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#### Slavery must be theorized as maximum captivity to produce a structural analysis capable of coming to terms with the world

Sexton 8 (Jared Sexton, Director of African American Studies at UC Irvine, 2008, “Amalgamation Schemes: Antiblackness and the Critique of Multiracialism”, pages 111-114) FYI: Randall Kennedy is “one of the first black scholars in this generation to pen a sustained argument advocating what he terms ‘a cosmopolitan ethos that welcomes the prospect of genuine, loving interracial intimacy’ ” (page 107-108)

In response to the last question, we examine several comments from Kennedy’s opening chapter, “In the Age of Slavery.” As noted, Kennedy is at pains to counter the claims of a certain black feminist history regarding the “extremity of power” exercised by the slaveholder and “the absolute submission required of the slave” (Hartman, quoted in Kennedy 2003, 532fn11). He is, in other words, attempting to demonstrate, or at least to speculate upon, the limits of the slave system’s power of domination. Beyond this limit—whose locus proves frustratingly obscure—the agency of the slave herself was, we are told, able to affect significantly the conditions of captivity to alternate ends. Kennedy, in other words, proffers a narrative in which evidence of agency (evidence, that is, confirming an assumption of agency), however circumscribed or practically ineffective, is taken as a sign of resistance. More properly, this is a narrative of resistant affection, an insistence that the dehumanizing social order of racial slavery was unable to achieve its ultimate goal—“the absolute submission of the slave”—because it could not overcome the irresistible force of affection between men and women, “regardless of color.” When all is said and done, a human is still a human, as it were, and the family romance of normative heterosexuality persists “even within” hierarchies that preclude for the captive all of the recognizable (social, political, economic, cultural, legal) trappings of “human being” in the modern sense. Here is Kennedy: The slave system failed, however, to perfect the domination that [ Judge Thomas] Ruffin envisioned. It failed to bind the slaves so tightly as to deprive them of all room to maneuver. It failed to wring from them all prohibited yearnings. Slavery was, to be sure, a horribly oppressive system that severely restricted the ambit within which its victims could make decisions. But slavery did not extinguish altogether the possibility of choice. (43) We might ask, what is the minimum ambit of decision making? What sort of system, if not slavery, would bind one so tightly as to deprive one of all “room to maneuver”? Need a system of domination be “perfect” in order for it to be legally binding or socially effective or politically determinant? Need the captive body be deprived of all room to maneuver for the situation to be considered one of extremity? Need the yearnings of slaves be wrung entirely from them for their prohibition to be considered a constitutive element of life? At what point does the quantitative measure of the slave’s bondage become difference of a qualitative sort? What precisely is the “choice” available under slavery, and is it one worthy of belaboring, one whose sphere of influence is to be considered newsworthy? To put a finer point on it, why is the categorical discrepancy refused between the free and the enslaved, or more specifically, between the slave and the slaveholder? Is such refusal not tantamount to denying the very existence of slavery as a system that produced slaves rather than free people whose freedom was simply “severely restricted” or whose power was simply “severely limited” or who simply faced “difficult situations”? Kennedy continues: Bondage severely limited the power—including the sexual power—of slaves. But it did not wholly erase their capacity to attract and shape affectionate, erotic attachments of all sorts, including interracial ones. In a hard-to-quantify but substantial number of cases, feelings of affection and attachment between white male masters and their black female slaves somehow survived slavery’s deadening influence. The great difficulty, in any particular instance, lies in determining whether sex between a male master and a female slave was an expression of sexual autonomy or an act of unwanted sex. The truth is that most often we cannot know for sure, since there exists little direct testimony from those involved, especially the enslaved women. (44) The inability to quantify the “number of cases” or, indeed, to “know for sure” anything about them does not prevent the author from considering them nonetheless “substantial,” and the paucity of direct testimony,6 “especially [from] the enslaved women,” does not stop the author from extrapolating wildly about said “feelings of affection and attachment” between them and their “white male masters.” In fact, it is the void in its place—the great historic silence—that enables both the reiteration of longstanding alibis for white male sexual violence—what Hartman (1997) discusses skillfully as the “ruses of seduction”—and the projection of this newfangled, though no less menacing, story about a maverick interracial intimacy that, almost undetectably, undermines the injunctions of white supremacy, serving not only as a sign of agency for enslaved women but a moment of their resistance as well. Their “sexual power” is expressed as the “capacity to attract”—and “somehow” to manipulate—the erotic attachments of white male slaveholders. There is here an unsubtle shift in terms: agency is not in itself subversive; indeed, the entire slave system derives, in large part, from the agency of the enslaved (its capture, manipulation, redeployment, etc.) (Chandler 2000). Agency may be resistant or complicit or both, and it may or may not have practical effects in the world; all of this can only be determined contextually. Much more troubling than Kennedy’s imprecision here, however, is his entirely uncritical suggestion about the “sexual power” of slaves. Is not one of the principal conceits of power to suggest that though the dominant may monopolize power political, economic, and social, the dominated nonetheless enjoy a wily aptitude for “getting their way” by other means, namely, the ars erotica of seduction? Is not one of the most pernicious elements of the proslavery discourse that the “attractiveness” of enslaved black women presents a threat of corruption to civilized white manhood and/or an internal guarantee against the excesses of state-sanctioned violence reserved for white slaveholders? The same quality that served as temptation was also, or alternately, taken to be that which would forestall the descent of slaveholding into unrestrained brutality, an essential rationalization for the upholding of white (male) impunity toward blacks, whether enslaved or nominally “free” (Hartman 1997).7 Finally, was not the suggestion that enslaved black men might have the power to seduce white women (whether free or, in earlier periods, indentured) one of the prime alibis for the construction of regulatory or prohibitory statutes around interracial marriage and sexual relations from the seventeenth century onward (Bardaglio 1999)? In each case, the focus on the “sexual power” of slaves was undoubtedly a displacement of the organized violence consistently required of captivity and, further, a dissimulation of the institutionalized sexual power of slaveholders in particular (whose authority not only foreclosed the possibility of prosecution and militated against the extralegal reprisals but also contributed immeasurably to their “capacity to attract and shape affectionate, erotic attachments of all kinds.” The asymmetry here approaches the incommensurable—how, after all, would a slave go on to “court” a master? How would such an exercise in self-objectification, supplementing structural availability with an affirmation of “willingness,” rightly be called power?). This is no less the case simply because for Kennedy the “sexual power” of slaves is something to honor or celebrate rather than to fear.

#### Their cost-benefit calculation creates anti-black fantasies that condemn blacks to repetition of impersonal death – infatuation with the “contingency” of “material change” disavows libidinal investments

Leong 16 – PhD UC Irvine - Assistant Professor, English, University of Utah - Assistant Professor, Environmental Humanities Graduate Program, University of Utah (Diana, “The Mattering of Black Lives: Octavia Butler’s Hyperempathy and the Promise of the New Materialisms,” Catalyst: Feminism, Theory, Technoscience, 2(2), 1-35)

