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#### Our interpretation is that negatives should not have the burden of rejoinder against affs that aren’t topical---winning that expanding the scope of core anti-trust laws is bad should always be a neg win condition

#### “Resolved” before colon denotes a formal resolution

**AWS ’13** [Army Writing Style; August 24th; Online resource dedicated to all major writing requirements in the Army; Army Writing Style, "Punctuation — The Colon and Semicolon," <https://armywritingstyle.com/punctuation-the-colon-and-semicolon/>; GR]

The colon introduces the following:

a.  A list, but only after "as follows," "the following," or a noun for which the list is an appositive: Each scout will carry the following: (colon) meals for three days, a survival knife, and his sleeping bag. The company had four new officers: (colon) Bill Smith, Frank Tucker, Peter Fillmore, and Oliver Lewis.

b.  A long quotation (one or more paragraphs): In The Killer Angels Michael Shaara wrote: (colon) You may find it a different story from the one you learned in school. There have been many versions of that battle [Gettysburg] and that war [the Civil War]. (The quote continues for two more paragraphs.)

c.  A formal quotation or question: The President declared: (colon) "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself." The question is: (colon) what can we do about it?

d.  A second independent clause which explains the first: Potter's motive is clear: (colon) he wants the assignment.

e.  After the introduction of a business letter: Dear Sirs: (colon) Dear Madam: (colon) f.  The details following an announcement For sale: (colon) large lakeside cabin with dock

g.  A formal resolution, after the word "resolved:". Resolved: (colon) That this council petition the mayor.

#### The “United States federal government” is the three branches

U.S. Legal ’16 [U.S. Legal; 2016; Organization offering legal assistance and attorney access; U.S. Legal, “United States Federal Government Law and Legal Definition,” <https://definitions.uslegal.com/u/united-states-federal-government/>; RP]

The United States Federal Government is established by the US Constitution. The Federal Government shares sovereignty over the United Sates with the individual governments of the States of US. The Federal government has three branches: i) the legislature, which is the US Congress, ii) Executive, comprised of the President and Vice president of the US and iii) Judiciary. The US Constitution prescribes a system of separation of powers and ‘checks and balances’ for the smooth functioning of all the three branches of the Federal Government. The US Constitution limits the powers of the Federal Government to the powers assigned to it; all powers not expressly assigned to the Federal Government are reserved to the States or to the people.

#### “Prohibitions” are laws forbidding actions

Garner ’19 [Bryan A; Editor in Chief of Black’s Law Dictionary; Westlaw, Black's Law Dictionary, Eleventh Edition, “Prohibitions”]

prohibition (15c) 1. A law or order that forbids a certain action; PROSCRIPTION (1).

#### “Anti-trust law” is controlled by the federal government

Sagers ’15 [Christopher L; 2015; the James A. Thomas Distinguished Professor of Law and Faculty Director of the Cleveland-Marshall Solo Practice Incubator; Handbook on the Scope of Antitrust, “Introduction,” Ch. 1, p. 9]

B. Sources of the Scope of Antitrust Law

The scope of federal antitrust law is governed by three separate authorities: (1) the U.S. Constitution, (2) the language of the antitrust statutes themselves, and (3) the language of other federal statutes and regulations.

#### Vote neg for predictability: allowing the affirmative to pick any grounds for the debate makes negative engagement impossible.

#### The impact is clash---advocating actions outside the resolution overstretches negative research burdens, which destroys second-level understanding and turns the case

Grossberg 15 **-** Morris Davis Distinguished Professor University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (Lawrence, We All Want to Change the World THE PARADOX OF THE U.S. LEFT A POLEMIC, <http://www.lwbooks.co.uk/ebooks/we_all_want_to_change_the_world.pdf>)

I will, in the following description, focus on the situation in the human sciences (rather than the hard sciences), where the explosion of publication creates an ever-expanding circle in which there is always too much to read—too many positions, too many arguments, too much contradictory evidence—so that scholars have to rely on either the author's stature or theoretical and/or political agreement. It has become almost impossible to read everything one must read, everything necessary to legitimate, at least in traditional terms, the claim of academic expertise or scholarship. In fact, given this situation (and its consequences as I will describe below), the most surprising thing is how much good work continues to be produced. This situation has serious consequences: First, one's expertise becomes defined in increasingly narrow terms, resulting in the proliferation of sub-fields.9 **[insert footnote 9]** For example, one might point to security studies, surveillance studies, transition studies, game studies, code studies, hip-hop studies, horror studies, etc. **[Footnote 9 ends]** And while each of them is valuable for their interdisciplinary efforts around a new empirical field, they all too often act as if the questions (and the realities they interrogate) are new; unfortunately, they rarely say anything new or surprising, anything that has not been said elsewhere. They frequently simply re-discover in their own empirical "pocket" universe what others have said previously in other fields. For example, all sorts of technologically defined sub-fields rediscover the rather old assumption that media audiences are active. This is partly because, within each subfield, one gets the impression of witnessing endless redistributions of a highly circumscribed set of citations and authors, under a series of ever-changing terms to describe their fields or positions. So, academics create ever shrinking circles in which authors cite a few theoretically and politically compatible works, and then follow the footnotes, all of which ultimately lead back to the original authors, creating an endlessly self-referential closed system of citations, a numbingly predictable, circular tissue of references. Second, one is less likely to read work that appears tangential but may nevertheless be absolutely decisive to producing truly interesting and insightful research. Asking significant questions should demand that one makes reference to all sorts of concepts and questions which would lead one to follow other unexpected traditions and lines of research, since any investigation (e.g., around questions of participation, publics, or leadership, to use only a few examples that have irked me recently) is likely to open up to an entire history of problematization, of conversations and debates, but who can afford the time and energy anymore. Third, one tends to read only the most recent work since so much is being published—in various media—so rapidly that there is little time to go back and read. Fourth, one tends to select one's sources according to criteria that have more to do with theoretical and political sympathies than with an understanding of research as a conversation with difference. One reads selectively, finding those ideas that are already in line with what one assumes one already knows, and one establishes a body of near-sacred texts; fifth, one selects topics that are au courant, partly because there is less scaffolding that one has to build upon and partly because one's work is more likely to gain visibility and impact. Sixth, complexity goes out the door as one increasingly "sees the world in a grain of sand." One can no longer be satisfied claiming to have discovered merely a new piece of a complex puzzle or even an interesting redeployment of an older practice or structure, because such claims do not bring fame and glory—either to oneself or the university. Instead, one has to have discovered the leading edge, the new key or essence. One good but relatively small idea is expanded into a metonym for the entire economy, culture or society. Instead of seeking new discursive forms to embody complexity, uncertainty and humility, one goes with elegance, hyperbole and the ever receding new.

#### Debates over the specific details of the implementation of a plan breaks cycles of polarization---debates about value systems in the abstract reinforce it

Wray Herbert 12 {Wray Herbert is the author of the book On Second Thought: Outsmarting Your Mind's Hard-Wired Habits. He is an award-winning journalist who has been writing about psychological science for more than 25 years. He’s citing Philip Fernbach, a psychological scientist at the University of Colorado. 9/26/2012. “Extremist Politics: Debating the Nuts and Bolts.” <https://www.huffpost.com/entry/extremist-politics-debating-the-nuts-and-bolts_b_1914307>}//JM

Starting next week and through October, President Barack Obama and Gov. Mitt Romney will face off in a series of four televised debates, designed to clarify the candidates’ positions on the most pressing public policy issues confronting the nation today. In place of the ideals and elegant rhetoric of the campaign trail, the leaders of the two major parties will have an opportunity to describe the nitty-gritty of governing: how they will deal with complex matters like affordable health care, foreign policy in the Middle East, job creation, equitable taxation, and more.

But the unfortunate reality is that Americans won’t get much in the way of detail and explanation. If history is any guide, the debate moderators will not press very hard for nuts and bolts, instead allowing the candidates to evade and attack and talk in unhelpful generalities. They will preach in pre-tested catch phrases to the already converted rather than really explaining the difficult day-to-day realities of decision making in a democracy.

Cynics will say that it doesn’t matter, that voters’ minds are made up anyway. But if national debates aren’t the venue for challenging citizens’ thinking, then what is? Voters need to understand the prosaic details of complex policies. Most have staked out positions on these issues, but they are not often reasoned positions, which take hard intellectual work. Most citizens opt instead for simplistic explanations, assuming wrongly that they comprehend the nuances of issues.

Psychological scientists have a name for this easy, automatic, simplistic thinking: the illusion of explanatory depth. We strongly believe that we understand complex matters, when in fact we are clueless, and these false and extreme beliefs shape our preferences, judgments, and actions — including our votes.

Is it possible to shake such deep-rooted convictions? That’s the question that Philip Fernbach, **a psychological scientist at the University of Colorado’s Leeds School of Business,** wanted to explore. Fernbach and his colleagues wondered if forcing people to explain complex policies in detail — not cheerleading for a position but really considering the mechanics of implementation — might force them to confront their ignorance and thus weaken their extremist stands on issues. They ran a series of lab experiments to test this idea.

They started by recruiting a group of volunteers in their 30s — Democrats, Republicans, and Independents — and asking them to state their positions on a variety of issues, from a national flat tax to a cap-and-trade system for carbon emissions. They indicated how strongly the felt about each issue and also rated their own understanding of the issues. Then the volunteers were instructed to write elaborate explanations of two issues. If the issue was cap and trade, for example, they would first explain precisely what cap and trade means, how it is implemented, whom it benefits and whom it could hurt, the sources of carbon emissions, and so forth. They were not asked for value judgments about the policy or about the environment or business, but only for a highly detailed description of the mechanics of the policy in action.

Let’s be honest: Most of us never do this. Fernbach’s idea was that such an exercise would force many to realize just how little they really know about cap and trade, and confronted with their own ignorance, they would dampen their own enthusiasm. They would be humbled and as a result take less extreme positions. And that’s just what happened. Trying — and failing — to explain complex policies undermined the extremists’ illusions about being well-informed. They became more moderate in their views as a result.

Being forced to articulate the nuts and bolts of a policy is not the same as trying to sell that policy. In fact, talking about one’s views can often strengthen them. Fernbach believes it’s the slow, cognitive work — the deliberate analysis — that changes people’s judgments, but he wanted to check this in another experiment. This one was very similar to the first, but some volunteers, instead of explaining a policy, merely listed reasons for liking it. Consider universal health care, for example: It’s highly complex and challenging to explain, but much easier to label it “compassionate” or, alternatively, “European” or “socialist.” So some volunteers were assigned to do the hard explaining and others the simplistic labeling.

The results were clear. As described in a forthcoming issue of the journal Psychological Science, those who simply listed reasons for their positions — articulating their values — were less shaken in their views. They continued to think they understood the policies in their complexity, and, notably, they remained extreme in their passion for their positions. In a final version of the study, volunteers who were forced to confront their inadequate knowledge actually gave less money to the cause, suggesting that with their extremism attenuated, they actually acted more moderately.

Americans in 2012 are about as polarized and partisan as they’ve ever been, and such polarization tends to reinforce itself. People are unaware of their own ignorance, and they seek out information that bolsters their views, often without knowing it. They also process new information in biased ways, and they hang out with people like themselves. All of these psychological forces increase political extremism, and no simple measure will change that. But forcing the candidates to provide concrete and elaborate plans might be a start; it gives citizens a starting place. As former presidential hopeful Ross Perot famously stated, “The devil is in the details.”

#### If they make debate unpredictable for one side, they also make it unfair---that must be a voting issue because integrity of the game is a precondition for voting, and we’ve all implicitly agreed fairness is good by abiding by other norms---not voting for fairness elevates judge biases which are worse, but if you don’t think fairness is an impact, automatically vote neg even if they’re winning the debate.

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#### Their theory of black relationality is rooted in negative identity, which ensures endless rejection that forecloses political change.

Brown 1995 (Wendy, States of Injury: Power and Freedom in Late Modernity. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995). pp. 69-71)

Enter politicized identity, now conceivable in part as both product of and reaction to this condition, where "reaction" acquires the meaning Nietzsche ascribed to it: namely, an effect of domination that reiterates impotence, a substitute for action, for power, for self-affirmation that reinscribes incapacity, powerlessness, and rejection. For Nietzsche, ressentiment itself is rooted in reaction – the substitution of reasons, norms, and ethics for deeds – and he suggests that not only moral systems but identities themselves take their bearings in this reaction. As Tracy Strong reads this element of Nietzsche's thought:

Identity ... does not consist of an active component, but is reaction to something outside; action in itself, with its inevitable self-assertive qualities, must then become something evil, since it is identified with that against which one is reacting. The will to power of slave morality must constantly reassert that which gives definition to the slave: the pain he suffers by being in the world. Hence any attempt to escape that pain will merely result in the reaffirmation of painful structures.

If the "cause" of ressentiment is suffering, its "creative deed" is the reworking of this pain into a negative form of action, the ''imaginary revenge" of what Nietzsche terms "natures denied the true reaction, that of deeds. " This revenge is achieved through the imposition of suffering "on whatever does not feel wrath and displeasure as he does" (accomplished especially through the production of guilt), through the establishment of suffering as the measure of social virtue, and through casting strength and good fortune ("privilege," as we say today) as self-recriminating, as its own indictment in a culture of suffering: "it is disgraceful to be fortunate, there is too much misery. "

But in its attempt to displace its suffering, identity structured by ressentiment at the same time becomes invested in its own subjection.' This investment lies not only in its discovery of a site of blame for its hurt will, not only in its acquisition of recognition through its history of subjection (a recognition predicated on injury, now righteously revalued), but also in the satisfactions of revenge, which ceaselessly reenact even as they redistribute the injuries of marginalization and subordination in a liberal discursive order that alternately denies the very possibility of these things and blames those who experience them for their own condition. Identity politics structured by ressentiment reverse without subverting this blaming structure: they do not subject to critique the sovereign subject of accountability that liberal individualism presupposes, nor the economy of inclusion and exclusion that liberal universalism establishes. Thus, politicized identity that presents itself as a self-affirmation now appears as the opposite, as predicated on and requiring its sustained rejection by a "hostile external world."

Insofar as what Nietzsche calls slave morality produces identity in reaction to power, insofar as identity rooted in this reaction achieves its moral superiority by reproaching power and action themselves as evil, identity structured by this ethos becomes deeply invested in its own impotence, even while it seeks to assuage the pain of its powerlessness through its vengeful moralizing, through its wide distribution of suffering, through its reproach of power as such. Politicized identity, premised on exclusion and fueled by the humiliation and suffering imposed by its historically structured impotence in the context of a discourse of sovereign individuals, is as likely to seek generalized political [failure] ~~paralysis~~, to feast on generalized political impotence, as it is to seek its own or collective liberation through empowerment. Indeed, it is more likely to punish and reproach - "punishment is what revenge calls itself; with a hypocritical he it creates a good conscience for itself" than to find venues of self-affirming action.

#### The 1ac’s horizontalist vision of power results in an anarcho-libertarian fantasy---only an organized political force can solve

Dean et. Al., ’18 Jodi Dean, political theorist and professor in the Political Science department at Hobart and William Smith Colleges, held the position of Erasmus Professor of the Humanities in the Faculty of Philosophy at Erasmus University Rotterdam, received her B.A. in History from Princeton University and her MA, MPhil, and PhD from Columbia University, Tomislav Medak, a doctoral student at the Coventry University's Centre for Postdigital Cultures and a member of the theory and publishing team of the Multimedia Institute/MAMA in Zagreb, and Petar Jandrić, Professor and Director of BSc (Informatics) programme at the University of Applied Sciences in Zagreb and visiting Associate Professor at the University of Zagreb, August 29, 2018, “Embrace the Antagonism, Build the Party! The New Communist Horizon in and Against Communicative Capitalism”, Springer Nature Switzerland AG, EO

JD: For as long as the capitalist economy is dominant, capitalists will enclose and eat up whatever we make – like, for instance, Tomislav’s and Marcell’s analysis of the open source code that Google has taken for themselves. It is not surprising at all that the same thing has happened with Bitcoin and I think that even if we manage to develop a new people’s Internet, it will be gobbled up as well. That is why I think that the important question concerns organizing people for the political fight. If we don’t want capitalism to always take everything, we must get rid of capitalism. The anarcho-horizontalist vision remains unable to grapple with the power laws that structure complex networks. Albert-Laszlo Barabasi’s Linked: How Everything Is Connected to Everything Else and What It Means for Business, Science, and Everyday Life (2003) shows that complex networks are not flat or horizontal at all. Complex networks are characterized by free choice, growth and preferential attachment. These three characteristics generate hubs, and their links are distributed according to power laws where the top (hub or most popular node) has twice as many links as the next one, which has twice as many at the next and so on. So there is the one at the top and the many at the bottom. The curve is thus very steep with a long flat tail. The horizontal processes favored by anarcho-libertarians create the conditions of hierarchy that they are against. It’s like they see the long tail, but not the hierarchy, the steep curve. Dismantling this structure requires a larger organized force. Once one understands the structure of complex networks, it’s not surprising that communicative capitalism generates monopoly, it makes perfect sense, that’s what its dynamic unleashes.

