## 1NC

### Kritik

#### The AFF’s promise of progress through the expansion of core anti-trust law understands the world in terms of visible and fixable exchanges between subjects. This process misses the black hole of antiblack violence that undergirds all political and social arrangements of modernity.

**Mubirumusoke 21** [Mukasa Mubirumusoke, Assistant Professor of Africana Studies, October 16, 2021, Philosophy Today, “Prolegomena to any Future Cosmology”, Pages 6-11, JMH]

Similar to white supremacy, black holes may be confirmed to exist but, ultimately, they remain much of a mystery. Despite the excitement and wonderment recent images invoked, black holes do not fit seamlessly into the modern imagination of the cosmos: they are a scandal. Black people know all too well that visual evidence can hardly be considered definitive incontrovertible proof or understanding. The point of analogy that I want to begin with is that over against Bataille’s sun as the extra-metaphysical signifier of the excesses of meaning, profanity, unraveled hierarchies, and the possibility of intimacy between humans, over against the individuation of reasoning, is this: the black hole as anti-black white supremacy, while having cosmic effects on its surroundings, remains invisible and this invisibility is reproduced by Bataille’s inability to distinguish chattel slavery and its aftermath as a metaphysical foundation of modernity from other forms of slavery, oppression, and exploitation. The images of a black hole, just like images and statistics of violence against blacks, distract from a shared fundamental quality, namely that by nature they fundamentally cannot be perceived directly.8 The structural invisibility of the interiority of a black hole, as opposed to the possible effects it may render visible through its interactions with phenomena around it, is the first characteristic to consider in a prolegomena to a new cosmology. Frank Wilderson continually reiterates as a core argument of afropessimism the structural antagonism of white supremacy and blackness as opposed to a contingent relation that may be resolved through some form of reconciliation. The visual manifestations of antiblack racism are similar to the ring of light that indicates the presence of a black hole, but the core of white supremacy refuses to be seen. **The antagonism renders the uniqueness of antiblack racism illegible since we are compelled to speak of it with the same vocabulary as any other form of oppression, alienation, and violence even though the structural grammar of anti-blackness entails that blackness, or the positionality of “the Slave,” exists as a “socially dead” antagonist in opposition to the human**. A person is conceptualizing in the wrong register if they think any phenomenal events in themselves will get to white supremacy’s essence since its essence lies not in the individual or collective acts, but in the repetitive conceptual labor that the gratuitous violence against black people achieves for the social cohesion of white civil society. This is the invisible core of white supremacy beyond the event horizon. In their essay, “The Avant-Garde of White Supremacy,” Jared Sexton and Steve Martinot articulate a clearer context for the structural invisibility of antiblack violence through the dimension of the extra-ordinary. Beginning with the case of Amadou Diallo, Sexton and Martinot want to explain why police violence appears so frequently and moreover why calling attention to this violence does not seem to help, but, rather, it only seems to strengthen the policing paradigm. To explain this non-intuitive phenomenon, they argue that police violence against black people is not just the response of police officers to law breaking. The police literally create the law with these violent acts, that is to say, police violence against black people is not a response to any action of violation done by black actors per se, but, instead, is an initiating ritual of reifying blackness criminally through a self-substantiating legislative act and executive order that belongs to the structural grammar, or cosmological order, of white supremacy. Moreover, the spectacle of police violence as seen or reported through the news draws attention away from the extra-ordinary, mundane, devastation of black people that is the effect of the police’s legislative/executive power not merely as random spectacle of violence (at the event horizon), but more importantly as a necessarily mundane communal labor for white civil society. They explain: The spectacular event camouflages the operation of police law as contempt, as terror, its occupation of neighborhoods; the secret of police law is the fact that there is no recourse to the disruption of people’s lives by these activities. In fact, the focus on the spectacular event of police violence is to deploy (and thereby reaffirm) the logic of police profiling itself. . . . Examples cannot represent the spectrum of contemporary white supremacy from the subtle . . . to the extreme . . . all of which has becomes structural and everyday. . . . Most theories of white supremacy seek to plumb the depths of its excessiveness, beyond the ordinary; they miss the fact that racism is a mundane affair. (Sexton and Martinot 2003: 173) White supremacy and antiblackness as constituted through terror and contempt, but also as “ordinary,” “mundane,” or extra-ordinary, is the other dimension of the invisible black hole of white supremacy that is set adjacent to the excessive sun of human intimacy. Invisibly orientating Bataille’s sun is the gravitational pull of the black hole. The black hole of white supremacy has extraordinary power that is terrifying since it cannot be seen as such, but it is also said that a black hole is at the center of every galaxy, thus in some way is ordinary and constitutive. Furthermore, the black hole of white supremacy that gives spectacular glimmers at its event horizon is at its core, contentless, mundane, and also without reason. Martinot and Sexton explain, “White supremacy is nothing more than what we perceive of it; there is nothing beneath it nor outside it to give it justification. The structure of its banality is the surface on which it operates. The mythic content it pretends to claim is a priori empty. . . . In other words, its truth lies in the rituals that sustain its circuitous, contentless logic; it is, in fact, nothing but its very practices” (Sexton and Martinot 2003: 175). There is no absolute content to white supremacy’s authoritative position, only the brute assertion of the fact and, therefore, there is nothing really to be discerned except the gratuitous—as opposed to contingent—violence of its actions and the effects it has on black people. **The white supremacist black hole’s illogic is therefore a more sinister parody than Bataille’s illogical “Solar Anus” since the former affects black lives in a way that totally trivializes the profundity of the latter’s transgressive intervention even though both are founded in a disavowal of reason.**9 The communal function that white supremacy’s violence performs is not to shock through the spectacular—as one may be inclined to read Bataille’s “Solar Anus”—but to support the affective coherence of white civil society by providing a negation upon which to secure non-black identity through libidinal fortification in the more mundane execution of violence against black life. Antiblack violence that positions black people in the position of “the Slave” is the real labor at work. Or as Wilderson explains, “the slave is . . . an anti-Human, a position against which humanity establishes, maintains, and renews its coherence, its corporeal integrity” (Wilderson 2010: 11). The fact that the duality of the spectacular and the mundane map well onto Bataille’s cosmological picture is not coincidental; Sexton and Martinot articulate the operations of white supremacy through a dual economy as well. Just as Bataille’s restricted economy functions through reason on earth and ultimately yields to the excessive general economy of the sun, in the proposed expanded cosmology of this essay the black hole has a dual structure where there is a spectacular economy at the event horizon of rationalized violence that ultimately yields to an excessive hyper economy of banality and irrationality. Sexton and Martinot describe their dual economy as such: The black hole of white supremacy is surrounded by a policing—which is not restricted to the actual police, but to a disposition of policing blackness—event horizon that distorts reality, but which appears spectacular from the human perspective. The hyper-economy of injustice is from where white supremacy excretes its irrational aura to justify its own self-conception and thus also allow for its everyday reality and ritualistic spectacular displays of violence in front of the mundane. The spectacular economy of police violence is the restricted economy of rational individuation where one sees black being as abject along the event horizon; whereas the banal mundane hyper injustice is the over rich center and together these economies make the invisible extra-ordinary black hole of white supremacy. V. Conclusion: To a New Cosmology The sun is also a night. In Bataille’s cosmologies he mistakes the solar system for the cosmos. In fact, there is another sun, the black hole, a scandal by no other name (Wilderson 2007: 23–35). The black hole of white supremacy is at the middle of the milky way of white civil society, which, while seemingly far away, still keeps the entire structure of white civil society afloat; it keeps Bataille’s generous sun in orbit. In this broader cosmology, where white supremacy is truly interrogated, black social—or perhaps more accurately political—death is a cosmological certainty, as the policing event horizon approaches and only x-rays escape the black hole’s gravitational pull. Over the centuries since the institution of chattel slavery and the absolute degradation of blacks, we have seen the idea of what or who constitute the human change and yet blacks retain their antagonistic positionality. In the future this may continue, or maybe humans even leave earth for other planets, but until the black hole of white supremacy is addressed, things may change, but antiblackness will remain the same. **Unless, of course, it doesn’t, because it never was the same. It’s hard to imagine that “social death” is all there is to black life—and it should be noted neither Wilderson nor Sexton ever make such a claim and acknowledge that indeed black people are more than the living dead.** With that said, in the name of something referred to as black social life, Fred Moten gives special attention to the possibilities intertwined in the impossibility of social death. In fact, **he argues the term “social death” is more properly understood as a political death,** writing: [W]hat I am trying to get to, by way of this terminological slide [of social and political death] in [Orlando] Patterson, is the consideration of a radical disjunction between sociality and the state-sanction, state sponsored error of power-laden intersubjectivity. . . . I am in total agreement with the Afro-pessimistic understanding of Blackness as exterior to civil society and, moreover, as unmappable within the cosmological grid of the transcendental subject. However, I **understand civil society and the coordinates of the transcendental aesthetic . . . to be the fundamentally and essential antisocial nursery for a necessarily necro-political imitation of life. (Moten 2013: 740).** If we leave behind “the cosmological grid of the transcendental subject”—which Bataille attempts, but, nevertheless, stays tethered to in his analyses by occluding the operations of white supremacy—what else do the stars leave us? **We must not forget that a black hole, in light of its mystery and physics of destruction, also permits the possibility of something beyond its scandalous core, whole other criminal dimensions.** Well if we follow Moten, along with Houston Baker Jr., but also Michelle Wallace, who suggests new cosmological dimensions that exemplify the capacities of black feminine creativity,10 then perhaps we can catch a fugitive glimpse, as this is only the prolegomena to any new cosmology.

#### Sovereignty and state power are maintained through the extermination of the excess of blackness. Rather than endorsing their investment in the 1AC’s capitalist project, you should use this as an opportunity to embrace the excess of the black hole of racial terror.

**Martin and Harney 07** [Randy and Stefano “Mode of Excess. Bataille, criminality and the war on terror.” Theory and Event (10: 2, 2007), JMH]

Capital's Excesses Bataille's vision bathes us all in the lap of luxury. So much of the political is cast in terms of lack-an insufficiency of activism, organization, theory, or resources to mobilize, in the face of an abundance of ossifying power. Excess refreshes the screen, it releases people from the enclosures of scarcity and the insuperable inevitability of aggression that springs from want. The compulsion to dominate is denormalized and exposed for its own peculiar excessiveness The dull efficiency of utilitarian accounting-where every drop is used best when used up and growth marches inexorably forward-loses its reason in desire's hall of mirrors. Understandably, Bataille's work is taken up as a cry for amplitude in a wilderness of self-limiting apocalypse. Entangling his thought in the present requires more than the lavishing of praise. He achieves his general economy by energic extension and squander that yields irrecuperable consumption. But his analysis proceeds by differentiating the ways in which societies attain their forms of surplus. These various means constitute nothing short of a mode of excess-a concept that can help extricate ourselves from Bataille's moment into that of contemporary affairs. If Bataille renders an ethnological or synchronic differentiation in his accounts of the Aztecs, Potlatch, Islam, Lamaism, bourgeois capitalism and Soviet socialism, we might look to his work of the middle of the last century to delineate the contours of excess in our own times. Let us consider three elements of what might constitute Bataille's own mode of excess, writing as he is, when consumer capitalism and Soviet socialism retain their status as historical projects, and war adheres snugly to a Keynesian metaphysic. Bataille, of course is writing under the sign of what came to be called Fordism, a regulatory apparatus that mass produced consumption as a disciplinary realm parallel to but outside that of production. While the externality was mutual, it was also directional-domesticity was the sphere were cars and people started out new and became old, where time was free, leisure expressed substantive rationality, and used luxuries could be put out in the garbage. Despite, or perhaps more precisely because of the way in which the Keynesian welfare state was involved in the economy, subventions for public assistance and military contracting stood as anti-productive. In the dream realm of popular culture and consumer markets, of manufactured desires, the state needed to be absent to locate excess in a space that would be free of coercion and domination-hence the formal distinction from work and government. The state operates for Bataille in a universe of general interest that can never use up the erotic extensive energies of the accursed share. "The State (at least the modern, fully developed State) cannot give full reign to a movement of destructive consumption without which an indefinite accumulation of resources situates us in the universe in exactly the same way as cancer is inscribed in the body, as a negation. " (Bataille 1993: 160) War is the consummate category of expenditure that can be stolen back by state and particularizing economic exchange, especially as it seeks an equilibrium between destruction and profit in what is intended as a virtuous cycle of demand absorbing supply that Franklin Delano Roosevelt dubbed, "Dr. Win The War." Like the partition between production and consumption, this political economy of war assumes that death and profitability belong to separate accounts, and that civic devastation will be restored by a reincorporating policy framework like the Marshall Plan. As Bataille observes: "Of course, what we spend in one category is in principle lost for the others. There are many possibilities of slippage: alcohol, war and holidays involve us in eroticism, but this means simply that the possible expenditures in one category are ultimately reduced by those we make in the others, so that only the profits found in war truly alter this principle; even so, in most cases these profits correspond to the losses of the vanquished.... We need to make a principle of the fact that sooner or later the sum of excess energy that is managed for us by a labor so great that it limits the share available for erotic purposes will be spent in a catastrophic war."(Bataille 1993: 188) Under these circumstances, the political choice becomes clear, expenditure can be wasted in war or applied to increase the standard of living. Finally, there is Bataille's enthusiasm for the Soviet socialism of his day. Here too, socialism is framed as an externality to capitalism, rather than being the latter's immanent condition. The Soviets form a geography of excess-that portion of global productive capacity that capitalist markets and development promises could not absorb. This perspective recasts Cold War bellicosity. The arms race certainly strains the Soviet social economy, as it supports a Western military-industrial complex. But the exclusion of more than half the world's peoples and territories by the partition of the three worlds was a condition for the concentration of consumption and masked the limits to its possible dispersion, as nearly two decades of post-Soviet opportunity now make plain. Still it was possible for Bataille to imagine the extension of a socialist geography as encroaching upon the ultimate utopian externality-the future. "Present day humanity has the communist horizon before it." (Bataille 1993: 261) Indeed the Cold War could be understood as a race toward disparate futures, each with their own utopian aspect, providing that the future remained on the horizon just outside of reach. Bataille has the benefit of imagining the chronotope of his own general economy as marked by clearly discernable divisions-between here and there, and between what is and what will come. He put such Cartesian formulations to tremendous effect, but we must consider what the general economy would consist of if history had not robbed us of that more clearly decidable grid of space and time. *finance* Still hot in pursuit of Bataille's horizon, we can now imagine capital's own tracks taking us toward a different mode of excess. These markings may map something apart from the post-fordist proliferation of the flexible which may have been more about clarifying what the initial formulation of a consumer society meant, than of what it would become. No doubt, stable and expanding careers of wage labor are now somewhat quaint, and mass consumption has been niched and customized in every conceivable direction. But what happens when production and consumption move in together, when one resides within the body of the other? Surely this is the generative condition of what is termed immaterial labor. It is also indicated where the investment logic of risk assumes the mantle of governmentality. Neoliberalism asked citizens to manage their own public good, insinuating a market trope where the state was meant to maintain its watchful eye. The domestic sphere is not simply an invitation to engage in home work (this it always was) but now also to serve as a platform for participation in myriad financial schemes, whether they be portfolios for retirement, education, or continued consumption itself. This implication of investment protocols in the labor of reproduction can be called financialization (Martin 2002). An ugly term perhaps but one that registers the invasion of capital for others into the realm of the self. Finance now occupies the spectre of excess in economic circulation. More than just acts of enclosure, financialization erupts where the socialization of capital meets the socialization of labor-amplifying mutual indebtedness, aggregating social wealth with extreme magnitude to the point where it moves from necessity to discretion. Finance signals a breach of referent that suggests huge sums can be applied anywhere for any purpose. The force of excess makes immediate the prospect that wealth might be applied otherwise. As much money moves in financial markets in a month as fills the accounts of industrial production in a year. The trade in derviatives alone-parsings of financial risk that disassemble and delocalize value so that it can be leveraged elsewhere-is tied to contracts valued at nearly $400 trillion. (Lipuma and Lee 2004: Bank of International Settlements, 2006) (Derivatives are identified by the value or notional price of the commodities that they are tied to, rather than to the amount of money they yield, which is but a fraction of that price. So, if one is paying $1,000 for the option to purchase $1,000,000 worth of Euros at a certain date, the contract is entered as $1,000,000 not $1,000). More than a vault of a determine form of capital, finance augurs an infectious logic that reorients the machinations of business as well a daily life. Banks no longer stand as intermediaries to circulation (disintermediation). Market share and stock price drive business planning (shareholder value). The speculative and the practical hedging of risk share instruments of operation (rentier capitalism). Even the state is internally riven between its neoliberal fantasy of leaving people alone to their fates, and the neoconservative obligations to intervene in private life to affect a kind of evangelical transformation or liberation. The neoconservative state intervenes to carve excess out of the social body by means of tax cuts, which are not simply redistributive to those most able to luxuriate, but to demonstrate the moral force behind setting capital free. But this freedom makes of those left behind, those populations incapable of managing themselves and termed "at risk," an accursed share in their own right. If financialization gives us production for and as consumption, ceaseless circulation nestled in what Marx called a "hidden abode," the implosion of the boundaries for enclosure liberate a whole matrix of capital from population. Bataille would see capital fleeing its social entailments of labor (whether wages or cities) to some secure outside-consumption, the state, or negatively in socialist topographies. The imbrication of production and consumption, the state's jettisoning of a general national interest, and a relinquishing of the socialist world has yielded a dizzying indifference. Rather than promising infinite absorption of population in accumulation, what was advertised under the watchwords of progress and development, liberation takes place in the here and now-a progressive and regressive freedom that turns against the history of difference (as all of the entanglements of social reproduction are brought together as interdependent demands for recognition, justice, resources and dispensation over what is done to make and live with social wealth).

