, imagination and performance) and, in turn, intervenes on the present through three anticipatory logics (i.e. pre-caution, pre-emption and preparedness). So, too, others have made the case that pre-empting the future is now a common feature of contemporary political life (Braun, 2007; Cooper, 2006). Futurity is also an important feature of the affective dimensions of daily life. Take, for instance, fear (Pain, 2009) and hope (Anderson, 2006; Anderson and Holden, 2008). Both are simultaneously embodied experiences and atmospheric qualities animated by imagined futures: one fears the yet-to-come and the other hopes for better things to come. In both, the here-and-now of the psyche or of collective mood is shaped by the yet-to-come. Or, as Brian Massumi (2002) argues, affect occurs precisely in the overlap between the actual and the virtual, which I take to mean an overlap between that which is and a very specific form of the virtual – the yet-to-come. By virtual I refer to things that are real but not actual (Shields, 2003); in this way, the future is exemplary of the virtual. It can be known and hence real, as Anderson suggests, but because it can never be fully actualized as the future, the future remains a permanent virtuality. Thus, analysing atmospheres of fear and hope, for instance, may tell us something about the way politics takes shape through the conjugation of the actual and the virtual, or at the threshold of the future event.¶ But the future as an object or orientation of inquiry is not limited to the affective, and nor is it confined to an actual-virtual binary. Hegel, for instance, paid considerable attention to transactions of the actual and the possible. For Hegel, the dialectic is made possible by the actual-possible relation where the dialectical movement of the actual is the possible.1 So, too, Heidegger argued that the future is indispensable to meaning. For instance, the significance that attaches to certain kinds of information would vanish were it not for the anticipated (i.e. future) consequences that lay dormant in information. Currency exchange rates would matter little, for instance, were it not for the anticipated consequences of exchange rate volatility. Although radically different, the Hegelian and Heideggerian traditions share in common the idea not simply that politics take shape through the collision of social forces that gathered pace in the past, but that political contests are shaped by the future as well.¶ This essay argues for a research agenda that situates the future at the centre of analyses of white geographies. It shows how the geographic literature on whiteness is past-oriented and suggests how this literature might benefit by attending to the ways in which white geographies are infused by notions of futurity. I develop this argument more fully below. For now let me offer a few preliminary thoughts about geographies of whiteness. By whiteness I refer to a racialized subject position that is remarkable for its seeming invisibility (Dwyer and Jones, 2000; Dyer, 1997). In this sense, whiteness is only partially about skin. More important, whiteness plays a foundational role in racist epistemology by serving as the norm against which others come to be viewed as different (Dwyer and Jones, 2000; Kobayashi and Peake, 2000). As such, whiteness does not name a set of stereotypes, so much as a set of ‘narrative structural positions, rhetorical tropes and habits of perception’ (Dyer, 1997: 12) that stand in for the normal. This makes defining whiteness almost impossible but then, as Richard Dyer (1997) argues, the power of whiteness lies in its capacity for almost infinite variability (see also Kobayashi, 2003; Vanderbeck, 2006). For myself, the power of racisms rest in their capacity to normalize their corresponding whitenesses (Kobayashi and Peake, 2000).¶ What, then, are geographies of whiteness? For my purposes here, they refer to geographies – spaces, places, landscapes, natures, mobilities, bodies, etc. – that are assumed to be white or are in some way structured, though often implicitly, by some notion of whiteness (Bonnett, 1997; McCarthy and Hague, 2004; Vanderbeck, 2006). The argument put forward in this paper is that research on geographies of whiteness is almost invariably past-oriented (Bonnett, 1997, 2000; Hoelscher, 2003; Pulido, 2000). By ‘past-oriented’ I mean that whiteness, whether understood as a past or present phenomenon, tends to be explained, accounted for and examined as an expression of social relations that took shape in the past (Satzewich, 2007). In the paper, I aim to show how this work is dominated by an orientation that looks to the past as the temporal horizon through which research and learning about past or present white racial identity occurs. By and large, this work assumes that in order to challenge or reconfigure whitenesses and their corresponding racisms whiteness must be diagnosed using some form of past-oriented analysis (Bonnett, 1997). The racist past is, thus, used to explain the racist present. A brief example makes the point. In an essay that many (Baldwin, 2009a; Dwyer and Jones, 2000; Jackson, 1998; McCarthy and Hague, 2004) suggest is a main point of reference for debate about whiteness in geography, Alastair Bonnett (1997) argues that whiteness ought to be understood as a function of historical geography.2 As such, Bonnett privileges a methodological approach that reaches into the past for answers about contemporary race and racism. Elsewhere, Audrey Kobayashi and Linda Peake (2000) make a similar claim that whiteness is a historically constructed position: to understand whiteness requires understanding its multiple genealogies.