#### Capitalism causes war, violence, environmental destruction and extinction

Robinson, PhD Sociology, 16 (William I, professor of sociology, global studies and Latin American studies at the University of California at Santa Barbara <http://www.truth-out.org/opinion/item/35596-sadistic-capitalism-six-urgent-matters-for-humanity-in-global-crisis>)

In these mean streets of globalized capitalism in crisis, it has become profitable to turn poverty and inequality into a tourist attraction. The South African Emoya Luxury Hotel and Spa company has made a glamorized spectacle of it. The resort recently advertised an opportunity for tourists to stay "in our unique Shanty Town ... and experience traditional township living within a safe private game reserve environment." A cluster of simulated shanties outside of Bloemfontein that the company has constructed "is ideal for team building, braais, bachelors [parties], theme parties and an experience of a lifetime," read the ad. The luxury accommodations, made to appear from the outside as shacks, featured paraffin lamps, candles, a battery-operated radio, an outside toilet, a drum and fireplace for cooking, as well as under-floor heating, air conditioning and wireless internet access. A well-dressed, young white couple is pictured embracing in a field with the corrugated tin shanties in the background. The only thing missing in this fantasy world of sanitized space and glamorized poverty was the people themselves living in poverty. Escalating inequalities fuel capitalism's chronic problem of over-accumulation. The "luxury shanty town" in South Africa is a fitting metaphor for global capitalism as a whole. Faced with a stagnant global economy, elites have managed to turn war, structural violence and inequality into opportunities for capital, pleasure and entertainment. It is hard not to conclude that unchecked capitalism has become what I term "sadistic capitalism," in which the suffering and deprivation generated by capitalism become a source of aesthetic pleasure, leisure and entertainment for others. I recently had the opportunity to travel through several countries in Latin America, the Middle East, North Africa, East Asia and throughout North America. I was on sabbatical to research what the global crisis looks like on the ground around the world. Everywhere I went, social polarization and political tensions have reached explosive dimensions. Where is the crisis headed, what are the possible outcomes and what does it tell us about global capitalism and resistance? This crisis is not like earlier structural crises of world capitalism, such as in the 1930s or 1970s. This one is fast becoming systemic. The crisis of humanity shares aspects of earlier structural crises of world capitalism, but there are six novel, interrelated dimensions to the current moment that I highlight here, in broad strokes, as the "big picture" context in which countries and peoples around the world are experiencing a descent into chaos and uncertainty. 1) The level of global social polarization and inequality is unprecedented in the face of out-of-control, over-accumulated capital. In January 2016, the development agency Oxfam published a follow-up to its report on global inequality that had been released the previous year. According to the new report, now just 62 billionaires -- down from 80 identified by the agency in its January 2015 report -- control as much wealth as one half of the world's population, and the top 1% owns more wealth than the other 99% combined. Beyond the transnational capitalist class and the upper echelons of the global power bloc, the richest 20 percent of humanity owns some 95 percent of the world's wealth, while the bottom 80 percent has to make do with just 5 percent. This 20-80 divide of global society into haves and the have-nots is the new global social apartheid. It is evident not just between rich and poor countries, but within each country, North and South, with the rise of new affluent high-consumption sectors alongside the downward mobility, "precariatization," destabilization and expulsion of majorities. Escalating inequalities fuel capitalism's chronic problem of over-accumulation: The transnational capitalist class cannot find productive outlets to unload the enormous amounts of surplus it has accumulated, leading to stagnation in the world economy. The signs of an impending depression are everywhere. The front page of the February 20 issue of The Economist read, "The World Economy: Out of Ammo?" Extreme levels of social polarization present a challenge to dominant groups. They strive to purchase the loyalty of that 20 percent, while at the same time dividing the 80 percent, co-opting some into a hegemonic bloc and repressing the rest. Alongside the spread of frightening new systems of social control and repression is heightened dissemination through the culture industries and corporate marketing strategies that depoliticize through consumerist fantasies and the manipulation of desire. As "Trumpism" in the United States so well illustrates, another strategy of co-optation is the manipulation of fear and insecurity among the downwardly mobile so that social anxiety is channeled toward scapegoated communities. This psychosocial mechanism of displacing mass anxieties is not new, but it appears to be increasing around the world in the face of the structural destabilization of capitalist globalization. Scapegoated communities are under siege, such as the Rohingya in Myanmar, the Muslim minority in India, the Kurds in Turkey, southern African immigrants in South Africa, and Syrian and Iraqi refugees and other immigrants in Europe. As with its 20th century predecessor, 21st century fascism hinges on such manipulation of social anxiety at a time of acute capitalist crisis. Extreme inequality requires extreme violence and repression that lend to projects of 21st century fascism. 2) The system is fast reaching the ecological limits to its reproduction. We have reached several tipping points in what environmental scientists refer to as nine crucial "planetary boundaries." We have already exceeded these boundaries in three areas -- climate change, the nitrogen cycle and diversity loss. There have been five previous mass extinctions in earth's history. While all these were due to natural causes, for the first time ever, human conduct is intersecting with and fundamentally altering the earth system. We have entered what Paul Crutzen, the Dutch environmental scientist and Nobel Prize winner, termed the Anthropocene -- a new age in which humans have transformed up to half of the world's surface. We are altering the composition of the atmosphere and acidifying the oceans at a rate that undermines the conditions for life. The ecological dimensions of global crisis cannot be understated. "We are deciding, without quite meaning to, which evolutionary pathways will remain open and which will forever be closed," observes Elizabeth Kolbert in her best seller, The Sixth Extinction. "No other creature has ever managed this ... The Sixth Extinction will continue to determine the course of life long after everything people have written and painted and built has been ground into dust." Capitalism cannot be held solely responsible. The human-nature contradiction has deep roots in civilization itself. The ancient Sumerian empires, for example, collapsed after the population over-salinated their crop soil. The Mayan city-state network collapsed about AD 900 due to deforestation. And the former Soviet Union wrecked havoc on the environment. However, given capital's implacable impulse to accumulate profit and its accelerated commodification of nature, it is difficult to imagine that the environmental catastrophe can be resolved within the capitalist system. "Green capitalism" appears as an oxymoron, as sadistic capitalism's attempt to turn the ecological crisis into a profit-making opportunity, along with the conversion of poverty into a tourist attraction. 3) The sheer magnitude of the means of violence is unprecedented, as is the concentrated control over the means of global communications and the production and circulation of knowledge, symbols and images. We have seen the spread of frightening new systems of social control and repression that have brought us into the panoptical surveillance society and the age of thought control. This real-life Orwellian world is in a sense more perturbing than that described by George Orwell in his iconic novel 1984. In that fictional world, people were compelled to give their obedience to the state ("Big Brother") in exchange for a quiet existence with guarantees of employment, housing and other social necessities. Now, however, the corporate and political powers that be force obedience even as the means of survival are denied to the vast majority. Global apartheid involves the creation of "green zones" that are cordoned off in each locale around the world where elites are insulated through new systems of spatial reorganization, social control and policing. "Green zone" refers to the nearly impenetrable area in central Baghdad that US occupation forces established in the wake of the 2003 invasion of Iraq. The command center of the occupation and select Iraqi elite inside that green zone were protected from the violence and chaos that engulfed the country. Urban areas around the world are now green zoned through gentrification, gated communities, surveillance systems, and state and private violence. Inside the world's green zones, privileged strata avail themselves of privatized social services, consumption and entertainment. They can work and communicate through internet and satellite sealed off under the protection of armies of soldiers, police and private security forces. Green zoning takes on distinct forms in each locality. In Palestine, I witnessed such zoning in the form of Israeli military checkpoints, Jewish settler-only roads and the apartheid wall. In Mexico City, the most exclusive residential areas in the upscale Santa Fe District are accessible only by helicopter and private gated roads. In Johannesburg, a surreal drive through the exclusive Sandton City area reveals rows of mansions that appear as military compounds, with private armed towers and electrical and barbed-wire fences. In Cairo, I toured satellite cities ringing the impoverished center and inner suburbs where the country's elite could live out their aspirations and fantasies. They sport gated residential complexes with spotless green lawns, private leisure and shopping centers and English-language international schools under the protection of military checkpoints and private security police. In other cities, green zoning is subtler but no less effective. In Los Angeles, where I live, the freeway system now has an express lane reserved for those that can pay an exorbitant toll. On this lane, the privileged speed by, while the rest remain one lane over, stuck in the city's notorious bumper-to-bumper traffic -- or even worse, in notoriously underfunded and underdeveloped public transportation, where it may take half a day to get to and from work. There is no barrier separating this express lane from the others. However, a near-invisible closed surveillance system monitors every movement. If a vehicle without authorization shifts into the exclusive lane, it is instantly recorded by this surveillance system and a heavy fine is imposed on the driver, under threat of impoundment, while freeway police patrols are ubiquitous. Outside of the global green zones, warfare and police containment have become normalized and sanitized for those not directly at the receiving end of armed aggression. "Militainment" -- portraying and even glamorizing war and violence as entertaining spectacles through Hollywood films and television police shows, computer games and corporate "news" channels -- may be the epitome of sadistic capitalism. It desensitizes, bringing about complacency and indifference. In between the green zones and outright warfare are prison industrial complexes, immigrant and refugee repression and control systems, the criminalization of outcast communities and capitalist schooling. The omnipresent media and cultural apparatuses of the corporate economy, in particular, aim to colonize the mind -- to undermine the ability to think critically and outside the dominant worldview. A neofascist culture emerges through militarism, extreme masculinization, racism and racist mobilizations against scapegoats. 4) We are reaching limits to the extensive expansion of capitalism. Capitalism is like riding a bicycle: When you stop pedaling the bicycle, you fall over. If the capitalist system stops expanding outward, it enters crisis and faces collapse. In each earlier structural crisis, the system went through a new round of extensive expansion -- from waves of colonial conquest in earlier centuries, to the integration in the late 20th and early 21st centuries of the former socialist countries, China, India and other areas that had been marginally outside the system. There are no longer any new territories to integrate into world capitalism. Meanwhile, the privatization of education, health care, utilities, basic services and public land are turning those spaces in global society that were outside of capital's control into "spaces of capital." Even poverty has been turned into a commodity. What is there left to commodify? Where can the system now expand? With the limits to expansion comes a turn toward militarized accumulation -- making wars of endless destruction and reconstruction and expanding the militarization of social and political institutions so as to continue to generate new opportunities for accumulation in the face of stagnation. 5) There is the rise of a vast surplus population inhabiting a "planet of slums," alienated from the productive economy, thrown into the margins and subject to these sophisticated systems of social control and destruction. Global capitalism has no direct use for surplus humanity. But indirectly, it holds wages down everywhere and makes new systems of 21st century slavery possible. These systems include prison labor, the forced recruitment of miners at gunpoint by warlords contracted by global corporations to dig up valuable minerals in the Congo, sweatshops and exploited immigrant communities (including the rising tide of immigrant female caregivers for affluent populations). Furthermore, the global working class is experiencing accelerated "precariatization." The "new precariat" refers to the proletariat that faces capital under today's unstable and precarious labor relations -- informalization, casualization, part-time, temp, immigrant and contract labor. As communities are uprooted everywhere, there is a rising reserve army of immigrant labor. The global working class is becoming divided into citizen and immigrant workers. The latter are particularly attractive to transnational capital, as the lack of citizenship rights makes them particularly vulnerable, and therefore, exploitable. The challenge for dominant groups is how to contain the real and potential rebellion of surplus humanity, the immigrant workforce and the precariat. How can they contain the explosive contradictions of this system? The 21st century megacities become the battlegrounds between mass resistance movements and the new systems of mass repression. Some populations in these cities (and also in abandoned countryside) are at risk of genocide, such as those in Gaza, zones in Somalia and Congo, and swaths of Iraq and Syria. 6) There is a disjuncture between a globalizing economy and a nation-state-based system of political authority. Transnational state apparatuses are incipient and do not wield enough power and authority to organize and stabilize the system, much less to impose regulations on runaway transnational capital. In the wake of the 2008 financial collapse, for instance, the governments of the G-8 and G-20 were unable to impose transnational regulation on the global financial system, despite a series of emergency summits to discuss such regulation. Elites historically have attempted to resolve the problems of over-accumulation by state policies that can regulate the anarchy of the market. However, in recent decades, transnational capital has broken free from the constraints imposed by the nation-state. The more "enlightened" elite representatives of the transnational capitalist class are now clamoring for transnational mechanisms of regulation that would allow the global ruling class to reign in the anarchy of the system in the interests of saving global capitalism from itself and from radical challenges from below. At the same time, the division of the world into some 200 competing nation-states is not the most propitious of circumstances for the global working class. Victories in popular struggles from below in any one country or region can (and often do) become diverted and even undone by the structural power of transnational capital and the direct political and military domination that this structural power affords the dominant groups. In Greece, for instance, the leftist Syriza party came to power in 2015 on the heels of militant worker struggles and a mass uprising. But the party abandoned its radical program as a result of the enormous pressure exerted on it from the European Central Bank and private international creditors. The Systemic Critique of Global Capitalism A growing number of transnational elites themselves now recognize that any resolution to the global crisis must involve redistribution downward of income. However, in the viewpoint of those from below, a neo-Keynesian redistribution within the prevailing corporate power structure is not enough. What is required is a redistribution of power downward and transformation toward a system in which social need trumps private profit. A global rebellion against the transnational capitalist class has spread since the financial collapse of 2008. Wherever one looks, there is popular, grassroots and leftist struggle, and the rise of new cultures of resistance: the Arab Spring; the resurgence of leftist politics in Greece, Spain and elsewhere in Europe; the tenacious resistance of Mexican social movements following the Ayotzinapa massacre of 2014; the favela uprising in Brazil against the government's World Cup and Olympic expulsion policies; the student strikes in Chile; the remarkable surge in the Chinese workers' movement; the shack dwellers and other poor people's campaigns in South Africa; Occupy Wall Street, the immigrant rights movement, Black Lives Matter, fast food workers' struggle and the mobilization around the Bernie Sanders presidential campaign in the United States. This global revolt is spread unevenly and faces many challenges. A number of these struggles, moreover, have suffered setbacks, such as the Greek working-class movement and, tragically, the Arab Spring. What type of a transformation is viable, and how do we achieve it? How we interpret the global crisis is itself a matter of vital importance as politics polarize worldwide between a neofascist and a popular response. The systemic critique of global capitalism must strive to influence, from this vantage point, the discourse and practice of movements for a more just distribution of wealth and power. Our survival may depend on it.

#### The alternative is to build solidarity around a mass socialist movement.

Dudzic & Reed 15 (Mark - National Organizer and Chairman of the United States Labor Party & Adolph - professor of political science at the University of Pennsylvania, “THE CRISIS OF LABOUR AND THE LEFT IN THE UNITED STATES,” p. 364-367, *Socialist Register*)

This does not mean that those who embrace a transformative vision must abandon all hope. Rather, the priorities, activities and resources of those who would rebuild a real left must be informed by this strategic sensibility. Building or rebuilding an effective left presence will be quite likely a decades-long process. This means that we are not well served by clambering after the Next Big Thing. We must start by excising the impulse – quite understandable for a political movement devoid of any real agency – toward utopian dreaming and wishful thinking. The spark will not ignite the prairie fire. Nor will the Ark float on its own account no matter how carefully we construct it. Recognizing the left’s political irrelevance can be emancipating, as it reduces the sense of urgency to try to mobilize around every one of neoliberalism’s daily outrages. That should provide space for serious strategic discussion of how to begin to build a mass socialist movement based in the working class and the creation of new institutions capable of mobilizing cross-class solidarity, as Sam Gindin has articulated in a particularly clear and compelling way.25 Certainly, the US left could benefit from a nonsectarian, organized force with a coherent strategic vision and programme. The absence of a disciplined, unified and sophisticated group of cadre is a major source of the left’s incoherence, and helps explain why moments of spontaneous political upsurge have had, at best, an episodic impact and remain unconnected to similar moments in the past – even those in which the same activists have participated. Such organization, however, cannot be created in a vacuum. It can only emerge in tandem with a growing working-class movement. We fear that in the specific context of US history and practice, the socialist project is too narrow a platform from which to launch a broad and far ranging left revitalization. Socialist practice in the US has become the domain of sectarian groups that drive away working-class support, and socialist consciousness has not embedded itself in any significant sections of the working class or a left capable of exercising social power. That failing reflects the cultural and ideological triumph of neoliberalism and the identitarian ideologies and programmes that serve as its left wing. In this environment, building socialism is exclusively a project of cadre development, albeit one that cannot hope to succeed apart from broader movement-building. Broad movement-building requires mobilizing around an agenda of substantively anti-capitalist reforms that directly and militantly assert the priority of social needs over market forces, bourgeois property rights and managerial prerogative in the workplace and production process. Struggles to preserve and expand public institutions and to decommoditize basic human needs like housing, transportation, healthcare and education could begin to address the immediate challenge, which is to create a new popular constituency for a revitalized movement, instead of reorganizing or re-mobilizing an already existing but totally marginalized left.26 Some question whether the current US labour movement is too narrow a platform on which to rebuild a left. In a widely circulated article, ‘Fortress Unionism’, Rich Yeselson correctly highlights the atrophy of the labour movement and shows how its decline began with the passage of the TaftHartley Act in 1947. He contends that labour’s ‘current institutional expression cannot, via a creative conceptual breakthrough (“tactics or broader strategy”), engender a vast growth in union strength comparable to its former peak. In short, “organized labor” can no longer create a space for workers to join their organizations by the millions’.27 In grim statistical detail, Jake Rosenfeld’s What Unions No Longer Do gives fuel to this thesis. He points out that despite decades of exemplary, heroic and pioneering organizing by Justice for Janitors in the immigrant community, ‘Today only one in seven Hispanic janitors in the United States belongs to a union, down from one in five back in 1988, when Justice for Janitors began’.28 Yeselson calls for a ‘fortress unionism’ that would ‘defend the remaining high-density regions, sectors and companies’ and then ‘Wait for the workers to say they have had enough. When they demand in vast numbers collective solutions to their problems, seize upon that energy and institutionalize it.’29 This approach correctly identifies the urgent need to preserve the remnants of the current labour movement as an institutional base upon which to build a future revitalized movement. And it also correctly points out the haplessness of willy-nilly organizing schemes that do little to build power for working people while exposing their best leaders in unorganized workplaces to massive employer retaliation without any ability to defend them. But a strategy of waiting for workers to say they have had enough ultimately relies on magical thinking not unlike that of isolated Japanese soldiers scattered on island outposts at the end of the Second World War waiting for reinforcements from a defeated empire. Many of Yeselson’s critics, however, are equally quixotic. Bruce Raynor and Andy Stern, two of the most cynical practitioners of a unionism that disempowers workers and is based on a model of global class collaboration, point out that the ‘fortress’ strategy will do little to reduce inequality. Instead, they place their hopes in ‘strategic alliances with willing employers’; in unions developing value-added services to complement human resource departments; and in leveraging union and public-sector pension funds to rebuild union density.30 This strategy would liquidate the very concept of an independent labour movement. Given its decimation and marginalization, any revitalization movement would need to be built from a base that is far broader than the current institutional labour movement. A revitalized labour movement will have to embrace new organizational forms and some of the models emerging from new labour organizing show significant potential. Some are driven by necessity as the legal status of many immigrants and of workers in industries such as trucking, taxi driving and residential construction make organizing under current labour law virtually illegal. Much of this new organizing is being done by Worker Centers with heavy foundation funding and has the character of social work along the settlement house model of the early twentieth century. Much of it seems also, more or less openly, to fold class analysis into identitarian discourses that both substitute moralizing for political critique and fit comfortably within the NGO model. Such impulses, as well as the popularity of neologism, underlie arguments that current conditions have generated a new social formation, a ‘precariat’ that lies outside the traditional capitalist class structure.31 But some associated with this category have begun to evolve into substantial, self-conscious worker-run organizations. The Taxi Workers Alliance grew from a small New York City advocacy group to become a national organization (whose members are classified as ‘independent contractors’ and thus ineligible for union representation under US labour law) and was recently admitted to the AFL-CIO.32 In Vermont and elsewhere, strategic Workers Centers have built organic alliances with the labour movement and gone on to lead significant campaigns for healthcare for all, paid sick days and economic justice through the mobilization of a working-class constituency.33 Some argue that these campaigns and projects have the capacity to coalesce into geographically based class-conscious organizations and have called for the building of worker assemblies to give voice to this new movement.34 Such an effort would require a level of ideological sophistication and institutional independence that does not currently exist. Attempts to establish these structures on the ground have been premature and could actually inhibit the kind of broad, class-based organizing that inspires this movement in much the same way that many Labor Party chapters became captured by an ‘activistist’ mentality that focused more on preaching to the converted than building a constituency, while driving away real working-class voices who represented something more than themselves. New models are most successful when they can leverage existing organization and power to build outwards into new organization. Recent experiences organizing healthcare and homecare workers, hotel and casino workers and building services employees are fruitful examples of smart and strategic organizing that have leveraged existing union relationships and/ or political opportunities to build power for working people. We also look to the logistics organizing campaigns – which focus on the chokepoints of global capitalism and build on existing union power on the docks and other shipping centres – as having the potential to develop a particularly powerful form of a strategic union presence in economic sectors at the very core of contemporary capitalism.35