Black lives matter and black lives matter and black lives matter. This homographic reading of the most salient political statement of recent years speaks to the torsions of blackness, matter, and life that have come to define our contemporary era. In “Unbearable Blackness,” Jared Sexton (2015) argues with regard to the triangulation of these concerns that antiblack fantasies “do not render blacks, like so much of the planet, subject to death in an economy of disposability; rather, they subject blacks to ‘the interminable time of meaningless, impersonal dying’” (p.168). In the wake of recent grand jury decisions not to prosecute the murders of Tamir Rice, Eric Garner, and Michael Brown, to name only the most widely publicized cases, Sexton’s claims register most strongly in the state’s refusal to allow these deaths to die. They are caught instead in a biopolitical apparatus that suspends racial blackness between a life unrecognized as such and an illegible form of death that can never pass into reason. Against this timeless, spectral dying, we can read the declaration that “Black Lives Matter” as a call to return racial blackness to a form that matters, to a form, in other words, that is matter. On this score, I ask: how do black life and death become matter, and what is at stake in the demand that they should assume such form? Octavia Butler’s Afrofuturist novels Parable of the Sower (1993) and Parable of the Talents (1998) dramatize these questions through protagonist Lauren Olamina and her condition of hyperempathy. In this article, I explore hyperempathy as a speculative embodiment of “pornotroping” (Spillers, 2003) to understand how racial blackness structures current theorizations of matter. Questions about the proper scale, scope, and character of matter have assumed a renewed sense of urgency given the emergence of the Anthropocene, a distinct geological epoch in which human activity has become so influential as to alter fundamental aspects of the Earth System. While ecologist Eugene Stoermer and Nobel Prize-winning atmospheric chemist Paul Crutzen introduced the current definition of the term in the 1980s, we have since witnessed a growing scientific consensus about the rigor of the concept. A recent article published in the journal Science by the Anthropocene Working Group (2016) provides the latest example of this support, demonstrating that fluctuations in the content and pace of sediment deposits and extinction rates are anthropogenically driven. However, the very nomenclature of the “Anthropocene” has been subject to critique from within the humanities for allowing an abstract notion of the “Anthropos” to anchor an implicit philosophy of history. Daniel Hartley (2015), for instance, comments in a recent issue of the UK-based magazine Salvage, “Inherent to the Anthropocene discourse is a conception of historical causality which is purely mechanical: a one-onone billiard ball model of technological invention and historical effect, which is simply inadequate to explain actual social and relational modes of historical causation” (para. 4). Hartley takes special issue with the presumed origins of the Anthropocene, which many geologists date to the industrial and nuclear revolutions. This determination, he suggests, interprets the environmental impact of technology as the “net effect” of an undifferentiated “human” activity (Waters et. al., 2016, p. 139). In order to assert a causal link between technological development and ecological catastrophe, any consideration of the roles race, class, and gender have played in engineering our historical present must be obscured.1 The benefits and consequences of technological development and environmental disaster, after all, are rarely if ever distributed symmetrically among and within human populations. “It is not all people that are indicted by the onset of the Anthropocene,” writes Nicholas Mirzoeff (forthcoming 2016), “but a specific set: colonial settlers, enslavers, and would-be imperialists” (pp. 19-20). At the same time, this remodeling of human history and ecological philosophy is not unique to geologists. Indeed, the Anthropocene’s scientific definition may have become matters of debate only recently, but its constitutive concerns—global warming, genetic technology, biodiversity loss, environmental racism—have thrown our prevailing concepts of nature and culture into crisis well before the epoch’s formal identification. At stake is not only the fate of homo sapiens as a species, but also the basic composition of a world yet to come. The challenges of analyzing the effects of non-human systems (e.g., weather patterns or ocean currents) and actors (e.g., viruses or pesticides) while attending to the uneven distribution of environmental risks and resources have generated a range of philosophical responses. For example, publications like Dipesh Chakrabarty’s (2009), “The Climate of History,” Elizabeth Kolbert’s (2014) The Sixth Extinction, and Roy Scranton’s (2015) Learning to Die in the Anthropocene recommend a universal or existential “species thinking” necessary for grasping the complexities of climate change. Other responses, like Jane Bennett’s (2010) Vibrant Matter and Jeffrey Jerome Cohen’s (2015) Stone, interrogate fantasies of human mastery as a way of reckoning with the power of non-human agents. Over the last decade, one particular variety of response has acquired critical purchase within the academic left: the new materialisms. As part of what Richard Grusin (2015) has named “the nonhuman turn” in contemporary thought, the new materialisms join affect theory, critical animal studies, and object-oriented ontology in calling for enhanced attention to matter and materiality. The popularity of this approach, evidenced by a growing number of monographs, special journal issues, and anthologies, appears grounded in the need to develop strategies of coexistence attuned to the Anthropocene’s political and ecological crises.2 How, for example, should we understand agency and embodiment in light of recent developments in biotechnology and the increasingly unpredictable behavior of non-human objects? The promise of the new materialisms thus inheres in the notion that a focus on materiality can offer us more comprehensive and efficacious ways to respond to these developments. As Diana Coole and Samantha Frost (2010) write in their introduction to the New Materialisms anthology, “What is at stake here is nothing less than a challenge to some of the most basic assumptions that have underpinned the modern world, including its normative sense of the human and its beliefs about human agency, but also regarding its material practices such as the ways we labor on, exploit, and interact with nature” (p. 4). There is much to recommend an intensified engagement with matter, not least of which is Coole and Frost’s proposal that such engagements can disrupt our “normative sense of the human” and of “human agency.” Given this professed interest in dismantling human exceptionalism, it is curious then that, as Zakiyyah Jackson (2015) and other critical race scholars point out, the new materialisms have systematically “[ignored] praxes of humanity and critiques produced by black people, particularly those praxes which are irreverent to the normative production of ‘the human’ or illegible from within the terms of its logic” (p. 216).3 Black thought has long challenged the enforced description of Africans and their descendants as non-human objects of science, as specimens for study and experimentation, as commodities for market exchange, as things. In fact, from at least the 16th century onward, black bodies provided crucial raw material for the development of natural history, the natural sciences, and the life philosophies in Enlightenment thought.4 Both geology and biology, for example, pursued notions of species and evolution that preserved early racial taxonomies; the techniques of observation and interpretation used to analyze geological activity were the same as those employed by the racial science of phrenology. Mirzoeff (forthcoming 2016) leverages this history to argue that “the very concept of observable breaks between geological eras in general and the definition of the Anthropocene in particular is inextricably intermingled with the belief in distinct races of humanity” (p. 2). His claim that the concept of the Anthropocene reproduces race-making technologies gestures to the historical fact that the human as such has emerged through the exclusion and extermination of black bodies. Proscribed from the realm of the human, black intellectuals have had to think within and through the categories of the non-human and the inhuman to pursue new ways of being in the world. Philosophical questions about the vitality and agency of the human, the animal, and the object are therefore longstanding in the fields of Black studies. Alexander Weheliye (2015) observes in Habeas Viscus that across Sylvia Wynter’s oeuvre, “it is the human—or different genres of the human—that materializes as the object of knowledge in the conceptual mirror of black studies” (p. 21). The scholarly work of Hortense Spillers (2003) and Fred Moten (2003), and the Afrofuturist contributions of Nalo Hopkinson (1998; 2000) and Nnedi Okorafor (2010), similarly confront the “most basic assumptions that have underpinned the modern world,” including our notions of history, temporality, and modern science.5 And yet, as it is with the Anthropocene’s implied philosophy of history, much of the scholarship produced under the banner of the new materialisms tends to reduce race to a crude “identity politics” or to endorse a model of difference-withoutrace.6 This reduction and disavowal of race, I contend, is something of a structural necessity for the new materialisms. In what follows, I trace the general theoretical principles of the new materialisms to a dissatisfaction with the linguistic and cultural paradigms of post-structuralism. I then demonstrate how this dissatisfaction enables an ethics of relation or affect that further legitimizes the reduction and dismissal of race. However, as a close reading of Butler’s Parable duology reveals, one of the primary figures of the new materialisms—the material body—is defined by and through disavowed social fantasies about black female flesh that are linked to the global legacies of modern slavery. My examination of the critical responses to Butler’s novels further suggests that such fantasies are necessary to secure a libidinal investment in the ethical potential of materiality. I argue, thus, against a misrecognition of black female flesh as a resource against the violence of hierarchical differences, rather than the site of their active production. Finally, I turn to a reading of Butler’s Parable duology as an allegory about the dangers of proceeding in the Anthropocene without a robust analysis of the formation of racial blackness. Because a proper survey of new materialist literature is beyond the scope of this article, the comments below should be taken as entry points for probing the (absent) place of racial blackness in theories about matter.7 The promise of the new materialisms The new materialisms are drawn from a long genealogy of philosophical materialism, in which Spinoza, Nietzsche, Bergson, Marx, and Deleuze are cited as major touchstones. In recognition of this legacy, Coole and Frost (2010) assert that the interventions loosely gathered by the term “new materialisms” are better “categorized as renewed materialisms,” with the qualifier “new” acknowledging the “unprecedented” ecological, biological, and technological conditions under which we currently live and labor (p. 4, italics in original). Although their specific objects of analysis are appropriately diverse, the new materialisms collectively insist on a post-humanist matter that is lively, self-directed, agential, creative, and always in the process of becoming. In this regard, matter is better thought of as materialization, or the process by which complex phenomena are temporarily and contingently stabilized to varying degrees. The ontological shift entailed here is towards a philosophical monism, inspired most notably by the work of Deleuze. Following Spinoza and Bergson, Deleuze (1994) develops a notion of the virtual as a generative field of difference, or a “plane of immanence,” where “all the varieties of differential relations and all the distributions of singular points [coexist] in diverse orders ‘perplicated’ in one another” (p. 206). These differences are then formatted into distinct phenomena or entities by processes of actualization that “[bring] the object back into relation with the field of differential relations in which it can always be dissolved and become actualized otherwise, as something else, by being linked through other differential relations to other particles” (Cheah, 2010, pp. 85-86). While not all new materialist theories cleave to a strictly Deleuzian philosophy, there is general agreement that the dynamic interactions among objects, bodies, and phenomena turn us away from the Anthropocene’s “billiard ball model” of causality, and more significantly, away from some of poststructuralism’s critical trends. According to the new materialisms, the linguistic and cultural turns of the last half century have resulted in both an intellectual and a political poverty. Specifically, social constructivism (Coole & Frost, 2010) and cultural representationalism (Barad, 2007) have overdetermined matter to the extent that it appears as a passive product made meaningful only through cultural and discursive practice. Coole and Frost (2010) even write of a theoretical “exhaustion,” claiming that they “share the feeling current among many researchers that the dominant constructivist orientation to social analysis is inadequate for thinking about matter, materiality, and politics in ways that do justice to the contemporary context of biopolitics and global political economy” (p. 6). Somewhere and sometime during the rise of the Anthropocene, cultural theory, broadly conceived, lost