#### Vote neg to jump into the Black hole. Come on, the water’s warm!

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)

In its adherence to working with fragments, to accepting the absoluteness of fragmentation and the centrality of it to Black creative work, Zong!’s destructive approach to creation offers us a name for what it is we might best do with our untimeliness in the middle of nowhere: destructive writing. M. NourbeSe Philip’s poiesis is destruction. To leap into the Black w/hole of the text, the praxis, the theory, and the interpretive method necessary to operate on the same frequency of this work is to take very seriously the untimely, stanky, political-ontological relationship between Blackness, creation, and destruction. To “make generations” in the name of defending the dead, or to do the wake work, or to conjure the Black and cosmic magic, is to reckon with the paradoxical generativeness of destruction. It is to wholly embrace violence as violence, fragments as fragments, and incoherence as incoherence, in order to actively refuse, combat, and vie to destroy the very logic, or grammar, or order that murdered, continues to murder, and threatens to wholly obliterate Black being, or whatever deranged fragments of that being remain.

What have we done? What have we been doing? What should—must—we do? As we reflect upon the shards of thought, language, literary scene, physical property, lived experience, and unbearable inquiry that form the field of fragments we call Black Study, we consider how these arrangements we have made have all been an attempt at working with destruction. Arranging and deranging, ordering, reordering, and disordering, and always looking, listening, and attending to them carefully has always been the product of a continuous negotiation of the destructive forces that turned Black life and death into fragments. We spent our textual spacetime theorizing the nature of these forces in order to both, understand how they destroy us (how they work), and to begin to consider what ways we might refract/reflect them (how we can create with and from them). My arguments have turned on establishing the significance or rethinking these spatiotemporal forces and how they shatter our existences, indeed because rethinking time and space and how they play out upon us as a project on its own will help us better grasp the nature of our subjection to the various orders and structures of the antiblack world, but also because a deeper understanding of their mechanics and their essence radically transforms how we imagine, theorize, and perform Black creation.

I/we have performed our impossible alchemy thusly: (nigredo) disintegrate our core materials—time, space, and work—shedding the ashen detritus inessential to our work and leaving only what we need; (albedo) the distillation of what remains—untime, nowhere, and refraction—into the material we can synthesize into a greater conceptualization; and (rubedo) the synthesization of a new, vexing, abstract material that might reshape our understanding of Black existence and imaginative creation—destructive writing. While we knew and know our work aims to produce an alternative theory of Black creation that embraces and works with the destructive forces that make us untimely and displace us into nowhere, we perhaps (re)discover that our work is its own negotiation of destruction, our own staging of these principles of destructive writing. That invisible force suturing the fragments surrounding us into a field, that unseen thing that amplified the call of the fragments we sought out and were able to hold and behold, that animating element of untimeliness, refraction, and being nowhere: that undergirds the whole of this work, argumentatively and creatively, is destruction, and in our endeavor to make time and space for our considerations, we contemplate and imagine and write toward an answer to our most difficult set of questions.

How to tell a shattered story, one not meant to be passed on or passed on? How to “un-tell” a story that must be told?16 How to tell an impossible story?

Perhaps it is not exactly as Sharpe says. Perhaps the goal is not to ‘imagine the unimaginable’17 but, as part of the same refusal NourbeSe writes and performs, to radically un-imagine the imaginable.

How to defend the dead, the dying, and we who live untimely lives in the middle of nowhere?

By

becoming

everybody?

No.

*By destroying everything*.

Cowrie shells drag across the hard, wet wood. A constellation has been traced in water. A spell has been cast. A conjuring has taken place. We bear the water and the witness. We are a clamor of fragments in the oceanic dark. Telling and writing impossible stories is destructive work.

Telling, writing, and living impossible stories is destructive, dangerous work when deathliness, untimeliness, and stankiness are the conditions of whenever and wherever we try to be. To really listen to Ursa Corregidora’s blues18 and take the leap into the Black hole toward total destruction is to leap toward the singular possibility of radical, unimaginable, and impossible creation. Only in the dark and clamoring shatter, only from the nowhere of there and the untimeliness of then, might we really make time and space for one another.

Nothing less, nowhere else, and with no time to spare, we leap.

#### The alternative’s leap into the black hole overcomes the move towards restrictive economies that is foundational to the 1AC. Their siphoning of libidinal energies is a move towards the boiling point of civil society whereby blackness becomes the necessary informe for all political arrangements.

**Butler 21** [Daniel Butler, psychoanalytic psychotherapist and doctoral candidate in History of Consciousness, June 3, 2021, Psychoanalytic Dialogues The International Journal of Relational Perspective, “Fervish Nonknowledge, or Intuition at the Boiling Point”, Pages 284-292, JMH]