### 1NC---OFF

EA K

#### The 1AC’s emphasis on academic resistance trades off with an exclusive focus on *earning to give* to effective charities

Alexander 14 12/19/14 - the smartest person on the internet (Scott, “Nobody is Perfect, Everything is Commensurable”, <https://slatestarcodex.com/2014/12/19/nobody-is-perfect-everything-is-commensurable/>, EM)

So what do we do with the argument that we are morally obligated to be political activists, possibly by reblogging everything about Ferguson that crosses our news feed? II. We ask: why the heck are we privileging that particular subsection of the category “improving the world”? Pervocracy says that “short of bringing about a total revolution of everything, your work will never be done, you’ll never be good enough.” But he is overly optimistic. Has your total revolution of everything eliminated ischaemic heart disease? Cured malaria? Kept elderly people out of nursing homes? No? Then you haven’t discharged your [infinite debt](https://slatestarcodex.com/2014/05/10/infinite-debt/) yet! Being a perfect person doesn’t just mean participating in every hashtag campaign you hear about. It means spending all your time at soup kitchens, becoming vegan, donating everything you have to charity, calling your grandmother up every week, and marrying Third World refugees who need visas rather than your one true love. And not all of these things are equally important. Five million people participated in the #BlackLivesMatter Twitter campaign. Suppose that solely as a result of this campaign, no currently-serving police officer ever harms an unarmed black person ever again. That’s 100 lives saved per year times let’s say twenty years left in the average officer’s career, for a total of 2000 lives saved, or 1/2500th of a life saved per campaign participant. By coincidence, 1/2500th of a life saved happens to be what you get when you donate $1 to the Against Malaria Foundation. The round-trip bus fare people used to make it to their #BlackLivesMatter protests could have saved ten times as many black lives as the protests themselves, even given completely ridiculous overestimates of the protests’ efficacy. The moral of the story is that if you feel an obligation to give back to the world, participating in activist politics is one of the worst possible ways to do it.Giving even a tiny amount of money to charity is hundreds or even thousands of times more effective than almost any political action you can take. Even if you’re absolutely convinced a certain political issue is the most important thing in the world, you’ll effect more change by donating money to nonprofits lobbying about it than you will be reblogging anything. There is no reason that politics would even come to the attention of an unbiased person trying to “break out of their bubble of privilege” or “help people who are afraid of going outside of their house”. Anybody saying that people who want to do good need to spread their political cause is about as credible as a televangelist saying that people who want to do good need to give them money to buy a new headquarters. It’s possible that televangelists having beautiful headquarters might be slightly better than them having hideous headquarters, but it’s not the first thing a reasonable person trying to improve the world would think of. Nobody cares about charity. Everybody cares about politics, especially race and gender. Just as televangelists who are obsessed with moving to a sweeter pad may come to think that donating to their building fund is the one true test of a decent human being, so our universal obsession with politics, race, and gender incites people to make convincing arguments that taking and spreading the right position on those issues is the one true test of a decent human being. So now we have an angle of attack against our original question. “Am I a bad person for not caring more about politics?” Well, every other way of doing good, especially charity, is more important than politics. So this question is strictly superseded by “Am I a bad person for not engaging in every other way of doing good, especially charity?” And then once we answer that, we can ask “Also, however much sin I have for not engaging in charity, should we add another mass of sin, about 1% as large, for my additional failure to engage in politics?” And Cliff Pervocracy’s concern of “Even if I do a lot of politics, am I still a bad person for not doing all the politics?” is superseded by “Even if I give a lot of charity, am I a bad person for not doing all the charity? And then a bad person in an additional way, about 1% as large, for not doing all the politics as well?”

#### The alt is commitment to effective altruism---that’s a far more effective means of combatting suffering than the aff

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This is such an astonishing fact that it’s hard to appreciate. Imagine if, one day, you see a burning building with a small child inside. You run into the blaze, pick up the child, and carry them to safety. You would be a hero. Now imagine that this happened to you every two years - you’d save dozens of lives over the course of your career. This sounds like an odd world. But current evidence suggests that this is the world that many people live in. If you earn the [typical income in the US](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Household_income_in_the_United_States), and [donate 10% of your earnings](https://www.givingwhatwecan.org/get-involved/join/) each year to the [Against Malaria Foundation](https://www.givewell.org/charities/against-malaria-foundation), you will probably save dozens of lives over your lifetime. In fact, the world appears to be even stranger. Donations aren't the only way to help: many people have opportunities that look higher-impact than donating to global poverty charities. How? First, many talented people can have a [greater impact](https://80000hours.org/career-guide/high-impact-jobs) by working directly on important problems than by donating. Second, other causes might prove even more important than global poverty and health, as we’ll discuss below. Many attempts to do good fail, but the best are exceptional In most areas of life, we understand that it’s important to base our decisions on evidence and reason rather than guesswork or gut instinct. When you buy a phone, you will read customer reviews to get the best deal. Certainly, you won't buy a phone which costs 1,000 times more than an identical model. Yet we are not always so discerning when we work on global problems. Below is a chart from an [essay by Dr. Toby Ord](https://www.cgdev.org/sites/default/files/1427016_file_moral_imperative_cost_effectiveness.pdf), showing the number of years of healthy life (measured using [DALYs](http://www.who.int/healthinfo/global_burden_disease/metrics_daly/en/)) you can save by donating $1,000 to a particular intervention to reduce the spread of HIV and AIDS. The chart shows figures for five different strategies. The first intervention, surgical treatment, can’t even be seen on this scale, because it has such a small impact relative to other interventions. And the best strategy, educating high-risk groups, is estimated to be 1,400 times better than that. ([It’s possible](http://reducing-suffering.org/why-charities-dont-differ-astronomically-in-cost-effectiveness/) that these estimates might be inaccurate, or might not capture all of the relevant effects. But it seems likely that there are still big differences between interventions.) We suspect that the difference in intervention effectiveness is similarly large in other cause areas, though we don’t have as clear data as we do in global health. Why do we think this? Partly because most projects (in many domains for which we have data) [don’t appear to have a significant positive impact](https://80000hours.org/articles/effective-social-program/). And, more optimistically, because there appear to be some interventions which have an enormous impact. But without knowing which experts to trust, or which techniques to trust in one’s own research, it can be very hard to tell these apart. Which interventions have the highest impact remains an [important open question](https://80000hours.org/problem-profiles/global-priorities-research/). Comparing different ways of doing good is difficult, both emotionally and practically. But these comparisons are vital to ensure we help others as much as we can. It’s important to work on the right problems The media often focus on negative stories. But in many ways, the world is getting better. Concerted efforts to improve the world have already had phenomenal success. Let’s consider just a few examples. The number of people living under the World Bank’s poverty line [has more than halved since 1990](http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.DDAY). The Cold War saw [thousands of nuclear weapons](https://thebulletin.org/nuclear-notebook-multimedia) trained across the Atlantic, but we survived without a single nuclear strike. Over the last few centuries, we have criminalized slavery, dramatically decreased the oppression of women, and, in many countries, done a great deal to secure the rights and acceptance of people who are gay, bi, trans or queer. Source: Our World In Data Nevertheless, many problems remain. [Around 800 million people live on less than $2 per day](http://iresearch.worldbank.org/PovcalNet/index.htm?1). Climate change and disruptive new technologies have the potential to negatively impact billions of people in the future. Billions of animals, [who may well have lives that matter](https://www.openphilanthropy.org/2017-report-consciousness-and-moral-patienthood), spend short lives of suffering in factory farms. There are so many problems that we need to think carefully about which ones we should prioritize solving. The cause that you choose to work on is a big factor in how much good you can do. If you choose a cause where it’s not possible to help very many people, or where there just aren’t any good ways to solve the relevant problems, then you will significantly limit the amount of impact you can have. If, on the other hand, you choose a cause with great prospects and tested solutions, you may have an enormous impact. For instance, some attempts to reduce the suffering of animals appear to be incredibly effective. By thinking carefully and acting strategically, a small group of campaigners - with limited budgets - [have helped improve](https://www.openphilanthropy.org/blog/why-are-us-corporate-cage-free-campaigns-succeeding) the conditions of hundreds of millions of chickens who were suffering in US factory farms. Many people are motivated to do good, but already have a cause of choice before beginning research. There are lots of reasons for this, such as personal experience with a problem, or having a friend who’s already raising money for a particular organization. But if we choose a cause that simply happens to be salient to us, we may overlook the most important problems of our time. Given that most interventions seem to have low impact, we’re likely to focus on something that is not very impactful if we don’t pick carefully. But it may be even worse than this: issues that are salient to us are probably also salient to others like us, so it’s likely there will be lots of other people working on those issues. This might mean that our additional efforts have even less impact. So we can do more good if we carefully consider many causes, rather than stopping at the first one we're drawn to. By remaining open to working on different causes, we’re able to change course to where we can make the biggest difference, without restricting ourselves too early. Promising causes How, then, can we figure out which causes we should focus on? Researchers have found [the following framework to be useful](https://80000hours.org/articles/problem-framework/). Working on a cause is likely to be high impact to the extent that it is: Great in scale (it affects many people’s lives, by a great amount) Highly neglected (few other people are working on addressing the problem), and Highly solvable (additional resources will do a great deal to address it). On the basis of this reasoning, there are several cause areas that appear particularly likely to be high-impact. These choices are not immutable. They simply represent best guesses about where we can have the most impact, given the evidence currently available. As new evidence comes to light that suggests different causes are more promising, we should consider working on those instead. It’s also worth keeping in mind that even if a person is motivated to choose a good cause rather than the best cause, their impact can still be much larger than it might have been. We'll discuss three main areas. We'll start with the more intuitive area of alleviating global poverty, then turn to work to improve animal welfare. Finally, we'll look into less intuitive, but possibly more impactful, work to improve the long-term future. Fighting extreme poverty Diseases associated with extreme poverty, such as malaria and parasitic worms, kill millions of people every year. Also, poor nutrition in low-income countries can lead to cognitive impairment, birth defects and growth stunting. Much of this suffering can be relatively easily prevented or mitigated. Antimalarial bednets [cost around $2.00 each](https://www.againstmalaria.com/DollarsPerNet.aspx). GiveWell, an independent charity evaluator, [estimates](https://www.givewell.org/international/technical/programs/insecticide-treated-nets) that they can significantly reduce malaria rates. Even simply [transferring money to people who are very poor](https://www.givingwhatwecan.org/report/cash-transfers/) is a relatively cost-effective way of helping people. Not only does improving health avert the direct suffering associated with sickness and death, it also allows people to participate more fully in education and work. Consequently, they earn more money, and have more opportunities later in life. Animal suffering The advent of industrialized agriculture means that billions of animals each year are kept in inhumane conditions on factory farms. Most have their lives ended prematurely when they are slaughtered for food. Advocates for their welfare [argue](http://www.animalcharityevaluators.org/research/foundational-research/number-of-animals-vs-amount-of-donations/) that it is relatively cheap to reduce demand for factory farmed meat, or enact legislative changes that improve the welfare of farmed animals. Because of the huge numbers of animals involved, making progress on this issue could avert a very large amount of suffering. Especially given the scale of the problem, animal welfare also seems extremely neglected. [Only 3%](https://www.charitynavigator.org/index.cfm/bay/content.view/cpid/42) of philanthropic funding in the US is split between the environment and animals, while 97% goes toward helping humans. And even within the funding spent on animal welfare, [only about 1%](https://animalcharityevaluators.org/donation-advice/why-farmed-animals/) goes towards farmed animals, despite the extreme suffering they endure. Improving the long-term future Most of us care not just about this generation, but also about preserving the planet for future generations. Because the future is so vast, the number of people who could exist in the future is probably [many times greater](https://www.effectivealtruism.org/articles/cause-profile-long-run-future/#the-long-term-future-has-enormous-potential) than the number of people alive today. This suggests that it may be [extremely important](https://80000hours.org/articles/future-generations/) to ensure that life on earth continues, and that people in the future have positive lives. Of course, this idea might seem counterintuitive: we don't often think about the lives of our great-grandchildren, let alone their great-grandchildren. But just as we shouldn't ignore the plight of the global poor just because they live in a foreign country, we shouldn't ignore future generations just because they are less visible. Unfortunately, there are [many ways](https://80000hours.org/articles/extinction-risk/) in which we might miss out on a very positive long-term future. [Climate change](https://80000hours.org/problem-profiles/climate-change/) and [nuclear war](https://80000hours.org/problem-profiles/nuclear-security/) are well-known threats to the long-term survival of our species. Many researchers believe that risks from emerging technologies, such as [advanced artificial intelligence](https://80000hours.org/problem-profiles/positively-shaping-artificial-intelligence/) and [designed pathogens](https://80000hours.org/problem-profiles/biosecurity/), may be even more worrying. Of course, it is hard to be sure exactly how technologies will develop, or the impact they'll have. But it seems that these technologies have the potential to radically shape the course of progress over the centuries to come. Because of the scale of the future, it [seems likely](https://80000hours.org/articles/future-generations/) that work on this problem is even more high impact than work on the previous two cause areas. Yet existential risks stemming from new technologies have been surprisingly neglected - there are just tens of people working on risks from AI or pathogens worldwide. US households spend [around 2%](https://www.valuepenguin.com/average-household-budget) of their budgets on personal insurance, on average. If we were to spend a comparable percentage of global resources on addressing risks to civilization, there would be millions of people working on these problems, with a budget of trillions of dollars per year. But instead, we spend just a [tiny fraction](https://80000hours.org/articles/extinction-risk/#why-these-risks-are-some-of-the-most-neglected-global-issues) of that amount, even though such risks may become [substantial in the decades to come](http://www.global-catastrophic-risks.com/docs/2008-1.pdf). If we value protection against unlikely but terrible outcomes individually, as our insurance coverage suggests we do, we should also value protection against terrible outcomes collectively. After all, a collective terrible outcome, like human extinction, is terrible for everyone individually, too. For this reason, it seems prudent for our civilization to spend more time and money mitigating existential risks. ([You can find more detail here](https://www.effectivealtruism.org/articles/cause-profile-long-run-future/).) Other causes There are many other promising causes that, while not currently the primary focuses of the effective altruism community, are plausible candidates for having a big impact. These include: Improvements to the scientific establishment, such as greater transparency and replication of results Researching mental health and neurological disorders, particularly depression and anxiety, and improving access to treatment in low-income countries Tobacco control Prevention of road traffic injuries US criminal justice reform International migration and trade policy reform Of course, it’s likely that we have overlooked some very important causes. So one way to have a huge impact might be to find an opportunity to do good that’s potentially high-impact, but that everyone else has missed. For this reason, [global priorities research](https://80000hours.org/problem-profiles/global-priorities-research/) is another key cause area. What does this mean for you? Which career? For most of us, a significant amount of our productive waking life — on average over [80,000 hours](https://revisesociology.com/2016/08/16/percentage-life-work/) — is spent working. This is an enormous resource that can be used to make the world better. If you can increase your impact by just 1%, that's equivalent to 800 hours of extra work. First, you need to consider which problem you should focus on. Some of the most promising problems appear to be [safely developing artificial intelligence](https://80000hours.org/problem-profiles/positively-shaping-artificial-intelligence/), [improving biosecurity policy](https://80000hours.org/problem-profiles/biosecurity/), or working toward the [end of factory farming](https://80000hours.org/problem-profiles/factory-farming/). Next, you need to consider the most effective way for you to address the problem. At this point, it is useful to consider multiple approaches. Organizations working on these problems generally need more policy analysts, researchers, operations staff, and managers. But you should also consider more unconventional approaches, like being an assistant to another high-impact individual. Finally, you might want to consider whether you can have a bigger impact by doing community building, to persuade other people to address the problem. You can see some of the best opportunities right now on [this job board](https://80000hours.org/job-board/). Senior hires are particularly in demand, but you can also often find graduate positions. If you can’t work directly on important problems now, consider [building skills](https://80000hours.org/career-guide/career-capital/) that allow you to do so in the future, or “[earning to give](https://80000hours.org/career-guide/high-impact-jobs/#approach-1-earning-to-give)” - taking a high-earning career and donating most of your salary. But which role will be the best fit for you? When you donate to a charity, your personal attributes don’t affect the value of your donation. But when it comes to choosing a career, your personal fit with a job is very important. This doesn’t mean that you should just follow the standard career advice, and “follow your passion”. Passion is [much less important than you might think](https://80000hours.org/articles/dont-follow-your-passion/). But it is important to find a job that you excel at: you can best do this by [trying out lots of options](https://80000hours.org/career-guide/personal-fit/), and getting feedback about what you are good at. [80,000 Hours](https://80000hours.org/) is an organization dedicated to helping people figure out in which careers they can do the most good. They provide [a guide](https://80000hours.org/career-guide/) to the most important considerations relevant to career choice, and [a set of tools](https://80000hours.org/career-decision/) to help motivated people make decisions. They have also conducted a large number of [career reviews](https://80000hours.org/research/) across a wide range of fields. [Read 80,000 Hours' career advice](https://80000hours.org/career-guide/) Which charity? One of the [easiest](https://80000hours.org/career-guide/anyone-make-a-difference/) ways that a person can make a difference is by donating money to organizations that work on some of the most important causes. Monetary donations allow effective organizations to do more good things, and are much more flexible than time donations (like volunteering). Most of us don’t realize just how rich we are in relative terms. People earning professional salaries in high-income countries are [normally in the top 5% of global incomes](https://80000hours.org/2017/04/how-accurately-does-anyone-know-the-global-distribution-of-income/). This relative wealth presents an enormous opportunity to do good if used effectively. Donating effectively Some organizations associated with the effective altruism community seek out the most effective causes to donate to, backing up their recommendations with rigorous evidence. One of the easiest ways to give to effective charities is through [Effective Altruism Funds](https://app.effectivealtruism.org/funds) (note that this is a project that we run, so we might be biased in its favor!). EA Funds allows you to donate to one of four major cause areas. An expert in that cause area will then decide which organization could most effectively use the fund’s donations. EA Funds also allows you to donate directly to a range of promising organizations. You might also want to look at [GiveWell’s](https://www.givewell.org/) in-depth research into charities working within global health and development. You can see their current recommendations [here](https://www.givewell.org/charities/top-charities). Yet another place to search for promising donation targets is [this list of organizations which have received a grant from the Open Philanthropy Project](https://www.openphilanthropy.org/giving/grants). The Open Philanthropy Project is a large grant-maker which uses effective altruist principles to find promising giving opportunities. Pledging to give It’s easy to intend to give a significant amount to charity, but it can be hard to follow through. One way we can hold ourselves to account is to take a public pledge to give. [Giving What We Can has a pledge](https://www.givingwhatwecan.org/get-involved/join/) that asks people to give 10% or more of their lifetime income to the organizations that will make the biggest improvements to the world. [The Life You Can Save has a similar pledge](http://www.thelifeyoucansave.org/take-the-pledge), starting at 1% of annual income, given to organizations fighting the effects of extreme poverty. Get involved in the community There’s already a growing community of people who take these ideas seriously, and are putting them into action. Since 2009, [more than 3,000 people](https://www.givingwhatwecan.org/) have taken the Giving What We Can pledge to donate 10% of their lifetime income to the most effective organizations. [Hundreds of people](https://80000hours.org/about/impact/studies-of-career-change/) have made high-impact career plan changes on the basis of effective altruism. And there are [over a hundred](https://app.effectivealtruism.org/groups) local effective altruism meet-up groups.