¶ I do wonder, though, whether a past-oriented approach to the study of white geographies reproduces the teleological assumption that white racism can be modernized away. Such an assumption privileges an ontology of linear causality in which the past is thought to act on the present and the present is said to be an effect of whatever came before. Consequently, efforts to understand racism are thought to proceed from, or be enhanced by, some correct historical analysis of whiteness. According to this kind of temporality, the future is the terrain upon or through which white racism will get resolved. It cleaves the future from the present and, thus, gives the future discrete ontological form. Yet, in so doing, this kind of temporality disregards the ways in which the future is very often already present in the present not as a discrete ontological time-space, but as an absent or virtual presence that constitutes the very meaning of the present (Anderson, 2010a; Massumi, 2007). This is a rather significant oversight when attempting to account for geographies of whiteness because it means that such geographies are not simply a function of the past but of the future as well.¶ So, then, what about the future? To what extent are geographies of whiteness a function not just of the past but of the future? How are white geographies maintained in relation to the future? In what ways is the future already present in various forms of whiteness? It seems that the geographic literature on whiteness is silent on these questions. In pointing this out, I do not mean to indict or discredit the historicist approach that has come to dominate understandings of whiteness. Again, past-oriented analyses of various kinds have been and continue to be critical for understanding whitenesses and the various racisms to which they give rise. I simply wish to acknowledge that by foregrounding the past in the present the geographic study of whiteness risks overlooking how whitenesses are made and maintained in relation to futures both distant and immanent. Here, the task for a future-oriented geographic research on whiteness might be to understand how both contemporary and past forms of whiteness relate to the future (Anderson, 2010a), or how specific geographic expressions of whiteness are contingent on the future. For instance, the task might be to understand how discourses of futurity shape various forms of white supremacy from right-wing xenophobias to left-nationalisms to practices of liberal humanitarianism, and how these shape, for instance, geographies of place, nature, space, mobility, bodies and so on. A worthwhile starting point for this work might be to analyse how discourses of white crisis, such as those found in Great Britain in the early 1900s (Bonnett, 2004) or throughout the West during processes of post-Second World War decolonization (Thobani, 2007), relate to and are shaped by notions of futurity. They do relate to the future. The question is: how and to what effect?¶ Acknowledging how the future is made present in white geographies is important for at least three reasons. First, as many now argue (Grusin, 2010; Massumi, 2007), the future is an important site through which individuals and societies are governed (Anderson, 2010a). A focus on whiteness and futurity provides scope for thinking about the way in which governing through the future might inaugurate new or reconfigure old forms of whiteness. Eugenic science is a useful example here. Eugenics was underwritten by an imagined future eradicated of human imperfections. Thus we might seek to understand how white geographies are reproduced through new future-oriented technologies, like genetic screening and nanotechnology (Rose, 2007). Second, understanding how white geographies articulate with discourses of futurity opens up new terrains for conceptualizing and challenging racism. If white supremacy is, in part, reproduced through shared practices of futurity, what then are these practices? What kinds of futures do such practices seek to expunge or produce, and how can they be resisted? The case of genetic medicine is again illustrative. For instance, individual gene mapping allows ‘genetic citizens’ to witness their ‘future’ health by assessing their genetic predisposition for disease (Rose, 2007). Genetic citizenship is, in turn, shaped by new practices of bodily purification aimed at foreclosing certain ‘unhealthy’ futures. We might ask whether and how these practices are white. Third, a focus on whiteness and futurity points to the idea that affect shapes white racial formation (Hook, 2005). For the future can never exist except as a form of virtual present, and affect can be understood, in part, as a generalized attitude towards the presencing of particular futures. (Important, however, is that affect can also be understood as a generalized attitude towards presencings of the past. Think, for example, affects of nostalgia and loss.) Thus, we might ask: what futures infuse the affective logics of whiteness? How does this future presencing occur? And how, if at all, are these futures constitutive of specific white spatio-temporalities? These reasons together provide a rationale for a research agenda concerned with understanding how the future works as a resource in the geographic expression of whitenesses.