Hyperindustry feeds on “information without knowledge” (Stiegler, 2010, p. 129), which is to say that it flourishes without human intervention (e.g., mass automation).2 The hyperindustrial subject consumes endless streams of information, gradually forgetting how to produce as an agent within an information economy. Consumerism itself becomes the hyperindustrial subject’s most prolific form of production, and the product that the subject consumes above all is data. Manualized and prescriptive information about how to live (skills, techniques, etc.) substitutes for the savoir-vivre (knowing how to live) and savoir faire (know-how in general) through which one experiences living itself. Absolute nonknowledge mortifies, deadens, and leads to mass dissociation (Stiegler, 2018, p. 194), while digital technology is vitalized and divinized at the expense of psychosomatic life. Feverish nonknowledge struggles with this technological nihilism, in part by espousing the concept of informé over information. Informé is often translated as formless but means something closer to alteration, which, in the Latin (alter), connotes both a change of time and state (Krauss, 1993, p. 162), “moving [the subject] . . . in the sense of e-moting them” (Stiegler, 2018, p. 195), or orienting them to a future that is not or is not yet. The informé moves toward an abyss of nonknowledge, wherein the difference between subject and object is absent, but it does not move toward a transcendence of knowledge by way of information channels. Shapiro and Marks-Tarlow’s intuition as extraordinary knowing seemingly enacts such a transcendence, and in a world of computational capitalism or capitalism sans human labor, such extraordinary knowledge easily doubles as something like the algorithm that not only tells me what I want but notifies me that I want at all. The subject’s mimetic doubling as a cybernetic, extraordinary computer is exciting and even necessary for a “non-inhuman” future (Stiegler, 2013, 2018), and yet it currently besets us with a veritable confusion of tongues, specifically insofar as desire and libido are overwhelmed by digital technology and perhaps even overspecialized clinical technique, whereby intuition and spontaneity mimic algorithmic and programmatic formulas that the (neuro)sciences have always already foretold. To “know” is both about comportment or how-to and about the desire that is embedded in the term’s libidinized etymology. There is a default or a lack in relation to knowledge as a developmental acquisition, whereas information is always already thought to be there, like a thing without life that nevertheless exists. By contrast, “the transitional object . . . does not exist” (Stiegler, 2013, p. 1), which means that the child is feverishly oriented to an absence and the unknown as the epicenter of their most vitalizing encounters with play. Slightly emending Stielger, Winnicott’s (1975a) transitional phenomena yield a (non)knowledge that makes life worth living (Stiegler, 2013, 2018), and while this knowledge spreads across the cultural field, inspiring the various domains of knowledge production, Winnicott was not anticipating a world in which there is nowhere to hide, where subjects are so localizable and trackable, and where the privacy of the self that is necessary for transitional experiencing is supplanted by algorithms that threaten the most incommunicado enclosures of psychic space. The digital technologies that orient much of our everyday lives effectively collapse the superficiality of the image with the heterogeneity of the signifier, such that the image no longer represents the mysterious and incalculable play of signification (Han, 2020). Things are what they seem, and algorithmically produced images tell us what things are. Image economies contort the self into an assemblage of likes, notifications, and information channels that can be mapped by way of various imaging and tracking devices. The image functions like its own brand of religious iconography, even within the sciences themselves, such that the psyche becomes visible by way of neural imaging, which is in turn divinized as the incarnation of noetic life. Shapiro and Marks-Tarlow are rightly critical of biological reductionism, and they take heed not to fall into the same materialist traps. They critique a highly intractable Cartesianism within psychoanalysis and its scientistic opponents, and their critique advances “a unitary psychophysical paradigm,” which “requires a more accurate translation of physical and complexity concepts in order to mirror the interpenetration of body/brain/mind informational dynamics in the clinical setting” (this issue, p. 278). They express concern at psychoanalysis’ alienation from the sciences, in part due to the former’s misapplication of scientific concepts. This is not only a pedantic point but a sincere and laudable effort on their part to cross a disciplinary divide. Larger cultural and psychopolitical reasons account for this divide in a more robust way, but their metaphor shifts are nonetheless instructive. Among the shifts, we have intersubjective “matrix” rather than intersubjective “field,” but we also have interobjectivity, a term that has no clear precursor in psychoanalysis and that denotes “the existence of a unitary objective reality of which we are all an integral part” (this issue, p. 276). The post-Cartesian amalgam of transsubjective and interobjective boundaries suggests a lifeworld in which “we are all an integrated part of psychophysical reality, where material processes and processes of the mind merge below the surface of the classical macroworld” (this issue, p. 276). We are always already connected by the information that is superordinate to representation and signification, which would of course include the world of cultural stereotypes, but to make this point – a point which partly derives from Bohm’s theoretical physics – is itself an utterance that, like all language games (Lyotard, 1984), is socioculturally and psychopolitcally contingent, if only because scientific and technological advances cannot escape the histories and libidinal economics of slavery, capitalism, and colonialism that made (and continue to make) them possible (Jackson, 2019; Lyotard, 1984). Shapiro and Marks-Tarlow’s post-Cartesianism seems to enfold metapsychology into natural science, such that the claims of psychoanalysis need to be coordinated with natural science if the interdisciplinary dialogue is to sustain itself. This is not a dialectic of natural science and metapsychology, for there is no struggle or agonism. Natural science, for our authors, is the way, which seems clear in their plea for a metaphor shift, and which also appears to be a shift, ironically enough, away from metaphor. Metaphor plays with the real, but play, in its most enlivening form, is an offense to the real insofar it reveals the latter’s contingency (Barthes, 1972). Thus, the metaphorical and the scientific agonistically meet at the boiling point, where the task for each is to survive a potentially annihilating show of difference. In practice, this is typically not what happens, and the adaptation of psychoanalysis to natural science, as in the metaphor shift, disavows the psychopolitical conditions that make such a shift so seemingly imperative. In a hyperindustrial society, where the profits of computational capitalism see no end in sight, the humanities and social sciences are often called upon to adapt to STEM models as if there is no other choice, and while this is no reason to dismiss STEM as an ally, there is good reason to query the ways in which a move toward STEM within non-STEM fields is overdetermined by sociocultural and political-economic threats to the latter’s existence. If psychoanalysis is indeed trying to survive this era of the so-called dark enlightenment, what this means, at least according to the admittedly more pessimistic tendencies in media philosophy, is that digital technology increasingly dominates if not replaces the psyche itself, largely by siphoning off libidinal energy; and what this diagnosis means for the collaboration between science and metapsychology is that the psychic subject of such collaboration is increasingly dead and dissociated or without much of a psyche to investigate. Is this why we might manically search for intuitive moments of transubjectivity, where rather than contending with feverish nonknowledge, we long for the intuition or extraordinary knowledge Shapiro and Marks-Tarlow so convincingly (and beautifully) narrate in their clinical vignettes? We might wonder about the search for extraordinary knowing from a psychopolitical perspective, given that the psychopolitcal struggle of our contemporary is, in my view, less about control over informational than libidinal economies or more about a struggle to feel alive as the precondition of that which enables us to know (for Bataille, knowing and living are, at root, incommensurable, even if the latter exceeds and anticipates the former); and while the natural sciences can indeed become a necessary comrade in this struggle, they are heavily instrumental in (and the least informed about) the deadening and proletarianization of psychosomatic life. Such proletarianization does not invigorate an underclass ala Marx but invades the subject’s nervous system ala Stiegler (2010); it is a generalized condition of “mindpsyches,” to use Winnicott’s (1975b) term. This diagnosis points to a massive psychic and political problem, and it is why psychoanalytic engagements with sciences demand a continual awareness of the science’s proletarianizing function in hyperindustrial society. While far from their presumable intent, Shapiro and Marks-Tarlow’s metaphor shift could read like a proletarianizing gesture, insofar as psychoanalysis is asked to become more useful and productive to the sciences, instead of being critical, offensive, or even ruinous of the computational capitalism that basically controls the sciences as its handmaiden, and that leaves so many clinical dyads bored, unfilled, and generally unavailable for the varieties of intuition that Shapiro and Marks-Tarlow delineate. Shapiro and Marks-Tarlow specifically acknowledge Bion (and Jung) for bringing intuition into the psychoanalytic mainstream. Unlike Freud’s (1911) reality principle as the neonate’s confrontation with a frustrating unpleasure, Bion’s intuition apperceives a continuous reality that is irreducible to any spatiotemporal or psychosomatic coordinates. This ultimate reality is a global form of psychic continuity that many psychoanalysts are wary of due to its mystical connotations, but from a quantum physics perspective, such mysticism is partly dispelled by way of thinkers like Bohm, whose “implicate order” informs Shapiro and Marks-Tarlow’s holistic theory of intuition. I say holistic because they, like Bohm, treat “the mental and the material” as an implicate order, or “[as] two sides of one reality” (Bohm, 1987, p. 20), and this unitary reality or Jung’s unus mundus facilitates nonlocal information sharing and the extraordinary knowing of intuition. For Bohm, Shapiro and Marks-Tarlow, the concept of wholeness is (explicitly, in Bohm’s case) tied to humanity and its survival. Conversely, Bataille’s boundlessness is a boiling point in relation to which human survival is risked and existentially held in suspense.3 Bataille argues that totalities cannot be conceptualized except by imaginary means, which is to say that a totality requires a thought from outside that undermines the totality itself. By extension, the greatest scientific truth is also the undoing of science or a transcendence of the point at which the object of science slips from view. This is not to suggest that science is unreal but that it is realest when it calls on the imaginary for its meaning or when its greatest meaning hinges on the disavowal of its insignificance. Where Bataille’s boundlessness aspires to an abundance of meaning that tips the scale into an absence of meaning, Shapiro and Marks-Tarlow implicitly reject such absence by aligning their nonlocal neurodynamics with concepts like the unus mundus and the implicate order, both of which transcend meaninglessness through a superordinate metanarrative of wholeness. Feverish with nonknowledge, the Bataillean subject does not turn to metanarrative to account for the boiling point’s beyond. Stielger’s teacher, Jean-Francois Lyotard, deserves mention here, especially since, in The Postmodern Condition – his still highly relevant “report on knowledge” that was commissioned by the Quebec government – he makes specific reference to quantum physics and to the hyperindustrial inversion of science and technology, whereby the latter now exploits the former rather than functioning as a scientific tool.4 Lyotard (1984) acknowledges that “quantum theory and microphysics require a far more radical revision of the idea of a continuous and predictable path,” but its “quest for precision is . . . limited . . . by the very nature of matter. It is not true that uncertainty (lack of control) decreases as accuracy goes up: it goes up as well” (p. 56). Lyotard continues with a reference to physicist Jean Perrin, whose study of air molecules, Lyotard argues, “resolves into a multiplicity of absolutely incompatible statements; they can only be made compatible if they are relativized in relation to a scale chosen by the speaker” (p. 57). Knowledge reaches its limit in this incompatibility, and this is where science draws on the imaginary and plays language games or creates a meta-language to legitimate itself, which in turn relativizes its status as “scientific.” This crisis of knowledge is traceable to the late-nineteenth century when metanarratives ala Hegel’s science of Spirit, Marx’s critique of capitalism, and Darwin’s theory of evolution no longer inspired faith in ineluctable progress and/or preordained emancipation. While the materialist turn in humanities and social sciences tends to lambast what appears to be a crude subjectivism in such “postmodern” thought (a critique Shapiro and Marks-Tarlow seem to share), it is less that Lyotard assumes matter only exists as an epistemological construction than that the sciences are partly contingent on metanarratives (or micronarratives) for their legitimation.5 Bohm’s holism would seem to be such a metanarrative. In order to supplement the localinteractive dynamics of interpersonal neurobiology with the nonlocal-participatory dynamics of quantum physics, Shapiro and Marks-Tarlow turn to thinkers like Bohm, who “postulated a unifying domain of active information, which underlies both matter and mind processes,” such that “matter loses its appearance of solidity and separate locality” (p. 18). Contra Bohm’s implicate order, Bataille’s espousal of boundlessness and nonknowledge suggests that any unity cannot account for the contingency by which it is constituted. In a conversation with Bohm (1987), an audience member challenges Bohm’s subsumption of contingency into wholeness, and Bohm (1987) admits to the speculative nature of his insights, adding “we are making models and . . . they are not models of ultimate reality, but proposals” (p. 57); the question, he notes, is “which presupposition are we choosing” (p. 53), and by presupposition Bohm would seem to mean the metaphysical premises, however propositional, that promote a world in which we want to live. Bohm is aware of the hermeneutics involved in interpreting science, but perhaps he is less aware of how the hermeneutic choices we make may or may not struggle against some of the more repressive forces that characterize every historical conjuncture. Like Bohm’s implicate order, the hermeneutic of Shapiro and Marks-Tarlow’s “inherent wholeness that unites us all” (this issue, p. 279) is arguably premised on a disavowed metaphysics as much as it is a speculative psychophysics. Their information channels that traverse psyche and physis are not, in my view, socially, politically, and culturally neutral. Borrowing a locution from afropessimist Frank Wilderson (2010), we might say that Shapiro and Marks-Tarlow’s conception of wholeness grounds itself in the “assumptive logic” of human ontology, which, even when recast according to an impersonal physics of information channels, takes for granted the “us” who are supposedly united. Following an anti-humanist reading of thinkers like Fanon, afropessimists do not accord human status to black “subjects,”6 and this discord extends to the natural sciences for at least two reasons: one, because anti-black violence epigenetically dehumanizes bodies that are epidermally black, thus leading to neurobiological conditions such as weathering (Jackson, 2019); and two, because modernity is built on economies of slavery that have libidinally and capitalistically funded scientific research as early as the Indian Ocean slave trade of 7th century Arabia (Vaziri, 2019).7 Whether one agrees with such positions or not, they surely highlight the contested terrain of the natural sciences, which is different from simply writing the sciences off or dismissing the realism on which scientific truths are based. When we speak of intuition, we might thus consider a racialized variety, namely that which reveals blackness as a potentially lethal encounter with the informé (Butler, 2020). I have written about this in relation to resignation syndrome as a condition that petrifies the refugee child into a protracted state of hallucinosis. Shapiro and Marks-Tarlow’s When we speak of intuition, we might thus consider a racialized variety, namely that which reveals blackness as a potentially lethal encounter with the informé (Butler, 2020). I have written about this in relation to resignation syndrome as a condition that petrifies the refugee child into a protracted state of hallucinosis. Shapiro and Marks-Tarlow’s. The nonlocal effects of an antiblack geopolitics thus register psychically as a blackness that is informé rather than informational or an absence that begins with the condemnation and denigration of black flesh but that shapes the psychopolitics of hypermodernity such that blackness is the primally repressed thing against and around which the psyche itself is formed. Blackness is constitutive of the psyche insofar as the latter is organized around the former as an inassimilable absence, but what this means for black “subjects,” at least according to a certain reading of Fanon, is that the psyche – and most definitely the psychophysical – is only ever legible as white (or as that which is not black, not the thing). Grappling with such thought seems crucial for the frontiers of psychoanalysis and the natural sciences, which Fanon, a psychoanalytic clinician, and experimental neuropsychiatrist, already knew. Like Fanon, many black critical theorists refuse the concept of psychophysical unity for the same reason they refuse the notion of a science that is not already saturated with stereotypes. After all, Fanon (2004) is decisive in stating that antiblack colonization creates a species division, such that the very concept of the human undergoes a lysis in which the black subject is psychically and physically jettisoned from the family of man. Lyotard’s critique in The Postmodern Condition (1984) addresses the way in which scientific knowledge is inextricable from a political–economic relationship to technology that metanarratives unwittingly work to obscure. In effect, metanarratives themselves serve the technical function of naturalizing science itself, as if the study of nature is not socially, politically, and economically motivated. Technology has historically aided human perception so that scientific observation becomes increasingly reliable, but this optimization of the scientific project is now firmly coupled with the logic of capitalism, where minimal input (e.g., automation) yields maximal output (surplus value), and where “an equation between p. 45). If the sciences now produce data and information that perpetuates absolute nonknowledge, this is because of the libidinal and economic surplus that their subordination to hyperindustry yields, not because there is something inherently insidious about science or technology. And yet, if Lyotard is right about the coupling of science and capital, how might the sciences critically account for that coupling so as to distance themselves from its proletarianizing effects? A proletarianized world thrives on speculation and superstition rather than investment and the time that it takes to develop knowledge. What Stiegler calls proletarianization, Achille Mbembe refers to as the becoming Black of the world (Mbembe & Stiegler, 2019), by which Mbembe means, in part, that historically denigrated African cosmologies now explain how objectified human life can become animated by perversely vitalized technologies. “The human person is trying to turn himself or herself into a thing or manufactured object” (Mbembe, 2016, 1:02:58), which is to say that they are becoming Black, specifically insofar as blackness is naturalized as an animate thing by antiblack and colonial imaginaries that still found our national settings (Butler, 2019b). In tandem with this turn toward animism, Mbembe (2016) notes the rise of interest in new materialisms, occult phenomena, and speculative realisms, all of which, in their own way, intersect with the transsubjective in Shapiro and Marks-Tarlow. Transcendent connectedness and unmediated access to the (im)material world inspires manic reparation that allows proletarianized populations to adapt to an antiblack techno-capitalism by feeling as though they can access otherworldly truths. Shapiro and Marks-Tarlow invite us to consider how the clinical setting of local-interactive processes is always already informed by much more expansive, nonlocal, or even subatomic settings or information channels, and thinkers like Mbembe remind us of the way in which such channels and technologies (e.g., settings) are historically, ontologically, and geopolitically racialized phenomena that always already condition the nonlocal as a concept. In a vitalist and animistic world in which technology is sovereign, some kind of rupture in local or nonlocal connection, a rupture in which information becomes informé, could recalibrate technology’s relationship to psychosomatic life. For Bataille, the informé “serves to bring things down in the world . . . what it designates has no rights in any sense and gets itself squashed everywhere, like a spider or an earthworm” (Bataille, 1985, p. 31). The informé is like a debased life that paradoxically underscores the basics about what makes life matter. Like Winnicott (1971), Bataille sees the need for a formlessness that is never (in) formed but that remains an excess that is sacred in its indispensability. If information travels in an ultimately productive way, folding and unfolding bits of communicable data, the informé definitively interrupts such production, squashing the informational like a worm underfoot. Bataille goes so far as to view the universe as informé, as nothing, or the absence of meaning, and this absence is pharmacological in that it can be both a poison or a cure, inspiring creation or portending death. Bataille’s interwar and postwar writings meditate on a violence that is gratuitous, that admits no meaning, and that he, out of a vigorous anti-idealism, locates in a debased cosmos. His thought experiments press humanity to ask if it is implicated in a monstrosity that doubles as its disavowed constitution. This is a question natural science struggles to consider, especially when under the sway of a bio- and psychopolitical techno-capitalism in which the endless optimization of concomitantly automated life is the goal. All of Bataille’s concepts involve a question of the limit or the point at which life resembles (without simply becoming) its opposite, death. For Shapiro and Marks-Tarlow, the notion of a limit may be overly physical, energic, or material, whereas information deals less with limits than with the seriality of sharing across limitless channels or networks. There thus appears to be little room for the negativity of the informé in Shapiro and MarksTarlow’s thought. The clinical and psychopolitical implications of this are quite interesting, and many of them circle the question of physical and psychic death, not the mention of the death drive as a psychoanalytic construct. For example, how does one conceptualize breakdown in the analysis without some concept of a limit to the informational channels by which clinician and patient are putatively bound? How does one conceptualize the afterlife of social and political disasters ala slavery and colonialism, which, at least for many victims, would seem to be quite gratuitous and informé rather than somehow informational and nascently meaningful? A psychoanalysis without excess – or a psychoanalysis in which excess is always already contained by wholeness – offers a post- or even anti-Freudian vision of psychic and political life. To take a Bataillean and perhaps more Freudian tack, the avowal of excess is not some accelerationist acquiescence to total annihilation, but an opening to radically new and unknown psychopolitical vistas. Transitional experience and primary preoccupation are paradigmatic of such an avowal. For example, in the case of a subject’s excessive libido, the shock of such excess functions as a psychosomatic invention ala Freud’s (1990) protective shield, and this invention is what paradoxically enables the subject to survive its own drivebased undoing. Put otherwise, such shock is an excitation that defends against the perils of excitation itself (Aulagnier, 2001; Miller, 2014), which is why, in an adjacent register, Stoekl (2007) argues that conservation and sustainability should not be the focus of environmental politics and that Bataille’s post-sustainable politics of nonproductive expenditure might be a better alternative. (If the world is made of excess energy, then it should be spent rather than conserved, the question being how it is spent rather than whether to spend it or not.) Bataille (2018) associates this beneficent yet potentially annihilating expenditure with play, which in turn evokes the early caregiving through which the infant learns how to weather the drives (Butler, 2019a; Winnicott, 1975a). In theory, science could function as a protective shield against the shock of hyperindustrial society, but the formation of this shield would require the sciences’ commitment to reckoning with their own psychopolitical and epistemological excesses. In work that has the potential to shift some of the more prominent paradigms of relational psychoanalysis, perhaps Shapiro and Marks-Tarlow can consider some excesses I have in mind. We can certainly think of nonlocal-participatory processes in apolitical terms, but they are only truly apolitical when they falter as a holism; such faltering is the absence, the boiling point, as both the whole’s excess and its most key ingredient. Such is the counterintuitively apolitical moment of revolution when it is simply the fight that is at stake, not any ideology for which one is fighting. Bataille’s is not a politics of sustainability and conservation – a politics compatible with a humanistic predilection for wholeness. While there may be unspoken affinities (or overstated differences) between Bataille and our authors, on the surface the differences seem quite clear; rather than highlighting what unites us all, Bataille highlights the unknowable excess by which unity is constituted and perennially undone (Rossi, 2019). The ethical question then becomes what we do with social, physical, and ontological excess, rather than how can we better account for such excess through a wholeness by which we are all supposedly bound. If the sciences have no conception of excess, of the libidinal, of the boiling point, and all we have is a holistic system, then the only (false) choice is to adapt, which is how proletarianization becomes a disturbingly logical – if not somehow intuitive – way to live.

### Case

#### Whiteness is an existential threat— (let’s just do the extinction debate here)

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.

#### Liberal peace is inseparable from the violent façade of liberal pacification which obscures the escalating cycle of phenomenological violence at the heart of the world order that kills value to life and ensures nuclear war

Baron, et al, 19—Associate Professor in the School of Government and International Affairs at Durham University (Ilan Zvi, with Jonathan Havercroft, Associate Professor in International Political Theory at the University of Southampton, Isaac Kamola, assistant professor of political science at Trinity College, Jonneke Koomen, Associate Professor of Politics, Sociology and Women’s and Gender Studies at Willamette University, Alex Prichard, senior lecturer in International Relations at the University of Exeter, and Justin Murphy, anticlimactically just an independent scholar, “Liberal Pacification and the Phenomenology of Violence,” International Studies Quarterly (2019) 63, 199–212, dml) [ableist language modifications denoted by brackets]

Phenomenology, as we are using it, is not about lived experience. It is the philosophical tradition of revealing different types of beings and things that contain meaning in our world, the structures and/or contexts in which they exist, and how these structures and contexts are meaningful. Understood in this way, violence is one of these structures and/or contexts. A phenomenological perspective does not approach violence from a particular normative position, although it does not preclude normative critique. A phenomenological approach does not treat violence as a discrete thing that one agent does to another, although it does not preclude such acts being described as violent. Instead, a phenomenological perspective adds to our intellectual and methodological toolbox by identifying violence as a condition or context in which people function. Phenomenology allows us to identify violence occurring in ways and in places that we otherwise would not be able to recognize. It does not change the meaning of violence (as harm, for example). Instead, it treats violence ontologically, enabling us to reveal more accurately the extent to which violence exists in the world.

From a phenomenological perspective, violence is often inconspicuous. Violence can function as a naturalized or internalized regime of compulsion or domination. Pacification reveals both the pervasiveness of violence and forms of violence that may otherwise remain inconspicuous. The erasing of tradition and the enforcement of particular legal codes at the expense of indigenous cultural norms is one example of an inconspicuous form of violence that involves conspicuous and inconspicous consequences (Cocks 2014). In understanding violence phenomenologically, as a structure of revealing across multiple worlds, we are better able to reveal the extent to which violence shapes our world and how we are then shaped by violence.

Pacavere

The Romans understood violence as a necessary condition for pax. The liberal imagination blinds itself to [obfuscates] the ways that pacification functions as violence in our world order. International relations scholarship’s strict distinction between peace and violence reinforces this obfuscation. Yet, the violence of (and in) pacification is central to the contemporary world. A phenomenological approach shows that moments of violent rupture are not aberrations of the world order. Violent outbreaks are breakdowns of pacification. It follows that multiple structures of the world order function as the violence of pacification, of pacavere.12 These structures include liberal capitalism, colonialism and the postcolonial aftermath, and war. Each functions as a key site of pacification. Anarchist thought reveals the pacification in liberal capitalism. Postcolonial thought reveals the pacification of colonial projects. Both anarchist and postcolonial thought demonstrate how war is a breakdown of pacification, revealing the hidden violent structures of our worldhood.

Anarchist critiques of capitalism, unlike Marxist and liberal interpretations, take seriously the decisive role of state violence in structuring society and markets. Anarchists view the state as an institution that sustains elite appropriations of political and economic power (Proudhon [1861] 1998; Sorel 1999; Prichard 2015). Those at the bottom of the social hierarchy bear the costs of this enforced order. The state diffuses violence (pacification) throughout the entire society—often in ways that go unrecognized by its subjects (Sorel 1999, 65). The naturalization of violence consolidates arbitrary regimes of domination in society. While specific, countable incidents of violence may decline, the social order is largely premised on the threat of violence for contravening social norms making specific, countable incidents of violence relatively rare (Kinna and Prichard, forthcoming).

Anarchist thinkers view rising inequality in the context of declining riots, insurgencies, and assassinations (see Figure 1) as evidence of pacification. Incidents of proletarian violence, anticolonial violence, riots, and protests are all examples of resistance to the “regimes of domination” that shape contemporary society, regimes easily identifiable by those subject to them (Gordon 2007, 33). Drawing on these accounts, we interpret declining rates of riots as a sign of increased pacification, rather than evidence that the system is becoming less violent. Conversely, eruptions of antistate and anticapitalist direct violence are signs of a breakdown in pacification. Much like Heidegger’s example of broken equipment (1962, 102–3, 412–13), which draws our attention to the background structures of our world, brief instances of direct violence reveal violently structured social relations.