## ON

### 1NC---AT: No Progress

#### Progress is possible, happening, and requires focused political change:

#### A confluence of statistical factors prove racial progress is occuring

Hochschild 17 (Jennifer L. Hochschild , Professor of Government, African and African American Studies, and the Chair of the Department of Government (Harvard University), Chair in American Law and Governance at the Library of Congress, President of the American Political Science Association, “Left Pessimism and Political Science,” Perspectives on Politics, Volume 15, Issue 1, March 15th, p. 6-19, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1537592716004102> \*\*modified to allow for more humanizing frames)

Is Pessimism the Only Sensible or Empirically Warranted Response in these Two Arenas? It is easy to find evidence to support pessimism about American racial dynamics or the societal deployment of genomic science. The United States is notorious for its racially- and ethnically-inflected poverty and excessive levels of incarceration; undocumented migrants live in legal limbo; new genomics techniques such as CRISPR-Cas9 tempt humankind into hubristic manipulation of nature, and scientists’ promises to cure cancer through genetics knowledge ring hollow to many. The question for this article is whether there are also strong grounds for optimism in my two illustrative realms, such that one could plausibly and persuasively choose to be “centered on advancement concerns” rather than “centered on security concerns.” The answer is yes. Again I can point only to illustrative, suggestive evidence. First, the gap between ~~blacks’~~ [black people’s] and whites’ life expectancy declined from seven years in 1990 to 3.4 years in 2014. That is an astonishing, perhaps unprecedented, rate of change given the usual slow pace of demographic transformation. It is important in itself, of course, and also as a summary statement about an array of other social phenomena in which racial disparities are declining. ~~Blacks~~ [Black people] are living longer mainly because of declining rates of homicides, HIV mortality, infant mortality, cancer and heart disease, and suicide among black men.19 A lot of things have to go right for a group’s life expectancy to rise rapidly. Second, applications for U.S. citizenship rose from the previous year in ten of the fifteen years from 2000 to 2015, while declining in four (and remaining stable in one). That is an important indicator of immigrant incorporation, and especially relevant to political scientists because “Hispanics and Asians who are naturalized citizens tend to have higher voter turnout rates than their U.S.-born counterparts.” 20 Third, non-white Americans themselves tend to feel pretty good about their lives. Gallup Poll asked in 2016, “Where do you expect your life satisfaction to be in five years?” If whites’ response is standardized at 1, then ~~blacks~~ [black people’s] are at 2.97, and Hispanics at 1.29. Only Asian Americans, at 0.97, were less optimistic than whites. Gallup also asked about one’s level of stress in the previous day. If whites are again standardized at 1, then ~~blacks~~ [black people] are at 0.48; Hispanics at 0.53; and Asian Americans at 0.75. Middle-class ~~blacks~~ [black people] were half as likely as middle class whites to report stress during the previous day.21 In the arena of genomics also, one can point to grounds for optimism rather than pessimism. The Innocence Project, “dedicated to exonerating wrongfully convicted individuals through DNA testing and reforming the criminal justice system to prevent future injustice,” has enabled about 350 people to be released from prison. (Not so parenthetically, seven out of ten are African American or Latino, mostly poor men.) More extensive DNA testing might lead to many more exonerations; one careful analysis of serious crime convictions found that “in five percent of homicide and sexual assault cases DNA testing eliminated the convicted offender as the source of incriminating physical evidence.” Previous estimates had pegged the share of wrongful convictions at no more than one to two percent.22 More generally, “DNA profiling [of convicted felons] reduces the probability of future convictions by 17% for serious violent offenders and by 6% for serious property offenders .... These are likely underestimates of the true deterrent effect of DNA profiling.” 23 Genomic scientists can point to impressive successes with regard to Mendelian (single-gene) diseases, and they focus even more on diagnoses and cures yet to come. Eric Lander, director of the Broad Institute, likens the trajectory of genomic medicine to the development of medicine based on the germ theory of disease, which “took about 75 years. With genomics, we’re maybe halfway through that cycle.” In his view, “the rate of progress is just stunning. As costs continue to come down, we are entering a period where we are going to be able to get the complete catalogue of disease genes.” Cancer is a prime target, almost in sight:“If you understand that this is a game of probability, and there is only a finite number of cancer cells and each has only a certain chance of mutating, and if we can put together two or three independent attacks on the cancer cell, we win. If we invest vigorously in this and we attract the best young people into this field, we get it done in a generation. If we don’t, it takes two generations.” Lander is “not Pollyanna .... [I]t’s not for next year. We play for the long game. I don’t want to overpromise in the short term, but it is incredibly exciting if you take the 25-year view.” 24 This is a classic statement of optimism, or being centered on advancement concerns. It begins with expertise and perspective, sees dangers and weaknesses, and nonetheless asserts empirical grounds for faith. President Obama’s insistence that “if you had to choose a moment in human history to live ... you’d choose now” has the same quality. My point is not that left pessimism is wrong—only that there are grounds, perhaps equally strong, for left optimism. One can choose either, and then find good evidence for that choice. Why Is Left Pessimism Problematic? That wily politician, Barney Frank, offers the best answer from the vantage point of the public arena: “When you tell your supporters that nothing has gotten better, and that any concessions you’ve received are mere tokenism, you take away their incentive to stay mobilized. As for those you’re negotiating with, if you denigrate anything they concede as worthless, they will soon realize they can obtain the same response by giving nothing at all.” 25 One can offer the same type of answer from the vantage point of a teacher. Many of us have had the experience of teaching a course—about civil war, inequality and politics, environmental policy, or the meaning of liberty—only to have our students politely request on the last day of class some idea or piece of information about which they can feel good or which they can use in their public engagement. We need to offer answers. Optimism may also be associated with academic success; one careful study found that“although achievement in mathematics was most strongly related to prior achievement and grade level, optimism and pessimism were significant factors. In particular, students with a more generally pessimistic outlook on life had a lower level of achievement in mathematics over time.” 26A study of college students similarly found that “dispositional and academic optimism were associated with less chance of dropping out of college, as well as better motivation and adjustment. Academic optimism was also associated with higher grade point average.” 27 And for those of us of a certain age, it is heartening to discover that “after adjusting for covariates, the results suggested that greater optimism [among middle-aged, predominantly white Americans] was associated with greater high-density lipoprotein cholesterol and lower triglycerides .... In conclusion, ... optimism is associated with a healthy lipid profile; moreover, these associations can be explained, in part, by the presence of healthier behaviors and a lower body mass index.” 28

#### No progress narratives are theoretically bankrupt

Birge 19 (Charles, MA in Comparative Studies, “The Addiction of Transparency: Observations on the Emotional Neurophysiology of Whiteness.” Thesis Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Master of Arts in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University. <https://etd.ohiolink.edu/!etd.send_file?accession=osu1554891264402108&disposition=inline> //shree)

This deeper structure of race is more fully elucidated by the theoretical perspective of Afro-Pessimism, which has also greatly influenced my thinking on whiteness. Afro-Pessimism arose out of the innovations of black scholars Orlando Patterson (1982), Hortense Spillers (1987), and Saidiya Hartman (1997), and has been elaborated by Frank Wilderson (2010), Jared Sexton (2008), Christina Sharpe (2010, 2016), and Fred Moten (2003), among many others. While “Afro-Pessimism” is not a monolithic term, and not all of these scholars identify with it, all of them explore similar territory: they theorize blackness--both past and present--as a condition of absolute (or nearly absolute) captivity in which the expectations, norms, and laws of human relationality (e.g., gender, kinship, personhood) do not apply--the black slave is, again, “socially dead.” This means that blackness is beyond the purview of Human ethical institutions such as the state, the law, civil society, and politics writ large (even revolutionary politics). Moreover, this condition of social death is the ground against which the modern notion of Humanity indexes itself; that is, in the modern world, Humanity only knows itself in all of its capacities (the ability to reason, to have emotions, to enter into intimate and civil relationships) against the absolute incapacity of black slaves. Thus, AfroPessimism argues that black enslavement is not merely a tool of economic exploitation; it serves as a symbolic position against which the existential and psychological security of Humanity is obtained--a condition which persists in the present day. In psychoanalytic terms, then, it functions unconsciously to sustain the psychic health of the Human. While the positions of Human Mastery can be occupied by various non-black peoples depending on the needs of the structure, it is most closely correlated with whiteness. So, for AfroPessimism whiteness is not merely a social construction that secures the hegemony; whiteness is an existential structure, instantiated in the unconscious, the very nature of which is to parasitically prevent racial others--blackness in particular--from accessing the agency needed to participate in the struggle for hegemony. The Afro-Pessimist analysis resonated with me. Given how easily white supremacy seems to resist conscious denunciation, it seemed sensible to argue that the nature of whiteness was to parasitically suck dry the agency of people of color, blackness in particular. However, Afro-Pessimism also has a problem: it is, by definition, abstract and essentialist, leading to difficulties and confusion when discussing how it functions phenomenologically in everyday life. Challenging questions abound: if blackness is theorized as so totalizing that formations such as gender and class lose their significance, can it provide an alibi for black patriarchy and class elitism? And if whiteness is so totalizing, does it mean that white people can simply dismiss the possibility of political engagement and responsibility as out of their control? How would one theorize the diverging interests of a wealthy black man and a poor indigenous woman--is she still privileged in her contingent Humanity over his absolute enslavement? In a quasitheological fashion, Afro-Pessimism risks outsourcing the demands, nuances, and agency of everyday life to an abstraction that seems transcendent. Some Afro-Pessimist scholars attempt to address this problem. Sexton (“Peopleof-Color Blindness, 35-36), for example, analyzes ontology politically, rather than philosophically or theologically; he argues that the ontology of race is not actually a transcendent principle, but it is so deeply entrenched that it takes on the appearance of one. Wilderson (following Sexton) theorizes that race functions as a “libidinal economy” of unconscious psychic identification (with the mastery/capacity of whiteness) and abjection (of enslaved blackness) that structures “the whole of psychic life.” (Wilderson, 9) But both of these political and libidinal explanations still rely heavily on a near transcendent structural analysis, theorized as absolutely unconscious and always already present; they do not suggest how they might be accessed by conscious awareness, and there is no specific moment or condition in which they begin, other than the Middle Passage. But didn’t the Middle Passage arise out of certain conditions? And couldn’t undoing those conditions also undo the existential structure of whiteness? And what about the unconscious--is it really impossible to access? Sexton and Wilderson do not offer much practical guidance here, other than their unwavering commitment to stare down the structural antagonism of race.1

#### Political change is possible, worthwile, and requires specific targetted political strategies

Lester **Spence 15**. Poli Sci Prof @ John Hopkins. 2015. “Knocking the Hustle: Against the Neoliberal Turn in Black Politics.” pp. 140-147.

All four examples have a few things in common. First all occurred at a moment where all seemed lost. While I wouldn’t go as far as to suggest that these events suggest that neoliberalism is “naturally” contested—just as there is no “good teaching gene” there is no “contest neoliberalism gene”—I would say that while the neoliberal turn has signifcantly altered our ability to argue for public goods, it hasn’t killed that ability. It still exists. It exists in institutions we have written of thinking they are no longer relevant—like teachers unions. It exists in populations we’ve written of because we believe they are incapable of radical political action— black youth. It exists in cities that we don’t think of as having a long history of radical political struggle —like Jackson, Mississippi. Second all three recognized the fundamental role politics played in their struggles. The black youth organizers recognized that they had to pressure Maryland state legislators to kill the prison. The black radicals in the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement made electing Chokwe Lumumba a component of their organizing. The CTU chose to take the city head on and to hold a series of town hall meetings designed to inform people of the ways political officials, philanthropists, and corporations are working together to neoliberalize and kill public education. The #blacklivesmatter movement recognized that politics was at the center of their struggle in Ferguson, Baltimore, and elsewhere. All campaigns used moral language in making their arguments. In Jackson they argued that the current way power was allocated in Jackson was immoral because it largely concentrated all of the benefits into a few (predominantly white) hands. In Baltimore they argued that putting $104 million to the goal of incarcerating youth was immoral given the lack of money being spent on youth in other areas, and later that Freddie Gray’s (and before him Tyrone West’s) murder was immoral. In Chicago they argued that closing 50 schools was immoral because it severely impacted the ability of poor black parents and black students to get the same degree of learning their white counterparts had. However, they didn’t rely on those arguments. They understood that seizing power (rather than speaking truth to it), that proposing new alternatives, would at some level have to involve political struggle. Morality wasn’t enough. Even if we had a common defnition of morality, a Christian-infuenced morality for example, that sense of morality could still be interpreted in diferent ways based on material interest. Relying on morality can make it hard to move against the wealthy charter school proponent who sincerely believes that privatizing public schools represent the best hope for increasing positive outcomes among black children. Relying on morality can make it very difficult to argue against the political bureaucrat who says — as they did in the case of Baltimore —that the conditions of youth currently held in adult prisons is so bad that the moral choice would be to give them their own facility where they won’t have to face the risks associated with being housed with adults. In deciding how we go about making our arguments and how we go about choosing our strategies and tactics we should act morally—I do believe our politics have to be rooted in a certain sense of ethics. We should never, however, ignore the fundamental role politics plays and should play in our struggle. Not only did they focus on politics, they all relied on political organizing. Organizing that included long discussions about political issues that mattered, but also parties and other events designed to get people working with each other and trusting one another. In general, people do not come to a common understanding of the structural dynamics of the problem they face, and to a common understanding of what the solution should be, through being exposed to a charismatic speaker, or through “loving black people”, without having the space to talk about the issues in depth over a long period of time. The CTU organized for several years to be able to get a 90% vote. The infrastructure black youth in Baltimore relied upon was by definition designed to inculcate critical thinking skills as well as a sense of the way racism worked at structuring black life chances. The Malcolm X Grassroots Movement worked for years to build the critical capacity required to elect Chokwe, first to the City Council, then Mayor, and to put the political platform into action. There is no way to get around the fact that the type of work we have to do to rebuild a sense of the public interest is going to take a long time and has to start by building connections between people who may not think of themselves as political, who may not think of the various issues they struggle with as being the product of the neoliberal turn, who may not know what neoliberalism is. What I am referring to here is not the same as getting people to attend a rally or a march. I’m referring to political organizing— building the capacity of people to govern and make important political decisions for themselves —not political “mobilizing”. Mobilizing people for a protest act of one kind or another may get people out to engage in a specific act, but unless combined with organizing work, will not cause those people to organize for themselves. Tird in each case they were not only reactive, they were not only being critical of the turn and its efects, they proposed a positive alternative. Protest is not enough. Just as the neoliberal turn did not simply occur when the welfare state was removed, rather it occurred when the welfare state was removed and then replaced with a new program, we will not be able to build a sustainable constituency for a new world without articulating as clearly as possible what that new world will look like, what type of policies would result, what the benefits of those policies would be. Fourth while each of these instances represent responses against the neoliberal turn broadly considered, they each began locally. Te Malcolm X Grassroots Movement has several chapters throughout the country and has already held one conference (planned before Lumumba’s untimely passing) about the Jackson model (which itself is partially based on ideas developed in Spain) and how to export it to other cities. Te movement against the proposed youth jail in Baltimore relied in part on data accumulated by the ACLU on the schoolto-prison pipeline. And as I noted above the Chicago Teachers Union have begun organizing events all across the country to get people to understand how the privatization movement in education afects them. And each of the #blacklivesmatter campaigns began with a specifc local act of police brutality and used that act to organize locally. With this said though each case represents a local struggle people could experience directly. Mark Purcell (2006) argues that academics and activists alike run the risk of falling into the “local trap” by arguing that there is something inherently better and anti-neoliberal about organizing locally. I agree with him a little. Te Civil Rights Movement represented in large part a fght against white supremacy as embedded in local and state politics —the local was not the site of empowerment but rather the site of profound disempowerment for black people throughout the North and the South. However at the same time I argue that sustainable organizing is more likely to occur in response to a local issue (a local school closing, a rise in foreclosures in a local neighborhood, a jail built up the road, a local referendum) that can then be connected to other local issues and made national rather than the other way around. And again the Civil Rights Movement represents the best example of this —people weren’t interested in ending Jim Crow as much as they were interested in desegregating the buses they took to work everyday, desegregating the restaurants they passed on the way to school, desegregating the schools themselves. Fifth they used a variety of black institutions in their struggles. Te Baltimore youth all attended black public schools in Baltimore. Tey used the public schools to garner support for their work and to build relationships with black adults and black children. While a number of Baltimore area churches do promote the prosperity gospel, not all do. A few black churches in Baltimore became critical spaces for organizing against the jail—in fact I ended up fnding out about the movement against the jail in the frst place through hearing a young progressive black nationalist Baltimore pastor speak about the movement. And they used popular culture. Tey used poetry, they used rap and hip-hop, they used parties, understanding that while again the national terrain for hip-hop may move with rather than against the neoliberal turn, they themselves could use it to speak to their local condition. And later they used these same institutions and spaces for their fght against police brutality. Similarly in Jackson the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement did not operate from a clean slate. Tey relied on professors from nearby Jackson State University, they used connections with local churches to gain support for their activities. And the CTU was itself located in one of the most important institutions in black communities, schools. Lastly, they all relied on the fundamental premise that black people had the capacity to be the change they wanted to see in the world. Tey neither believed that black people’s fundamental condition was bruised and broken, nor did they believe that black people because of the contemporary condition didn’t love each other. At the same time though they understood explicitly and implicitly that love was not enough. And while each organization does have a number of leaders they have largely (though not fully) stayed away from the type of prophetic politics that have often created problematic internal hierarchies. Again there are signifcant diferences between these instances. And even though each of these instances were victorious ones that helped to change the terrain of political struggle, there is still much more to be done. In the case of Baltimore they stopped the youth jail but were not able to stop the privatization of Baltimore youth recreation centers, nor have they been able to (as of yet) redirect the $104 million to more progressive ends. Jackson elected Lumumba mayor but after his untimely passing his son ended up coming in second. Chicago teachers made substantial gains as a result of the strike but they were not able to prevent the 50 schools from being closed. Te #blacklivesmatter movement as it stands has not gone without critique. Te most notable one is that even though the project has increased the range of black lives that people are willing to fght for, it still hasn’t gone far enough. Although it’s reasonable to assume, based on the limited data we have, that black boys and young men are victimized by police more than other populations (and to the extent the zero-tolerance technology itself generates broader forms of policing in places like schools), black boys and young men are not the sole target. Black women have been victimized both directly and indirectly by police, as have black transgender populations. These acts have in many instances been as violent as those perpetrated against their male counterparts, and they have been videotaped as well. But they haven’t garnered the same degree of support and/or outrage. Extending the #blacklivesmatter movement to include the lives of black women and transgender populations that are also the victims of police violence would be more than simply a good thing. However there’s a more systemic problem at work. Te idea behind “black lives matters” represents an opportunity to organize around and against a certain type of sufering, a uniquely black sufering, made possible by the neoliberal turn. (It bears repeating, this is not simply the “new Jim Crow” at work. Te odds that someone like me would sufer the type of horrifc death someone like Freddie Gray did is very slim.) However the politics of the #blacklivesmatter movement do not quite match the phrase. Every single time the #blacklivesmatters movement appears it does so in the presence of either a horrifc instance of black death or a startling instance of police brutality. One could argue given this that the real politics of the movement refect the concept that (graphic) black death matters rather than black life. Tis move makes a great deal of sense — one way to think about this move is to think about the way civil rights movement activists used non-violence. Particularly when news cameras were present, non-violent tactics of protest tended to really highlight how violent and terroristic white supremacy in the South and other places was. However, by privileging the graphic black death, the victim shot in his back while running away, the victim who had his back violently broken by police, it ends up ignoring the many forms of non-graphic black death that occurs not because of police violence per se, but because of economic violence. If Freddie Gray weren’t murdered by the police but rather experienced a slow death due to lead poisoning it’s unlikely we’d be talking about him right now. It’d be unlikely that Baltimore would’ve had anything like an uprising. Following up, by privileging black death, graphic black death, we privilege certain types of tactics, strategies, and institutions. We counter the spectacle of the murder with the spectacle of the mass assembly, in the form of the protest march, or the spectacle of the mass disruption, in the form of the highway stoppage, or even in the form of the type of violent actvity the uprising hinted at. Actions in other words that are not only designed to transform the event into a black-and-white catalytic moment where people and the institutions around them feel forced to make a choice for the status quo or against it. And the organizations and institutions we call into being end up being those designed to generate these types of activities and to generate support for these activities (in order to grow the organizations and institutions themselves). As far as solutions go, we also privilege anti-police legislation, and perhaps more broadly, legislation designed to counter the school to prison pipeline. Te political solution for black life matters is to reduce the likelihood of a graphic singular black death— a kid shot on the way to the corner store, a young man shot while holding a BB gun he may have planned on purchasing, a black couple driving a car with a tendency to backfre. Te types of politics that generate change when the deaths come slow, painfully, and in aggregates, or when the issue is an entire legal framework (like the Maryland Law Enforcement Ofcers Bill of Rights) is a diferent politics. It is not solely or primarily a politics of the spectacle. Spectacle can work here in instances. It can be used to mobilize support. It can be used to increase awareness and general participation. And sometimes in combination with other tactics it can be used to disrupt. To generate and prolong crises. Te types of crises that engendered the same type of problems that caused the neoliberal turn. Certainly in the case of Baltimore a range of institutions and elites had no ready-to-roll-out solutions to the issues that the uprising called up. But these aren’t enough. It requires a politics attuned to the type of long term institution building that builds the capacity of individuals to govern and devise alternatives themselves. It also requires a solution set that is more about combating the type of long term institutional violence that doesn’t necessarily have a Trayvon Martin or a Freddie Gray at the center. Te types of violence that, instead might have Freddie Gray at the center, but not at the moment of his murder but at the moment he was found to have lead poisoning. I use these examples in order to argue that we aren’t starting from scratch necessarily— some of the work is already being done on the ground. I use these examples in order to show that we already have the seeds for a new institutional framework that re-roots the economy in politics and in the public interest. To show that we aren’t alone, and that a number of people recognize another way of life is possible. There aren’t as many of us as we’d like, but there are far more of us than we think.