#### Their aims to incorporate socially dead bodies but ignores what made those bodies socially dead. The 1AC performs an act of pornotroping from which they derive entertainment from saving those they are responsible for subjugating

Weheliye (Alexander G., professor of African American Studies at Northwestern University) 2014 (Habeas Viscus: Racializing Assemblages, Biopolitics, and Black Feminist Theories of the Human, Duke University Press, pg. 90-91 C.A.)

Spillers has referred to the enactment of black suffering for a shocked and titillated audience as “pornotroping”: “This profound intimacy of in- terlocking detail is disrupted, however, by externally imposed meanings and uses: (1) the captive body as the source of an irresistible, destructive sensuality; (2) at the same time—in stunning contradiction—it is reduced to a thing, to being for the captor; (3) in this distance from a subject posi- tion, the captured sexualities provide a physical and biological expression of ‘otherness’; (4) as a category of ‘otherness,’ the captive body translates into a potential for pornotroping and embodies sheer physical powerless- ness that slides into a more general ‘powerlessness’” (“Mama’s Baby,” 206). Spillers directs our seeing to several facets of the body/flesh, human/not- quite-human, sovereign/bare life, and so on pas des deux in her insistence on the simultaneous thingness and sensuality of the slave, which lays bare the extralegal components of this volatile Ding. Pornotroping unconceals the literally bare, naked, and denuded dimensions of bare life, underscor- ing how political domination frequently produces a sexual dimension that cannot be controlled by the forces that (re)produce it. As Daphne Brooks remarks, “born out of diasporic plight and subject to pornotroping,” black flesh has “countenanced a ‘powerful stillness.’”5 The hieroglyphics of the flesh, embodied here by pornotroping, circumnavigate the connubial abyss of subjection and freedom, displaying at once the physical powerlessness of the dysselected slave subject and the untainted power of the selected mas- ter subject. In order to better follow Spillers’s brilliant coarticulation of porno and trope, a brief etymological detour is in order. Originally porno signified “pros- titute” and in the ancient Greek context whence it sprang, the term referred to female slaves that were sold expressly for prostitution. Also a derivation from Greek, trope, according to Hayden White, refers to “turn” and “way” or “manner”; later, by way of Latin, trope is aligned with “figure of speech.” White states the following of the palimpsestic structure of this word: “Tropes are deviations from literal, conventional, or ‘proper’ language use. . . . It is not only a deviation from one possible, proper, meaning, but also a de- viation towards another meaning.”6 In pornotroping, the double rotation White identifies at the heart of the trope figures the remainder of law and violence linguistically, staging the simultaneous sexualization and brutaliza- tion of the (female) slave, yet—and this marks its complexity—it remains unclear whether the turn or deviation is toward violence or sexuality.7 90 Chapter Six Pornotroping, then, names the becoming-flesh of the (black) body and forms a primary component in the processes by which human beings are converted into bare life. In the words of Saidiya Hartman, it marks “the means by which the wanton use of and the violence directed towards the black body come to be identified as its pleasure and dangers—that is, the expectations of slave property are ontologized as the innate capacities and inner feelings of the enslaved, and moreover, the ascription of excess and enjoyment to the African effaces the violence perpetrated against the enslaved.”8 The violence inflicted upon the enslaved body becomes syn- onymous with the projected surplus pleasure that always already moves in excess of the sovereign subject’s jouissance; pleasure (rapture) and vio- lence (bondage) deviate from and toward each other, setting in motion the historical happening of the slave thing: a potential for pornotroping.9 In Christina Sharpe’s words, the black body and flesh “become the bearers (through violence, regulation, transmission, etc.) of the knowledge of cer- tain subjection as well as the placeholders of freedom for those who would claim freedom as their rightful yield.”10 How does the historical question of violent political domination activate a surplus and excess of sexuality that simultaneously sustains and disfigures said brutality? Or what are the sexual dimensions of objectification in slavery and other forms of extreme political and social domination? My argument is not about erotics per se but dwells in the juxtaposition of violence as the antithesis of the human(e) (bondage) and “normal” sexuality (rapture) as the apposite property of this figure.11 Once again, I am bracketing questions of agency and resistance, since they obfuscate—and not in a productive way—the textures of enfleshment, that is, the modes of being which outlive the dusk of the law and the dawn of political violence