Although the liberal imagination obscures the centrality of violence, violence has always been central to the liberal world order—to the liberal worldhood—particularly during the colonial and imperial projects of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Bell 2007a, 2007b). Colonial violence was diffused throughout the entire society, often in ways that went unrecognized by the colonized themselves. The violence of pacification structured the very existence of the colonized subject. This violence transformed the colonized subjects into a different “species” (Fanon 1963, 35– 40, 43). Colonial pacification was more than direct and indirect violence; it was sufficiently diffuse to remake the psyche of the colonized, affecting their mental health and emotions (Fanon 1963, 35–106). Fanon (1963, 31) described it as “atmospheric violence,” a “violence rippling under the skin.” Unable to lash out against the colonizer, the colonized lived everyday within a world ordered by violence. In this world, the colonized could not respond to the colonizers for fear of directly violent reprisals and would turn to symbolic activities such as a dance circle to expose the violence experienced on a daily basis (Fanon 1963, 57). For the colonized, rituals such as the dance were a means of expressing existential frustrations with and resistance to the violence of colonial pacification through reenactments of direct violence. Ultimately, anticolonial struggles exposed the violence of colonialism by directing that violence back on its authors.

Practices of colonial rule were central to developing liberal norms of sovereignty, as well as to the domination and control of recalcitrant populations whether within Europe, such as the English domination of the Welsh, Irish, and Scots, or outside of Europe by settler colonialists against indigenous populations (Deloria Jr 1974; Anghie 2005; Miller 2006; Havercroft 2008; Shaw 2008; Barkawi and Stanski 2012; Coulthard 2014; Simpson 2014; Lightfoot 2016; Rueda-Saiz 2017). This civilizing imagination functioned phenomenologically. It produced insiders as civilized and peaceful and outsiders as violent, external threats to civilization. In doing so, this imagination successfully obscured how the structures of liberalism produced colonial violence.13

FOOTNOTE 13 Arguments about the foundational role of colonialism, primitive accumulation, and white supremacy in structuring the modern international system are particularly useful in thinking about phenomenological violence (Jones 2006; Anievas, Manchanda, and Shilliam 2015; Du Bois 1915; Shaw 2008; Coulthard 2014; Deloria 1974; Lowe 2015; Hartman 1997). The legacy of these practices pervades contemporary liberal peace-building (Richmond 2014; Sabaratnam 2015; Bouka 2013; Autesserre 2009) and liberal global governance (Koomen 2014a, 2014b, 2013), while trade liberalization can facilitate mass violence (Kamola 2007; Smith 2016). Césaire argues that colonialism produced a “boomerang effect” within European societies; Nazism was the return of violence previously “applied only to non-European peoples” (Césaire 2000, 36). At independence, international law became a mechanism for reinforcing this international order upon the previously colonized world (Grovogui 1996).

The idea of war as an external practice of states, not tied to their internal workings and located according to specific normative projections of Western identity, followed from this colonial mentality. This mentality legitimized the exporting of violence to create a Western imperial pax and was so widespread that it shaped the development of modern warfare (Ellis 1986; Proudhon [1861] 1998). The colonial wars reproduced and reinforced ideologies of Western superiority, evidenced in part by the West’s superior military technology. A consequence of this racist hubris was the inability to foresee the destructive tendencies of Western warfare when unleashed against themselves (Ellis 1986).

The discipline of international relations, founded in response to the unexpectedly destructive character of the First World War, reproduced this understanding of war.14 This understanding disguises the possibility of increasing violence within the liberal world by presuming a historical narrative of progress and being shocked by its aberration. War, however, is not the absence of peace or an aberration of liberal progress, but is instead a phenomenological breaking of the liberal worldhood.15

Once a liberal order of democracy, free markets, and international institutions are spread throughout the world, liberal ideology imagines peace as the end state. Yet, states often deploy war under liberal guises.16 Wars under the aegis of humanitarian values and regime change are examples of the multifaceted character of liberal pacification. Liberal regimes emphasize the violence of those that they are invading, while minimizing the violence involved in these military undertakings and the violence necessary to sustain the liberal societies themselves. What Pierre-Joseph Proudhon called “the moral phenomenology of war” (Prichard 2015, 112–34; Proudhon [1861] 1998) becomes an integral part of the everyday workings of society that shape innumerable aspects of our daily language. The upshot is that, within liberal ideology, the violence committed by liberal states is justified, whereas the violence committed by illiberal states is not.

Postcolonial and anarchist scholarship focuses on the incorporation of violence in the production of liberal spaces (Barkawi and Laffey 1999). These same concerns can be directed onto the liberal order itself. Seen from the perspective of marginalized and oppressed populations, the structures of liberal pacification take on a distinctly violent aspect. The liberal world is not less violent. Rather, the liberal world involves a sophisticated phenomenological process of legitimating certain types of violence in order to render other types of violence invisible.

Liberal Pacification

What does it mean to apply this third type of violence to our understanding of international relations? Pacification reveals liberalism as a violent process as opposed to a system that is emblematic of the absence of direct violence. There are parallels between the Pax Britannia, Pax Americana, and the ancient peace of the Pax Romana (Neocleous 2010, 13). However, our account emphasizes the crucial role of pacification as a distinct kind of violence in maintaining these pacific orders. Our theory offers the novel insight that incorporating pacification into the analysis of the liberal peace reveals crucial aspects of this peace that conventional and critical accounts neglect.

A focus on pacification provides three critical insights. First, it recovers the crucial role of pacification in the historical founding of the liberal order. Second, by distinguishing between three kinds of violence (Figure 2), we account for the empirical observations of the liberal peace as leading to a decline in direct violence and an increase in violence overall as part of the pacification of the Pax Americana. Conversely, the liberal version of the Pax Americana cannot account for key anomalies. Third, our approach draws attention to the violent ordering of social relations. This dimension of violence is neglected even in Marxist, postcolonial, neo-Gramscian, and post-structuralist critiques of the liberal peace, which primarily focus on the role of direct and indirect violence in maintaining the Pax Americana.

Contemporary liberal international relations theory emphasizes the nonviolent role of the liberal triad (democracy, free markets, and institutions) in causing the liberal peace. Yet, a quick review of the history of liberalism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries shows that key figures in liberalism, from John Stuart Mill, to Joseph Galliéni, to American foreign policy elites, understood pacification as a necessary step in establishing and maintaining the liberal order

Mill, one of the philosophical founders of liberalism, conceptualized and deployed liberalism as a domination strategy. Mill argued that it is appropriate to impose despotism or slavery on “savages” who incline to “fighting and rapine,” but the government should use force as little as possible:

What they require is not a government of force, but one of guidance. Being, however, in too low a state to yield to the guidance of any but those to whom they look up as the possessors of force, the sort of government fittest for them is one [that] possesses force, but seldom uses it. (Mill 1998, 232–33)

In terms of our conceptual distinction, Mill argued that liberalism as pacification was a more effective instrument of violence than the direct modes of violence that governments usually deploy.

The history of European colonialism is replete with this line of reasoning. “[L]iberal improvement” was a regular plank of colonial strategy by France and Britain in the nineteenth century (Owens 2015, 154). Consider one example from the French colonial tradition. Galliéni, a military commander and administrator, consciously deployed liberalism as a domination strategy in the pacification of Tonkin during the 1890s. Galliéni’s strategy involved slowly spreading military outposts and deploying civil administrators to create markets, schools, and amenities. The rationale was that locals would gain a personal interest in the continuation of French control and would help to quell Chinese brigandage. “Piracy,” said Galliéni, “is the result of an economic condition. It can be fought by prosperity” (quoted in Owens 2015, 157). Galliéni devised a “theory of pacification” in which “the correct combination of force and politics can socialize, pacify, and domesticate a population into regulating itself” (quoted in Owens 2015, 157). What Mill proposed in theory, Galliéni enacted in practice; pacification—the violent reordering of social relations in a colony—was a more effective means of maintaining liberal rule than the deployment of direct violence.

While less explicit, the relationship between liberalism and imperialism remained present in the twentieth-century development of the Pax Americana. During this era, US policy makers sought to construct a zone of peace distinct from the zones of war associated with authoritarian regimes. The US State Department first recognized the concept of “hegemonic pacification” in the Euro-Atlantic conference diplomacy of the 1920s (Cohrs 2008, 619). The United States’ “strategic restraint” in the aftermath of World War Two was motivated by this concept of liberal, hegemonic pacification (Ikenberry 2009; Ikenberry 2011, 173). US defense officials Stimson, Patterson, McCloy, and Assistant Secretary Howard C. Peterson agreed that it was a matter of the security interests of the United States to maintain “open markets, unhindered access to raw materials, and the rehabilitation of much—if not all—of Eurasia along liberal capitalist lines” (Leffler 1984, 349–56; Barkawi and Laffey 1999). Liberalism as a domination and pacifying strategy continued throughout (and long after) the Cold War (Laffey 2003; Stokes 2003), as evident in one of the founding documents of the post–World War Two liberal order, NSC-68 (Ikenberry 2011, 168). While the enforcement of a Pax Americana eventually yielded a decline in direct violence, it produced an increase in other types of violence. The first insight of our theory is that pacification has always been part of the liberal project and that the violence in the liberal project never went away.

The second insight is that by reinterpreting the liberal peace as liberal pacification we are able to grant the empirical findings of liberal peace theorists while maintaining that the Pax Americana represents an intensification of violence overall. In the language of positivist social science, our theory is observationally equivalent to that of liberal peace theory. We expect that the quantity of direct violence inversely associates with the degree of pacification in a society. Therefore, our interpretation challenges research that identifies liberal institutions as the cause of declining violence. Liberal institutions, as apparatuses of liberal pacification, ensure that direct violence is increasingly rare while leaving the structures of violence and domination in place. The observational equivalence on particular dependent variables (in our case, all forms of direct violence) produces a theoretical change requiring the generation of novel observable implications (King, Keohane, and Verba 1994, 30).

Furthermore, increased suffering in liberal societies provides evidence contradicting the main claims of liberal peace theories, while remaining consistent with liberal pacification. At its core, liberalism is a project that tries to maximize the utility of its subjects (in other words, minimize suffering while maximizing happiness). As such, a state of liberal peace should lead to a decrease in markers of suffering. However, there is more slavery in the world today than ever before, with conservative estimates of between 12.3 and 27 million people in debt bondage, chattel, or contract slavery (Gordon 2012).17 Moreover, there is ample evidence of rising psychological disorders in liberal societies. A preponderance of evidence from the United States suggests that depression, anxiety, alienation, opioid dependency, stress, other related psychological disorders, increased social isolation, and the decline of community have increased throughout the twentieth century (Twenge, Zhang, and Im 2004, 320; Adler, Boyce, Chesney, et al. 1994; Twenge 2000; Twenge, Konrath, Foster, et al. 2008; Twenge, Gentile, DeWall, et al. 2010; Cohen and Janicki-Deverts 2012; American Society of Addiction Medicine 2016). Changes to human life associated with modernity have caused psychological stress to increase (Jackson 2014). Mortality rates have increased for some white, non-Hispanics aged 45–54 in the United States between 1999 and 2013 (Case and Deaton 2015). Modern technological advances from television to the Internet may contribute to increasing separation and alienation of the social human animal into individualized bodies connected by increasingly weak and empty bonds (Putnam 2000; Gray 2011; Turkle 2011). At minimum, new information communication technology such as Facebook can increase the stress and anxiety of its users (Lee-Won, Herzog, and Park 2015). The violent structuring of liberalism enables increases in social alienation, anxiety, stress, and human bondage through repression, economic control, and social isolation.

These are not isolated instances of suffering. They are fundamental structural features of our liberal world. If liberalism is a process of pacification rather than simply peace, then this rise in individual suffering in liberal spaces may be evidence of a similar process that Fanon equated with the psychic life of the colonist. Just as Fanon’s colonial subjects, unable to lash out at the settler through direct violence, internalized their suffering, modern liberal subjects, unable to resist liberal pacification, internalize their suffering (1982, chap. 6; cf. Sorel 1999, 118). Liberal peace should bring about a rise in happiness; that it has instead led to rising suffering is evidence of liberal pacification.

Third, in addition to offering an alternative interpretation of the liberal peace, our theory of liberal pacification supplements key insights from critical approaches to peace. Tarak Barkawi and Mark Laffey’s work on imperial processes and liberal spaces makes a similar point to ours, that the celebrated zone of liberal peace rests on practices of violence (Barkawi and Laffey 1999, 2002; cf. Neocleous et al. 2013). Their account, however, focuses on practices of direct violence, such as humanitarian interventions against authoritarian regimes or corporations hiring local militias to make work sites in the global south safe for economic extraction (Barkawi and Laffey 1999, 422). Our point is that these moments of direct violence lead to pacification wherein social relations have been so violently reordered as to make direct violence no longer necessary. Once direct violence has established liberal space, pacification functions as a structure of violence that sustains the space. Direct violence only manifests itself when pacification weakens.

Pacification, however, does not merely operate through manipulating the conscience of its subjects. While Marxist and Gramscian concepts of ideology and hegemony are consistent with our theory of pacification (Peceny 1997, 418), they do not address how the constructed political order sustains itself through a violent reordering of social relations. A Gramscian-inspired critique of the democratic peace can yield a bird’s-eye view of the ways in which liberal peace theory is itself deployed as an ideological tool (Ish-Shalom 2006, 569–75). However, Gramscianinspired approaches do not account for the ways that everyday practices of violence (for example, surveillance technologies, implied threats from weapons, security barriers, etc.) sustain liberal pacification. While ideational factors are important in pacification, these factors rest upon practices and structures that are of an ontological-existential character. To review, our reinterpretation of the liberal peace as liberal pacification offers three novel insights. First, liberal scholars and others associate the development of the liberal order with peace and a decline in violence by ignoring how pacification is part of the liberal project. Second, the empirically observed decline in violence equated with the liberal peace is not necessarily a sign of human progress but could be a sign of intensified repression or increases in other forms of suffering across the liberal world order. Third, our concept of pacification reveals violence that is neither direct nor indirect but is phenomenologically structured into the world order. Understanding liberalism as pacification produces a paradigm shift. Liberal pacification is violent in the sense that it coerces a specific type of liberal docility, while also preventing types of resistance that might be understood as violent, including riots, insurrections, civil wars, and interstate wars. Pacification reveals the ongoing violence at the heart of a political project that imagines itself to be against violence.

Conclusion

Our account of pacification recovers a crucial aspect of pax, one originally etched into Roman monuments. The heading of the Res Gestae (the funeral monument to Emperor Augustus) reads, “[t]his is how he [Augustus] made the world subject to the power of the people of Rome” (Beard 2016, 364). This monument does not celebrate peace as the absence of violence; it celebrates pacification. Pax takes the form of a process that violently reorders the world so that imperial subjects are rendered incapable of using violence to resist Roman rule. The absence of overt acts of violence depends upon the maximization of pacification.

The practice of pacification includes threats, coercion, intimidation, and surveillance to restructure and sustain social and political relations. When this type of violence operates effectively, it appears as the absence of violence; pacification’s violence resides in the structuring of the prevailing order. While such an outcome may appear peaceful, it entails, at best, a negative peace that operates through a violent and coercive reordering of society.

Liberal peace advocates measure direct violence and equate the decline in that kind of violence with peace. However, our claim is that the spread of liberal institutions does not necessarily decrease violence but transforms it. Our phenomenological analysis captures empirical trends in human domination and suffering that liberal peace theories fail to account for, including increased inequality, slavery, anxiety, addiction, and anomie. Our analysis also highlights how a decline in direct violence may actually coincide with the transformation of violence in ways that are concealed, monopolized, and structured into the fabric of modern liberal society. If our theory is correct, we will find increases in markers of suffering as society liberalizes. While we cannot say whether these indicators are unique to pacified liberal societies, it is significant that they are rarely, if ever, discussed in terms of violence and the liberal peace.

Liberal pacification is observationally equivalent to liberal peace. This is not a semantic argument. Liberal peace advocates claim that processes that promote individual freedom and autonomy (that is, democracy, free markets, and global institutions) cause peace. While the restructuring of the global order—pacification—reduces direct violence, it also restructures social relations in ways that are violent. Declines in directly observable violence render other forms of violence invisible as violence; in fact, insidious, coercive, and violent systems of military deterrence and compellence, nuclear terror, surveillance, and intimidation constitute the worldhood of the liberal order.

#### Their invocation of catastrophe obliterates black life by narratively cohering it within a linear temporality of progress.