#### Reject unbacked pop-psychology claims---political activism reduces race related stress and has positive mental health effects

Caroline Reid 18, “Activism as a Source of Strength for Black College Students at Predominately White Institutions,” https://encompass.eku.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1588&context=honors\_theses

Racism is deeply ingrained in American society, and white supremacy and the oppression of people of color has greatly contributed to the establishment of the very institutions that continue to perpetuate its existence today. Racism manifests itself in a variety of ways, and its most constant and daily appearance is in instances of microaggressions. These experiences contribute to feelings of invisibility, frustration, and anger, an experience known as racism- related stress, which research has shown to severely and negatively impact mental health. In order to combat the insidious effects of racism, Black Americans have utilized coping mechanisms for generations. This resiliency is astoundingly powerful, however, dealing with the omnipresence of racism is a constant and significant internal labor. For Black college students at predominately white institutions, microaggresions and systemic racism create a difficult environment to navigate. Unique opportunities in activism manifest themselves as tools to combat discrimination and racism-related stress. However, some argue that caution is needed in viewing activism as panacea for improving the lives of people of color, particularly Black people. Indeed, some research has suggested that activism is harmful to mental health, as it increases the intensity and frequency of experiences of perceived racism among some populations. This thesis includes a meta-analysis that examines the findings on the effects of activism on mental health. As a result of this analysis, a counter argument argues the potential of the utilization of activism as a source of strength that may combat the harms of racism, supporting the earlier claim that certain factors involved in activism may be protective in nature.

### 1NC---AT: Antitrust Bad

#### Monopoly capitalism worsens every form of oppression and antitrust advocacy strengthens every angle of resistance.

Greer and Rice, 21—co-founders and co-executive directors of Liberation in a Generation (Jeremie and Solana, “Anti-Monopoly Activism: Reclaiming Power through Racial Justice,” <https://www.liberationinageneration.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Anti-Monopoly-Activism_032021.pdf>, dml) [language modifications denoted by brackets]

Since the founding of the nation, people of color have been living an economic nightmare. People of color have persistently lagged behind white people in nearly every economic category, including employment, income, education, small-business ownership, home ownership, and asset-ownership. This is the result of the rise and reach of concentrated wealth and power, including monopoly power.

The Racial Wealth Gap

Economic racial disparities do not happen by accident. Rather, they are the product of centuries of systemic racism and have been built into the design of our economic system, which has created what we at Liberation in a Generation call the Oppression Economy. The Oppression Economy uses the racist tools of theft, exclusion, and 31 exploitation to strip wealth from people of color, so that the elite can build their wealth. In this Oppression Economy, racism is profitable, and it fuels a cycle of oppression 32 that depresses the economic vitality of people of color, suppresses our political power, and obstructs our ability to utilize democracy to change economic rules that make racism profitable in the first place.

Racial wealth inequality is the consequential disease caused by the Oppression Economy. Today, racial wealth inequality has reached astronomical levels and will continue to rise if nothing is done. Without drastic policy action it will take 228 years for average Black wealth and 84 years for average Latinx wealth to match the wealth that white households hold today. Further, if nothing is done—or we attempt to return 33 to “normal” and fail to distance racism34 after COVID-19—Black and Latinx wealth will reach zero sometime in the middle of this century. These disparities are driven by 35 36 two reinforcing phenomena connected to the issue of corporate concentration: 1) the systematic withholding of wealth from people of color and 2) the gross concentration of wealth held by the corporate elite.

Between 1983 and 2016, which coincides with the rise of corporate and monopoly power, average Black and Latinx wealth was dwarfed [outpaced] by the wealth accumulated by white households. In fact, average Black wealth decreased by more than 50 percent over this period. This is the result of a long history of economic oppression that has 37 actively blocked people of color from building wealth or has stripped their wealth through theft and predation. The beneficiaries and perpetrators of this ever-growing gap are the corporate elite who set the rules of the economy. The corporate elite’s actions have led to people of color being paid less for their labor and having to pay more for the basic necessities of life. Here are a few metrics that speak to this reality.

• Black, Indigenous, and Latinx women earn between 55 cents and 63 cents for every dollar earned by white men.38

• Low income people of color often pay a 10 percent poverty premium for essential goods and services.39

• Black and Latinx households are far more likely than white households to be unable to pay their monthly bills or cover unexpected expenses.40

• Black households are more likely to be denied mortgage credit and end up paying more when they are able to access credit.41

• Black households, in particular, suffer from a crippling debt burden composed of an array of predatory credit products (e.g., student, small-dollar, auto, and home loans).

The phenomenon fueling racial wealth inequality is the concentration of wealth in the hands of a small number of individuals. Today, the wealthiest 400 people in the US hold more wealth ($3.2 trillion) than the entire Latinx population ($2.4 trillion)and 43 more than 70 percent of the Black population combined ($4.41 trillion). While the 44 average wealth of Black people has decreased since the 1980s (as cited earlier), the average wealth of those on Forbes’s list of the 400 wealthiest people increased from $600 million in 1982 (adjusted for inflation) to $8.0billion in 2020.. You might be 45 asking, what does the Forbes 400have to do with monopoly? Well, it is a who’s who of corporate monopolists.

The people on this list are some of the most egregious perpetrators of driving down wages, expanding income inequality, degrading the health of workers, desecrating the environment, fleecing consumers, perpetuating racial residential segregation, driving community disinvestment, avoiding taxes, and corrupting our democracy. These monopolists utilize ruthless business practices to perpetuate their unquenchable thirst for maximized profits and for control of major segments of the US economy—and people of color bear the brunt.

America’s Legacy of Racism Drives and Sustains Corporate Concentration

The confluence of monopoly power and racial inequality is not new. The construction of an economy that relies on unchecked capitalism to create the modern-day monopolist relies on the construction and maintenance of America’s racial caste system. The legacy of theft, exclusion, and exploitation of people of color by corporate monopolists has been with us since the founding of the nation. In fact, prior to the Civil War, southern plantation owners were the equivalent of the modern-day Fortune 500 monopolists. The Mississippi Valley had more millionaires per capita than anywhere in the country, making it the Silicon Valley of that period. Prior to the Civil War, the combined value of America’s approximately 4 million slaves was $3.5 billion, making it the largest single financial asset in the entire economy, bigger than all manufacturing and railroads combined.46

As the roots of this problem run deep and disproportionately impact people of color, so too must the solutions. Today’s corporate monopolies are built on the foundation of an economy that also stole land from Indigenous people through genocide and forced removal, and built a labor market on the bodies of enslaved Black people. Nothing in our economy is race-neutral, including our work to dismantle monopoly power and the racial wealth inequality it causes, so we must seek race-conscious solutions.

Scholars have developed a catalogue of research confirming what many people of color experience on a daily basis: Corporations have seized control of many aspects of our lives that were once intended to serve the public good over private sector interests. Examples include the growth of charter schools and for-profit colleges as an alternative to public schools; the growth of private health insurance and private hospitals; the growth of private prisons and paid services in prison, such as phone calls and health care. However, more research is needed that connects the economic conditions of people of color to the growth of monopoly power, a call to action we further explore in Section 6.

Connecting Monopoly Power to Other Movements

There is no silver bullet to slaying the monster that is systemic racism. Leaders of color across the country are actively organizing people of color to advance bold and transformational economic and racial justice policies. These leaders are doing the hard work of transforming our economic systems by advancing liberatory policies such as a Homes Guarantee and a federal jobs guarantee; and by dismantling systems of oppression, including police and prison abolition, ending voter suppression, and curbing corporate power. To this end, anti-monopoly policy and advocacy work can be a powerful tool to advance these transformative, activist-led movement priorities.

To win the battle to advance movement priorities, we must seek to pull every lever of power at our disposal and to directly confront one of their most ardent political opponents: corporate monopolies. The Action Center on Race and the Economy (ACRE) is deftly integrating anti-monopoly tactics to advance their racial and economic justice mission. In advancing police abolition, for example, they highlight the fact that big banks (as discussed in Section 1) finance “police brutality bonds” that fund the payment of police department settlements for acts of police brutality.47 Additionally, they have highlighted for grassroots leaders of color the connections that corporate monopolies have to anti-Muslim bigotry, the Puerto Rican debt crisis, and pharmaceutical prices.48

Corporate monopolists, including big banks, big tech, and big pharma, are often primary opponents in the battles for bold, transformational movement priorities. For example, activists for bold environmental justice policies, such as the Green New Deal, have encountered strong opposition from fossil fuel monopolies, such as Exxon, Shell and BP; but also, Wall Street bank monopolies financing fossil fuel monopolies, in addition to other monopolies in the airline industry. In another example, Wall Street 49 monopolies have aggressively clashed with affordable housing advocates as their investments have displaced residents of color from their homes and businesses and have also gentrified communities of color from Harlem to Oakland and Detroit to New Orleans. Directly challenging the monopoly power of these corporations could prove to be a useful tactic for activists of color to further movement priorities.

### 1NC---AT: Hartman

#### Political reform is good and violence occurs on a gradient---denying this is paternalistic, internally contradictory, and sanctions violence against millions---their solvency advocate agrees!

Hartman et al. ’17 [Saidiya, Frank Wilderson, Jared Sexton, Steve Martinot, and Hortenese Spillers; September 2017; Professor of African American Studies at Columbia University; Professor of Drama and African American Studies at the University of California, Irvine; Professor of African American Studies at the University of California, Irvine; Instructor Emeritus at the Center for Interdisciplinary Programs at San Francisco State University; Professor at Vanderbilt University; Racked and Dispatched Publishing, “Afro-Pessimism: An Introduction,” p. 10-41]

The challenges Afro-pessimism poses to the affirmation of Blackness extend to other identities as well and problematize identity-based politics. The efforts, on the part of such a politics, to produce a coherent subject (and movement), and the reduction of antagonisms to a representable position, is not only the total circumscription of liberatory potential, but it is an extinguishment of rage with reform—which is to stake a claim in the state and society, and thus anti-Blackness. Against this, we choose, following Afro-pessimism, to understand Black liberation as a negative dialectic, a politics of refusal, and a refusal to affirm; as an embrace of disorder and incoherence;10 and as an act of political apostasy.11 This is not to categorically reject every project of reform—for decreased suffering will surely make life momentarily easier—but rather to take to task any movement invested in the preservation of society. Were they not to decry every action that didn’t fit within their rigid framework, then they might not fortify anti-Blackness as fully as they do. It is in the effort to garner legitimacy (an appeal to whiteness) that reformism requires a representable identity and code of actions, which excludes, and actually endangers, those who would reject such pandering. This also places undo faith in politicians and police to do something other than maintain, as they always have and will, the institutions—schools, courts, prisons, projects, voting booths, neighborhood associations—sustaining anti-Blackness.

Afro-pessimism can also be used to critique prevalent liberal discourses around community, accountability, innocence, and justice. Such notions sit upon anti-Black foundations and only go so far as to reconfigure, rather than abolish, the institutions that produce, control, and murder Black subjects.12 Take for example the appeal to innocence and demand for accountability, too frequently launched when someone Black is killed by police. The discourse of innocence operates within a binary of innocent/ guilty, which is founded on the belief that there is an ultimate fairness to the system and presumes the state to be the protector of all. This fails to understand the state’s fundamental investment in self-preservation, which is indivisible from white supremacy and the interests of capital. The discourse goes that if someone innocent is killed, an individual (the villainous cop) must be held accountable as a solution to this so-called injustice. The structural reality of anti-Black violence is completely obfuscated and justice is mistook as a concept independent from anti-Blackness. Discrimination is indeed tragic, but systematic dispossession and murder is designedly more—it is the justice system—and no amount of imprisoned cops, body cameras or citizen review boards will eliminate this.

Furthermore, Afro-pessimist analysis exposes the often unacknowledged ways that radical movements perpetuate anti-Black racism. One such way is in the rhetoric repeatedly used that takes an assumed (historically oppressed) subject at its center—e.g., workers or women.13 This conflates experience with existence and fails to acknowledge the incommensurate ontologies between, for instance, white women and Black women. To speak in generalities, of simply workers or women, is to speak from a position of anti-Blackness, for the non-racialized subject is the white, or at least non-Black, subject. For this reason, movements against capitalism, patriarchy, or gender mean unfortunately little if they don’t elucidate ontological disparities within a given site of oppression; and if they don’t unqualifiedly seek to abolish the totality of race and anti-Blackness. This is not to privilege antiBlack racism on a hierarchy of oppression, but to assert—against the disparaging lack of analysis—the unlivability of life for Blacks over centuries of social death and physical murder, perpetuated (at varying times) by all non-Black subjects in society.

Finally, we should add that alongside the valuable theoretical offerings of Afro-pessimism, this reader was also motivated by a desire to contribute to the efforts of bringing these writings out of the ivory towers of the academy, the place from which all these writings originated. We wish to remove the materials from this stifling place and see them proliferate among those in the streets and prisons. The topics discussed here may have origins in a place of lofty theory, but they deal with the constant realities of millions of people. We therefore find it imperative that these theories directly inform the practices of everyone desiring a life other than this one—while not simply resorting to the empty gesture of empathy.14

We must acknowledge the fact that non-Black people are complicit in perpetuating anti-Blackness and face the necessity of abolishing all notions of the self and identity, practicing an antiracism with a view toward the total abolition of the state, and developing an anti-capitalism aimed at the destitution of race. We take heed of the following statement: “If we are to be honest with ourselves, we must admit that the ‘Negro’ has been inviting whites, as well as civil society’s junior partners, to the dance of social death for hundreds of years, but few have wanted to learn the steps.”15 Consider this project an opening sashay.

I.

Blacks and the Master/Slave Relation

Frank Wilderson

C. S. Soong: The question for today is how to properly situate Black people in today’s world? What is their position in relation to other people? And what is the nature of their vulnerability to violence? Those questions can be addressed in a number of ways. Conservatives, Liberals, and radicals offer perspectives that perhaps you’ve heard over time. The answer offered by my guest today is singular and provocative, not least because he calls Black people, all Black people, slaves. But what does Frank Wilderson, III mean by slave? Why does he argue that the master/slave relation cannot be analogized with the capitalist/worker relation? And what does he mean when he asserts that slavery is social death? And that slaves, that is Blacks, are subject to gratuitous violence because their masters, that is all non-Blacks, need to exercise that violence in order to give their lives, their non-Black lives, integrity and coherence? Frank Wilderson is a writer, professor of African American studies and Drama at UC Irvine, and founder of what’s called the Afro-Pessimism movement. His books include Red, White and Black: Cinema and the Structure of U.S. Antagonisms, and Incognegro: A Memoir of Exile and Apartheid. Frank spent five years in South Africa as an elected official in the African National Congress during that country’s transition from apartheid and he was a member of the ANC’s armed wing. When Frank Wilderson joined me recently in studio I began by asking how important Marxism has been to his understanding of capitalism.