its explanatory power. This assessment of inadequacy repeats across much of the recent new materialist scholarship, condensing the cultural turn into a discursive reductionism that rebuffs the empirical for the ideal, or the material for the symbolic. Elizabeth Grosz’s (2004) The Nick of Time opens with a telling “reminder to social, political, and cultural theorists, particularly those interested in feminism, antiracism, and questions of the politics of globalization, that they have forgotten a crucial dimension of research…not just the body, but that which makes it possible and which limits its actions: the precarious, accidental, contingent, expedient, striving, dynamic status of life in a messy, complicated, resistant, brute world of materiality” (p. 2). Social, political, and cultural theory, in other words, have overlooked the material conditions of life that render the body available for inscription and enculturation in the first instance. So too in the recently published Gut Feminism does Elizabeth Wilson (2015) rebuke “social constructionism” for “[tending] not to be very curious about the details of empirical claims in genetics, neurophysiology, evolutionary biology, pharmacology or biochemistry” (p. 3). Her ensuing conclusion is that focusing on how social structures produce and discipline bodies comes at the expense of recognizing the ways bodies radically alter and organize social structures themselves. It appears that cultural theory harbors an “allergy to ‘the real’” that dissuades “critical inquirers from the more empirical kinds of investigation that material processes and structures require” (Coole & Frost, 2010, p. 6). However, the very aspects that would make matter more “real” than language or culture are the same aspects that restrict its ethical potential and facilitate a conceptual rejection of race. In line with their post-humanist agenda, the new materialisms evoke matter and materiality as existing in excess of human subjectivity and its attendant domains. Mechanistic theories of causality hold that objects are composed of inert matter acted upon by external forces, which presumes that an object’s potential or possible capabilities are already present and fixed in some initial moment of creation. But, as the new materialisms emphasize, the virtual field of differential relations is immanent to matter in such a way that it is impossible to anticipate all of the effects a material configuration may have, or the organizational forms it may take. This ability to act independently of the subject’s will and desire is variously construed as “impersonal and preindividual forces,” an alterity that “comes from outside the capability or power of the subject” (Cheah, 2010, p. 80, 89), “degrees of indetermination” that represent the “‘true principle of life’” (Grosz, 2010, p. 149), and a “powerful reminder…that life will always exceed our knowledge and control” (Bennett, 2010, p.14). Differences in terminology aside, the new materialisms are united by an understanding of materiality as a spectral, impersonal force with material effects, one that escapes reason and disrupts systems of meaning, including modernist binaries like mind/body, culture/nature, and inside/outside (Dolphijn & van der Tuin, 2012). The latter aspect is key because, while matter can frustrate representation, its “excessive” properties do not mean that it exists “outside” of the subject. Rather, matter and materiality are “real” because they actively produce reality in unpredictable ways (Cheah, 2010). It is here that the ethical impetus of the new materialist project is located. If we accept our embeddedness in mutually transformative, nonhuman networks, the ground of ethics shifts accordingly. First, a responsibility to an externalized other gives way to an accountability for the many relations that constitute becoming. And second, ethics are no longer reducible to the decisions or actions of individuals that are initiated by a properly historical judgment. In Rosi Braidotti’s (2010) terms, “Accepting the impossibility of mutual recognition and replacing it with one of mutual specification and mutual codependence is what is at stake in postsecular affirmative ethics” (p. 214). I find nothing immediately problematic with an ethics that aspires to keep pace with advancements in science, philosophy, and technology. What I find troublesome is how our acquiescence to these ethics is solicited. New materialist ethics necessarily manifest as affective encounters that operate best on micropolitical scales. Because materiality is figured as an impersonal force of the real, it runs the risk of becoming a transcendental signified that merely replaces language or culture as an organizing principle. Doing so would severely diminish its import as an inducement to a posthumanist ethics. To circumvent the “tension between universalistic theory and specific mode of inquiry,” chance, contingency, and creativity in micro-level encounters are prioritized over more obstinate assemblages that congeal at the global or macro-levels (Zhan, 2016, p. 26). Further, as the nucleus of the new materialisms, the embodied subject or material body compels an ethics that unfolds on a parallel plane, meaning between and within bodies. “This implies,” Rosi Braidotti (2010) proposes, “approaching the world through affectivity and not cognition: as singularity, force, movement, through assemblages or webs of interconnections with all that lives,” and “accepting the impossibility of mutual recognition and replacing it with one of mutual specification and mutual codependence” (p. 214). In the quotation above, Braidotti invokes an ethics of relation, in which sensation and perception comprise the “zone of [ethical] effectivity,” and attunement and affirmation take precedence over social transformation (Tumino, 2011, p. 555). Because material inter- and intraactions are preconscious and multisensorial, ethical practice is based not on the ability to evaluate right from wrong, but on a commitment to feeling right. We can observe this adjustment in appeals to “an ongoing responsiveness to…entanglement” (Barad, 2007, p. 394), “a heightened sensitivity to the agency of assemblages” (Bennett, 2010b), a “wakefulness” to the “feel [of] what makes us laugh, lament, and curse” (Orlie, 2007, p. 127) and an “experience of the vitality of being” (Connolly, 2010, pp. 196-197). As a consequence, the experiences of living under conditions of crisis are fetishized at the expense of addressing the causes of these conditions themselves. The imperative to “[live] with the open wound...through a sort of depersonalization of the event” (Braidotti, 2010, p. 213), for example, not only depoliticizes the claims of historically oppressed communities, but also flattens distinctions between traumas inflicted through happenstance and persistent intergenerational harm. How else could one, as Braidotti does, list as equivalent examples: those who survived the Holocaust, Frida Kahlo’s deadly tram ride, and missing the train to the World Trade Center on September 11th (p. 214)? The limits of a new materialist ethics appear most forcefully, then, as we attempt to move from an embodied “responsiveness” to the dislocation of structures. When patterns of materialization are addressed, it is generally as the amalgamation of “perpetual circuits of exchange, feedback, and reentry” that thereby “[inflect] the shape of political experience” (Connolly, 2010, pp. 190-191). On the one hand, there is nothing innately objectionable about attributing the creation and transformation of political structures to any number of quotidian, embodied experiences. This is in fact common in political theory and historiography.8 On the other hand, it becomes more difficult to reconcile the effects of chance, unpredictability, and indeterminacy with the endurance and repetition of something like antiblack violence.9 The new materialisms are therefore at pains to clarify why the structures of global antiblackness continue to function as if “neither time nor history, nor historiography and its topics, show movement, as the human subject is ‘murdered’ over and over again by the passions of a bloodless and anonymous archaism, showing itself in endless disguise” (Spillers, 2003, p. 208). Interpreting and describing our entanglements with non-human, materialist forces are not enough to account for, much less dislodge attachments to, social categories and representational arrangements. By this I mean that becoming more aware of material forces will not inevitably reduce the weight of discursive or psychic formations. It could even obstruct change by making forms of affect and sensation newly available for inscription. As Timothy Morton (2007) states, when “contact becomes content,” perceptions of difference collapse into identity (p. 37). Granted, these complications are not unique to the new materialisms as changes in scale almost always require a re-calibration of ethics. The point is, however, that the framing of the new materialisms as inherently more ethical generates, and is generated by, a disavowal or misreading of race as a stagnant analytical framework. As I submit above, since at least the Enlightenment period intellectual genealogies have maintained an almost overwhelming racial homogeneity. Critical theories produced by non-white scholars may have increased in terms of production or representation, but these are consistently marked as minority perspectives that have little to do with universal or ontological questions.10 Hence, black bodies especially are rendered objects for theoretical development, rather than subjects of universal philosophy. Coole and Frost (2010) continue this trend, revealing that even as “feminists and class theorists have often insisted upon” the importance of material bodies and environments, the authors remain “[concerned] that such material dimensions have recently been marginalized by fashionable constructivist approaches and identity politics” (p. 19). The latter, they continue, “had a good deal to say about the body and its imbrication in relationships of power, but we are not convinced that they pay sufficient attention to the material efficacy of bodies or have the theoretical resources to do so” (ibid.). Such a statement is heavy with longstanding racial charges of intellectual primitivism and parochialism. The unfortunate request to be “convinced” of identity politics’ intellectual merit effectively seals an historically white critical theory as the standard for authoritative knowledge production.11 One must also wonder about the referents for these insufficiently materialist identity politics, given that the New Materialisms anthology fails to cite even one example that might be taken as representative of a larger trend. Even if Coole and Frost employ “identity politics” as a shorthand for idealist approaches to subjectivity, their statement betrays both a misunderstanding of studies of “identity,” and a symptomatic desire to abandon race. To be clear, Coole and Frost never openly reduce “identity politics” to racial identity. But in many if not most of new materialisms’ founding texts, race receives only casual mention alongside the “other socalled axes of social difference” like sex, gender, and class, and often to specify a concept that has been “paralyzed by [a] ‘binary’ take on dualism” (Dolphijn & van der Tuin, 2012, p. 88, 143), or to name potential beneficiaries of one’s theorization (Barad, 2007; Grosz, 2004). We could perhaps attribute this treatment of race to an obdurate politics of attention (Ahmed, 2008) that determines which issues receive consideration.12 Nonetheless, to ascertain if and how the new materialisms might furnish us with a timelier ethics, we must first ask what purpose the omission of race serves. The Movement for Black Lives has forcefully reminded us that black bodies have historically provided the standards against which the human subject and non-human objects are measured. This is to say that the “rupture in the quality of being” inaugurated by modern racial slavery is not limited to black lives (Brand, 2001, p. 29). Black critical theorists repeatedly insist on the world-historical scale of this rupture, tracking how it conditions our thinking about humans and matter, and the movements of this thought itself. What this means for our current discussion is that “the question of race’s reality has and continues to bear directly on hierarchies of knowledge pertaining to the nature of reality itself” (Jackson, 2015, p. 216), or on what Dionne Brand (2001) calls our “cognitive schema” (p. 29). As a conceptual orientation or method of “way-finding,” the prevailing cognitive schema articulates a libidinal economy of antiblackness to the history of ideas, ensuring, as Spillers (2003) maintains, that “dominant symbolic activity, the ruling episteme that releases the dynamics of naming and valuation, remains grounded in the originating metaphors of captivity and mutilation;” “sticks and bricks might break our bones, but words will most certainly kill us” (pp. 208-209). By inverting a childhood rejoinder about the supposedly limited reach of the symbolic, Spillers lays out a provocative proposal: the metaphors of slavery are immanent to the force of the material. Although “‘race’ alone bears no inherent meaning, even though it reifies in personality,” it “gains its power from what it signifies by point, in what it allows to come to meaning” (Spillers, 2003, p. 380). Black lives matter, and blackness enlivens matter. It is possible, then, that the elaboration of thought, the conditions of its enunciation and reception, are always part of a racial praxis, even when those “personalities” that absorb the reification of race are most absent. This is a paradigmatic example of the prevailing cognitive schema at work. Antiblackness conditions the force of materiality by determining the logic of both its actualization and its theoretical manifestations. These functions become clearer when we turn our attention to Octavia Butler’s Parable duology.