--Time—defined as humanity’s experience of temporality—is not “real”, it’s a mental construct designed to help us make sense of difference between memories and now—aff’s narrative of emergency turns truth into fiction bc their evaluative criteria isn’t accuracy in a vacuum, it’s always informed by temporal try-or-die calculations—that obliterates black life by assembling it into white grammars

--alt of embracing crisis is generative

--the link is unique! The aff fractures movements through their narratives—“When the moment for organized challenge emerges, white hegemony rushes to squander the creative energy and reorients social relations toward its consolidation. It does so by rushing to innovate through the co-production of narratives and an emerging ecological order. ”

Agathangelou, 21—Associate Professor, Department of Politics, York University (Anna, “On the question of time, racial capitalism, and the planetary,” Globalizations, 18:6, 880-897, dml) [brackets in original]

Physicists, spiritual leaders, and theorists argue ‘time is not real’ (Martin, 2020; Rovelli, 2018). It is a ‘human construct … to help us differentiate between now and our perception of the past’ (Martin, 2020). As a meaning that human groups have given to change (Tabboni, 2001), it organizes our systems of thought and our everyday lives. Time has special meaning in politics, where ‘the very distinction between truth and fiction has been made redundant’ so that ‘the criterion is no longer accuracy – it’s conformity to the needs of the moment’ (Klein, 2014; emphasis added). Our present analytical and political challenge is to grapple with the ways time is entangled with the ‘needs of the moment’ in areas of energy and climate change. Yet the politics of the ecological require understanding time. Notions like succession, simultaneity, duration, urgency, waiting, speed, geological revolutions, money, and death are expressions of time and are entangled with the ecological and its models of development.

The increasing risks to the environment as a result of the extraction of conventional oil and natural gas resources and the increased greenhouse emissions have led to what the experts have called the climate crisis. Yet as Klein says, ‘despite being convinced of the necessity of addressing our behavior as regards energy consumption, collective consciousness appears at once paralyzed and indecisive … frozen in the face of the obstacle’ (Klein, 2014). Instead of frozen time, Bourriaud points to the acceleration of time and what this has wrought: ‘the great acceleration also lies within the process of the naturalization of capitalism: now it has become both organic and universal, it is the natural law of the Anthropocene’ (cited in Chiambaretta, 2017). Mbembe (2021) expands this argument of the relations of time with the planetary by arguing the politics and aesthetics of the ecological require understanding the coloniality of power and its contemporary temporal mutations. Imperial expansion, Mbembe argues, was (is) a planetary project driven by nationalist states and companies to reallocate the earth’s resources through military might and privatization. Colonial epistemes and practices of time block the potentiality and affirmation of a planetary beyond capture and conquest (Marriott, 2011) but national decolonization cannot be ‘what gives deep breathing for the world’ (Mbembe, 2021). Some physicists speak of ‘eternity in relation to time’, wherein ‘atoms and the emptiness of the universe are infinite, uncreated, and imperishable’ (Oestreicher, 2012, p. 435). Others speak of chronological and cyclical time, attributing the first to the West and the latter to the East. Newton (1643–1727) defined time as a mathematical variable with one dimension. The only two ‘topological objects with this characteristic’ are a ‘line and a circle … . It thus follows that time is either infinite or cyclic’ (Oestreicher, 2012, p. 436). Grappling with the question of social death, Frank Wilderson argues that assembling black life into a series of historical events, into a narrative with a plot ‘is a catastrophe for narrative at a meta-level rather than a crisis or aporia within a particular narrative’ (Wilderson, 2015b). For him,

narrative time … marks stasis and change within a [human] paradigm, [but] it does not mark the time of the [human] paradigm, the time of time itself, the time by which the slave’s dramatic clock is set. For the slave, historical ‘time’ is not possible. (Wilderson, 2010, p. 339)

In this article I engage with two dominant logics1 and grammars of time,2 modernity, capitalism, and ecology: time as linear, flowing in a particular direction (determined sequencing separable in measurable units), and time as retrojection, defined as ‘a kind of projection that retrospectively testifies to ‘what comes before’’ (Walker, 2012, p. 268) or after.3 Examining how these two ideas of time become central to the co-production of the planetary as a colonial and imperial project will allow a structural engagement with the emergence and generation of the conditions for decolonial planetary relations as acts of invention (Fanon, 1967; Marriott, 2014).

A Caribbean slave proverb, ‘time is longer dan rope’, challenges the dominant notion of linear time and progress. The state and corporations continue to expropriate black lives and indigenous lands, thus ‘extract[ing] surplus from various processes of social and ecological reproduction’ (McGee & Greiner, 2020), including the obliteration of lives. These structures of death are taken for granted, including the colonial linear structures of progress and growth, their contingent epistemic edifices and the privileges that shape and enable social and ecological reproduction.

Generally speaking, temporal boundaries are drawn to render climate change or ecological crisis theorizable within certain fields, such as environmental, governance, and conservation studies. However, that which is ‘inside’ or embodies a temporal trajectory connotes what is present in the economy, while the ‘outside’ connotes a void (without time). Rather than seeing contemporary readers as always irrevocably distanced from such events, if those who write on climate change focus the language of time, they may open up new possibilities for bringing to the fore substantial structures whose temporality or lived experience is occluded or does not even register as time. In fact, the pervasive tapestries of violence and their temporal structures are challenged by theorists of black thought, indigenous studies, postcolonialism, and Fanonian studies (Rifkin 2017; Wilderson 2015a, 2015b, 2016; Fanon, 1967). They challenge historical and linear time, orienting the reader toward a reality that is neither graspable nor conquerable but a flickering reality of sensed and unsensed ‘actualities, the moment under the moment’ (Hoban, 1992). They problematize easy readings of structures and dominant systems of thought and their entanglement with notions of time, and they query the collective amnesia of temporal productions and the racial capitalist-enslaving-colonial global order where, on the one hand, things are written on water and evaporate (Shafak, 2014, p. 2) and, on the other, certain ecologies and lives are dead on arrival.

Modernist nationalist and capitalist iterations of time focus on linear teleologies/eschatologies. This orientation of the temporal operates through causality, stories of progress and growth, the plausible and possible, and ideas about movement from past to present to future and evolution (Wilk, 2007). However, another orientation, retrojection, I argue, is vital to racial ecological capitalism’s dominant power. Without engaging with both of these structures and operation of time simultaneously, we cannot understand power and its entanglements with the planetary. The temporality of capital’s projection retrospectively testifies to what comes before its current organizing. Retrojection requires us to ‘relocate ourselves into the past’, while ‘assigning purposes and ends to [such] actions’ (Motzkin, 1992) as well as a mythical agency to capital. These two expressions of temporality co-exist, at times in tension. They are inflected in our institutions and our social life.

In this piece, I look at the structure of time and ecology to trace how social sciences, humanities, and natural sciences draw on such structures to colonize, enslave, and imperialize the planetary. I trace how and when time and temporality bound the Anthropocene. The search is not for a start date but for the ways the ‘date’ or the ‘when’ is a political, economic, scientific, and ethical question (Davis & Todd, 2017, p. 761; Rifkin 2017; Whyte, 2017; Saldanha, 2020) entangled with the structure of time and what Fanon calls the invention or new beginning beyond global capital’s projects. I draw on a 2018 report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and work by Naomi Oreskes and Erik M. Conway to register the co-production of the temporal with ‘the domains of nature, facts, objectivity, reason … policy [and] culture, values, subjectivity, emotions and politics’ (Jasanoff, 2004, p. 12).4 I use these works as a springboard for thinking how this temporal co-production expresses the tension between the reproduction of capital and the generation of life. To conclude the piece, in conversation with Octavia E. Butler, I suggest instead of dreading an impending crisis, we should read radically for the ruptures in the dominant structures of time (i.e. in narratives, dialectics, etc.) (Marriott, 2011; Wilderson, 2010) and their entanglement with questions of the planetary and climate change. Such fractal readings may yield insights into possible disinvestment from the fossil economy and open up the possibility for an indeterminate world, the passionate and living experimenting with and harnessing of the flux of energy into a vision of a decolonial whose basic premise is not conquest and enslavement.

Liberalism: always too late, or capitalism’s colonial and enslaving proactivity?

In the IPCC reports, time as a linear human orientation is placed in the context of timescales of forces requiring human intervention but out of human control: climate change. The recent SRl.5 (IPCC, 2018), ‘Global Warming of 1.5°C’, representing the ‘newer instalment of the scientisation of climate change’, situates ‘the issue beyond democratic debate by declaring it a matter for the scientific expertise of the IPCC’, and inscribes it as an emergency (Garrard, 2020, p. 1). The report suggests ‘climate change is moving faster than we are’ (Masson-Delmotte et al., 2018, p. v), and its urgency demands our intervention. However, the moral and ethical articulation of the climate as a linear temporal ‘urgency’ does not allow us to understand ecological shifts or even climate change in a larger trajectory, including human conquest, property relations, and competition. Rather, the report’s ‘foreshortened timeframe’ speaks to the urgent need of global concerted efforts to mitigate climate change and signals how temporary responses and procrastination are not going to do the trick (Garrard, 2020, p. 2).

John Mecklin, Editor of Bulletin of Atomic Scientists, similarly reminds us that time is running out:

Faced with this daunting threat landscape and a new willingness of political leaders to reject the negotiations and institutions that can protect civilization over the long term, the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists Science and Security Board today moves the Doomsday Clock 20 s closer to midnight - closer to apocalypse than ever. (Mecklin, 2020)

The moving of the clock makes the ‘climate emergency’ public, especially for those proponents of liberalism whose ‘macroscopic exclusion clauses’ have been written to ‘displace … unfreedom’ onto all marginalized, enslaved, and colonized peoples and those ‘primitive’ and ‘undeveloped’ sites ‘from a white male bourgeois European who was the historical agent in the narrative’ (Mann, 2019). Yet this moving of the clock does not address the root of the problem. It allows the positing of a secular/humanist eschatological story (Rothe, 2020, p. 162) whose temporal structure is one of immanent destruction, informed by an analysis of existence as being-towards-death (i.e. of the human and the planet) or catastrophe.

Of course, this schematic presumes death and ecological catastrophe (collapsed into one). It represents a never-reached horizon of experience, where authentic and moral decisions must be made through a theory or ‘concept of crisis or emergency’ (Mann, 2019). Liberal leaders of the international political system ‘inch toward’ an implementation of a regulatory system, what Mann and Wainwright call climate Leviathan, instead of addressing the root causes of global warming. These leaders are not creative but ‘fumble … for solutions’, continuing to argue that ‘climate change’ is a ‘market failure, without considering the limiting structures of the ‘market’ itself (Osaka, 2019, p. 2; citing Mann & Wainwright, 2018). When the moment for organized challenge emerges, white hegemony rushes to squander the creative energy and reorients social relations toward its consolidation. It does so by rushing to innovate through the co-production of narratives and an emerging ecological order.

The present as a fracture of notions of history and ‘historical natures’

Apocalypse is ‘the single most powerful master metaphor that the contemporary environmental imagination has at its disposal’ (Buell, 1995, p. 285). As such, it deranges capital and its entanglements with ecological problems, ranging from the climate change, to the extinction of species, the loss of pollinating insects, and other ecological disasters. These challenges or this ecology of environmental concerns cannot be considered in a partitioned manner.

The focus on temporality has been picked up by historians and others grappling with what the authors of the Anthropocene name a crisis and emergency. One text that speaks to the global climate change as apocalyptic temporality is Oreskes and Conway’s The Collapse of Western Civilization. In theorizing the present and the temporal possibilities for the future otherwise, these authors open the door for us to experiment with what Sheila Jasanoff and Sang-Hyun call sociotechnical imaginaries (2013). The book’s narrator is a Chinese historian in the year 2393. The historian says Western civilization possessed robust information about climate change and the ‘damaging events to unfold’ but was ‘unable to stop’ them (Oreskes & Conway, 2014, p. x, pp. 1-2), thus ‘condemning their successors to the inundation and desertification of the late twenty-first and twentysecond centuries’ (Oreskes & Conway, 2014, pp. 59–60). A second Dark Age descended, and the Period of Penumbra began. The present ignorance, the historian says, is a result of an ‘ideological fixation on ‘free’ markets; another compartmentalization and the practice among the scientific community of demanding an excessively stringent standard for accepting claims of any kind, even those involving imminent threats’ (Oreskes & Conway, 2014, pp. ix-x). In a sense, this future scenario tells nothing about the future and more about the ‘present’ – our moment.

However, the narrator’s historical account is problematic and, as Garrard argues ‘unequivocably dangerous’, as the scenario focuses on ‘catastrophic outcomes’ (Garrard, 2020, p. 3). Gallard’s critique is important to our discussion of temporality. Narrating the present as a given history evades uncertainty and possibilities for the world as a project beyond global capital. In a sense, this dystopian temporality posits itself as the ‘truth’ of our reality as if punctuating a certain kind of imaginary temporal orientation – the only one about the future. This depicted history anticipates the failure of the future by drawing on assembled empirics and technologies of problem-solving as if failure and the future are not up for debate (Jasanoff, 2019), as if the historical codes and genre choices that assemble these dystopia future scenarios are not ‘originary’ to the familiar narratives of history which they ground.

In highlighting that the Anthropocene is actually a ‘liberal managerial term’, Mann (2019) suggests the ideology of liberalism distorts the multiple social reproductions of violence and strategies of failure by sublimating them through temporal means, deploying concepts such as crises, emergencies, and exceptions, and substituting adaptation for progress. We see this in scientific reports, for example, the SRl.5 and others; while they address the metabolic rifts and shifts, they still use the Anthropocene as the social contract (Mann, 2019). In Climate Leviathan, Joel Wainwright and Geoff Mann argue crisis, risk, and uncertainty are asymmetrical, the result of the actions of a minority of humanity, i.e. the white male bourgeois European who claims the agency and writing of the historical narrative of liberalism and imperial capitalism. The Anthropocene is a technology co-productive of temporal regimes of modernity and the planetary order:

[The Anthropocene is] an explicitly future facing instrument of temporal power. Like all contracts, it restarts time on its terms. The distribution of responsibilities it represents is always also the closure of supersession of past arrangements. So, a contract that has no expiration, like a constitution or the Anthropocene, is supposed to mark the end of the past and the beginning of a new time. (Mann & Wainwright, 2018, p. 8)

The Anthropocene is itself a technology of temporal power which orders and organizes social life. In questioning this contract, Mann and Wainwright problematize how time is used to organize global power. They question whether the idea that the Anthropocene marks the end of the past as many claim and the beginning of a new time is accurate. For them, this fetishization of the Anthropocene evades the intensifying challenges to the world. The structure of ‘transition’ of the contemporary global order and the production of history of liberalism as progress (Mann & Wainwright, 2018, p. 9) are problematic and do not acknowledge how such kinds of politics are co-produced with a structure of transcendental time as their major procedural technology of governance. The transformation of the world’s political economy and the fundamental political arrangements most people take for granted thus need to be engaged on the register of the language of temporal power and the global order.

#### Todd 17 uses Pinker to justify their data – vote negative to reject Epstein apologism



#### Plan can't deliver on theorical benefits. Decades of research agrees.

Jamison '20 [Mark; 8/19/20; nonresident senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, director and Gunter Professor of the Public Utility Research Center at the University of Florida’s Warrington College of Business, Ph.D. in economics from the Warrington College of Business at the University of Florida; "Breaking up Big Tech will not help the US innovate or compete with China," <https://www.aei.org/technology-and-innovation/breaking-up-big-tech-will-not-help-the-us-innovate-or-compete-with-china/>]

Facebook and Google have argued that breaking them up would damage US competitiveness with China. Vanderbilt Law Professor — and former advisor to Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) — Ganesh Sitaraman and former Federal Communications Commission Chairman Tom Wheeler (now at the Brookings Institution) take exception. Sitaraman argues in Foreign Affairs that breaking up Big Tech companies would bolster US national security. Wheeler writes that US tech innovation would improve if Big Tech companies were required to make their data assets available to rivals.

It is an open question how regulation might affect whatever competition there might be between the US and China, but Sitaraman and Wheeler are wrong. Sitaraman seems unaware of the five decades of academic research showing that market structure — the number and relative sizes of firms in a market or industry — does not determine the amount of innovation. Wheeler also seems unaware of how markets for ideas work. Here are my explanations.

Regulation and market structure

Both Sitaraman and Wheeler assume that government regulation can define an industry’s market structure, but they are wrong for two reasons.

First, more regulation results in industries having larger firms, not smaller ones, and it also lowers labor productivity. This has been confirmed in several economic studies (see examples here, here, and here). Regulations raise the cost of a firm being in business, which means firms need to be larger to cover those fixed costs.