#### Whiteness is an existential threat—

Preston, 17—Cass School of Education and Communities, University of East London (John, “Rethinking Existential Threats and Education,” Competence Based Education and Training (CBET) and the End of Human Learning pp 61-93, dml)

After Marxism, the second existential threat is one of negation and elimination of the subject and here I shall consider conceptions of this from CRT and black existentialism.

Various contemporary educational theories consider the equity and social justice implications of different forms of education with regard to race. The work of Sleeter and Grant (2007) makes the ethical and pragmatic case for multicultural social justice as a key value of education. This has been followed in contemporary work that attempts to consider the various dimensions of social justice. For example, Bhopal and Shain (2014), consider the twin axis of recognition and redistribution as goals of education. Other work examines the role of social distancing from the ‘Other’ by white students as a dynamic process in which Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) and working-class students are disadvantaged. In many ways denial of social justice in terms of lack of resources, recognition or access to social space can be considered to be a form of dehumanisation. However, whilst work on social justice and education might consider the lack of humanity in these systems of oppression (applying concepts such as ‘bare life’, Lewis 2006; or ‘othering’ Lebowitz 2016) they do not consider directly existential threats. Threats to humanity on the basis of difference may arise from totalitarianism as much as through war and threats to the environment. The various genocides which have taken place throughout human history have often had a racial, or ethnic, cleansing purpose to them. They have been eugenic threats that are based upon spurious ideas of genetic and moral superiority. Writers on race from Fanon to Du Bois have considered that the threat posed to racial groups may be existential and that there is a short step from psychic, to real extermination. The negation of individuals through economic, social and psychological processes allows for their physical extermination. Du Bois (2014) deals explicitly with existential threat in his short story ‘The Comet’ where humanity is almost wiped out by a threat from space, leaving only a small number of people to carry on. As one of the survivors of the comet is an African American, this leads Du Bois to consider the state of race relations in the USA. The implication of the story is that the existential threat of the comet (which allows the African American character to live in a world entirely free of racial prejudice) allows release from the existential threat of eugenic attitudes. Building on Du Bois, in other work (Preston 2012), I have considered the ways in which preparation for threats, including existential threats such as pandemics and nuclear war, has been in many ways eugenic in that it prioritises the survival of some more than others based upon criteria which include race and ethnicity (Preston 2012). Preparing for disasters and emergencies often prioritises the interests of white people above those of other ethnic minorities. One reason for this is tacit intentionality which means that policymakers and practitioners do not consider human diversity in considering how people may respond to disaster. Policy is often biased as policymakers expect that people will be ‘like me’ which (at least in the UK and USA) means they will often be white, middle-class, educated, English-speaking men. In planning for threats, there will be various ways in which such biases are included. For example, they may not consider publishing advice in a number of languages, the resources necessary to survive a disaster, the mobility of people and the attitudes of emergency responders. This is unwitting prejudice in that by not considering diversity they are actually making it less likely for BAME people to survive, or protect themselves against, the disaster.

Although these biases may lead to a gradient in terms of survival by different groups in a disaster, they do not appear to relate to existential threat. However, existential threat can be interpreted in a different way in perspectives from critical whiteness studies and CRT.