Frank Wilderson: I think that when I began to study Marxism in college I understood that here was a theory that took a kind of attitude toward the world that was uncompromising. That was valuable to me because before that in junior high school and in high school I had seen the kind of performative political labor of people in the Panthers and people in the Students for a Democratic Society—part of that time was here—and I knew that these folks were on a mission that was more robust and more unflinching than the mission of certain types of Bobby Kennedy Democrats and members of the Civil Rights movement. When I actually began to study the theory I understood why their performance was so much more unflinching than other peoples’ performance. So I think the study of Marxism helped me get into thinking about relations of power, which I think is more important than simply thinking about the way power performs.

CSS: In other words, structures of power as opposed to how power tends to manifest itself in individual relations.

FW: Yes, and I also mean that if you kind of turn your head sideways and listen to most Americans on the Left talk about politics, what you’re going to hear is that the rhetorical weighting of their discourse tends to be heavily weighted on discriminatory actions, the effects of unfair relations on people. And so what we really don’t do so much in this country is—and this is what I found to be very different when I started traveling the world, when I went to Italy, and various places in South America and Africa—we’re not as readily able to think about power as a structure. We tend to think about power as a performance, a series of discriminatory acts. That’s okay if you’re a Liberal-Humanist-reformist, but if you’re a revolutionary, that simply leads you down a track of increasing wages or getting more rights for women or ending racial discrimination and you’re finding yourself in the same kind of cycle of performative oppression ten, twenty years later without an analysis of why the “fix” that you had years ago doesn’t last and isn’t working now.

CSS: Well, the antagonism according to the Marxists is that between capitalist and worker. Would you agree that the essential antagonism in social relations and political relations is in fact between capitalist on the one side and worker on the other?

FW: No. All of my work is an interrogation of that assumptive logic. I’m sometimes misunderstood to be saying that I have left Marxism. I’m sometimes misunderstood to be saying that the cognitive map that Marx gives us should be thrown out. That’s not what I’m saying. How do you throw out a cognitive map that explains political economy so well? What I’m saying is that in Das Kapital vol. I, Marx has two opportunities to think the relation between the slave and everyone else and each of those opportunities presents him with a kind of paradox, a conundrum; and instead of meditating on that he bounces off of it and continues to posit that the world is out of joint because there is a dichotomy between haves and have-nots, because there’s a dichotomy between those who accumulate capital and those who work for a wage. What I’m saying is that his hit on the slave and then bouncing off of that are a disavowal of the nature of the slave relation, which is symptomatic of the problems in political organizing and political thought on the Left. I’m saying that the antagonism in Das Kapital should be relegated to a conflict because there is an aspect of the thinking which presents itself with a coherent way out. The slave/non-slave, or the Black/human relation, presents us with a structural dynamic which cannot be reconciled and which does not have a coherent mode of redress.

CSS: Alright, you see the master/slave relation as the essential antagonism, so what do you mean by that? A lot of people would think, okay, slavery in the U.S., so Black slavery, and then 1865, the formal end of slavery. But then of course you have slavery today and we hear about issues with people in bondage, debt bondage, and other forms of bondage, so when you say the master/slave relation, what are you specifically referring to?

FW: There is no way I can actually answer that in a compact way, I think I have to step back a minute. So what Afro-pessimism—the conceptual lens or framework that myself and other people are working on—assumes is that you have to begin with an analysis of slavery that corrects the heretofore thinking about it. So the first thing that happens—and this is built on the work of Orlando Patterson’s 1982 tome Slavery and Social Death—the first thing we have to do is screw our heads on backwards. In other words, stop defining slavery through the experience of slaves. What happens normally is that people think of slavery as forced labor and people in chains. What Orlando Patterson does is shows that what slavery really is, is social death. In other words, social death defines the relation between the slave and all others. Forced labor is an example of the experience that slaves might have, but not all slaves were forced to work. So if you then move by saying that slavery is social death, by definition, then what is social death? Social death has three constituent elements: One is gratuitous violence, which means that the body of the slave is open to the violence of all others. Whether he or she receives that violence or not, he or she exists in a state of structural or open vulnerability. This vulnerability is not contingent upon his or her transgressing some type of law, as in going on strike with the worker. The other point is that the slave is natally alienated, which is to say that the temporality of one’s life that is manifest in filial and afilial relations—the capacity to have families and the capacity to have associative relations—may exist very well in your head. You might say, “I have a father, I have a mother,” but, in point of fact, the world does not recognize or incorporate your filial relations into its understanding of family. And the reason that the world can do this goes back to point number one: because you exist in a regime of violence which is gratuitous, open, and you are openly vulnerable to everyone else, not a regime of violence that is contingent upon you being a transgressed worker or transgressing woman or someone like that. And the third point is general dishonor, which is to say, you are dishonored in your very being— and I think that this is the nature of Blackness with everyone else. You’re dishonored prior to your performance of dishonored actions. So it takes a long time to build this but in a nutshell that’s it. And so that’s one of the moves of Afro-pessimism. If you take that move and you take out property relations—someone who’s owned by someone else—you take that out of the definition of slavery and you take out forced labor, and if you replace that with social death and those three constituent elements, what you have is a continuum of slavery-subjugation that Black people exist in and 1865 is a blip on the screen. It is not a paradigmatic moment, it is an experiential moment, which is to say that the technology of enslavement simply morphs and shape shifts—it doesn’t end with that.

CSS: If Orlando Patterson, who is a sociologist at Harvard, argues that forced labor is not a defining characteristic of slavery, if he says that naked violence is one of the key elements of social death, which is slavery, and if the violence directed at Blacks is not based on, as you said, this person transgressing in some way, being disobedient in some way, refusing to consent in some way to what the ruling class thinks or does, then why is violence freely directed at Blacks? What is the reason that the non-white or the master in the master/slave relation treats Blacks violently?

FW: The short answer is that violence against the slave is integral to the production of that psychic space called social life. The repetitive nature of violence against the slave does not have the same type of utility that violence against the post-colonial subject has—in other words, in the first instance, to secure and maintain the occupation of land. It does not have the utility of violence against the working class, which would be to secure and maintain the extraction of surplus-value and the wage. We have to think more libidinally and in a more robust fashion. This is where it becomes really controversial and really troubling for a lot of people because what Patterson is arguing, and what people like myself and professor Jared Sexton and Saidiya Hartman at Columbia University have extended, is to say that what we need to do is begin to think of violence not as having essentially the kind of political or economic utility that violence in other revolutionary paradigms have. Violence against the slave sustains a kind of psychic stability for all others who are not slaves.

CSS: When you say that—and I’ve read some of your writings on the subject—it seems like you’re suggesting that only if some population perceives another population as inferior, or so degraded that anything can be done to them—unless they have that other in mind that somehow, psychologically and psychically—they can’t have the integrity that they want. Is that correct? And why would that be the case psychologically? Why would somebody need to have some other person seen in that light in order to feel actualized, in order to feel worthy of life?

FW: It’s a very good question and we could spend several hours on it, but what I’m trying to do is give you short-hand answers that have integrity and hopefully your listeners will do some more reading and research to actually see how these mechanisms work. But let’s take it for one second outside of the way in which I and other Afro-pessimists are theorizing it. One of our claims is that Blackness cannot be dis-imbricated from slaveness—that is a very controversial claim; that claim is actually the fault line right now of African and Black Studies across the country, the claim that Blackness and slaveness cannot be dis-imbricated, cannot be pulled apart. But I can’t argue against everyone who disagrees with that right now. One of the points that Patterson makes at a higher level of abstraction is that the concept of community, and the concept of freedom, and the concept of communal and interpersonal presence, actually needs a conceptual antithesis. In other words, you can’t think community without being able to register non-community. His book Slavery and Social Death goes back thousands of years and covers slavery in China and all over the world and he says that communal coherence has a lot of positive attributes: this is my language, this is how I organize my polity, these are the anthropological accoutrements of how we work our customs—but at the end of the day what it needs to know is what it is not. So the idea of freedom and the idea of communal life and the idea of civic relations has to have a kind of point of attention which is absent of that or different from that. This is the function that slavery presents or provides to coherence so that prior to Columbus, for example, the Choctaw might have someone inside a Choctaw community who transgresses the codes of the community so fiercely that they’re given a choice, and the choice at this moment of a transgression, which is beyond-the-beyond, is between real death—“We will kill you in an execution”—or social death. Nothing changes in the mind of that person tomorrow or the day after he or she chooses social death. He or she still thinks they have a cosmology, that they have intimate family relations, but the point that Patterson is making is that everything changes in the structure of that person’s dynamic with the rest of the tribe. So now that that person is a slave, that person is socially dead. This is bad for that person, obviously, but what he is suggesting is that that type of action regenerates the knowledge of our existence for everyone else. Now where I and some others take Patterson further is to say that Black, Blackness, and even the thing called Africa, cannot be dis-imbricated, cannot be pulled apart from that smaller scale process that he talks about with respect to Chinese communities or the Choctaw. In other words, there is a global consensus that Africa is the location of sentient beings who are outside of global community, who are socially dead. That global consensus begins with the Arabs in 625 and it’s passed on to the Europeans in 1452. Prior to that global consensus you can’t think Black. You can think Uganda, Ashanti, Ndebele, you can think many different cultural identities, but Blackness cannot be dis-imbricated from the global consensus that decides here is the place which is emblematic of that moment the Choctaw person is spun out from social life to social death. That’s part of the foundation.

CSS: This is really provocative. Are you saying then—let’s just focus on the U.S.—that every African American, regardless of income or wealth or status, can and should be understood in the figure of the slave who is socially dead in relation to the master, who I presume is white?

FW: Well, the master is everyone else, whites and their junior partners, which in my book are colored immigrants. It’s just that colored immigrants exist in an intra-human status of degradation in relation to white people. They are degraded as humans, but they still exist paradigmatically in that position of the human. So yes, I am saying that. Now part of the reason is that one of the things that we are not doing is talking about the different ways in which different Black people live their existence as slaves. I’m willing to do that, but what’s interesting to me is the kind of anxiety that this theory elicits from people other than yourself. I mean this is the calmest conversation that I’ve had on this subject [laughter]. You could say to someone that you are a professor at UC Berkeley and there is a person in a sweatshop on the other side of the Rio Grande. This person in the sweatshop is working sixteen hours a day, cannot go to the bathroom, dies on the job from lack of medical benefits… and you are a kind of labor aristocrat. And they could say, “Okay, well that’s interesting.” And you could say to that person, “But if you read the work of Antonio Negri, the Italian communist, you come to understand that even though you live your life as a proletarian differently than a sweatshop laborer, you both stand in relation to capital in this same way, at the level of structural, paradigmatic arrangement.” That person would say, “Oh yeah! I get that, I get that.” You say to someone that all Blacks are slaves and that we’re going to change the definition of slavery because the other things are not definitions, they are actually anecdotes, and your teacher in third grade told you that you don’t use an anecdote to define something. And that person says, “Oh wait a minute, I know a person who’s richer than me and also Black and they live in the Tenderloin…” and it just goes off to the races. It’s a symptomatic response primarily because they understand that what Black people suffer is real and comprehensive but there is actually no prescriptive, rhetorical gesture which could actually write a sentence about how to redress that. Most Americans, most people in the world, are not willing to engage in a paradigm of oppression that does not offer some type of way out. But that is what we live with as Black people every day.

CSS: Let me take us on what sounds like a bit of a detour, but I think it will help you clarify certain concepts that you’re forwarding, and that’s to go to Antonio Gramsci’s work and think about a word that he had a very specific definition of, which is “hegemony.” And of course Gramsci, coming out of the Marxist tradition, was very interested in workers and capital and the struggle between capitalists and workers, although he was also interested in a lot of other things. What did Gramsci mean by the word hegemony?

FW: In 1922 Antonio Gramsci was working for the Comintern and he asked Lenin the following question: “How did you create this successful revolution and I can’t get it off the ground in Italy?” Lenin said, “Well there is no trough of civil society between our working class and the command modality of capitalism, the violent manifestations of the capitalist state. We go on strike and the Cossacks come out.” And Gramsci began to theorize: between working class suffering and state violence and state institutionality there’s this thing called civil society which captivates the workers—in other words, induces a kind of spontaneous consent to the values of capital. Guild associations, schools—today it would be talk shows, but not this talk show of course [laughter]—and he began to theorize that what Lenin meant by hegemony, which is the domination of imperialist countries over countries that are trying to evolve into a kind of revolutionary dispensation, is different than what he needed to develop his theory of hegemony and so he came up with three constituent elements: influence, leadership, and consent. By influence, leadership, and consent he means the influence of the ruling class—not the influence of one person or another, but the influence of a class—the leadership of its ideas—which is to say the idea of meritocracy, which was a very bad idea for a Marxist—and the consent of the working class to that influence and those ideas. What he sought to do was to find ways to break the spontaneous consent to those ideas. Once he could break the spontaneous consent to those ideas, then the working class of a Western, so-called devout country like Italy would be able to see what Marxists think of as the antagonism between them and the ruling class. Then it would move from a passive revolution to a real revolution, which would be a violent overthrow of the state. The European Gramscians actually leave out that last part, the violent overthrow of the state, but that was actually his dream.

CSS: Okay, so then we have on the one hand force and on the other we have consent. We have the force of the ruling class and we have consent, which you’re suggesting if it is withheld, if it is abrogated to such an extreme degree, there might be social and political revolution. But how does, in Antonio Gramsci’s conception, hegemony normally work in terms of the relationship between force and consent in a nominally stable society?

FW: When a state is stable in a capitalist dispensation, such as Canada, then there is an equilibrium between force and consent. In other words, one of the things you have in a “good” (for capitalists) dispensation is a smooth situation. So for the hundreds of years it took to develop capitalism, there was all this violence. Once people have been remolded from peasants and whatever else into workers, then in a capitalist dispensation, just as in a patriarchal dispensation, the violence goes into remission. That’s what Gramsci means by equilibrium. Violence goes in remission and it only needs to rear its ugly head in those singular moments, which hopefully are not global for the capitalist, when the working class refuses or transgresses those symbolic codes that it has consented to.

CSS: Such as general strikes, mass aggression against the capitalist order…

FW: Exactly.

CSS: So then this equilibrium between force and consent, which constitutes hegemony in Gramsci’s mind, how does that notion apply or not in your mind to the relationship between master and slave?

FW: Consent is never a constituent element of the slave relation. If only Marx had picked up on this, but he says in Capital that he doesn’t understand the slave to exist in a relation of pure force but then he moves away from that. So, why is that? Well, one of the things that Orlando Patterson points out is that any stratified society—by that he means for example a capitalist society—only comes into being through a kind of pre-history of violence—the violence that it takes to move from feudalism to capitalism. But once the state of capitalism is set up the violence goes into remission. But then he goes on to say that what’s interesting about the slave estate—the slave estate is actually a phrase from the Black feminist Hortense Spillers—or the slave relation is that the violent pre-history of the slave relation carries over and becomes the concurrent dynamic of the current history of slavery. And that is really, really profound. It is so profound, that it’s traumatic and painful even for Black politicos and Black writers and you see the pain of that coming through in slave narratives. In the film Twelve Years a Slave, there’s a lot of narrative energy put into making sense of how and why Edwin Epps beats his concubine, Patsy, and why his wife wants him to beat her. So it kind of looks like ordinary sadism and jealousy on the wife’s part and so it actually almost becomes a sort of sick love triangle. Alright, put the film away. Pick up the book and what you find is that the violence against the slaves in the book that became the movie actually has no utility, it has no rationale. For instance between a place like Berkley and San Jose there were about four hundred plantations—I know because my father is from one of those plantations—and you have what I would call a bacchanal of pleasure, not a kind of utilitarian need to extract work or obedience out of people, number one. Number two, what you find is that the families on these plantations all participate in the regular beating of slaves—children, wives, husbands… It sustains the psychic health of the people in the first ontological instance. In the second instance, it gets good sugar cane production out of them—and that could even be questioned.

CSS: If you believe the plight of Black people does not mirror the plight of the working class because of gratuitous, as opposed to reasoned, violence against Blacks, and that there is no consent coming from Black people as there is when workers buy into the capitalist order and agree to offer their services in ways that satisfy capitalists, then what about Native Americans? What do you say to those who say the plight of Black people mirrors the treatment of Native Americans?

FW: A lot of people have been genocided so the middle 88 pages of my book, Red, White and Black, first begins by honoring the destruction of Native Americans and what that has meant for white Americans. However, to make it really simple, to pare it down, I do think that there is, in the main, a utility to the genocide of Native Americans that does not mirror the prelogical “rationale” of the violence against Blacks. Indians are genocided, in the main, for the occupation of Turtle Island, which is primarily why so much Native American theorization builds upon Frantz Fanon’s The Wretched of the Earth and does not build upon Fanon’s Black Skin, White Masks. In other words, so much theorization under what I call the meta-commentary called Indigenism leads us back to thinking genocide as a mechanism for usurpation of cartography, of space. Violence against Black people is a mechanism for the usurpation of subjectivity, of life, of being. It’s great if you have a place to stay, but if you don’t have a sense of your own identity, that’s even worse. I think that the repetitive violence against Blacks, if we get back to social death, produces a regenerative form of being in everyone else.

CSS: In other words, settlers wanted Indian land so they killed Indians in large part to get the land, whereas what non-Blacks want from Blacks is not land but…

FW: …but being. If you look at the Dred Scott decision, there’s a really interesting three or four paragraphs in this two hundred and fifty-page decision where Judge Taney says to the lower court, “We are returning Dred Scott to slavery.” One lower court had said, “Dred Scott made it to Minnesota, so he’s not a slave, he made it to a free territory.” The next court said, “No, he never got released, manumission from his master so he is a slave.” The Supreme Court returns Dred Scott to slavery and then does what is known in jurisprudential logic as a “Herculean opinion.” It says to both courts, “We’re not siding with the court that returned him to slavery because he didn’t get freedom from his master; we are trying to correct your thinking in this. In order for Dred Scott to appear before the Bar, he had to become a jurisprudential subject and Africa is a place of non-community. As a result, we’re trying to teach you a lesson—there’s no such thing as a jurisprudential subject that can come out of Africa. We are returning him to slavery not because he didn’t get freedom from his master but because he had no standing before the Bar.” And then they go on to talk about Native Americans and they say that Native Americans actually have political community: “We recognize the arrangements of natality, affiliation, cartography. They have a degraded community in our eyes, and we’re trying to help them evolve to become a superior community, but they actually have community.” This is to say that the people on reservations are subjects worthy of jurisprudential adjudication. So in other words, return him to slavery not because he didn’t get permission to be freed, but because he is not a human being.

CSS: Well, let’s engage in a thought experiment. I’m thinking back to your claim about the master in the master/slave relation: unless they dole out violence to Blacks, they can have no psychic or psychological integrity or security. Let’s posit that all Blacks are wiped out. There is a genocide and all Blacks are removed. In that case, in a sense, you are saying by implication that humanity would cease to exist because the conceptual coherence that it needs would be absent.