The other reason is that the economics of social media, search, and e-commerce, etc. have determined today’s market structures. Breaking up the companies wouldn’t repeal these economic realities, so the current market structure would reemerge, except with possibly even larger firms.

#### Or, they have their internal link backwards – antitrust expansion cedes tech dominance.

Abbott et al. '21 [Alden; 3/10/21; Senior Research Fellow, formerly served on the Federal Trade Commission’s General Counsel, J.D. from Harvard Law School, M.A. in Economics from Georgetown University; "Aligning Intellectual Property, Antitrust, and National Security Policy," https://regproject.org/wp-content/uploads/Paper-Aligning-Intellectual-Property-Antitrust-and-National-Security-Policy.pdf/]

The U.S. government has recognized that “5G is a critical strategic technology [such that] nations that master advanced communications technologies and ubiquitous connectivity will have a long-term economic and military advantage.”8 The U.S. has had a substantial technological edge over our military and intelligence rivals in foundational R&D for 5G and other next-generation technologies. U.S. companies have long been leaders in the development of previous generations of core mobile standards (2G, 3G, 4G, and LTE). This technological leadership has made it possible for U.S. companies to ensure the security and integrity of the hardware and software products that make up the backbone of the U.S. telecommunication systems. This leadership must continue for the U.S. government to more effectively anticipate potential security risks and take the necessary steps to protect national security.9

Despite this history of clear technological leadership, there are causes for concern. First, a very small number of U.S. companies have made the investments in the overwhelming majority of the R&D necessary to develop 5G.10 Historically, U.S. companies have heavily invested in R&D, which has propelled the U.S. into leadership positions in critical standard development organizations working on foundational next-generation technologies like 5G.11 U.S. companies like Qualcomm play a significant and important role in this process through innovation, patenting, and standard setting, but they are not alone in the global community of high-tech companies.12 Backed by their nations’ leadership, Chinese and Korean companies have also invested heavily in developing the core technologies for 5G.13

The willingness of U.S. companies to invest in R&D is threatened, however. The development of 5G is a bit like a race, with the companies who develop the best technology coming out ahead. While U.S. companies are savvy and talented competitors in this race, aggressive and unwarranted use of antitrust law by U.S. regulators, as well as by foreign antitrust authorities, threatens to put obstacles in these companies’ paths and hinder their ability to lead.

III. Overly Aggressive Antitrust Enforcement Hinders American Technological Leadership and Threatens National Security

As companies from around the world develop the technology and standards for 5G mobile devices and networks, American companies are under threat by aggressive antitrust enforcement that ultimately redounds to the benefit of these foreign companies, which are economic competitors in countries that are also military competitors of the U.S. Over the past five years, foreign governments, particularly in Asia, have subjected U.S. companies to antitrust investigations that failed to follow basic norms of the rule of law, such as providing basic due process protections.14 These antitrust investigations were a thinly-disguised effort by these countries to force the transfer of U.S. patented technology to their own domestic companies, or to insulate their domestic companies from American competition. In recent years, Chinese, Korean, and Taiwanese antitrust authorities have brought nearly 30 investigations against 60 foreign companies across a range of industries, including manufacturing, life sciences, and technology.15

Antitrust challenges undermine intellectual property rights by forcing companies to license their products on non-market-based terms. One prominent example in U.S. history is when the Department of Justice wrung a concession from AT&T to license royalty-free the entire portfolio of 8,600 patents held by Bell Labs in a 1956 antitrust consent decree with the company.16 Today, the White House Office of Trade and Manufacturing Policy has observed that “China uses the Antimonopoly Law of the People’s Republic of China not just to foster competition but also to force foreign companies to make concessions such as reduced prices and below-market royalty rates for licensed technology.”17 Companies have also complained about poor policy guidance and procedural protections under China’s competition laws.18 Others have complained about China’s use of its competition laws to promote policy objectives rather than protect competition and advance consumer welfare.19 In one example, companies raised concerns with Article 7 of China’s State Administration of Industry Commerce (SAIC) 2015 Rules on the Prohibition of Conduct Eliminating or Restricting Competition by Abusing Intellectual Property Rights.20 Under this provision, intellectual property constitutes an “essential facility,” which could allow parties to raise abuse of intellectual property rights claims against patent owners for a unilateral refusal to license their patents.21

Predatory antitrust enforcement actions threaten the ability of U.S. companies to continue to be leaders in 5G technological development. China and other nations with similarly restrictive regulatory frameworks can weaken the ability of the United States to compete in global markets by exacting high monetary penalties from U.S. intellectual property owners or forcing the transfer of their intellectual property to domestic commercial rivals. As a penalty for violations of its competition laws, China can impose exorbitant fines that range up to 10% of a foreign company’s entire revenue in the prior year.22 This is not a legal rule observed in the breach; it has already resulted in fines just shy of $1 billion.23

Another way in which courts in China and other foreign countries are harming U.S. companies is through the use of anti-suit injunctions. One example of this is in the recent patent infringement lawsuit brought by InterDigital, an American high-tech company that has developed key technologies in wireless telecommunication, against Chinese company Xiaomi. In June 2020, Xiaomi filed a lawsuit in the Wuhan Intermediate Court in China requesting that the court set global licensing rates for InterDigital’s patents on standardized technologies. In July 2020, InterDigital sued Xiaomi in India for infringement of InterDigital’s Indian patents. The Wuhan Intermediate Court then ordered InterDigital to stop its lawsuit with its request for an injunction in India. The Chinese court further prohibited InterDigital from suing Xiaomi and requesting an injunction or damages in the form of reasonable licensing rates, or even to enforce a previously-issued injunction, in any other country. If InterDigital does not comply with this worldwide injunction against pursuing legal relief for the violation of its patents in any other country, the company faces a significant fine in China. The type of judicial order issued by the Wuhan court is known as an anti-suit injunction and its purpose is to force an intellectual property dispute to play out solely in a Chinese court at the behest of the Chinese government. These court orders demonstrate China’s desire to become the source of 5G innovation and to dictate the licensing terms of the technology, and the anti-suit injunctions hamstring U.S. companies like InterDigital from enforcing their intellectual property rights anywhere in the world.

The unfair use of antitrust enforcement and related legal actions like anti-suit injunctions to weaken U.S. intellectual property rights around the world risks diminishing U.S. global competitiveness in critical technologies like 5G, and further empowers China and others to expand their influence over the evolving 5G technological ecosystem. To the extent the U.S. cedes its dominance in 5G standards development, China will continue its focused efforts to fill that void. Huawei, a China-based company, has increased its R&D spending while growing its share of patents on the standardized technologies comprising 5G.24 The President’s Council on Science and Technology issued a report concluding that Chinese actions in the semiconductor industry, which include a range of policies backed by over $100 billion in government funds, threaten U.S. leadership in the industry and present risks to U.S. national security.25 China’s “Made in China 2025” plan called for China to become a leader in 5G technology, including in the development of the standards for the technology, by 2020.26 The plan expressly favors Chinese domestic producers, calling for raising the domestic content of core components in high-tech industries like 5G to 70% by 2025.27

This issue, however, extends far beyond simply the ability and willingness of U.S. companies to engage in the requisite R&D to participate in the 5G race. Reduced U.S. influence on 5G standard-setting would force the U.S. government to rely on untrusted foreign companies for its 5G product supply. The Department of the Treasury has expressed concern about the “well-known” U.S. national security risks posed by Huawei and other Chinese telecommunications companies.28

## Block

### Kritik

#### Repetition Compulsion -- the addendum of “extinction outweighs” to “black lives are affected too” is the Slave State’s advertisement that pornotropes black flesh a fungible tool for its existential project -- that ritual reputation is inseparable from the episteme of slavery and ensures complacency -- turns case.

**Warren ’18** [Calvin; 2018; Associate African American Studies at Emory University; *Ontological Terror; Blackness, Nihilism, and Emancipation*, “THE INVENTION OF THE NEGRO AND THE NECESSITY OF BLACK BEING,” p. 45-48]

In this schematic, the body is a metaphor for instrumentality or abject use value. Spillers suggests that this body “is reduced to a thing, to being for the captor.” With the death of African existence (the flesh) an oppres- sive mode of existence is imposed on the Negro. This existence is unlike human being. The human being’s mode of existence is to be for itself, and this being for itself is the structure of care between Dasein and Being. Black ~~being~~ is invented, however, precisely to secure the human’s mode of existence. Reading Spillers’s metaphysical schema through Heidegger’s, we could suggest that the black body or this “thing, being for the captor,” is invented to serve as the premier tool or equipment for human being’s existential project (and I would argue that this equipment is not equivalent in form to the human, even if the structure of tool-being, as Graham Harman would call it, provides a general explanatory frame).37 In other words, the mode of existence for black being is what Heidegger would call “availableness.” Availableness is “the way of being of those entities which are defined by their use in the whole.”38 To exist as “a thing, being for the captor” is to inhabit a mode of existence dominated by internecine use and function. Black being, then, is invented not just to serve the needs of economic interest and cupidity, but also to fulfill the ontological needs of the human. This thing is something like Heidegger’s equipment—an object that when used with such regularity becomes almost invisible, or trans- parent, to the user (blackness is often unthought because the world uses it with such regularity; antiblackness is the systemization of both the use of blackness and the forgetting/concealment of black being). Utility eclipses the thing itself. We must, then, understand antiblackness as a global, 46 Chapter One systemic dealing with black bodies, as available equipment. Heidegger considers dealings the way the Being of entities, or equipment, is revealed phenomenologically through the use of this equipment. Antiblack dealings with black bodies do not expose the essential unfolding, or essence, of the equipment; rather, the purpose of antiblack dealings is to systemically obliterate the flesh, and to impose nothing onto that obliterated space—care and value are obsolete in this encounter.39 Therefore, equipment structure is predicated on the premier use of blacks within the network of equipment. In other words, black use cuts across every equip- mental assignment, making it the ultimate equipment. Why does black equipment cut across all assignments, and why is it the tool Dasein relies on to commence its existential journey? We might say the answer to these difficult questions is that the essence of black equipment is nothing— being is not there. If Heidegger assumes that equipment will reveal its being through its usage, then he did not anticipate the invention of the Negro— equipment in human form, embodied nothingness. Using black equipment reveals existence but not being (existence as non-being for Greek philosophers, according to Heidegger in Introduction to Metaphysics). This puzzle is what black philosophy must investigate, must think through, to understand the continuity of antiblackness.

Spillers describes black being is a “living laboratory,” and we can conceptualize this laboratory as the source of availableness for modernity. A living laboratory is a collection of instruments for carrying out ontological experimentation, or the construction of the human self. Black beings constitute this irresistible source of availableness for the world. Saidiya Hartman meditates on the ontological utility of black being for the human when she states:

The relation between pleasure and the possession of slave property, in both the figurative and literal senses, can be explained in part by the fungibility of the slave—that is, the joy made possible by virtue of the replaceability and interchangeability endemic to the commodity—and by the extensive capacities of property—that is, the augmentation of the master subject through his embodiment in external objects and persons. Put differently, the fungability of the commodity makes the captive body an abstract and empty vessel vulnerable to the projection of others’ feelings, ideas, desires, and values; and, as property, the dispossessed body of the enslaved is the surrogate for the master’s body since it guarantees his disembodied universality and acts as the sign of his power and dominion.

40 Instruments, tools, and equipment are interchangeable/replaceable; this is starkly different from human being, whose existential journey in the world renders it incalculable and unique. When I suggest that black being is pure function or utility, I mean precisely the way this being is used as a site of projection for the human’s desires, fantasies, and onto- logical narcissism. The body that Spillers presents is a necessary invention because it is through the human’s engagement with instruments (tools and equipment) that the human comes to understand the self. To be for the human is to serve as the empty vessel for the human’s reflection on the world and self. In short, what I am suggesting is that black being is invented as an instrument to serve the needs of the human’s ontological project. This use, or function, exceeds involuntary labor and economic interest. It is this particular antiblack use that philosophical discourse has neglected. The Negro, as invention, is the dirty secret of ontometaphysics.

If we follow Heidegger’s understanding of the human being as Dasein (being there) and thrown into the world, then black being emerges as a different entity: the Negro is precisely the permanence of not being there [Nicht Da Sein], an absence from ontology, an existence that is not just gone away (as if it has the potential to return to being there) but an exis- tence that is barred from ever arriving as an ontological entity, since it is stripped of the flesh.41 To assert that black being is not of the world is to suggest, then, that black being lives not just outside of itself, but outside of any structure of meaning that makes such existence valuable. Black being is situated in a spatiotemporality for which we lack a grammar to capture fully. Spillers’s body, then, is the symbolic and material signifi- cation of absence from Being. To be black and nothing is not to serve as an aperture of Being for the Negro; rather, it is to constitute something inassimilable and radically other, straddling nothing and infinity. The Negro is the execration of Being for the human; it is with the Negro that the terror of ontology, its emptiness, is projected and materialized. This is the Negro’s function.

Inventing the Negro is essential to an ontometaphysical order that wants to eradicate and obliterate such ontological terror (the terror of 48 Chapter One the nothing); and since ontometaphysics is obsessed with schematization and control, it needs the Negro to bear this unbearable burden, the execration of Being. To return to our proper metaphysical question “How is it going with black being?,” we can say that neither progressive legislation nor political movements have been able to transform black being into human being, from fleshless bodies to recognized ontologies. Spillers also seems to preempt the question when she states, “Even though the captive flesh/body has been ‘liberated,’ and no one need pretend that even the quotation marks do not matter . . . it is as if neither time nor history, nor historiography and its topics, show movement, as [the flesh] is ‘murdered’ over and over again by the passions of a bloodless and anonymous archaism, showing itself in endless disguise.”42 This onticide, the death of the flesh/African existence, continues impervious to legal, historical, and political change. This is to say that the problem of black being, as both a form of ontological terror for the human and a site of vicious strategies of obliteration, remains. To ask the (un)asked question “How is it going with black being?” is to inquire about the resolution of the problem of black and nothing, ontometaphysically, as it imposes itself onto the Negro. The answer to the Negro Question, then, is that the ritualistic and repetitive murder of the flesh, the primordial relation, is absolutely necessary and indispensable in an antiblack world. And as long as the world exists, this murder must continue.

#### The Johnson and Thayer card proves this- it relies on eugenics logic of survival of the fittest that leads to both interpersonal forms of violence as well as international conflict against countries and bodies that are deemed as weaker.

\*Johnson and Thayer reject Mearsheimer’s understanding of offensive realism as only descriptive of state behavior

Johnson and Thayer, 16 (Dominic Johnson and Bradley Thayer, Johnson, Ph.D, Department of Politics and International Relations, University of Oxford, Thayer, Ph.D Stjórnmálafræðideild/Department of Political Science, Háskóli Íslands/University of Iceland, Spr 2016, accessed on 12-7-2021, PubMed, "The evolution of offensive realism", <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/27378020/)//Babcii>

Conclusions

Offensive realism, more than other major theories of international relations, closely matches what we know about **human nature** from the evolutionary **sciences**. Reading the literature of offensive realism can be hauntingly analogous to reading ethnographies of warfare among preindustrial societies such as the Yanomamo in the Amazon, the Mae Enga in New Guinea, or the Shuar in the Andes. An evolutionary foundation offers a **major reinterpretation** of the theory of offensive realism and permits its **broader application to political behavior across a wide range of actors, domains, and historical eras.**

**\*\*Table 4 omitted\*\***

Evolutionary theory also allows realist scholars to explain the intellectual foundations of offensive realism: Why individuals and state decision-makers are **egoistic** and **strive to dominate others** when circumstances permit, and why they make strong ingroup/outgroup distinctions. These adaptations were favored by natural selection over the course of evolution and remain a significant cause of human behavior.

The fundamental differences and similarities between our theory of offensive realism and Mearsheimer’s are captured in Table 4. The abundance of intergroup **threats**, which cause the fear and uncertainty Mearsheimer identifies, are deeply rooted in human evolution under conditions of anarchy over millions of years, and **not just in the anarchy of the modern state system** in recent history. Thus, if theories of international relations are to accurately account for human nature, they must acknowledge how human behavior has been shaped by the ancestral environment, rather than (or as well as) contemporary international politics.

The optimistic message of our argument is that understanding human nature will make efforts toward international institutions, democracy, and **cooperation more effective**. Cooperation and peace efforts often **fail** precisely **because people have too rosy a view of human nature** and thus fail to structure incentives effectively. Efforts to make positive political change may be more effective if we view humans as **offensive realists** and intervene accordingly. At worst, this perspective will make us err on the side of caution.