In critical whiteness studies, whiteness is taken to be not a racial identity, but rather a system of power and oppression (Leonardo 2009). Whiteness was created as an identity not simply as a mode of social classification but as a way of exploiting and controlling others. There are obviously periods in history where this was objectively the case. During slavery in the USA, for example, whiteness was used as a means to distinguish between those people who had the right to own property (whites) and those who could not (Africans), Moreover, whiteness was the obverse of property in that only Africans could ‘be’ assets or property. Enslaved Africans were therefore treated as property and did not have access to the basic rights which would constitute humanity in American society (such as access to education, the right to own property, the right to decide who they should have relationships with). There are obviously parallels between this experience and holocaust when Jewish people (and other individuals) were dehumanised by the Nazis and denied access to basic resources. During imperialism there was also a period whereby other races were categorised to be less worthy than white people and this provided the justification for colonial control, exploitation and often extermination.

Advocates of whiteness studies go further than this and consider that whiteness is not merely a past system of oppression, but a continuing system of white supremacy (Leonardo 2009). The economy and society is comprised in such a way that white people will usually benefit, and BAME people will usually not. This is not only an economic and social system but also a psychological system whereby existence as a full human depends upon one’s racial categorisation. This idea has its roots in the work of Fanon (1986) who wrote that black identity was shaped by the white gaze, but also contemporary writers also consider the notion of whiteness as ‘death’, a categorisation that is rooted in past oppression and extermination, whose remnants exist to this day. This perspective on race and existence leads us to consider what is meant by life, and whether we are not currently living to our full potential (as Marxists would also propose) when existential threat is actually amongst us. For Marxists this would be the expansion of the ‘social universe’ of capitalism that flows between and through us, ‘capitalising humanity’. For critical whiteness studies, this existential threat would be one of whiteness and the negation of existence for a racially classified group of people.

In order to make this idea of constant existential threat more tangible (although the term is not used) critical race theorists use what are known as ‘counter-stories’ to consider how racial dynamics might develop in the future, or to highlight inequalities in the present (Delgado 1996). Derrick Bell (1992) who is considered to be the founder of CRT, uses a much cited counter-story ‘The Space Traders’ to consider the ways in which black people’s lives are classed as being not equal to those of whites in the USA. In ‘The Space Traders’ a race of aliens offer the USA a trade: all of America’s black citizens in return for unlimited, environmentally friendly, energy and technology. After some debate, the American people vote on the proposal and decide to give up all of America’s black citizens to the space traders in return for the futuristic technical goods. Of course, Bell is proposing an analogy between slavery in the past and the present situation of black people in the USA, and perhaps even suggesting that such a thing might happen again. On another level, though, there is also the idea that the existence of black people in America is categorised at a different level of metaphysical worth to that of white people. That life could be traded so cheaply, even plausibly (in the thought experiment) makes us pause for thought in terms of how we classify existential threat.

Although the relationship between CRT and black existentialism may not always seem obvious we can see that there is a nihilistic streak in the work of Bell (1992) with regard to the prospects for survival. In addition, the drawing on the work of Fanon by authors who use CRT as part of their work which shows the perpetual violence encountered by people of colour in education as well as the enduring influence of Du Bois on CRT (Delgado and Stefancic 2001) shows the close connection between the two theories. What links CRT and black existentialism is a basic concern with existence and the meaning of human life under constant threat that can be thought to underpin any concern with social justice. From CRT and black existentialism, we therefore see that existential threat is one of negation through economic, social and political systems and there are degrees of graduation between these forms of existential threats and actual genocide or extermination. The links between these points and CBET might be considered as obtuse but, as we shall see in the next chapter, systems of education can play a role in forms of negation. Obviously, there are social justice implications in the way in which people are treated in terms of race and ethnicity in education. The ‘triaging’ by race and ethnicity of access to education courses, the ways in which certain groups are rationed access to educational routes and the fragility of links between education and the labour market for BAME groups are all part of marginalisation, in which vocational education plays a large part. As part of this process, and probably not coincidentally, these groups are also more likely to find themselves in vocational, CBET courses. However, social justice is not the whole story, and there is a more profound form of equality associated with the right to existence. It is this that CBET threatens through the reduction of the subject to a digital organism as I will show in the next chapter.