#### The plan demands the “durable fiat” of an ahistorical dream – anti-ethics is your paradigmatic imperative

Curry 13 (Curry, Tommy J. ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR @ DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY, RAY A. ROTHROCK FELLOW (’13-’16). TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY “In the Fiat of Dreams: The Delusional Allure of Hope, the Reality of Anti-Black Violence and the Demands of the Anti-Ethical,” Situating, Black Existentialism (UK: Cambridge Scholars Press, forthcoming). Available on academia.edu))

The Fiat of Dreams: The potentiality of whiteness—the proleptic call of white anti-racist consciousness— is nothing more than the fiat of an ahistorical dream. A command ushered before thought engages racism, before awareness of the world becomes aware of what is actual. This is forced upon accounts of racism where whiteness is morally obscured from being seen as is. [w]hiteness as is partly determined by what could be, since what is was a past potentiality—a could be. The appeal to the sentimentality, morality, the moral abstraction/distraction of equality—both as a political command and its anthropological requisite—complicate the most obvious consequence of anti-Black racism, namely violence. This moral apriorism urges the Black thinker to conceptualize racism as an activist project rooted in the potential of a world filled with non-racists, a world where the white racist is transformed by Black activity into the white anti-racist. But this project supposes an erroneous view of the white racist which occludes the reality of white supremacy and anti-Black racism. As Robert F. Williams argues in Negroes with Guns, “the racist is a man crazed by hysteria at the idea of coming into equal contact with Negroes. And this mass mental illness called racism is very much a part of the ‘American way of Life.’” The white racist is not seen as the delusional individual ostracized from society as a result of their abhorrent social pathologies of racist hate. Rather the white racist is normal—the extended family, the spouse, the sibling, the friend of the white individual—the very same entities upon which the inter/intrasubjectivity nexus of the white self is founded. The white [he] experiences no punishment for his longing for Black servitude and his need to exploit and divest the Black worker here and then of [his] wealth. The white [she] has no uneasiness about her raping of—the destruction of generations of Black selves—mothers, children, and men—and today usurps the historical imagery of “the nigger,” to politically vacate Blackness and demonize niggers as beyond political consideration. She rewrites history, pens morality, and embodies the post-racial civil rights subject. As such, racism, the milieu of the white racist is not the exposed pathological existence of the white race, but rather valorized in white individuality, the individuality that conceptualizes their racism as a normative aspiration of what the world should look like, and even more damning, an aspiration that can be supported and propagated in the world. The white racist recognizes the deliberateness of the structures, relations, and systems in a white supremacist society and seeks like their colonial foreparents to claim them as their own. The Anti-Ethical as Paradigmatic Imperative: Traditionally we have taken ethics to be, as Henry Sidgwick’s claims, "any rational procedure by which we determine what individual human beings 'ought'—or what is right for them—or to seek to realize by voluntary action.” This rational procedure is however at odds with the empirical reality the ethical deliberation must concern itself with. To argue, as is often done, that the government, its citizens, or white people should act justly, assumes that the possibility of how they could act defines their moral disposition. If a white person could possibly not be racist, it does not mean that the possibility of not being racist, can be taken to mean that they are not racist. In ethical deliberations dealing with the problem of racism, it is common practice to attribute to historically racist institutions, and individuals universal moral qualities that have yet to be demonstrated. This abstraction from reality is what frames our ethical norms and allows us to maintain, despite history or evidence, that racist entities will act justly given the choice. Under such complexities, the only ethical deliberation concerning racism must be anti-ethical, or a judgment refusing to write morality onto immoral entities. In the post-structuralist era, post-colonial thinking about racism specifically, and difference/otherness generally, has given a peculiar ameliorative function to discourse and the performance of “other-ed” identities. In this era, the dominant illusion is that discourse itself , an act that requires as its basis the recognition of the “other” as “similar,” is socially transformative—not only with regard to how the white subject assimilates the similitude of the “other-ed,” but as an actual activity gauged by the recognition by one white person or by a group of white people in any given scenario, is uncritically accepted and encouraged as anti-racist politics.. In actuality such discourse appeals, which necessitate—become dependent on—(white) recognition, function very much like the racial stereotype, in that the concept of the Black body being the expression and source of experience and phenomena (existential-phenomenological-theorization) is incarcerated by the conceptualization created the discursive catalyst yearning to be perceived by the white thing seeing the Black. Such appeals lend potentiality-hope-faith to the already present/demonstrated ignorance-racism-interest of the white individual, who in large part expresses the historical tone/epistemology of their racial group’s interest. When morality is defined, not by the empirical acts that demonstrate immorality, but the racial character of those in question, our ethics become nothing more than the apologetics of our tyrannical epoch. Ought implies a projected (futural) act. The word commands a deliberate action to reasonably expect the world to be able to sustain or support. For the Black thinker, the Black citizen-subject-slave-(in)human, ought is not rational but repressive. For the oppressed racialized thinker, the ethical provocation is an immediate confrontation with the impossibility of actually acting towards values like freedom, liberty, humanity, and life, since none of these values can be achieved concretely for the Black in a world controlled by and framed by the white. The options for ethical actions are not ethical in and of themselves, but merely the options the immorality of the racist world will allow, thus the oppressed is forced to idealize their ethical positions, eliminating the truth of their reality, and the peeling away the tyranny of white bodies, so that as the oppressed, the can ideally imagine an “if condition,” whereby they are allowed to ethical engage racism from the perspective of: “if whites were moral and respected the humanity of Blacks, then we can ethically engage in these behaviors. Unfortunately, this ought constraint only forces Blacks to consciously recognize the futility of ethical engagement, since it is in this ought deliberation that they recognize that their cognition of all values are dependent not on their moral aspirations for the world, but the determined by the will of white supremacy to maintain virtue throughout all ethical calculations. In short, Black ethical deliberation is censored so that it can only engage moral questions by asserting that whites are virtuous and hence capable of being ethically persuaded towards right action, hence all ethical question about racism, white supremacy and anti-Blackness is not about how Blacks think about the world, but what possibility the world allows Blacks to contemplate under the idea of ethics. These ethics, the ethics that result from this vitiated morality, are not arbiters of oppression at all. They are not a rational calculus that is capable of revealing a categorical imperative, rather they function as the Kantian constraints upon human experience; the synthetic apriori upon which the phenomena of whiteness is the landscape of thinking about Blackness under the Western anthropos. There is an implicit appeal to a hierarchy of being that is both empirical and universal—all man is superior to non-man. Hence, ethics emerges as the product of the overrepresentation of Western man thinking itself—projecting itself—into the future. These ethics, theorized away from the anti-Blackness not within it, only uphold an overdetermined virtue of whiteness. They hold within them no actual delineation between good or bad, only a Puritanical call to reason to turn its attention towards the other-ed created. This attention however relies on the perceptions and caricatures of Black torment that appeal to the whites’ self-assuring imagining of themselves, so that even when confronted with racism and their role as whites thinking about Black people incarcerated within a racist society and dying, these whites can claim that their conceptualization of racism itself, or (inter-sectionally) next to other injustices like poverty, sexism, homophobia, etc. makes them (whites) virtuous. It is the process of, the appeal to, “getting whites to recognize” (racist) oppression that allows the destruction of reality, Black death, to continue unabated, since it is the exact moment that whites are forced to engage racist problems in America, be it the anti-Black violence of American society, which animates the aversion of the justice system, the police state, the white citizenry, or the practice of American democracy itself—where the death of Black people/criminals/deviants/thugs remain normal and justified by whites—that they, the white(s) thinking about racism, get to impose upon Black reality, a racist moral maxim, namely that racism is not death and beyond –the end of--ethical calculus or moral evaluation, but ultimately contingent in America and of measurable consequence so much so that must be weighed next to the other democratic values that preserve this great white society: security, safety, individuality, property, profit, and freedom, the very values that when enacted by whites continue to perpetuate one ultimate end, the death of Blacks. Racism is not unethical simply because it is a moral affront to the allegedly generalizable Western/white/enlightenment notion of humanity extended to Blacks by the liberal synonymy of citizenship. Racism is unethical, immoral, because it re-presents—makes known in the present— and acts to capture the Blacks urging the acknowledgment of racism in the ontological entity of modernity’s greatest oppression—the slave; the non-human. To say racism is unethical is to say that it is outside of ethical deliberation, which is to say what is meant by ethics meant to rationally determine relationships between human beings. Because racism exposes the absurdity of Western ontology’s suggestion that the white/European human stands in moral obligation towards the non-human/Black/racialized other created by the Western notion of MAN, calling for “ethical deliberation” is a call to make the historical event of Black inhumanity introduced by modernity the referent of white rationalizations about Black death, and anti-Blackness. Such deliberation only offers the white mind the opportunity to reassert the social boundaries constraining Black life conceptually. It is the memory of slavery, which motivates the white’s attachment to the contingency of Black life, and ultimately concludes that racism, while unfortunate, is/was necessary for America/the West, the world to exist and humanity/the citizen to reach its historical/imperial apex. Thus, MAN, the onto-anthropological basis of humanity and the cultural values that are simultaneously birthed to project humanity into existence is the origin of the oppressive conceptualizations of the other. Oppression “as is” was born out of and sustained by the exclusive morality of white/Western humanity against the barbarism imposed on the Black/African. As such, the nigger born of racism is behind all oppressions, since “it” is the cultural/epistemological/historical ethic—the moral rock bottom of dehumanization. The oppressed is made nigger through dehumanization; the product of absolute debasement, while morality/virtue the valuations of ethics itself is reified perpetually by the activity of whiteness; its perpetual commanding of morality to conform to and justify their existence as the human. As Karen Gange writes in “On the Obsolesce of Disciplines” (2007), The shift out of our present conception of Man, out of our present “World System”—the one that places people of African descent and the ever-expanding global, transracial category of the homeless, jobless, and criminalized damned as the zero-most factor of Other to Western Man’s Self—has to be first and foremost a cultural shift, not an economic one. Until such a rupture in our conception of being human is brought forth, such “sociological” concerns as that of the vast global and local economic inequalities, immigration, labor policies, struggles about race, gender, class, and ethnicity, and struggles over the environment, global warming, and distribution of world resources, will remain status quo. Anti-ethics; the call to demystify the present concept of man as illusion, as delusion, and as stratagem, is the axiomatic rupture of white existence and the multiple global oppressions like capitalism, militarism, genocide, and globalization, that formed the evaluative nexus which allows whites to claim they are the civilized guardians of the world’s darker races. It is the rejection of white virtue, the white’s axiomatic claim to humanity that allows the Black, the darker world to sow the seeds of consciousness towards liberation from oppression. When white (in)humanity is no longer an obstacle weighed against the means for liberation from racism, the oppressed are free to overthrow the principles that suggest their paths to liberation are immoral and hence not possible. To accept the oppressor as is, the white made manifest in empire, is to transform white western (hu)man from semi-deitous sovereign citizen to contingent, mortal, and un-otherable. Exposing the inhumanity of white humanity is the destruction/refusal of the disciplinary imperative for liberal reformism and dialogue as well as a rejection of the social conventions that dictate speaking as if this white person, the white person and her white people before you are in fact not racist white people, but tolerable—not like the racist white people abstracted from reality, but really spoken of in conversations about racism. The revelatory call, the coercively silenced but intuitive yearning o describe the actual reality set before Black people in an anti-Black society, is to simply say there is no negotiating the boundaries of anti-Blackness or the horizons of white supremacy. Racism, the debasement of melaninated bodies and nigger-souls, is totalizing.

#### The alt is Black redaction and annotation of the 1AC – key to defending the dead

Murillo 16 (Dr. John Murillo III is a graduate of Brown University with a PhD in English. His primary research interests include twentieth century black literature, afro-pessimism, critical theory, quantum mechanics, astrophysics, and cosmology. Review of “In the Wake: On Blackness and Being”. 10-4-16. <http://makemag.com/in-the-wake/> //shree)