No theory is perfect. None captures all salient issues. However, offensive realism is one of **the most compelling** current theories for explaining major phenomena across the history of international politics, such as great power rivalries and the origins of war. Part of the reason for its intuitive and explanatory success is, we suggest, its close match with human behavior. This match, in turn, should be no surprise because human behavior evolved under conditions of anarchy, which pervaded throughout our evolution as well as in international politics today. Self-help, power maximization, and fear are strategies to survive nature, not just contemporary international politics. It is also worth noting that offensive realism may often be derided because we do not want it to be true. We prefer a more positive picture of human nature, perhaps one that accords with comfortable modern life in developed states. However, **we need to see the world as it is, not as we would like it to be.** When the **stakes are high**, such as **in** 1914, 1939, 1941, or 1962, or today in the Middle East, Ukraine, or **the** East and South **China Seas**, offensive realism does not seem so foreign. Indeed, the possibility of even more intense security **competition** in the Sino-American relationship, between India and Pakistan, and in the Middle East highlights the importance of making the theory’s **logic explicit** and revealing and testing its foundations.

#### The view of heg as peaceful is a move towards epistemological and physical distancing that accelarates the virtualization of warfare---drives rippling state failure, terrorism, and mass warfare

**Duffield 16** [Mark, Professor of Development Politics and Director of the Global Insecurities Centre at the University of Bristol, “The resilience of the ruins: towards a critique of digital humanitarianism”, *Resilience*, published online March 15, 2016, DOI: 10.1080/21693293.2016.1153772]

At the end of the cold war, there was an historic upsurge in the liberal interventionism within the global South. In terms of the number of agencies involved, personnel deployed and money spent, this interventionism was reflected in a rapid increase of all kinds of UN and NGO humanitarian, development and peace activism throughout the 1990s (Duffield, 2001). Looking back over the last decade, however, it is striking how this intrusive interventionism has failed to achieve its defining aim. That is, with military force if necessary, to democratise and liberalise failed and non-integrating societies in the interest of international security (Mazarr, 2014). Such liberal interventionism now lies buried in the ruins of Iraq, Libya and Syria. The existential shock of this strategic defeat, needlessly amplified by the war on terror, has seen an increasing recourse to arm’s length remote management and risk-avoidance when it comes to international terrestrial deployments in the global South. There has been a widespread retreat or physical circumscription of an international ground presence in challenging or politically difficult environments. This defensive relocation not only involves the military, perhaps even more so, it affects diplomats (Worth, 2012), international aid agencies (Healy & Tiller, 2014; Lemay-Hébert, 2011), journalists (Sundaram, 2014) and academic researchers as well (Adams, 2007).

Unqualified ideas of ‘retreat’ or ‘withdrawal’, however, can be misleading. Although international actors may be limiting or circumscribing their ground presence, aid operations and academic research, for example, have not stopped or disappeared, indeed, they continue apace (Collinson & Duffield, 2013). There is a difference, however. The mode of engagement has changed. While exceptions exist, effects on the ground are now orchestrated at a distance through a mixture of remote technologies and subcontracting local players. While this shift is widely celebrated as the fruit of technological advancement, the current risk and anxiety-related distancing of international actors are closely intertwined with the negativity of policy failure, political push-back and humanitarian access denial (Duffield, 2013).1 The growing physical remoteness from what one could call the West’s clash with history has been compensated by the rise of data-based smart technology and remote management techniques (Howe, Stites, & Chudacoff, 2015; Verjee, 2005). Such capabilities are currently driving all manner of international security, research, media and aid interventions. The emergence of what has been called ‘digital humanitarianism’ (Conneally, 2011) is but one example of a terrestrial retreat which is being repositioned as a triumph of technoscience and its ability to achieve governmental effects from the enveloping electronic atmosphere (Livingston, 2015).2 It is a remoteness that, simultaneously, is a form of recapture and drawing near. The strategic plane has pivoted from the ground friction of the horizontal to the relative freedom of the vertical and volumetric dimensions (Elden, 2013; Weizman, 2002).

At a time of global rebalancing, remoteness involves a combination of epistemological, existential and physical distancing while, simultaneously, calling forth new technological means of digital recoupment and re-embodiment. Remoteness is inseparable from the increasing sophistication of the global North’s atmospheric ability to digitally rediscover, remap and, importantly, govern anew a now distant South. This strategic turn to the electronic atmosphere, however, is obscured by the inability of technoscience to conceive its own conditions of possibility. The political setback and failure of liberal interventionism is obscured by an affirmatory rhetoric that celebrates the restorative powers of smart technologies and fast machine thinking (Meier, 2015). Within this normalising narrative, new technologies are simply replacing older and less efficient terrestrial assemblages (Hanchard, 2012). The transformation of a negative into an affirmatory positive has allowed a failed liberal interventionism to live on as a delusional and revengeful digital afterlife. Against the backdrop of falling battle deaths, as a strategic platform, the electronic atmosphere has allowed the reconfiguration of the whole planet, irrespective of the claims of territorial sovereignty, as a seamless digital manhunt reserve (Chamayou, 2015). In addressing these concerns, this paper explores what Hannah Arendt would recognise as the world alienation intrinsic to technoscience (Arendt, 1998/1958). That this alienation now appears as a stupefying political psychosis, however, would possibly surprise and alarm her.

The positive and the negative

To introduce remoteness as digital recapture, the current humanitarian disaster in Syria is a good example. On any scale, this is a major complex political emergency affecting the region and beyond. There are over three million Syrian refugees alone representing almost 25% of the world total, with millions more people internally displaced (Borger, 2014). However, the single factor marking Syria as a modern humanitarian crisis is an absence of international aid agencies on the ground. Rather than a plethora of in-country offices, white sports utility vehicles (SUV’s) and a visible presence of international staff that used to define a humanitarian emergency, the Syrian crisis is being addressed through remote management techniques usually involving the arm’s length subcontracting of local agencies organised from secure locations within the region or even direct from agency HQs in Europe and the USA (Whittall & Bseiso, 2015). In another related example of remoteness, the brutal beheading of the American journalist, James Foley by the Islamic State in August 2014 revealed that, in places like Syria, international news groups have dispensed with their own in-country reporters and news infrastructure (Preston, 2014). In large parts of the global South what little on-the-ground news gathering still takes place is now down to independent risk takers like Foley (see, Sundaram, 2014).

Despite this physical pull-back, however, with the help of remote satellite sensing, biometrics and social media analysis, refugee management and news gathering continues in Syria. Regarding the former, since 2001, UNHCR has been quietly experimenting with the biometric registration of refugees, involving either fingerprinting or iris scans. Attracting little public attention at the time, biometric registration was announced as an official UNHCR policy in 2010. Given the large numbers of Syrian refugees and the volatility of their movements, UNHCR has pioneered a ‘cross-border identity’ that operates through a series of linked databases in Syria and the surrounding countries (Jacobsen, 2015). Maintained by local aid workers, refugees can be tracked and their entitlements managed even when on the move. Digital recoupment is also taking place in relation to news gathering. While there are few reporters on the ground in Syria, through the spread of the Internet and mobile telephones, it is the most socially mediated war to date (O’Callaghan et al., 2014). Using commercially available mapping and network analysis software, private and academic organisations are, for example, routinely analysing social media data to gain virtual situational intelligence of hardto-reach conflict zones like Libya and Syria (Laville, 2014; Slottlemyre & Slottlemyre, 2012).

Using the metaphor of analogue photography, from these brief examples, the real-world conditions driving physical distancing and remoteness can be regarded as a ‘negative’, while the compensatory process of digital recapture and drawing near constitutes a ‘positive’ take on these same conditions. In the negative, Syria is part of an unparalleled political upheaval that is unravelling the Middle East. On all sides, its coinage is zealotary and deliberate acts of urbicide (Coward, 2007) that are fomenting state collapse, persecution and societal fragmentation.

This negative is reflected in the significant increase in political push-back, access denial and the spread of international terrorism. Such ground friction has been accompanied by growing international risk aversion. When these factors are combined, they work against maintaining an international terrestrial presence. In the positive, however, we have a simultaneous digital remapping and reinterpreting of these new cartographic ‘white spaces’, together with an increasing ability, through remote sensing and the algorithmic analysis of metadata, to substitute ground truth with pattern recognition and behavioural analysis among the now hard-to-reach populations. Presence has been seamlessly swopped for speed and synchronicity (Bowker, 2014).

For a can do digital affirmationism, ground friction and the need for remote intelligence does not appear as a negative. While societal breakdown and the failure of humanitarian aid continues to telegraph warning signals, they fail to fully register as urgent political problems requiring sustained collective attention and determined resolution. To the contrary, for the military–industrial–academic complex (Giroux, 2007), ground friction presents itself as an engineering challenge for which technoscience can, and will, provide a methodological workaround. Through the accelerating sophistication of information technologies and their reducing cost, rather than dwell on the negative, technoscience maintains the cybernetic illusion that success equates with speed (Virilio, 2007/1977). The 2011 Libyan bombing campaign, for example, which helped bring the Ghaddafi regime down, was celebrated as a humanitarian success on the grounds that the allies were able to quickly bring precision military technology to bear (O’Sullivan, 2014). The same coalition of the willing, however, has subsequently fallen silent on the intractable political quagmire they helped create.

To reintroduce a sense of gravitational pull, it can be argued that just as wealth creation and consumerism produces poverty and pollution, there is a dialectical relationship between the negative conditions associated with remoteness, and the positive techno-affirmationism that defines their digital recapture and drawing near. Whereas a practical politics would acknowledge, navigate and compensate for such contradictions, neoliberalism denies any such connection. Instead we are regaled with speed spectacles and connectivity dreams that, while attempting to escape the drag of the real world, invariably fail to do so. Instead, they reproduce deceleration and stagnation. In order to understand this dialectic, the idea of ‘actually existing capitalism’ is useful. It is derived from ‘actually existing socialism’ coined by Rudolf Bahro to critically interrogate the East Germany of the 1970s (Bahro, 1978). While the party habitually described the German Democratic Republic as a workers’ paradise on earth, actually existing socialism was the negative reality of everyday shortages, regimentation and corruption. The qualifier ‘actually existing’ is a relational concept that seeks to rhetorically deflate self-serving affirmationism by drawing attention to the actual conditions of existence.

#### We straight McCarthy

Kelley, 15—Gary B. Nash Professor of American History at UCLA (Robin D.G., “Beyond Black Lives Matter,” Kalfou, Vol. 2, Iss. 2, (Fall 2015): 330-337, dml)

This implicit appeal to acknowledge us-to recognize our humanity, our dignity, and our right to live-is understandable in a world where the statesanctioned killing and caging of Black bodies is routine. But as George Lipsitz observed, such appeals are embedded in a humanist logic that emphasizes "interiority" and feeling, thereby elevating "the cultivation of sympathy over the creation of social justice."7 That is to say, our feelings of empathy in any representation of suffering are designed to be understood and individually felt rather than transformed into collective praxis. This is partly why concepts like reparations are so antithetical to modern liberalism. Given the trauma produced by an endless video loop of Black people dying at the hands of police officers who are almost never indicted, let alone prosecuted and convicted, collective healing and the cultivation of sympathy are to be expected. On one hand, this makes the movement's counterslogan, "All Lives Matter," all the more offensive and painful. "All Lives Matter" is heard and felt as a belittling or decentering of anti-Black racism. It trades on postracial myths of equivalency in suffering. On the other hand, sometimes we react to "All Lives Matter" with such hostility that it stands in as an unambiguous expression of anti-Black racism. Can we salvage these words? Don't we want to build a world in which every life is valuable, cherished, and sustained? Are we not seeking a world that recognizes multiple sites of dispossession and recognizes that state violence inside US borders is inseparable from US militarism around the world? The fact that we are compelled to a defensive position is a consequence of focusing on proving our value rather than critiquing the system that devalues all of us and destroys the world in the process.

The veracity of our humanity was never the issue-then or now. The problem lies with Western civilization's very construction of the human. As Sylvia Wynter, Cedric Robinson, Aimé Césaire and others have been saying for decades, the "Negro" was an invention, a fiction-like that of the Indian, the Oriental, the "Mexican," etc. Or in Frantz Fanon's oft-quoted line from The Wretched of the Earth: "It is the colonist who fabricated and continues to fabricate the colonized subject."8 Indeed, the entire structure of global white supremacy depends on such inventions, like the fictions of the Arab as non- or anti-Western and the "Immigrant" as essentially Latino/a, or the notion that indigenous people (in North America at least) are all dead. This is why we have such a hard time acknowledging that most so-called immigrants from Mexico and Central America are, in fact, indigenous.

The very foundations of Western civilization were built on such fabrications and enacted through violence. Once they crumble, so goes Western civilization's conceit as well as the massive philosophical smokescreen that enables (racial) capitalism-the greatest, most destructive, most violent crime wave in history-to masquerade as the engine of progress, a pure expression of freedom and liberty, the only path to human emancipation. The modern world that invented the Negro, the Oriental, the Indian, and the Savage as a means of inventing European Man was built on the theft of humans, theft of land and water, indiscriminate murder, violation of customary rights, moral economy, enclosure of the commons, destruction of the planet-outright lawlessness, justified by supposed rationality or what Weber might call instrumental rationality. To leave it at Black Lives Matter unintentionally conceals the crime. After all, these were the very processes that birthed the liberal humanism to which BLM activists seem to appeal.

In his book Forgeries of Memory and Meaning, Cedric Robinson further elaborates on the systems of racial maintenance and myth making, the "racial regimes" responsible for the inventions of the Negro (the Indian, the Oriental) and their relation to capital. What exactly are racial regimes? In Robinson's words, they "are constructed social systems in which race is proposed as a justification for the relations of power." The power is real and formidable but surprisingly unstable. For Robinson, "the covering conceit of a racial regime is a makeshift patchwork masquerading as memory and the immutable. Nevertheless, racial regimes do possess history, that is, discernible origins and mechanisms of assembly. But racial regimes are unrelentingly hostile to their exhibition."9 In other words, to say that anti-Blackness is foundational to Western civilization is not to say that it is fixed or permanent. On the contrary, it is incredibly fragile and must be constantly remade; it is epiphenomenal to the production of Blackness-which is an essential component of modern racial regimes, but not its totality. In the last century alone, racial regimes have been remade, reconfigured, destabilized, and consolidated many times, employing new technologies to circulate old racial fabulations and new fictions in the process of capitalist expansion.

Proving one's humanity will not uproot racial regimes, for the very evidence of our humanity is their raison d'etre. Our exploitation is evidence of our value, but it requires enormous intellectual, juridical, and psychic resources to conceal our humanity. Slavery was not just social death, but was based on a cost-benefit analysis that assumed the disposability of Black lives. The system of extracting surplus emerged within a logic of racial hierarchy and racial subjugation that dragged Africans, Asians, and Europeans proletarianized by enclosure to the lands of the Americas, Oceania, parts of South Asia and Africa, and the Eastern Mediterranean-where indigenous people were dispossessed, enslaved, or exploited by other means. Enclosure is yet another example of theft and violence masking as "law, order, security": backed by the rule of law, the state employs violence to discipline, to reclassify, to criminalize, and to destroy sovereignty and create disorder. Enclosure is part of this process of war-a war on the commons, which ultimately turns some of the expropriated people into a proletariat (including European industrial, maritime, and landless rural labor, as well as prostitutes and beggars), turns a portion into settlers, and sends a portion to the workhouse. Some are merely casualties whose flesh mingles with the earth and whose bodies-sometimes hanging from a tree or broken on the wheel-serve to terrorize those who resist the new discipline.10

While the value of Black labor may have ebbed and flowed with the changing character of the global economy, there has never been a moment in US history when our humanity mattered, when Black people could enjoy full privileges and protections of citizenship. But the same can be said of most of the planet-at least until the mid-twentieth century, although I would venture to say this is still the case. What Black resistance calls into question is the inhumanity of the system, the inhumanity of those who subjugate in the name of civilization; it insists that the survival of humanity (and this is not the humanity defined by the Enlightenment) depends on the complete destruction of racial capitalism, patriarchy, and regimes of normativity.

As I wrote in the aftermath of the George Zimmerman verdict, unless we come to terms with this history, we will continue to believe that the system just needs to be tweaked, or the right-wing fringe defeated, or our humanity acknowledged.11 We will miss the routine character of state violence; its origins in the very formation of colonialism, slavery, and capitalism; and the ways in which routine violence has become a central component of US policies, including drone warfare and targeted killing. We cannot change the situation simply by finding the right legal strategy, the best policies, or recognition.