**Embracing extinction as a narrative—not biological—phenomenon is a prerequisite to disrupting white desires**

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How, then, to articulate and effect the radical abolitionism of revolutionary desire without getting caught up in the stranglehold of futurism? Futurism’s inescapability means **not simply that politics is irredeemable** and **reform insufficient**, but also that the deconstructive or queer practice of **subversive redeployment** is a **naïve delusion** regarding our own ability to **think** and **act outside** or **beyond futurist mandates**. As Edelman simultaneously argues and demonstrates, futurism’s **stifling determination** of the very domain of the political itself means that **any** and **all resistance is always already coopted**, while revolt is an impossibly queered space that is simultaneously named and foreclosed by the death drive. Yet Edelman’s solution to this dilemma is to recommend neither **capitulation** to futurism nor some sort of **compromise** with it but rather an **accession to its worst nightmares** in an embrace of queerness that will **destroy it from within**, “shortcircuit[ing] the social in its present form.”74 In other words, rather than **defend** society, which Edelman finds indefensible, much less **deconstruct** society, as a queer critique of norms might recommend, or even (dear me!) **redeem** society, by **entreating a utopian vision** that imagines the overcoming of all suffering and oppression, Edelman instead declares we must **destroy society**. And we do so by **taking up**, **inhabiting**, or “**embracing**” the very “**death**” that futurism **inevitably produces** as the queer by- product of its social ordering. He thus **dismisses utopianism** in the name of an **immediacy** that “**the future stop here**,”75 challenging us to live life as an **insistent presentism** that will **do nothing else afterward but die**, and casting this alliance with death as the **act of revolutionary resistance**.

While Dean vociferously rejects this “embrace” because of its psychoanalytic impossibility, Edelman, I think, is well aware of this fact and recommends it precisely for this reason, a contradiction that becomes more intelligible if understood politically rather than solely psychoanalytically. Indeed, Edelman’s recommendation of this “embrace” is a clearly political position— despite what he may say otherwise— in two specific, complex ways. First, recall the historicization of Edelman’s argument provided in chapter 2, wherein I characterized his version of “politics” as a distinctly modern, European, settler colonial sovereignty. An important consequence of this historicization is that, even in his allegedly non- or antipolitical advocacy, Edelman **cannot actually be rejecting politics per se** since, despite his own claims to the contrary, there is **no such thing**. Abolishing modern politics or futurist politics is **not equivalent to abolishing politics as such** and could only mean as much if **every modernity were European modernity**, if **every politics were a sovereign biopolitics**, and if **every temporality were futurist**. To understand Edelman’s refusal of politics as a **refusal of any and all politics existing anywhere** is to **go along with** his unmarked **universalist presentation of** reproductive **futurism** as the **logic of everything existing everywhere all the time**, itself a frequent conceit of psychoanalytic frames.76 But if futurism is the **temporality of modern biopolitical sovereignty**, it **immediately becomes clear that other temporalities are possible**, even as other versions of politics **must necessarily exist**.77 As Audra Simpson argues, for example, “Indigenous political orders are quite simply, first, . . . **prior** to the project of founding, of settling, and as such **continue to point**, in their persistence and vigor, to the **failure of the settler project to eliminate them**, and yet are subjects of dispossession, of removal, but their polities serve as **alternative forms of legitimacy** and **sovereignties** to that of the settler state.”78