Imperative for Sharpe, and for all of we who inhabit the wake of enslavement, is an ensemble of questions aimed at the work of Black being—questions Frank B. Wilderson III might describe as “menacing and unbearable:” “What does it mean to defend the dead? To tend to the Black dead and dying: to tend to the Black person, to Black people, always living in the push toward death?” Further, what might emerge should we-in-the-wake really harness “the power of sitting with someone as they die,” and really, devotionally be about “the important work of sitting (together) in the pain and sorrow of death as a way of marking, remembering…celebrating” and “[trying] to really see” Black life, “if only momentarily?” Against the “dysgraphia” and misnaming that subject Black being to every order of disaster, Sharpe works to “find the language for this work…to find the words that will articulate care…[and] to sound a new language,” to consider “how to perform the labor” of those words and that language. Chapter by chapter she proceeds, carefully working to examine the space and time of Black subjection in the antiblack world, while also taking care to “insist”—a verb Sharpe returns to repeatedly—upon real, fleeting and/or fractured glimpses of Black life scattered throughout the violence of the archive. Be that deathly life on or as “The Ship,” (Chapter 2), life as “boat people,” which is life marked by the figure of the slave ship—itself like the photograph of the young Haitian girl with “ship” mysteriously, menacingly, taped to her forehead (Sharpe returns to this girl and her image throughout the text). Or, be it in “The Hold” of the ship (Chapter 3), known by all its attendant conditions and resonant images, which continues to hold—bind, contain, strangle—us, the very same hold which we (are made to) hold within, in the flesh. Or, be it in the gasping for air against the reality of the “disaster” that is “The Weather” and the water (Chapter 4) that is antiblackness. In every iteration of the space and time of Black life and death, life/death, Sharpe locates a moment, glimpse, or fragment that insists Black life/death through the wake.For Sharpe, this is deathly Black life, and these are its words and doings. Black life is “anagrammatical.” “Anagrammatical blackness…exists,” as she puts it, “as an index of violability and potentiality.” This is a Blackness betwixt and between, caught in the opening/rift/tear marked by this index—“blackness anew, blackness as a/temporal, in and out of place and time putting pressure on meaning and that against which meaning is made.” This is a Black betwixt/betweenness. This betwixt/between region, like the asterisk in Trans\*, holds open a space/time in the imagination for “new modes of writing, new modes of making-sensible” with/against the orthographies of the wake, an alternative set of reading and writing practices that carry out wake work, what Christina Sharpe calls “Black annotation and Black redaction.” Perhaps most essentially, in relation to the dead, the dying, and “those living lives consigned to the possibility of always-imminent death, life lived in the presence of death,” Black life—in blips and bits, silences and looks—insists upon a different kind of holding, an alternative kind of care, and a violent and lifesaving kind of aspiration—aspiration, in Sharpe’s use, being the process of “keeping and putting breath back into the Black body” as we approach “the histories and presents” of Black life and death in the wake. To be, to think, and to move with In the Wake is to meet the look of this insistence unflinchingly, to linger in that look and to look carefully, with care, and to claim, to accompany, and to hold those dead, dying, and living in death’s proximity in our memory, our thought, and our imagination, through, and as our very consciousness. Without and against the desire to fantasize a Black humanity and subjectivity that fills in the silences, the breaks, the lapses and absences in the archive, In the Wake, and the wake work it practices and theorizes, insists on a reimagining of the way we locate, hold, carry, and, again, really try to see Black life as it is lived bound up with death—as it creates, thinks, and moves with, through, and against storming, disastrous antiblackness. What precedes is a circumstantial account. I am unable to capture in this limited space the complexity and beauty of the maneuvers Christina Sharpe makes as she sits with, drifts with, and never abandons, the many Black lives and deaths that give In the Wake, its theorization, and its practices their force; even less am I able to wholly account for the fullness of the “new language…new modes of writing, [and] new modes of making-sensible” she painstakingly develops, applies, and reexamines in her work. This is, after all, only a sounding of a small note of care and careful critique for an extraordinary work. Instead, I will conclude with Sharpe’s own summation of the mission of the text, its theorization of the wake, of its wake work and ours, of the past and ongoing works it holds tightly, and of the work it has inspired and is bound to inspire. At the end of the first chapter, “The Wake,” she writes: I want In the Wake to declare that we are Black peoples in the wake with no state or nation to protect us, with no citizenship bound to be respected, and to position us in the modalities of Black life lived in, as, under, despite Black death: to think and be and act from there. It is my particular hope that the praxis of the wake and wake work, the theory and performance of the wake and wake work, as modes of attending to Black life and Black suffering, are imagined and performed here with enough specificity to attend to the direness of the multiple and overlapping presents that we face; it is also my hope that the praxis of the wake and wake work might have enough capaciousness to travel and do work that I have not here been able to imagine or anticipate. To echo Fanon, perhaps, here, in the wake, and from In the Wake, and with all the work it holds close, sits with, and aspires/inspires, “might an authentic upheaval be born” (Black Skin White Masks). With In the Wake, Christina Sharpe looks out from the text and really tries to see us, both those here and gone, living and dead, in the wake, for all we are. We might begin, anew, by carefully looking back—double emphasis on care.

# Framework:

#### Our interpretation is that debate should be about competing theoretical and political imaginaries

#### Prefer it –

#### –Subject formation – advantage choice controls topic education -- doesn’t preclude good clash, this is in depth -- topic research -- perfectly predictable

#### reflection– plan-based debate makes critical thought impossible because we never learn the critical thinking skills we are supposed to get from debate

#### the impact is education -- not a question of fairness but education, switch side doesn’t solve, resolving the underlying anti-black assumptions of the debate space easily o/w them not being able to “read/win” on a DA

#### their FW offense is a new link- an ideological hegemony that filters what elements of the plan should be the stasis of conversation that allows problematic performances to go unabated.

#### ROB is to endorse advocacies not actions – reject the dogma of ideological heg – it’s the foundation of anti-black sentiments

**BAPTISE 22** - Bala James Baptiste - professor of mass communication and the chair of the Division of Communications at Miles College, earned the doctorate at Indiana University, 5-25-2022, "Ideological Hegemony: A Precursor to Institutional Racism," AAIHS, https://www.aaihs.org/ideological-hegemony-a-precursor-to-institutional-racism///vi

Intellectuals advanced the concept of ideological hegemony, which is applicable to the establishment and change of relationships between Caucasians and African Americans. Marxist theorists Antonio Gramsci, Stuart Hall, Michel Foucault, Louis Althusser, and others expounded in regards to ideological hegemony, the ideas and structures wherein individuals without access to power reinforce instruments of action of the powerful despite their potentially harmful and silencing effects. Marxism analyzes the relationship between the powerful and the powerless. The writings of Karl Marx, a German sociologist, historian, and economist, who published in 1848 with Friedrich Engles the Communist Manifesto, heavily influenced the intellectuals. The celebrated Manifesto pamphlet concluded that the creation of a society with one class of people would end problems between the haves and have nots. Hall, the Jamaican-born British Marxist sociologist, cultural theorist, and political activist articulated his view of ideology. The concept is more than a belief system or a way of thinking. Ideology is an actionable principle enabling the organization of political or economic functions in a society or a sector of a populace. Ideology aims to create public annunciation of policies for the realization of a set of beliefs. Communism, capitalism, liberalism, conservatism, nationalism, and multiculturalism are examples of ideologies. During the modern Civil Rights Movement, academics and activists recognized Hall as one of the first scholars to articulate the ideology of multiculturalism, which represents the development and organization of institutions and societies that include on an equal basis African Americans and their culture in white-dominated societies. Multiculturalism included other ethnicities and people of color. Ideology is relevant because the concept significantly explains the materialization and perpetuation of white supremacy. The ideas of white supremacy diffuse from powerful individuals and settle upon subordinates. The theory of white supremacy began with imperial, national, or intellectual leadership and percolated down to the masses. In the United States, the framing of ideology applicable to race relations originated at the top of the political structure and diffused to the bottom social realms of the population. The writers of the U.S. Constitution codified Black inferiority during the mid-1770s to late 1780s. Instead of legislation requiring states to take the census of 100 percent of the Black population, Article 1, Section 2, Clause 3 of the Constitution authorized states to count enslaved people as representing only three-fifths of the total Black population. Other early constitutional provisions were also racist. Congress prohibited states from outlawing the trade of enslaved Africans, required white people to return the captured escaped-enslaved to their masters, and embedded the federal government with the power to suppress insurrections by the enslaved. State legislatures and federal courts undergirded white supremacy with the enactment or support of racist laws, such as the separation of Blacks and whites in public spaces. White supremacists committed murder, physical violence, rape, political oppression, and psychological abuse against Black people. As racial integration began to emerge, anti-Blackness gradually became less overt, but African Americans were denied favorable treatment and access to decision-making positions. The theory of ideological hegemony materializes when a populous takes part in reinforcing power structures and societal ideas willingly, even when the structures and ideas only marginally benefit those without meaningful access to power. Social groups embrace ideological hegemony despite its capability to harm or silence dissent. Gramsci wrote in one of the sections of the Notebooks that the government is responsible of hegemony. “…to gain the upper hand, to propagate itself throughout society… and thus creating the hegemony of a fundamental social group over a series of subordinate groups….. It is true that the State is seen as the organ of one particular group, destined to create favourable conditions for the latter’s maximum expansion…”1 In colonial America, the political and military elite established dominant domestic power and held onto it in part by convincing the masses to accept their versions of reality, among which were proclamations of an exploitative British monarch, victimized colonists, superior white men, and inferior people of color. The ideologies disseminated in written form but mostly orally and consistently. Over time, white people and Black people interpreted the ideas of race relations as commonplace. By then coercion of the white masses was unnecessary. Authorities used intimidation and force against Black people to accept white supremacy. The elite continuously encouraged the ideology of the superiority of white people and their culture and the inferiority of people of color and their ways of life. Hall said the government is not always the reason the public adopts certain belief structures. Ideological hegemony often originates with the elite private sector. “It is quite easy to see why the only ideology that gets reproduced is the dominant one. But the far more pertinent, but difficult, question is how a society allows the relative freedom of civil institutions to operate in the ideological field, day after day, without direction or compulsion by the State.”2 When assessing the validity of a claim, the enlightened might say that a scholar’s intellectual viewpoint should be considered separately from his or her personal beliefs. Intellectualism includes well thought out propositions, sometimes based on the results of an analysis of empirical data. To the contrary, beliefs are rooted in cultural practices that are personal, deeply felt, and sometimes unprovable. Gramsci’s views on the distribution of power and influence changed the formulation of a wave of scholarship concerning ideological hegemony that evolved between the 1850s to the 1960s. Gramsci proposed that the ideas of the powerful are diffused and maintained among groups who are oppressed or otherwise powerless. Ideological hegemony is also applicable to race relations in the late 1960s and early 1970s during which racial integration began to occur in American institutions. With that said, one might argue that Gramsci’s personal viewpoint on Black people too should be separated from his intellectual analysis. Gramsci’s Eurocentrism contained some of the same negative views of Africans and African Americans as the segregationists in the south.3 Gramsci’s writing included his personal expression of ideological hegemony applicable to the relationships between powerful white men and the formally enslaved African Americans whose lineage Gramsci suggests was backward. One further phenomenon in the United States is worth studying, and that is the formation of a surprising number of negro intellectuals who absorb American culture and technology. It is worth bearing in mind the indirect influence that these negro intellectuals could exercise on the backward masses in Africa, and indeed direct influence if one or another of these hypotheses were ever to be verified: 1. that American expansionism should use American negroes as its agents in the conquest of the African market and the extension of American civilization.4 Gramsci’s position on the then-modern relationship whites foisted on Blacks coincides with the views of critics of race relations in the United States. Gramsci also wrote that powerful white Americans reserved decision-making authority for Caucasians, who limited the progression of Black people. “It seems to me that, for the moment, American negroes have a national and racial spirit which is negative rather than positive, one which is a product of the struggle carried on by the whites in order to isolate and depress them.”5 Gramsci also wrote of his interpretation that Africans, Black people in the United States by extension, that they were devoid of intellect. He said Africans lived in a state of ignorance that Europeans discovered upon their first encounters with them on the African continent. “One got the impression that it was all rather like the first contacts of English merchants and the negroes of Africa: trashy baubles were handed out in exchange for nuggets of gold.”6 In other words, Gramsci suggests that African Americans, the decedents of ignorant Africans, existed devoid of intellectual prowess. Therefore, Caucasians were justified with excluding Black people from realms wherein white people practiced ideological hegemony: the superior Caucasians and inferior Black people. The concept of racism employed the same mechanism as ideological hegemony wherein the purveyors of dominant idealistic power transferred racists ideas from the upper-class to the lower-classes. At the level of the upper class, systemic racism represents a series of actions of interacting mechanisms wherein white leadership made available opportunities exclusive of Black people. Institutional racism, on the other hand, refers to leaders of organizations or operations that distribute opportunities and services inequitably based on race. Institutional racism is the mechanism by which systemic racism functions. Education, healthcare, financing, and justice are among the institutions providing societal resources that Caucasians reserved for white people. The concept of ideological hegemony preceded that of racism, but it laid the foundation on which racism rested and explains why white leaders drastically delayed opening institutions to Black people to work at professional functions.