#### Lesion, pharmacological, and deep brain stimulation studies provide empirical neurological support for psychoanalysis

Dall’Aglio 19 [John Dall’Aglio, Department of Cognitive, Linguistic, and Psychological Sciences, Brown University. Developmental Psychosomatics Laboratory, New York State Psychiatric Institute/Columbia University Medical Center.] “Of brains and Borromean knots: A Lacanian meta-neuropsychology” Neuropsychoanalysis, Vol. 21, 2019 (<https://doi.org/10.1080/15294145.2019.1619091>) – MZhu

Affective consciousness and the real

Recall the concept of the real as a negativity (non-representational insistence) which is present from the beginning. Das Ding emerges simultaneously with understanding yet is outside of it (Freud, 1895). Reason (or cognition, understood as a symbolic-imaginary function) cannot represent, and thereby cannot comprehend, the real. In this way, the limit of reason is within reason (Copjec, 2012; Laplanche, 2011).

Therefore, neural areas corresponding to the real should be constitutive of, but not identical with, cognitive functions. As non-representational, they should insist their presence through affect and the compulsive repetition of the drive. At the core of the subject, the real is also at the core of cognition, while simultaneously the limit of that cognition.

The drive (iteration, source/pressure) refers to the real (Johnston, 2013). Freud (1915a) defined drive as:

a concept on the frontier between the mental and the somatic, as the psychical representative of stimuli originating from within the organism and reaching the mind, as a measure of the demand made upon the mind for work in consequence of its connection with the body. (Freud, 1915a, pp. 121–122)

Drive, thereby, refers to the demand upon the mind concerning bodily needs. In the brain, the brainstem and diencephalon contain “need-detectors.” Each has a homeostatic set-point – for example, the ideal amount of salt to have in the blood. The hypothalamus and related systems closely monitor and modulate the internal body (see, for example, Waterson & Horvath, 2015; Williams, Harrold & Cutler, 2000; Woods, Seely, Prote, & Schwartz, 1993). These areas can be dynamically localized as important points of proximity between the body and the mind, and the locus of the pressure of the drive (Solms, 2013).

These diencephalic and upper brainstem systems are fundamentally affective (Panksepp, 1998; Solms, 2013). Deviations from set-points produce unpleasure, whereas moving towards the set-point generates pleasure. One major structure is the periaqueductal gray (PAG), which receives projections from these brainstem areas. Stimulation of the ventral columns of the PAG induces feelings of extreme pleasure, whereas stimulation of the dorsal columns corresponds to feelings of excruciating pain. Here, one finds the pleasure principle as a key dynamic in the process of maintaining homeostasis (Solms & Turnbull, 2002).

Importantly, this affective system is fundamental to consciousness, the feeling state of being. Disturbances to upper areas of the brain disrupt cognitive and emotional functions, but the subject retains affective being (Penfield & Jasper, 1954). For example, hydranencephalic patients are born with little-to-no cortex but intact subcortical affective circuits (Merker, 2007; Shewmon, Holmes, & Byrne, 1999). These patients are still conscious in the affective sense and respond to the environment through these circuits. Summarizing these various lines of evidence, Solms (2013) argues that consciousness can exist without cortex.

However, damage to these affective circuits significantly impairs consciousness (along with cognition). In fact, a lesion to the PAG completely wipes out consciousness, extinguishing affective being. This supports the critical role of the upper brainstem in the generation of consciousness (Moruzzi & Magoun, 1949), which leads Solms (2013) to conclude that affective consciousness is the bedrock of consciousness. Later cognitive functions of the cortex depend upon and are shaped by the affective circuits which function prior to them (Panksepp, 1998; Solms & Turnbull, 2002).

With its (extimate) relationship with the internal body via homeostasis and drives, the upper brainstem and associated structures correspond functionally to Freud’s id. In contrast, the cortical focus on exteroception corresponds to Freud’s ego. Since the upper brainstem is intrinsically conscious (i.e. its activity generates the affective bedrock of consciousness) and the cortex is dependent on the brainstem for consciousness, Solms (2013) argues that the id is fundamentally conscious. Rather than the nucleus of the unconscious, the id is the font of consciousness.

More specifically, the id (upper brainstem and associated structures) is affectively conscious. It generates being as a feeling state without representation. Through a Lacanian lens, this affective consciousness corresponds to the insistence of the real. It is non-representational, a primary affect (Lacan, 1997). It is beyond (indeed, prior to) cognition – constituting a limit, an impasse. Furthermore, as the bedrock of consciousness, it is constitutive of cognition. This fits well within Lacan’s conception of the real and the drive (Johnston, 2013a).

Affective instincts

Additionally, affective consciousness extends into the limbic system. Panksepp (1998) identifies seven affective systems: SEEKING, RAGE, PANIC, PLAY, CARE, LUST, and FEAR.7 Across mammals, they exhibit the same circuitry, neurotransmitters, and stereotyped motor functions (see Panksepp, 1998 for neuroanatomical details). A combination of lesion, pharmacological, and deep brain stimulation studies supports the dynamic localization of their functions.

SEEKING closely resembles the Freudian libidinal drive (Solms, 2012a). It is an objectless, volitional system that carries its own subjective quality of excitatory pleasure (as opposed to a reduction of tension). The rest of the circuits are more specialized. For example, RAGE characterizes the aggressive impulse to destroy that which frustrates the subject’s goals. PANIC activates in response to separation from a loved object, connoting separation-anxiety. Generally speaking, all seven systems generate a distinct response to an experience of the external world.

Furthermore, these experiences also concern socio-emotional needs, such as attachment needs in the PANIC system (Solms, 2012b). These limbic circuits qualitatively elaborate upper brainstem affective consciousness through distinct socio-emotional needs. These affective instincts prepare the organism to interact with the world and meet its needs, albeit in a rough-and-ready way (Solms & Turnbull, 2002).

Insofar as these affective instincts are prepared for certain types of experiences, I would suggest that they are not the real proper and are better localized at the intersection of the real and the imaginary. Nevertheless, they also have built in “holes” – the potential to acquire new objects. For example, the FEAR system has certain built-in objects (such as a fear of falling). However, it also has the potential to learn new objects, such as electrical outlets. This potential is never exhausted, for these areas are subject to neuroplasticity (Ansermet & Magistretti, 2007; Solms & Turnbull, 2002). I suggest that these seven affective instincts might be considered “highways” from the real to the symbolic-imaginary. Similarly, Verhaeghe (2004) highlights Panksepp’s (1998) instincts as potential neurobiological underpinnings in the child’s turn to the Other (symbolic-imaginary registers) to answer the pressure of the drive (the real).

These instincts contrast with the upper brainstem homeostatic drives. Each instinct represents a socio-emotional need. In the perspective of drive as representative of bodily need (i.e. located in brainstem and diencephalon “need-detectors”), there is not much flexibility in terms of what objects might satisfy the drive. Only water can satisfy the demand made upon the mind when dehydrated, for example. However, affective instincts are more flexible – emotional needs may find any number of objects.

Therefore, the flexibility attributed to the psychoanalytic drive (i.e. alteration, the aim and object) corresponds with the plasticity and potentiality of these affective instincts. In contrast, the brainstem, corresponds to the real of the drive (i.e. iteration, the source and pressure). Indeed, drive itself is split – here, neuro-structurally and evolutionarily, for the affective instincts are more evolutionarily recent than the upper brainstem (Solms & Turnbull, 2002). For Lacan, the tension of the drive is never eliminated. SEEKING corresponds best to this notion of excitatory pleasure in the drive, for it is innately objectless (Solms, 2012a). However, this inexhaustibility may be attributed to all seven affective instincts.

#### It’s the best metric, the relationality between crack and blacks can only be explained through the libidinal economy and not through the cost benefit analysis of a political action.

Chico et al 11 (A Primer on "Libidinal Economy" in Relation to Black Folks. Cosmic Hoboes: An Afropessimist Meditation (No)Space. <https://cosmichoboes.blogspot.com/2011/08/primer-on-libidinal-economy-in-relation.html>)

People who are interested in struggle need to understand the "libidinal economy." Coalition politicos like Al Sharpton like to tell us to put the unique experiences of black folks in the backseat to the interests of poor folks more generally. Such politicians expect us to submerge our interests as black people on the assumption that if poor people in general benefit from a political concession, poor black people will share equally in such benefits. Such politicos will continue to ignore the repeated evidence that a lot of nonblack people hate black people, even if doing so costs them money. If someone tells you that the problems black folks face are really just the problems that poor people face, they are telling you to ignore the libidinal economy. They are telling you that the political economy of capitalism is more important than the libidinal economy of antiblack racism. What is "libidinal economy"? In Red, White, and Black: Cinema and the Structure of U.S. Antagonisms (2010, Duke University Press), black political theorist Frank Wilderson highlights the distinction between political economy and libidinal economy (p. 9): Jared Sexton describes libidinal economy as “the economy, or distribution and arrangement, of desire and identification (their condensation and displacement), and the complex relationship between sexuality and the unconscious.” Needless to say, libidinal economy functions variously across scales and is as “objective” as political economy. Importantly, it is linked not only to forms of attraction, affection and alliance, but also to aggression, destruction, and the violence of lethal consumption. He emphasizes that it is “the whole structure of psychic and emotional life,” something more than, but inclusive of or traversed by, what Gramsci and other marxists call a “structure of feeling”; it is “a dispensation of energies, concerns, points of attention, anxieties, pleasures, appetites, revulsions, and phobias capable of both great mobility and tenacious fixation.” What does all this mean? Let's interpret this elaborate definition and get to how it thinks of "economy." When we think of economy, we usually think of something having to do with money. Wilderson uses the term political economy to refer to economy in the ways that we usually think of it: the ways people exchange materials and decide on how things are valued. Economy doesn't just mean the economy in the sense of the stock market or banks, but also any means of determining whether something is worth doing or possessing based on how much capital and labor power it yields. In struggle, we see over and over that money talks and bullshit walks. Economy has to do with what they value moves people to act. Economies are therefore very important to political action. But can there be an economy that exchanges something other than money or capital? Yes. To understand "economy" as Wilderson and Sexton use it, we have to think of economy in a more general way as things of all kinds that we can trade or save. You can accumulate not only cash or material items, but also fears and desires. Certain people accumulate more fear (the black athlete) and desire (the blonde cheerleader) than others. The term libidinal economy refers to the systems of exchange and valuation for fantasies, desires, fears, aversions, and enjoyment. Economy is about exchange and accumulation. Everyone feels fear and aggression, but where is it directed? The libidinal is about both people's desires, fantasies, and pleasures AND their phobias, fears, and violent consumptions. A libidinal economy has to do with which groups a subject is attracted to, which groups it is willing to form alliances with, and which people it is willing to provide affection to. Where can we see this libidinal economy? How can we illustrate this distinction? The libido is the collection of things like phobias and desires that are unconscious and invisible but that have a visible effect on the world, including the money economy. Some examples: We see libidinal economies at work any time there is a response by state that is out of all proportion to the material effects of any practice they are regulating. The USA incarcerates three million people, despite the fact that doing so has an adverse impact on US financial security. Hence the libidinal economy of the fear of black and brown people (who together comprise the overwhelming majority of inmates) trumps the political economy of the cost-benefit analysis of maintaining prisons. Let's take another example of the powder - versus crack-cocaine distinction, in which the same drug is punished differently at the federal level. Because the two drugs are chemically identical, there shouldn't be any distinction between how their use and sale is punished. In 2010, the law made it so that these two drugs were punished the same, although the Obama administration isn't in any hurry to make the abolition of this distinction retroactive so that the mostly black and brown people who are locked up because of it will get released. But the legal abolition of this distinction is not essential for us to look at. What is essential is why that distinction was made in the first place. Wilderson's work suggests that, for civil society, black people pose a threat that has nothing to do with the chemical content or the social and cultural effects of crack. Simply by being associated with black people, crack is seen as 100 times more threatening than is powder cocaine. The financial and social costs of locking all those black and brown people up and the financial and social costs of allowing all those white people to go free and continue to sell does not really matter to civil society. What the powder- versus crack-cocaine distinction shows is the desire to contain the threat that blackness symbolizes. This is the mark of libidinal economy. Cops, soldiers, firemen are considered sexually desirable because they become the heroes of civil society. The Oscar Grant shooting. Amadou Diallo was a victim of a extreme kind of violence because of the phobias that converged on his body. What is the exchange? Civil society has an anxiety about crime, and crime is always attached to black in urban areas. Police don't have to get a monetary award, but they get the gratitude of civil society. How does this play out in ways that don't have to do strictly with money? The desire for them may not show up in the amount of money they make. Cops get rewarded for their aggression. When the cop slammed dude into the glass at BART. Prison guards, thought of as having the toughest beat on the planet. They get rewarded for being the last line of defense against George Jackson. Oscar Grant was an accumulation of aggression and phobias. Why are the black people in Prince George's County, Maryland, segregated from white people in their same socioeconomic bracket with the same kinds of high-value real estate, and the same kinds of political-economic values? Living around white people has a value that cannot be explained in strictly monetary terms. AFDC benefited mostly white single mothers, and enjoyed a long history of support from 1936-the 1960s. It initially excluded black people. By the 1960s, when black people started getting it, attitudes changed toward it, making it seem like it was undeserved and a drain on national prosperity, and by 1984, when Ronald Reagan referred to "welfare queens in Cadillacs," it was clear that AFDC was "a black thing." In actual statistical terms, it was still used mostly by white women. But once it became associated with poor black women, it was seen as in need of drastic, radical reforms. But is this "libidinal economy" really that important? Frank Wilderson is using the distinction between a money economy and an economy of desire over and over again throughout this book. Wilderson talks about this by talking about the difference between word and deed. This is not the hypocrisy of the system. It IS the logic of the system. So Europeans tried to resolve the lack of labor power by passing laws that reduced homeless white people to the status of slaves. In the end, however, they never really enforced these laws. Wilderson quotes David Eltis, an economic historian, who says that the costs of settling the "new world" would have been significantly reduced if Europeans has simply enslaved other Europeans. But, Wilderson points out, "what Whites would have gained in economic value, they would have lost in symbolic value; and it is the [symbolic value] which structures the libidinal economy of civil society." In other words, the symbolic costs of Europeans enslaving other Europeans would have been too great. Instead, they went to Africa for their slaves, even though the financial cost of doing so was much, much greater. The radical left doesn't make this distinction. Cornel West and Tavis Smiley say they want to organize a new Poor People's Campaign, but they won't be able to explain why this is a failed project from the start. This is because they won't think about the aspects of coalition building that have nothing to do with money or the lack of money. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the so-called "Reagan Democrats" were poor and working-class white people, many of them in unions, who voted overwhelmingly for Reagan against their own economic interest. The white left mistakenly thinks about the Reagan Democrats as people who were duped. They view them as an example of what Marx called "false consciousness" and they see it as their duty to inform the white poor and working class of why they should vote left. But there were all kinds of signs that white poor and working-class folks simply hated black people and didn't want to live anywhere that there was a large community of black people, even if those black people are of the same or higher socioeconomic status. The Reagan Democrats were excited by Reagan's antiblack rhetoric of law and order, a rhetoric that was in response against the activities of the Black Liberation Army, Weather Underground, Black Panthers, and Black Guerilla Family. Marxists think a person is in a state of false consciousness if her political or social interests go another way than her material or financial interests. If you adopt this view, then you probably think that the Reagan Democrats just need to be educated correctly about what they have in common with the black poor and working class. You have to think that their hatred of black people is somehow "false" simply because it runs counter to their financial interests. But this would be to ignore their interest in maintaining white supremacy and antiblack racism. One of the things white men would lose would be access to black bodies for sexual pleasure and amusement. These examples are not just isolated cases of false consciousness, ignorance, media manipulation, or some mystical thing called "prejudice." They are all of those things, but they are also something much, much greater that any student of struggle needs to be aware of. These examples reveal the contours of an economy of desires that is not primarily concerned with money. It's not that the political economy isn't also antiblack. In fact, both economies are antiblack.

### Case

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

**Schotten, 18**—Associate Professor of Political Science and an affiliated faculty in Women's and Gender Studies, University of Massachusetts-Boston (C. Heike, “SOCIETY MUST BE DESTROYED,” *Queer Terror: Life, Death, and Desire in the Settler Colony* pg 108-111, dml)

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.