Historicizing futurist politics in this way means that alternative temporalities or political schemas **exist** but are queer(ed) and **represented as existential threats** to it: as **unintelligible**, **unlivable**, **immoral**, **backward**, and “**savage**.” While Edelman does indeed conflate all politics with futurism, such that his call for the destruction of politics seems to portend an unthinkable and intolerable nihilism, it is nevertheless the case that, once situated historically, the advocacy that queers **accede to the deathly positioning** to which they are always already relegated by reproductive futurism is **not some sort of unthinkable**, **antipolitical vision**, nor is it an **advocacy of suicide** or **some sort of necropolitical imperative**. Rather, in the context of a **European modernity** built on the colonization of most of the rest of the world, Edelman’s embrace of death can be read as a **prescription** for an **anticolonial allegiance to** and **alliance with those forms of politics** and **temporality that thwart**, **refuse**, or **deny futurism’s colonial mandates**. No Future’s embrace of the “death drive,” in other words, is a **championing of resistant futures** and **political systems** that **show up as death from a futurist perspective** and are various surrogates for the broad, structural category he designates as “queer.” In advocating for a revolution on behalf of queers and arguing for an embrace of queerness, then, Edelman is very much arguing in the name of something— not the future, of course, and certainly not life in any biological sense. But he is also **not quite arguing in the name of death in a biological sense**, either. Rather, he is arguing that “the dead” should “live,” that is, that they “come to life” (or insistently exist) and **animate the destruction of the settler order** that they are always already **consigned by that social order to symbolize**. This is, in other words, an argument for indigenous existence as resistance to settler sovereignty. Siting and situating futurism historically make clear that Edelman’s recommended accession to queerness/death is another name for radical resistance to sovereign biopolitics and that, **far from nihilism**, it is an **emancipatory** and **decolonizing political recommendation** of the first order. In this sense, even Edelman’s own project is wedded to life, albeit a life that is unlivable as life, which is the status of native life within settler colonial regimes. As he says in recommendation of embracing the death drive, “political self- destruction inheres in the only act that counts as one: the act of resisting enslavement to the future in the name of having a life.”79 Edelman’s opposition to the political can therefore be reread as a **wholesale opposition** to the sovereign biopolitics of European modernity and an **imagining of the death of that political order** as the **content of revolutionary politics**. Indeed, his suggestion of a necessary “counterproject”80 to futurism makes clear that his recommendation of this refusal is the **essential**, **necessary**, and **definitive act of political resistance**, even as it is a **championing of the lives** and **political temporalities** of those **determined to be emissaries of death**.

Importantly, this destructive refusal is a threat that redounds back on Edelman himself and on **all of us who share** his **habitation of futurist politics** in Western modernity (or who were ourselves **trained in the history of that thought**). This is the second, complex way that Edelman’s rejection of politics is in fact a **maximally political entreaty**. The tension at work in Edelman’s inevitably futurist call to end futurism means that he is also and necessarily calling for the destruction of his own revolutionary project and subjective/authorial position. This is a queer revolution that **queers the aims of revolution itself**, divesting itself of futurism even as it speaks in its name. As a political act, it amounts “to **put[ting] one’s foot down at last**, **even if doing so costs us the ground on which we**, **like all others**, **must stand**.”81 It is a revolutionary desire that seeks to dispossess revolution of its failed foundations without thereby relinquishing either revolution or its animating desire. This revolutionary discourse exceeds the parameters of revolution as it has hitherto unfolded in modernity, even as it promises a liberation from modernity’s— and liberation’s— moralizing constraints.

This paradoxical, queer(ed) revolution is therefore **unmistakably tied to death**, and in more than one way: not only because queerness is the structural position of anything antisociety and antilife; not only because it **demands the destruction of all that has been construed as life** (as **valuable life**, as **worthy life**, as life **worth living** and **endowed with a future**); but also because the revolutionary call to destroy society and its futurist temporality will **necessarily result in the eradication of its own revolutionary demand in the process**. This is why Edelman’s queer political project **can never recommit us to sovereignty**, whether of a charismatic revolutionary leader, a vanguard revolutionary class, or a theological vision of an allpowerful monarch, much less the **sovereign subject**, whose **very European coherence requires futurism’s linear temporality**. It can commit us **only to the destruction of these things**, as well as to the **eradication of our own commitments precisely to that very destruction** if, as, and when they **threaten to become the next crushing futurist ideal**. Edelman’s formulation of the **impossible** yet **wholly revolutionary goal** of refusing futurism— a refusal achievable only in a future that lies beyond its textual articulation and summary rejection there— offers a **rich** and **provocative articulation** of a revolutionary desire that seeks to **dispossess revolution of its very foundations**, even as it speaks in its name.