FW: Exactly, and that will never happen. We need to bring people like David Marriott from UC Santa Cruz and Jared Sexton from UC Irvine to think more psychoanalytically about this. But in a nutshell, the reason that this will never happen is, remember, that the utility of violence against the slave is not the same as the utility of violence against the Indian, the post-colonial subject, the worker, or the woman. In Fanon’s Black Skin, White Masks, he’s negotiating between two dynamics: one is negrophilia—“I just love Black people, I love Black music, I want to sleep with them, I want to be around them…”—and one is negrophobia—“Yeah you can come over to my crib but don’t bring your friends.” And so, what he’s saying is that the psychic arrangement of the collective unconscious is manifest with the push/pull in the collective unconscious between negrophilia and negrophobia. It’s not important how that gets worked out. What’s important is that that is a process of psychic integration which is necessary for global community. So, one day there could be negrophobia in one psyche, the next day there could be negrophilia. One community could be completely, like teenage boys in the suburbs, negrophilic. Another community, like teenage boys in the deep south, could be completely negrophobic. The point is not that this gets worked out in a decisive way one way or the other because that would make Blacks like Indians, that they have something tangible to give up, like workers. The point is that it’s there that this is the push/pull of collective unconscious meditations. In that push/ pull, whether it’s negrophilia or negrophobia, the concept that has to be reiterated is that the Black is an implement of that negotiation. If the Black does not become an implement of that negotiation then you have not a crisis but an epistemological break, a catastrophe in the knowledge-arrangement of the world. We would find ourselves on the cusp of a new world order, but one that could not be predicted in the way that Marx does.

CSS: Let’s talk more about the Black experience of social death. I’m wondering specifically if you feel that African Americans in this country can in fact consciously acknowledge the violence, the structure of violence, in which they operate and encounter every day.

FW: Well, we can articulate it, but normally when we’re by ourselves. Because when we get into Progressive communities— first of all it’s not even heard of, I used to work in banking for eight years and you can’t even talk about this stuff—but in Progressive humanities there’s a policing action that happens, which is to say: “Make your grammar of suffering, your paradigmatic arrangement, your relationship to structural violence articulate with the other oppressed people in the room.” Once that happens we’re trapped. I mean we’re surrounded by white supremacists, militarization, the police, the military, but we’re also surrounded by people-of-color-consciousness that polices our capacity to flower, to expand upon theorization that I’m doing. A short anecdote: there was a conference years ago at UC Santa Cruz. At the end of the conference, Haunani-Kay Trask, the revolutionary from Hawai‘i, spoke and then we were supposed to break away into groups. The conference organizer said, “You must go into a breakaway room based upon your color—in other words how you are policed.” And immediately—this is how the antagonism manifests itself symptomatically—the Black people were like, “Yes! Now we get to be in a place where we can talk about how we are policed as Blacks.” But the people of color stalled by saying, “There’s no such thing as yellow. We’re Koreans, we’re Japanese, we’re Chinese, we’re Taiwanese. We’re not going to let you pigeonhole us into this position when we have our ethnic identities.” The Latinos did the same thing. The Native Americans did the same thing. My wife, who is white, went to the white room and they rejected the entire arrangement. They said, “We’re just going to talk about ourselves as Armenians, as women, as Jews.” It was the Black people who were energized by the prospect of leaving culture and identity by the wayside and having a conversation about how we fit into the gaze of the police. I think it was up to the other people to be authorized by that project and stop complaining about the fact that the exercise was putting them in a box that was positional and not cultural. But until that happens, there’s no real political coalition building that’s happening. What’s happening, as Jared Sexton says, is Black people become the refugees in everyone else’s political project.

CSS: Let me ask you a personal question, but you can of course refuse to answer. So your wife is white; given what you were telling me about the position of Blacks, what’s your sense that she could truly ever understand your consciousness, your positioning within society? And if she can’t, then what are the prospects of a relationship that could reach as deeply as, for example, two Black people or two white together could?

FW: Well, she can’t. She tries, but what’s interesting and important is that I would never put my marriage out there as a kind of example of what people could aspire to. As a kind of short hand, I call her my wife and she calls me her husband. But the reality is that I’m her slave. And that doesn’t change because we have sentimental—as I would say, contrapuntal—emotions to the contrary. In fact, oftentimes those contrapuntal emotions are mechanisms or means of disavowing the true nature of the relation. Now, I will give her a lot of props for the past eight years that she has actually inculcated this logic. She did her best at that Santa Cruz conference I talked about to tell the white people in that room, “We’re not here to think about how we think about ourselves, we’re here to think about our complicity as whites with policing. Not as women, not as gays, not Armenians, not as Jews, but as white.” On the other hand, if you read my book Incognegro, you’ll see that in the first eight years, there was nothing but resistance to that. So that resistance is as traumatizing as the second eight years are regenerative and I will say that the first eight years are what Black people should take away from that. There’s no way in hell we should have to go through the kind of resistance that white people and non-Black people have to this particular logic because they know it’s the truth. They know their own anxieties about the question, Where is Blackness?, but they can’t approach it because what it would mean is a kind of confrontation with people who are intimate to them that they don’t know they could withstand. And so the real question is, Will these people do all they can to fall into the abyss of nonexistence?, not about how they will perform as partial allies while keeping their cultural presence.

CSS: Why would a Black person, why would you, choose intentionally, consciously, to enter into a life relationship in which you perceive yourself as the figure of the slave?

FW: I don’t think it’s a fair question because the question implies that, knowing what I know, I can actually change my life in an essential way. The question actually takes us away from the problem that I’ve outlined and actually puts the responsibility of correcting the situation on me when actually it should be on you.

CSS: I hear that and I think that prompts me to ask the final thing I want to bring up with you which is regarding how we hear a lot about groups and people who are victims. There is this victimhood frame and so these people have been victimized by, let’s say, another group of people and then the critique is that, by focusing on that, by concentrating on that, you then deflect attention away from their subjectivity, from their agency, from what they can do about their circumstance. Are you concerned that the master/slave relation, which is positioning Blacks as foremost a victim, in my mind, and then focusing only or mainly on a group status as victim, tends to deny—and we’re speaking here now about Blacks—the kind of agency, I think you would admit, that they have at least some semblance of ? And maybe some more than others based on their position in society?

FW: I don’t agree with that and we don’t have the time to actually get into this, but my book, Red, White and Black, is a critique of agency as a generic category. What I’m saying is that, okay, I’m not Elijah Mohammed, I don’t believe that the white man is the devil and that this is all divined by god. I do believe that there is a way out. But I believe that the way out is a kind of violence so magnificent and so comprehensive that it scares the hell out of even radical revolutionaries. So, in other words, the trajectory of violence that Black slave revolts suggest, whether it be in the 21st century or the 19th century, is a violence against the generic categories of life, agency being one of them. That’s what I meant by an epistemological catastrophe. Marx posits an epistemological crisis, which is to say moving from one system of human arrangements and relations to another system of human relations and arrangements. What Black people embody is the potential for a catastrophe of human arrangements writ large. I think that there have been moments—the Black Liberation Army in the 1970s and 1980s is a prime example—of how the political violence of the Black Liberation Army far outpaced the anti-capitalist and internationalist discourse that it had and that’s what scares people; and as Saidiya Hartman says, “A Black revolution makes everyone freer than they actually want to be.” A Marxist revolution blows the lid off of economic relations; a feminist revolution blows the lid off patriarchal relations; a Black revolution blows the lid off the unconscious and relations writ large.

CSS: I have to ask you, when you talk about this violence, in maybe the ideal situation of a Black revolution, what are we talking about concretely? Who or what is the violence directed against? Are we talking about literally the elimination of the master threat physically?

FW: Well, the short answer is that’s for me to know and for you to find out [laughter]. And the long answer is that as a professor I’m uniquely unqualified to actually make that answer. I rely on providing analysis and then getting those marching orders from people in the streets.

II.

The Burdened Individuality of Freedom

Saidiya Hartman

The limits of political emancipation appear at once in the fact that the state can liberate itself from constraint without man himself being really liberated; that a state may be a free state without man himself being a free man.

—Karl Marx, On the Jewish Question (1843)

The emancipation of the slaves is submitted to only in so far as chattel slavery in the old form could not be kept up. But although the freedman is no longer considered the property of the individual master, he is considered the slave of society.

—Carl Schurz, Report on the Condition of the South (1865)

Are we to esteem slavery for what it has wrought, or must we challenge our conception of freedom and the value we place upon it?

—Orlando Patterson, Slavery and Social Death (1982)

The entanglements of bondage and liberty shaped the liberal imagination of freedom, fueled the emergence and expansion of capitalism, and spawned proprietorial conceptions of the self. This vexed genealogy of freedom plagued the great event of Emancipation, or as it was described in messianic and populist terms, Jubilee. The complicity of slavery and freedom or, at the very least, the ways in which they assumed, presupposed, and mirrored one another—freedom finding its dignity and authority in this “prime symbol of corruption” and slavery transforming and extending itself in the limits and subjection of freedom—troubled, if not elided, any absolute and definitive marker between slavery and its aftermath.1 The longstanding and intimate affiliation of liberty and bondage made it impossible to envision freedom independent of constraint or personhood and autonomy separate from the sanctity of property and proprietorial notions of the self. Moreover, since the dominion and domination of slavery were fundamentally defined by black subjection, race appositely framed questions of sovereignty, right, and power.2

The traversals of freedom and subordination, sovereignty and subjection, and autonomy and compulsion are significant markers of the dilemma or double bind of freedom. Marx, describing a dimension of this paradox, referred to it with dark humor as a double freedom—being free to exchange one’s labor and free of material resources. Within the liberal “Eden of the innate rights of man,” owning easily gave way to being owned, sovereignty to fungibility, and abstract equality to subordination and exploitation.3 If sovereignty served “to efface the domination intrinsic to power” and rights “enabled and facilitated relations of domination,” as Michel Foucault argues, then what we are left to consider is the subjugation that rights instigate and the domination they efface.4

The task of the following chapters is to discern the ways in which emancipatory discourses of rights, liberty, and equality instigate, transmit, and effect forms of racial domination and liberal narratives of individuality idealize mechanisms of domination and discipline. It is not simply that rights are inseparable from the entitlements of whiteness or that blacks should be recognized as legitimate rights bearers; rather, the issue at hand is the way in which the stipulation of abstract equality produces white entitlement and black subjection in its promulgation of formal equality. The fragile “as if equal” of liberal discourse inadequately contends with the history of racial subjection and enslavement, since the texture of freedom is laden with the vestiges of slavery, and abstract equality is utterly enmeshed in the narrative of black subjection, given that slavery undergirded the rhetoric of the republic and equality defined so as to sanction subordination and segregation. Ultimately, I am trying to grapple with the changes wrought in the social fabric after the abolition of slavery and with the nonevent of emancipation insinuated by the perpetuation of the plantation system and the refiguration of subjection.

In exploring these issues and in keeping with the focus on everyday practices, I examine pedagogical handbooks designed to aid freed people in the transition from slavery to freedom, the itinerancy of the freed and other “exorbitant” practices, agricultural reports concerned with the productivity of free labor, political debate on the Reconstruction Amendments, and legal cases in order to consider the discrepant bestowal of emancipation. The narratives of slavery and freedom espoused in these disparate sources vied to produce authoritative accounts of liberty, equality, free labor, and citizenship. This generally entailed a deliberation on the origins of slavery, if not the birth of the republic, the place of slavery in the Constitution, the substance of citizenship, and the lineaments of black freedom.

By examining the metamorphosis of “chattel into man” and the strategies of individuation constitutive of the liberal individual and the rights-bearing subject, I hope to underscore the ways in which freedom and slavery presuppose one another, not only as modes of production and discipline or through contiguous forms of subjection but as founding narratives of the liberal subject revisited and revisioned in the context of Reconstruction and the sweeping changes wrought by the abolition of slavery. At issue are the contending articulations of freedom and the forms of subjection they beget. It is not my intention to argue that the differences between slavery and freedom were negligible; certainly such an assertion would be ridiculous. Rather, it is to examine the shifting and transformed relations of power that brought about the resubordination of the emancipated, the control and domination of the free black population, and the persistent production of blackness as abject, threatening, servile, dangerous, dependent, irrational, and infectious. In short, the advent of freedom marked the transition from the pained and minimally sensate existence of the slave to the burdened individuality of the responsible and encumbered freed person.

The nascent individualism of the freed designates a precarious autonomy since exploitation, domination, and subjection inhabit the vehicle of rights. The divisive and individuating power of discipline, operating in conjunction with the sequestering and segregating control of black bodies as a species body, permitted under the guise of social rights and facilitated by the regulatory power of the state, resulted in the paradoxical construction of the freed both as self-determining and enormously burdened individuals and as members of a population whose productivity, procreation, and sexual practices were fiercely regulated and policed in the interests of an expanding capitalist economy and the preservation of a racial order on which the white republic was founded. Lest “the white republic” seem like an inflated or unwarranted rhetorical flourish, we must remember that the transformation of the national government and the citizenship wrought by the Reconstruction Amendments were commonly lamented as representing the loss of the “white man’s government.”5

In light of the constraints that riddled conceptions of liberty, sovereignty, and equality, the contradictory experience of emancipation cannot be adequately conveyed by handsome phrases like “the rights of the man,” “equal protection of the law,” or “the sanctity of life, liberty, and property.” Just as the peculiar and ambivalent articulation of the chattel status of the enslaved black and the assertion of his rights under the law, however limited, had created a notion of black personhood or subjectivity in which all the burdens and few of the entitlements of personhood came to characterize this humanity, so, too, the advent of freedom and the equality of rights conferred to blacks a status no less ambivalent. The advent of freedom held forth the possibility of a world antithetical to slavery and portents of transformations of power and status that were captured in carnivalesque descriptions like “bottom rail on top this time.” At the same time, extant and emergent forms of domination intensified and exacerbated the responsibilities and the afflictions of the newly emancipated. I have opted to characterize the nascent individualism of emancipation as “burdened individuality” in order to underline the double bind of freedom: being freed from slavery and free of resources, emancipated and subordinated, self-possessed and indebted, equal and inferior, liberated and encumbered, sovereign and dominated, citizen and subject. (The transformation of black subjectivity effected by emancipation is described as nascent individualism not simply because blacks were considered less than human and a hybrid of property and person prior to emancipation but because the abolition of slavery conferred on them the inalienable rights of man and brought them into the fold of liberal individualism. Prior to this, legal precedents like State v. Mann and Dred Scott v. Sanford made the notions of blacks’ rights and black citizenship untenable, if not impossible.)

The antagonistic production of abstract equality and black subjugation rested upon contending and incompatible predications of the freed—as sovereign, indivisible, and self-possessed and as fungible and individuated subjects whose capacities could be quantified, measured, exchanged, and alienated. The civil and political rights bestowed upon the freed dissimulated the encroaching and invasive forms of social control exercised over black bodies through the veneration of custom; the regulation, production, and protection of racial and gender inequality in the guise of social rights; the repressive instrumentality of the law; and the forms of extraeconomic coercion that enabled the control of the black population and the effective harnessing of that population as a labor force. The ascribed responsibility of the liberal individual served to displace the nation’s responsibility for providing and ensuring the rights and privileges conferred by the Reconstruction Amendments and shifted the burden of duty onto the freed. It was their duty to prove their worthiness for freedom rather than the nation’s duty to guarantee, at minimum, the exercise of liberty and equality, if not opportunities for livelihood other than debt-peonage. Emancipation had been the catalyst for a transformed definition of citizenship and a strengthened national state. However, the national identity that emerged in its aftermath consolidated itself by casting out the emancipated from the revitalized body of the nation-state that their transient incorporation had created.6 In the aftermath of the Civil War, national citizenship assumed greater importance as a result of the Fourteenth Amendment, which guaranteed civil rights at the national level against state violation and thus made the federal government ultimately responsible for ensuring the rights of citizens.7 Yet the illusory universality of citizenship once again was consolidated by the mechanisms of racial subjection that it formally abjured.

This double bind was the determining condition of black freedom. The belated entry of the newly freed into the realm of freedom, equality, and property, as perhaps expected, revealed the boundaries of emancipation and duly complicated the meaning of freedom. Certainly manhood and whiteness were the undisclosed, but always assumed, norms of liberal equality, although the Civil Rights Act of 1866 made this explicit in defining equality as being equal to white men. The challenge of adequately conveying the dilemmas generated by this delayed entry exceeds the use of descriptions like “limited,” “truncated,” or “circumscribed” freedom; certainly these designations are accurate, but they are far from exhaustive. This first order of descriptives begs the question of how race, in general, and blackness, in particular, are produced through mechanisms of domination and subjection that have yoked, harnessed, and infiltrated the apparatus of rights. How are new forms of bonded labor engendered by the vocabulary of freedom? Is an emancipatory figuration of blackness possible? Or are we to hope that the entitlements of whiteness will be democratized? Is the entrenchment of black subordination best understood in the context of the relations of production and class conflict? Is race best considered an effect of the operation of power on bodies and populations exercised through relations of exploitation, domination, and subjection? Is blackness the product of this combined and uneven articulation of various modalities of power? If slave status was the primary determinant of racial identity in the antebellum period, with “free” being equivalent to “white” and slave status defining blackness, how does the production and valuation of race change in the context of freedom and equality?8

The task of describing the status of the emancipated involves attending to the articulation of various modes of power, without simply resorting to additive models of domination or interlocking oppressions that analytically maintain the distinctiveness and separateness of these modes and their effects, as if they were isolated elements that could be easily enumerated—race, class, gender, and sexuality—or as if they were the ingredients of a recipe for the social whereby the mere listing of elements enables an adequate rendering. Certainly venturing to answer these questions is an enormously difficult task because of the chameleon capacities of racism, the various registers of domination, exploitation and subjection traversed by racism, the plasticity of race as an instrument of power, and the divergent and sundry complex of meanings condensed through the vehicle of race, as well as the risks entailed in generating a description of racism that does not reinforce the fixity of race or neglect the differences constitutive of race. As well, it is important to remember that there is not a monolithic or continuous production of race. […]

If race formerly determined who was “man” and who was chattel, whose property rights were protected or recognized and who was property, which consequently had the effect of making race itself a kind of property, with blackness as the mark of object status and whiteness licensing the proprietorship of self, then how did emancipation affect the status of race? The proximity of black and free necessarily incited fundamental changes in the national fabric. The question persists as to whether it is possible to unleash freedom from the history of property that secured it, for the security of property that undergirded the abstract equality of rights bearers was achieved, in large measure, through black bondage. As a consequence of emancipation, blacks were incorporated into the narrative of the rights of man and citizen; by virtue of the gift of freedom and wage labor, the formerly enslaved were granted entry into the hallowed halls of humanity, and, at the same time, the unyielding and implacable fabrication of blackness as subordination continued under the aegis of formal equality. This is not to deny the achievements made possible by the formal stipulation of equality but simply to highlight the fractures and limits of emancipation and the necessity of thinking about these limits in terms that do not simply traffic in the obviousness of common sense—the denial of basic rights, privileges, and entitlements to the formerly enslaved—and yet leave the framework of liberalism unexamined. In short, the matter to be considered is how the formerly enslaved navigated between a travestied emancipation and an illusory freedom.9

When we examine the history of racial formation in the United States, it is evident that liberty, property, and whiteness were inextricably enmeshed. Racism was central to the expansion of capitalist relations of production, the organization, division, and management of the laboring classes, and the regulation of the population through licensed forms of sexual association and conjugal unions and through the creation of an internal danger to the purity of the body public. Whiteness was a valuable and exclusive property essential to the integrity of the citizen-subject and the exemplary self-possession of the liberal individual. Although emancipation resulted in a decisive shift in the relation of race and status, black subordination continued under the aegis of contract. In this regard, the efforts of Southern states to codify blackness in constitutions written in the wake of abolition and install new measures in the law that would secure the subordination of freed black people demonstrate the prevailing disparities of emancipation. The discrepant production of blackness, the articulation of race across diverse registers of subjection, and the protean capacities of racism illuminate the tenuousness of equality in a social order founded on chattel slavery. Certainly the freed came into “possession” of themselves and basic civil rights consequent to the abolition of slavery. However, despite the symbolic bestowal of humanity that accompanied the acquisition of rights, the legacy of freedom was an ambivalent one. If the nascent mantle of sovereign individuality conferred rights and entitlements, it also served to obscure the coercion of “free labor,” the transmutation of bonded labor, the invasive forms of discipline that fashioned individuality, and the regulatory production of blackness.