#### Yes framework links- Their biotech relies on a thesis of becoming that elevates the European conceptualization of biological composition. This representation of the human category replicates microbial anti-blackness.

**Rawson 21** (RawsonBlack fungibility and the PosthuMan: Becoming microbial geographies [Doctoral dissertationOhio State University]. OhioLINK Electronic Theses and Dissertations Center.)//GUCCISUSHI

As an ontology, antiblackness is inseparable from knowledge of and thus the experience of being, a living being, a human species being. Ontologies are about nature. They are always bio-ontologies. As Elizabeth Povinelli explains, ontological claims are inseparable from the emergence of biology as a discipline (2016). The prolific Jamaican anti-colonial philosopher and novelist Sylvia Wynter has been a seminal figure in linking the intellectual invention of the human as a universal abstract category, human nature, to an antiblack ontology. Engagement with and the growing relevance of Wynter’s work (1995, 2003) has only skyrocketed since its initial reception. In the 90’s and at the turn of the century Wynter’s work developed the argument that the experience of being human is shaped by the internalization of social scripts on the (human) Self and (human) Other. Wynter teases out two versions of the human. She maps the second version, Man2, onto 20th century ideas of the human as genetically selected versus dysselected life. Whereas she maps the first version, Man1, onto 15th century ideas of the human as rational and political versus an irrational and sensual animal. In this process, divine causality was displaced by the laws of nature. According to Wynter, prior to these European inventions of Man as a species, the human didn’t exist as such, but rather European subjectivity linked the individual body to the divine procreator through idealized Christian figures of the clergy and nobility. Rather than read Man1 as the version of the human that is separate from nature and Man2 as the version of the human that is the same as nature, Wynter reads the emergence of the human (first with Man1 and then Man2) as the trajectory of becoming increasingly closer to nature, i.e., as a natural object—a species. This is important because it highlights how becoming natural is constitutive of becoming human or in other words actualizing the human self as a distinct species consciousness is cultivated through increasing intimacy with nature. The link to the microbiome is clear: Man3, the posthuman, is even closer to nature. Microbial diversity levels and variations in composition become the new biomarker for differentiating the (post)human. Man3 even grounds distinctions in consciousness in the natural agency of the world. Fitness reflects a psychic intimacy with nature, which is figured as the awareness of being microbial ecologies all the way down. Critically the emergence of Man 1 and Man 2, not only rescript Eurocentric cosmologies of difference—rooted in the distinction between good and evil—in ontological or ‘natural’ terms but do so through the invention of the African. As such English scholar Zakiyyah Iman Jackson in her book Becoming Human: Matter and Meaning in an Antiblack World follows how blackness in the form of the African, for Wynter, is not “excluded from the category of Man and its overrepresentation of humanity but foundational to it as its antipodal figure, as the nadir of Man” (Jackson, 2020: 19–20). For Wynter, this antiblack dichotomy is not a binary but an expanding continuum. In other words, the capacious categories of human Others proliferate not just out of race but out of the “central and primary representation of the black physiognomy” as “proof” of biogenetic nonhomogeneity and thus as the “ultimate mode of otherness” (Wynter, 1995: 42). For Wynter the emergence of the natural sciences and the notion of life, species, populations, selection processes, etc. embeds antiblack notions of good versus evil into the nature of life and death, improvement and degeneration. Therefore, as scholarship rescripts the human Self, we need to attend to the relation between posing the microbe as the Other that remakes the Human Self, and way blackness has been historically figured as the ultimate Other of the Human. Central to Wynter’s critique of biocentric notions of the Human is that paradoxically recourse to nature’s agency hides these specific yet collective scripts through which we inscribe our sense of self, other, and world. Ontological scripts written by the natural sciences are peculiar because the author of the claim is scripting themselves as a living being too. For Wynter, Enlightenment epistemological shifts about humans, nature, and life are shifts in the politics of being (Wynter, 2003). Wynter’s elaboration of antiblack ontology places emphasis on the relation between scripts about what it is like to be a certain life form and the experience of being such life form. That is, integral to her treatment of antiblackness as ontology is for/by whom is this account of existence experienced and thus how does it differentially materialize modes of consciousness. For Wynter antiblackness is a historically specific episteme that has become ontologized, not the truth but an adapted truth for the experience of being white. In turn, she reconceptualizes the relation between epistemology and ontology as sociogeny. In other words, antiblackness is a historically specific sociogeny. Antiblackness has become ontologized not only because of the way it is modeled on nature or biology but also because of the way it is ontologically adaptive for those Europeans making claims about good/evil in terms of the natural order of the world. In turn, it is adaptive for the invented experience of being white because the neurochemical pleasure derived in affirmations of the self is what naturalizes the European cum white experience of self as normal. In other words, it is by activating the reward and punishment mechanisms of the nervous system that cultural scripts about the “genetic-instinctual sense of self” reaches down into the psyche’s processes of “perception and categorization” (Jackson, 2020 on Wynter). In this way, ideas about the microbe today are posed as both an intellectual revolution and a revolution in the politics of being. Moreover, microbes are presented as a new way of thinking about the pleasure-pain relation and the reward-punishment system. In so doing, microbes not only link the symbolic social milieu to biochemical processes of health and disease but as such internalization of the social script—on being microbial—becomes an adaptive response itself. This points to the limits of Wynter, as sociogeny itself becomes ontologized. The stakes are high. For Wynter, the ontologization of antiblackness not only naturalizes the white experience as adaptive but also ontologizes the experience of blackness as the nonadaptive experience of “dysbeing: symbolic death as out of place with respect to being human” (McKittrick, 2015: 60). Since the only true human self is the white self, the “lived experience of being black” becomes doubled as not just Other (as object) but also as Self (as the subjective experience of being objectified) (Wynter, 2001). Elaborating on both Dubois’ and Fanon’s concept of “double consciousness,” Wynter explains how this nonadaptive experience of blackness takes form as either an “aberration in affect” in the form of auto-phobia or the “mimetic desire and adoption of white masks” as the “attempt by black subjects to realize themselves/ourselves in non-aversive terms as truly human” (Wynter, 2001: 53). In deciphering the narratively prescribed master code that institutes particular social orders and thus conjures forms of life into existence, Wynter argues Fanon’s practice of sociodiagnostics not only “enabled the calling in question of our present culture’s purely biological definition of what it is to be, and therefore of what it is like to be, human” but in so doing provided “insights into the laws which govern the realm of lived subjective experience, human and non-human, which govern, therefore, the interrelated phenomenon of identity, mind, and/or consciousness” (Wynter, 2001: 31-32). In turn, for Wynter, it is only from this “context of systemic misrepresentation” that the psycho-affective space of blackness re/scripts life at the ontological level (Wynter, 1995: 44).

#### Don’t let them weigh their offense- cybersecurity is NOT existential, and cyber attacks rarely escalate to material violence.

#### Kaunert 21 (Kaunert, Christian, and Arif Sahar. "Violence, terrorism, and identity politics in Afghanistan: The securitisation of higher education." *Social Sciences* 10.5 (2021): 150.)//GUCCISUSHI

Unlike other security sectors, cybersecurity threats are always perceived in the form of attacks, or hostile, purposeful, and deliberate actions by an enemy/adversary against the referent object(s). While this attack logic can still be used occasionally in all sectors, it is the dominant one in cybersecurity. All cyber operations, even the ‘defensive’, involve the use of malware by an actor to gain unauthorised access into the target’s system. A vulnerability in a system is not threatening per se if not exploited, and this exploitation requires an adversary’s or another party’s involvement. Although the resemblances with the military sector here are high, one more aspect makes cybersecurity more distinctive: the question of existentiality. According to the securitisation theory, the defining feature of security is the idea of existentiality; i.e. security is concerned with the survival of a certain referent object(s), which justifies the calls for urgent responses. In cybersecurity, despite the existence of existential discourses, the existentiality assumption is not as straightforward as it is in other sectors for multiple reasons. Firstly, the majority of cyber attacks that are seen as the most serious in history were neither objectively existential from a technical viewpoint, nor portrayed as such by the concerned actors. Stealing military, commercial, or personal information can hardly affect the survival of the state, the private sector, or any individual. Similarly, denying customers/citizens access to certain services through denial of service attacks (DOS) does not pose an existential threat to anyone. This does not mean that cyber threats cannot be hyped, exaggerated, or presented in urgent terms, since all those qualities are not essentially linked to existentiality. Secondly, the indirect nature of the majority of cyber attacks and the non-physicality of their consequences, although does not undermine their seriousness and urgency, acts as an impeding rather than a facilitating condition to the existentiality assumption. The empirical analysis also proves that existentiality is not the only reason for threats to register in the cybersecurity debate and that it is not a precondition for perceived urgency. Generally, cybersecurity is marked by different understandings of disruptive and destructive implications of cyber threats, and all invoke a certain level of urgency. The majority of discourses emphasise these ‘disruptive’ implications, including huge financial losses that can slow down the economy, loss of productivity and global competitiveness, customers’ loss of confidence in the information infrastructure, etc. Though not portrayed in ‘survival’ terms, these disruptive implications are still perceived as immanent, urgent, and as serious threats to national security.