Notwithstanding the dissociation of the seemingly inviolable imperial body of property resulting from the abolition of slavery and the uncoupling of the master-and-slave dyad, the breadth of freedom and the shape of the emergent order were the sites of intense struggle in everyday life. The absolute dominion of the master, predicated on the annexation of the captive body and its standing as the “sign and surrogate” of the master’s body, yielded to an economy of bodies, yoked and harnessed, through the exercise of autonomy, self-interest, and consent. The use, regulation, and management of the body no longer necessitated its literal ownership since self-possession effectively yielded modern forms of bonded labor. However, as Marx observed with notable irony, the pageantry of liberty, equality, and consent enacted within this veritable Eden of rights underwent a radical transformation after the exchange was made, the bargain was struck, and the contract was signed. The transactional agent appeared less as the self-possessed and willful agent than as “someone who has brought his own hide to market and now has nothing to expect—but a tanning.”10 Although no longer the extension and instrument of the master’s absolute right or dominion, the laboring black body remained a medium of others’ power and representation.11 If the control of blacks was formerly effected by absolute rights of property in the black body, dishonor, and the quotidian routine of violence, these techniques were supplanted by the liberty of contract that spawned debtpeonage, the bestowal of right that engendered indebtedness and obligation and licensed naked forms of domination and coercion, and the cultivation of a work ethic that promoted self-discipline and induced internal forms of policing. Spectacular displays of white terror and violence supplemented these techniques.12

At the same time, the glimpse of freedom enabled by the transformation from chattel to man fueled the resistance to domination, discipline, and subjugation, for the equality and personal liberty conferred by the dispensation of rights occasioned a sense of group entitlement intent on collective redress as these newly acquired rights also obfuscated and licensed forms of social domination, racial subjection, and exploitation, Despite the inability of the newly emancipated to actualize or enjoy the full equality or freedom stipulated by the law and the ways in which these newly acquired rights masked the modes of domination attendant to the transition from slavery to freedom, the possession of rights was nonetheless significant.

### 1NC---AT: Waywardness

#### Mutual aid and waywardness can’t solve any of their harms

Harcourt 20 (Bernard E. Harcourt, Professor of Law and Political Science, Columbia University, “For Coöperation and the Abolition of Capital, Or, How to Get Beyond Our Extractive Punitive Society and Achieve a Just Society,” Columbia Public Law Research Paper No. 14-672, 9-1-2020, https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\_id=3702010)

The theory of mutual aid can sometimes elide the structural failures that are the root cause of the problems that give rise to the very need for mutual aid. At other times, the concept of mutual aid comes too close to charitable work. It is problematic, for instance, that some proponents glorify mutual aid, arguing that it works better than state or top-down measures, and as a result (1) ignore the fact that the problems are the product of indifference and structural racism, poverty, classism, and gender discrimination, and (2) suggest that we would all be better off with no state interventions. Dean Spade gets to this in his essay, “Solidarity, Not Charity,” when he argues that most of the media stories about recent mutual aid efforts elide the structural causes of the problems; and when he argues that they feed into the rhetoric of small government.312

Another concern with mutual aid is that it only really addresses one small or tiny segment of coöperation, the sector that relates to charitable works, non-profit service, or what might be called public service—altruistic projects aimed at relieving the immediate effects of poverty and hunger and sickness. This raises several problems.

First, it has an anarchist bent that may be detrimental to coöperation: the impetus and force of coöperatives and mutuals may well be that the individual workers and members drive the enterprise, and in this sense, many of these initiatives are bottom-up or grass-roots; but that does not signify in any way that there is no need for an organizational mechanism or regulatory framework to administer and ensure the smooth functioning of these initiatives. Coöperationism is not anarchism. It may devalue the dirigiste elements of the state (by, among other things, placing ultimate decision-making in the hands of elected members of coöperatives), but it does not do away with the state necessarily.

Second, it takes a part for the whole: mutual aid is just one type of coöperationist enterprise, and it fits alongside housing and worker coöperatives, credit unions, mutuals, etc. Each one of these types of enterprise will have their own unique features. Mutual aid may appear to require less state intervention than worker coöperatives, but that is only because state regulation is often so hidden. It is pervasive in the mutual aid context: the state licenses food services and has OSHA regulations for the groceries where Invisible Hands’ Elkind shopped (Fairway Markets), as well as all kinds of worker and other regulations, FDA etc. And these differ from the kinds of regulations that would be necessary for banking through credit unions. Each one of these will need their own conceptualization, and we could never say that “mutual aid” governs those other areas—that makes far too many assumptions and simplifications about coöperationism.

Third, mutual aid does not really address root causes, despite its oft-repeated claims: these mutual aid projects are more temporary remedies, than solutions to the problems. They are valiant forms of self-help, but they depend on some of us having enough money to volunteer and shop for others, for instance in the Invisible Hands initiative. They build solidarity and reorient our moral compass—all good—but do not resolve the structural problems that give rise to capitalist exploitation. When Tolentino writes in the New Yorker that “Both mutual aid and charity address the effects of inequality, but mutual aid is aimed at root causes—at the structures that created inequality in the first place,”313 I have to disagree. Other forms of coöperation will get at the root causes, but not the mutual aid projects. Tolentino links in the article to the Big Door Brigade.314 The Big Door Brigade is a project that Dean Spade has been involved with. 315 On its website, built by and maintained by him, Dean Spade explains:

Mutual aid is when people get together to meet each other’s basic survival needs with a shared understanding that the systems we live under are not going to meet our needs and we can do it together RIGHT NOW! Mutual aid projects are a form of political participation in which people take responsibility for caring for one another and changing political conditions, not just through symbolic acts or putting pressure on their representatives in government, but by actually building new social relations that are more survivable. Most mutual aid projects are volunteer-based, with people jumping in to participate because they want to change what is going on right now, not wait to convince corporations or politicians to do the right thing.316

To be sure, mutual aid embraces a notion of people building new social relations and taking matters in their own hands and taking responsibility; but that is not the equivalent, I would argue, to addressing the structural problems of capitalist exploitation (unless, backing up to the first point, you are an anarchist). So again, more needs to be added to really address the root problems.

This is not to impugn mutual aid in any way. There is a long and admirable history to mutual aid that goes back to the Black Panther Party’s free-breakfast program in the United States in the 1960s and well before; and that extends to ongoing initiatives like the groups that leave water in the desert for immigrants crossing the border (the No More Deaths collective).317 There is a strong parallel between mutual aid and Occupy Wall Street: the idea of prefiguring another form of democracy. Kaba talks about the practice of mutual aid as “prefiguring the world in which we want to live.”318 That was, as you will recall, a constant refrain of Occupy and of Judith Butler’s work on assembly.319

But mutual aid is only one small dimension of a society built on coöperation, one dimension which has its own peculiarities. It should not be built up to represent the whole. For one thing, it simply does not constitute a viable economic system for production and growth. Contemporary coöperationist enterprises do.

# 2NC

## T

### 2NC---AT: Change Debate

#### In round protests to the state of debate backfire for creating coalitions

Atchison ‘9 [Jarrod and Edward Panetta; Director of Debate at Trinity University; Director of Debate at the University of Georgia; The Sage Handbook of Rhetorical Studies; “Intercollegiate Debate and Speech Communication: Issues for the Future,” p. 317-334]

The final problem with an individual debate round focus is the role of competition. Creating community change through individual debate rounds sacrifices the “community” portion of the change. Many teams that promote activist strategies in debates profess that they are more interested in creating change than winning debates. What is clear, however, is that the vast majority of teams that are not promoting community change are very interested in winning debates. The tension that is generated from the clash of these opposing forces is tremendous. Unfortunately, this is rarely a productive tension. Forcing teams to consider their purpose in debating, their style in debates, and their approach to evidence are all critical aspects of being participants in the community. However, the dismissal of the proposed resolution that the debaters have spent countless hours preparing for, in the name of a community problem that the debaters often have little control over, does little to engender coalitions of the willing. Should a debate team lose because their director or coach has been ineffective at recruiting minority participants? Should a debate team lose because their coach or director holds political positions that are in opposition to the activist program? Competition has been a critical component of the interest in intercollegiate debate from the beginning, and it does not help further the goals of the debate community to dismiss competition in the name of community change. The larger problem with locating the “debate as activism” perspective within the competitive framework is that it overlooks the communal nature of the community problem. If each individual debate is a decision about how the debate community should approach a problem, then the losing debaters become collateral damage in the activist strategy dedicated toward creating community change. One frustrating example of this type of argument might include a judge voting for an activist team in an effort to help them reach elimination rounds to generate a community discussion about the problem. Under this scenario, the losing team serves as a sacrificial lamb on the altar of community change. Downplaying the important role of competition and treating opponents as scapegoats for the failures of the community may increase the profile of the winning team and the community problem, but it does little to generate the critical coalitions necessary to address the community problem, because the competitive focus encourages teams to concentrate on how to beat the strategy with little regard for addressing the community problem. There is no role for competition when a judge decides that it is important to accentuate the publicity of a community problem. An extreme example might include a team arguing that their opponents’ academic institution had a legacy of civil rights abuses and that the judge should not vote for them because that would be a community endorsement of a problematic institution. This scenario is a bit more outlandish but not unreasonable if one assumes that each debate should be about what is best for promoting solutions to diversity problems in the debate community. If the debate community is serious about generating community change, then it is more likely to occur outside a traditional competitive debate. When a team loses a debate because the judge decides that it is better for the community for the other team to win, then they have sacrificed two potential advocates for change within the community. Creating change through wins generates backlash through losses. Some proponents are comfortable with generating backlash and argue that the reaction is evidence that the issue is being discussed. From our perspective, the discussion that results from these hostile situations is not a productive one where participants seek to work together for a common goal. Instead of giving up on hope for change and agitating for wins regardless of who is left behind, it seems more reasonable that the debate community should try the method of public argument that we teach in an effort to generate a discussion of necessary community changes. Simply put, debate competitions do not represent the best environment for community change because it is a competition for a win and only one team can win any given debate, whereas addressing systemic century-long community problems requires a tremendous effort by a great number of people.

## Case

### 2NC---AT: Solvency

#### The aff’s framing of self-care fails to produce material change and net reduces energy

B. LOEWE 12, an organizer and communicator, has served as NDLON's Communications Director, supported the Alto Arizona work against SB 1070 and Sheriff Arpaio, and participated in the organizing of the 2010 US Social Forum in Detroit [“An End to Self Care,” *Organizing Upgrade*, October 15 12, http://www.organizingupgrade.com/index.php/blogs/b-loewe/item/729-end-to-self-care]

As long as self-care is discussed as an individual responsibility and additional task, it will be something that middle-class people with leisure time will most easily relate to and will include barriers to the lives of people without time to spare. It becomes one more unchecked box on a to-do list to feel bad about, an unreal expectation, or a far-off dream.

The movement is my self-care not my reason for needing it.

Don Andres awoke every morning at 5:00am to arrive at a street corner to look for work by 6:00am. He’d work a full day of heavy construction and still arrive at the 7:00pm meeting. He’d routinely fall asleep but he was there. Why? Because organizing together to improve conditions, to create alternatives, to band together, was the only option for how care could be anything but alien in his life as a day laborer. Being at the meeting was self-care.

Lack of care is systemic. Therefore resistance to those systems is the highest affirmation of care for oneself and one’s community. Movement work is healing work.

What self-care often misses is the reality that for the majority of people engaged in social justice movements, participation is out of necessity. That a collective effort in the form of social movement is the highest articulation of caring for one’s own self in a world designed to deny your worthiness of care. Too many people discussing self-care overlook the structural barriers that make access to the care they are speaking of impossible without the struggle they often discuss as the cause of their need to ‘take care of themselves.’

Even for someone like myself who has the majority of my materials needs met, I feel most alive, most on fire, most able to go around the clock, when I’m doing political work that feels authentic, feels like it pushes the bounds of authority, and feels like it is directly connected to advancing my individual and our collective liberation.

The truth is that we cannot knit our way to revolution. The issue is not that movements are taxing, because truly they are. It’s called ‘struggle’ for a reason. But they go from strain to overtaxing when we seek to fulfill our political aspirations through vehicles never meant to carry them like in non-political formations or some 501c3s.

The crisis of care is also a crisis of organization. Non-profits are built to do a lot of good, but they have inherent limitations that mean they are rarely built to fulfill our visions of the transformative organizing that would usher in a world where we could feel whole. Most engaged in social movements today are originally driven out of either a concrete material necessity and/or a deep connection to the wrong that accompanies inequality and a drive to make it right. However the majority of organizations available to us today are designed for gentle reforms but not the fundamental transformation our spirits crave. As a result, we try to transform a model unfit to nourish our hearts and then treat that frustration with tonics and diets and stretches instead of placing our efforts in creating a collective space that unleashes our heart’s creative desires.

Maria Poblet of Causa Justa Just Cause once said, “Burnout is not about the amount of hours you work, it is about the amount of political clarity you have.” What that means is that there is no chance of us consistently burning the midnight oil if we don’t at our core believe what we’re working on will get us to a new day and no amount of yoga or therapy or comfort food we supplement our work with will compensate for that. However, if we can see a better world just over the horizon, like a marathon runner nearing a finish line, we can find endless wells to draw upon as we work to usher it in. I have literally gone from being in debilitating pain and only being able to accomplish three hours of work each day to working 18 hour shifts the same week in a completely different context. The difference was not the conditions of my work. It was my connection to my purpose.

The problem with self-care is that there is an underlying assumption that our labor is draining. The deeper question is how do we shape our struggles so that they are life-giving instead of energy-taking processes. When did activities that are aimed to move us closer to freedom stop moving us?

#### They conflate waywardness with resilience---that spectacle empowers hegemonic institutions, disempowers victims of structural oppression, and turns psychological health

James 14 - (Robin James is Associate Professor of Philosophy at UNC Charlotte, ON RESILIENCE & ‘SELF-CARE AS WARFARE’, September 28, 2014, <http://www.its-her-factory.com/2014/09/on-resilience-self-care-as-warfare/)//TR>

I’ve been using the concept of [resilience](http://www.its-her-factory.com/2014/05/oh-bondage-up-yours-resilience-as-feminine-ideal-and-racializing-technology-my-philosophia-2014-talk/) as a way to understand one of these latter methods. (I think self-care is legible as resilience only when subjects occupy specific situations.) What do I mean by ‘resilience’? Well, some women are tasked with the imperative “you must be a survivor.” We’re supposed to Lean In, or show “grit” by learning to code, to rock, to run, or whatever. By overcoming our personal gendered damage, we both (a) show that society has overcome patriarchy, and (b) take out the trash, those individuals/groups who aren’t flexible, adaptable, indeed, resilient enough to keep up with the post-feminist times. Resilience is a means of producing (a) and (b)–it’s a way of organizing society to funnel the profits from this surplus value to privileged people and institutions. This is why resilience is not about personal healing: resilient self-care is just another, upgraded way of instrumentalizing the same people.

Resilience is not actually about your survival; it’s about the survival and health of hegemonic institutions like MRWaSP. It’s a strategy MRWaSP uses to wage its war. Contemporary white supremacist patriarchy “includes” some formerly excluded populations, but they’re included as always in need of remediation, as eternally working on and improving themselves (we’re not “in” yet, just constantly leaning that way). (Just to be clear: individuals can be seen as successfully and finally remediated, but the group as a whole still isn’t completely finished.) This is really convenient for capitalism too, because people’s endless laboring on themselves opens up the personal “disciplines” (what were formerly preconditions for capitalist production, what standardized workers and made them docile cogs in the machine) as sources of surplus value production.

The labor of resilience only seems like self-care because society is structured so that it functions optimally when you (or people like you) succeed. So resilience isn’t about cultivating what you need, it’s about adapting to dominant notions of success. What they say is ‘healthy’ might not actually be healthy, for example. This is self work, but not necessarily self “care.” This sort of work looks and feels like care because its rewards are generally affective, physiological, and personal. It is a kind of “care” labor on the self, but it is not actually “caring” in the sense of 70s feminist care ethics, i.e., of cultivating relationships that support one another. In fact, I think cultivating relationships that support one another–that is, re-organizing society on whatever scale you can to make it more survivable–is one of the best ways to think about refusing the work of resilience. It’s quite similar to what Ahmed describes as “redirecting care away from its proper objects.”

Re-organizing relationships of support and dependence is one thing that happens when workers go on strike. In a well-organized strike, supporters and participants help one another do things that would normally happen as a business transaction, like the provision of food and services. So maybe those of us tasked with the work of resilience should imagine our resistance not as warfare, but as a strike. There’s a difference between surviving a system predicated on your death, and bending the circuits of systems designed to support (a very narrowly drawn model of) your life. In the former case, your survival disrupts systems predicated on your death; in the latter case, refusing to work/generate surplus value diminishes the vitality of the systems that profit from your work.

I think there are some other important differences between resilience and guerilla self-care, differences that make it pretty clear that “an individual woman who is trying to survive an experience of rape by focusing on her own wellbeing and safety” is not “participating in the same politics as a woman who is concerned with getting up ‘the ladder’” (Ahmed). First, resilience is a specific method for producing human capital, that is, for getting a return on the investments you make in your self-improvement. And to get these returns, your recovery must be spectacular–that is, made into a spectacle consumable (and shareable) by others. Resilience discourse makes a spectacle of the performance of survival. Self-care isn’t resilient self-work unless it’s rendered into human capital, i.e., what gets you “up the ladder.” Second, self-care is an ongoing process. Dealing with trauma can be a lifelong project. Resilience, on the other hand, treats therapeutic overcoming as a resolved accomplishment: I was once damaged, but now I am better. Resilience says “Look, I Overcame” (spectacle + past tense).