#### Only an analysis of racial realism forces self-reflexivity – allows for critical interrogations of ideological hegemony

**HOWARD 11** - Natasha Howard - appointed in Geography and Environmental Studies and Africana Studies. She holds a Ph.D. in Educational Thought and Sociocultural Studies and her Masters in Latin American Studies. Dr. Howard’s research centers on unveiling the structures of anti-black racism and the production of anti-black racial discourses in the Americas. 7-2-2011 “Black in the Non-Black Imagination: How Anti-Black Ideology Shapes Non-Black Racial Discourse”, University of New Mexico UNM Digital Repository, <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=&httpsredir=1&article=1013&context=educ_llss_etds//vi>

Methodology This study takes a critical hermeneutical approach. According to Gallagher (1992) critical or depth hermeneutics is concerned with engaging ideology critique. He notes that, “critique calls for a special and suspicious interpretation of those ideologies and institutions which support and maintain ruling power structures” (Gallagher, 1992, p. 240). He cites four guiding principles related to critical hermeneutics: 1) reproduction, 2) hegemony, 3) critical reflection and 4) application. Drawing from Habermas, Gallagher states that the purpose of critical interpretation is not simply to attempt to reproduce original meaning but rather to interrogate ideological positions presented in texts. A critical or depth hermeneutic methodological approach proposes that reproduction of texts without any critical reflection on ideological representation only serves to maintain unequal power relations. This stands in sharp contrast to traditional methodologies that follow strict non-critical, non-reflective approaches concerned with reproducing the supposedly pure words of the texts (or in the case of empirical research, the voice/s of the subject/s of study). Related to the second principle, hegemony, a depth hermeneutical approach would take the perspective that ideology is embedded within linguistic symbols. Once again, drawing from Habermas, Gallagher notes that problematic ideology distorts and serves the purpose of maintaining oppressive social relations. Critical hermeneutics is concerned with undistorting distorted communication, which takes place through engaging in ideological critique. In other words, depth hermeneutics questions the meaning behind linguistic symbols and to what extent does the meaning collude in the reproduction of oppression. The third principle, critical reflection places the interpreter in relationship to that being interpreted. Gallagher states that “the purpose of critical reflection is to assist in the achievement of emancipation the objectivity of interpretation is seen either as a tool to be used in the pursuit of emancipation or as a result of emancipation, but not as an end in itself (p.244). The fourth principle of critical hermeneutics is application or the idea that there exists ideal undistorted communication, which we strive to achieve. A critical hermeneutic approach is guided by the pursuit of freedom and transformation. In reflecting on Habermas‟ and the principle of application, Gallagher (1992) writes, For Habermas, application, which is the result of critical interpretation in the sense that it always comes along with the practice of depth hermeneutics, involves an escape from prejudice, a radical modification of the anterior relation with the tradition process. The “deep” meaning discovered by the critically suspicious interpretation is not only enlightening but also emancipation for the interpreter. (p. 246) My methodological framework, depth hermeneutics, is grounded by Derrick Bell‟s theory of racial realism (1992). This theory makes us aware of the real dynamic and effects of a racialized social system for Blacks. Although race may be a social construct, the social outcomes produce concrete forms of inequality. Bell also concludes that racism has such a dynamic in our society that it is unlikely that Blacks will achieve full equality since American society is premised upon a system of white supremacist domination. This ideology penetrates American consciousness to the point that no institution, individual or group has not been touched or affected by it. Racism will always re-invent itself in such a way as to maintain the hierarchy and the subordinate status of Blacks. Thus, with each racial gain achieved by Blacks, there are subsequent setbacks. We can see the evidence of this in the aftermath of the Civil Rights Movement. Of course, the movement led to significant gains for Blacks. However, antidiscriminatory laws have not successfully leveled the playing field. Furthermore, in recent decades we have witnessed some backlash against any goals or principles that might presumably lead to any potential advantage for Blacks. We see how the language of the Civil Rights Movement and subsequent laws are currently being used to deter from the goal of racial equality and now a racial hierarchy. Racial realism tells us that we must acknowledge the historical endurance of anti-Black racism and understand that it has often been disguised. This is particularly true in our contemporary age of colorblind race politics. Therefore, we must be mindful of how anti-Blackness manifests in the postCivil Rights era. A study influenced by racial realism would critique the idea of abstract neutrality or pure deductive reasoning, and instead acknowledge that research is also interpreted through social knowledge. A study grounded in a racial realist approach would work toward exposing and confronting anti-Black ideology in fields of thought that collude in the perpetuation of a racial hierarchy. For example, from a racial realist perspective even those discourses that are presented as “critical” or still yet “anti-racist” discourses may also be complicit in the preservation of anti-Black ideology. This means that even presumably critical discourses on race must be studied from the perspective that they take a particular social position, also understand Blacks from a particular social position and maneuver theoretically based upon that understanding. Racial realism is premised upon ideological critique. My study is rooted in this method of inquiry. In Ideology and Modern Culture, Jon Thompson (1990) highlights the debate in defining the notion of ideology. Ideology has its origins in Marxist theory and the idea of false consciousness. Ideology is seen as negative in that it supports the status quo and delimits the development of counter-hegemonic consciousness among the working class. Ideology illusively hides unequal relations of power between dominant and subordinate groups. Other theoretical perspectives propose that ideology is neutral, moving away from the purely pejorative connotation. Ideologies can be regarded then as „systems of thought‟, „systems of belief‟, or „symbolic systems‟ which pertain to social action or political stance” (Thompson, 1990, p.5). In this light, all political action and thought is ideological. I concur with Thompson‟s (1990) critical conception of ideology in which he finds that, the analysis of ideology is primarily concerned with the ways in which forms intersect with relations of power. It is concerned with the ways in which meaning is mobilized in the social world and serves thereby to bolster up individuals and groups who occupy positions of power. To study ideology is to study the ways in which meaning serves to establish and sustain relations of domination. Ideological phenomena are meaningful symbolic phenomena in so far as they serve, in particular social historical circumstances, to establish and sustain relations of domination. (p.56) Nicolas Burbules (1995) proposes five forms of ideology critique including (1) scientific, (2) immanent, (3) deconstructionist, (4) argument from effects, and (5) counter-ideology. Scientific critiques see ideologies as distorted and irrational. They examine ideologies for the ways in which they distort the truth. Immanent critiques reveal how ideologies often do not “measure up to their own standards” (p.57). The critic reveals the contradictions that belie a particular standpoint or position. Burbules states that the third form, the deconstructivist approach, takes the position that there are no universal truths or metanarratives. The fourth form of ideological critique, argument from effects, takes the stand that we must examine the outcome or consequences of ideological positions and then critique those that uphold domination or perpetuate unequal systems of power. The final form of critique is counter-ideology, which proposes that ideological critic challenge ideologies with other counter-hegemonic ideologies. Burbules (1995) notes that there are both possibilities in and limitations to each form of ideological critique he describes. He proposes that we approach the process from the perspective of critiquing ideology as a way of working on developing critical thought. Additionally, he proposes that the work of the ideological critic is to understand people on their own terms, in their journey towards changing perspectives as they are introduced to new ways of thinking about the world. And while, as an educator, I do tend to concur to some degree with the position, I strongly disagree with his presupposition that we must not refute ideologies but rather attempt to induce people towards transformative thinking. For instance, I see my role as ideological critic as one that is guided by racial realism and the commitment to refute and challenge forms of antiBlackness or what I see as ideologies that uphold the oppression and subjugation of Black people. By intersecting racial realism with ideological critique I propose a study that will critique the presence of anti-Black ideology in post-Civil Rights racial discourses on multiracialism, culture, and those defined as moving beyond the Black/white paradigms (e.g., LatCrit and AsianCrit). I have selected these fields of thought because they represent contemporary discourses on race that purported reject binary racial thinking in an attempt to offer new theoretical insight into U.S. race relations. Each field of thought dedicates substantial scholarship to problematizing the presence of Blackness in U.S. racial thought. Though individual texts were selected and interpreted in relationship to anti-Black ideology, taken as a whole, these texts represent a larger pervasive anti-Black discourse that works to sustain the racial hierarchy. As an ideological critic I am concerned with challenging ideology that sustains unequal power relations. Anti-Black discourse sustains a racial hierarchy that places Blacks at the bottom. My responsibility as an ideological critic is to unpack that ideology colluding in the oppression of Blacks. As Thompson (1990) states, ideological critique proposes a contestation or challenge to systems of domination by unveiling precisely how they manifest, are defended and also become unquestionably part of social reality. I first will begin with a review of literature comprising the following areas: racial hierarchy in the post-Civil Rights era; globalized anti-Blackness; ethnicity and the structure of racism; and the construction of the Black body.

#### Scenario planning relies on rubrics of futurity indentured to uneven distribution of power. Their “emergency governance” logics generate racialized assemblages under the guise of liberal democracy, increasing racial divisions and calcifying racial violence.

**Grove et al 22** ( Clare Herrick, Ann H. Kelly, Jeanne Soulard, Humanitarian inversions: COVID‐19 as crisis, Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, 10.1111/tran.12544, (2022). Kevin Grove Department of Global and Sociocultural Studies, Florida International University, Miami, Florida, USA Lauren Rickards School of Global, Urban and Social Studies, RMIT University, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia Ben Anderson Department of Geography, Durham University, Durham, UK Matthew Kearnes School of Humanities and Languages, University of New South Wales, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia)//GUCCISUSHI

As we have detailed elsewhere (Anderson et al., 2020), attention to this uneven distribution of futurity orients thought on emergency governance and its underlying biopolitical rationalities towards a founding violence in ways that are attuned to historically specific racialising assemblages (Weheliye, 2014). These assemblages mark some subjects as White, fully human and in possession of lives worthy of protection, pastoral care, and perpetuation, while marking others as Black, female, less-than-human objects in the future-making projects of White male subjects.1 These deep divisions between and across lives means that the dominant linear temporal imaginary of emergency management—which envisions a smooth transition between phases of the event from disruption, to response, and ending with post-event recovery—is revealed as not equally applicable for all subjects. Only some subjects are automatically presumed to have a right to post-event recovery; for others, such a future is always contingent and precarious—that is, always an emergency but a slow and unrecognised one. In the case of COVID-19, the question, then, is how the spectacular event/disruption of COVID-19 and its associa ted emergency measures intersect with liberalism’s racially uneven distribution of futurity. In this light, emergency measures both help generate uneven racial, gender, and class impacts, as has been well documented (Ali & Keil, 2008; Mullings et al., 2010), and they are also vectors along which the racialising assemblages that condition normal, “pre-event” life are reinforced or perhaps challenged. Rather than the smooth performance of COVID-19 as a classic time-bound emergency against a neutral background, we argue that current response measures (and efforts to motivate people to cope with them) reflect how the COVID-19 emergency has been intersecting with context-specific manifestations of the multiple slow emergencies such as racism, patriarchy, poverty, biodiversity loss, and climate change that characterise normal liberal life and its arithmetic of futurity. We expand on this argument and approach in section two, exploring the relations between emergency responses and uneven distributions of futurity. The subsequent sections bear witness to some of the ways in which slow emergencies in Australia and the United States have intersected with responses to COVID-19, specifically responses which prioritised a return to or perpetuation of post-pandemic normality. Section 3 examines how Australian planning for post-COVID-19 recovery is based on continued state endorsement of the fossil fuel economy, in doing so preserving existing distributions of power, and intensifying the future harms associated with climate change. In this process, the uneven distribution of futurity that underpins Whiteness and maleness is reproduced. White masculinity is also at stake in our next example—anti-lockdown protests in the United States. Section 4 considers how they emerged out of a dissonance between the immediate pandemic response, on the one hand, and the expectations of White privilege, on the other. In both cases, we see how specific slow emergencies—human-induced climate change and anti-Black violence in White supremacist societies respectively—become intensified as liberal order recalibrates itself in response to the event of COVID-19. In the conclusion in section 5, we argue that some responses to COVID-19 intensify the uneven distribution of futurity that structure liberal governance. Emergency is an effort to ensure the continuity of the future. A happening is named and governed as an emergency not only because it threatens harm, damage, and loss but also crucially because its outcome(s) remains uncertain: the future is open. The uncertainty of the future relates not only to what might be harmed, damaged, or lost but also the means through which the actual and/or threatening event is addressed and (if possible) brought to an end. In the assumption of both the openness of the future and the possibility of active intervention making a difference, emergency is part of a modern relation with time and temporality (Koselleck, 2004). Because of this distinctive relation with the future, emergency also reconfigures the present–future relation. The present becomes an interval for action, imbued with a more or less fragile hope that the event is not over, and that action can still be effective (Anderson, 2017). The governance of emergency has been a recurring problem for liberal democracies such as, in our cases here, Australia and the United States. For polities organised around the principles of liberal political philosophy, such as universalising appeals to individual equality and freedom (ideal assumptions that, as we will see, are in practice highly racialised), the ability to respond to an emergency does not rely on an individual sovereign figure who exercises an absolute decision in the time–space of emergency but rather leanson a dense administrative machinery calibrated to “anticipate and govern emergency situations within the framework of constitutional liberalism” (Collier & Lakoff, 2015, p. 37). Logics of anticipatory action and calculative, imaginative, and other techniques congeal in a variety of styles of emergency management that develop capacities to anticipate, respond to, and recover from emergency events without recourse to a state of exception (Anderson, 2010). Importantly, these logics often operate through distinct visions of the temporality of emergency (Neisser & Runkel, 2017) and so involve different ways of relating to futures and acting in the present. For example, logics of preparedness rely on techniques of scenario planning to identify capacities and limitations in existing emergency response protocols. These anticipatory practices mobilise fear and anxiety that “we are not prepared!” to compel action in the present. The aim is to develop specific response capacities that will prevent future unexpected events from unfolding into catastrophic systemic breakdowns (Collier & Lakoff, 2008; O’Grady, 2018). Logics of resilience, in contrast, view future systemic disruptions as inevitable and utilise techniques such as community based training and simulations to work on affective relations between individuals and their environments. These techniques attempt to design resilient “cultures of safety,” metastable social and ecological systems capable of topologically transforming in ways that preserve the system’s form, function, and identity while undergoing change (Grove, 2018). Different logics of anticipatory action—notably the logic of resilience—can be seen at work in the various GROVE ET AL. 3 responses to COVID-19, even as COVID-19 as an event mixes fast and slow temporalities, and distributed and punctual spatialities, in ways that perhaps differ from other events that are usually governed as emergencies.

#### Fiat and crisis representations are built upon racialized logics of coloniality, extraction, and accumulation within systems of global racial capital.

**Agathangelou & Killian 21** (Anna, is a political scientist from York University in Toronto. She is the co-director of Global Change Institute, Cyprus and was a visiting fellow in the Program of Science, Technology and Society at John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard (2014-2015). Kyle D, Ph. D., LMFT is a couple and family therapist whose books include Interracial Couples, Intimacy & Therapy: Crossing Racial Borders (Columbia University Press), and Intercultural Couples: Exploring Diversity in Intimate Relationships. “About time: climate change and inventions of the decolonial, planetarity and radical existence.” Pg 821 – 838. Published: 2 August 2021. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400>) //NT

We are at a crossroads. The modern condition, bordering on the irreparable, demands creative, ethico-poetic approaches, insights, and real leaps (Fanon, [1967](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400); Hosseini & Gills, [2020a](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), [2020b](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400)). As scientists and activists grapple with massive ecological changes and environmental threats, it is not in our best interest to continue the reanimation of market growth models and fossil-fuel trajectories, nor is it ethically acceptable. Some analyses of the Anthropocene and possibilities for transformation, linearity, and the pursuit of justice (Falk, [2017](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400); Pindyck, [2013](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400)) engage with what anthropologist Jane Guyer calls the ‘evacuation of the near future’ ([2007](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 409) through fantasies of catastrophe or crisis in scientific, earth, social sciences, and literary studies alike. Guided by a combined fantasy of catastrophe and ‘forced presentist’ macroeconomic models, many climate change analysts focus on crisis and call for immediate fixes through market forces for a future prioritizing a clean fight in the short term rather than a livable planet. Research and institutional calls conceptually divide economic time into short and long term, speaking to a shift from theories of value (land, labour) to a ‘mathematical economics based on market demand and supply’ (Guyer, [2007](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 409, citing Marshall, 1890). These temporal linear presuppositions inhere in thought and socio-technical imaginaries (Jasanoff & Kim, [2016](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400)), in economic models, in planning, in struggles to reduce gas emissions and lower temperatures, and in ecoterrorism and conservation movements. A shift in ‘temporal framing has involved a double move, toward both very short and very long sightedness, with a symmetrical evacuation of the near past and the near future’ (Guyer, [2007](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 409). Planetary colonization is a different kind of moment, and requires a different kind of inquiry (Nancy, [2007](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400); Hosseini & Gills, [2020a](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400)). Our times, to remember Fanon, must acknowledge that the ravages of colonialism and empire, including ecological degradation, may have immured life and livelihoods, but have also immured the ways we read and write history and theories of inquiry that speak to ideological productions at the intellectual level and experience in a given conjuncture. Jean-Luc Nancy argues our global present ‘demands that we … discern in capital another type or another kind of a flaw than what we understood to be insurmountable contradictions’ ([2007](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 53). For him, this is the moment ‘to expose capital to [its] absence of reason, for which capital provides the fullest development’ ([2007](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 53; Hosseini & Gills [2020b](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400)). Hosseini and Gills push this exposition of the irrationality of reason to argue the need to problematize the ‘way the ruling systems have shaped the foundations of our imagination and inquiry’ ([2020a](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 14). For radical existence to emerge, it is imperative to ‘keep pushing our debates beyond the contours of Eurocentric, (post-)modernist, or liberal humanist perspectives’ (Hosseini & Gills, [2020a](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 14). In addition to calls to expose capital’s fantasies and irrationality, we argue along with Fanon that our times demand we ‘constantly remind [ourselves] that the real leap consists in introducing invention into existence’ (Fanon, [1967](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 229). Invention in a Fanonian sense, David Marriott tells us, ‘can never be ‘enslaved’ by the past, and its meaning circumscribed by history’ ([2014](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 518) or utopian imaginaries. Rather, ‘what the leap implies is a situation of radical indecision whose emergence introduces something entirely new into the world’ (Marriott, [2014](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 518). Our moment demands this kind of inquiry, ‘this imperious leap’ (Marriott, [2014](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 518), or what Frantz Fanon calls the turn to invention, for the crafting of conditions for decolonial ecologies. Judgment on the planetary as a colonial neo-tech-imperial project (Bianco, [2004](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400)) demands not only a focus on the complex notion of the longue durée seeking to show how global racial capitalism’s violence persists as the ‘essence’ of structures and the present moment’s material struggles and ecological violence but also on those signs of an irreducible and heterogeneous singularity. A starting point is the language of the structural relations of time with racial planetary-capitalism. Our interest is whether and how racial capitalism as an emergent world-ecology project (in its more contemporary iterations of expansionist neocolonialisms, ongoing enslavements, and ecological deracinations) reaches its perverse zenith in the form of persisting power or what Toni Morrison calls the pathology and perversity of modernity. What else could have been known if the leaders of European modernity and modern knowledge had not limited, appropriated, and even obliterated sources of life and inventions and their contingent visions about the planetary and life in the name of a global racial planetary capitalist order? What else could have emerged if the leaders of European history did not shackle the ‘muscles and intelligences of men and women’ (Fanon, [1967](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400)) for global racial capitalism’s desires and temporal redirections and orientations? What is the role of time as a condition, a structure, an insight, and a force in this conversation? Admittedly, the question of time and climate change is widely discussed (e.g. Chakrabarty, [2012](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400); Moore, [2015a](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), [2015b](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400); Simpson, [2017](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400)). While some notable exceptions afford time a crucial role in thinking about planetary justice (Whyte, [2018](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400)), many more simply presume time in their conversations about planetary imaginaries, ecology and transformation, crisis, reparative justice, and the future. The attempts of capitalism to infinitely extract for profit have been challenged by both social scientists and earth scientists, the latter of whom recently argued for abandoning the focus on the industrial revolution and turning to the mid-twentieth century, the ‘golden spike’ of the Anthropocene. 16 July 1945, when the first nuclear bomb was detonated with the suitably metaphysical name of the Trinity Test, could be considered the Anthropocene’s symbolic starting date because ‘to many physicists, the epoch-defining feature of modernity is the mobilization of the stupendous energy deriving from the splitting of the atomic nucleus, a scientific as much as geopolitical and theological feat’ (Saldhana, [2020](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 28). Though this is not considered a Global Boundary Stratotype Section and Point (GSSP) date, scientists argue it can be considered ‘a geological marker out of convenience’ (Saldhana, [2020](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 28; citing Zalasiewicz et al., [2015](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400)). The year 1945 also marks the geopolitical zoning of the three worlds as the international system, along with the new set up of the monetary and postcolonial liberal order, with the United Nations, Bretton Woods as multilateral institutions and the ‘great acceleration of baby boom, mass consumption, and mobility with their environmental impacts’ (Saldhana, [2020](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 28). Earth scientists Lewis and Maslin ([2018](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400)) set 1964 as the date for GSSP because this was the year of the peak of radioactive carbon-14 and its sedimentation in trees. They also suggested 1610, which allows a link with the colonization of the Americas, but the radioactive dust is the determining force. Different notions, epistemes, and structures of time as articulated in these debates are productive of classification, ordering, and managing of populations and ecologies. Assumed structures of time play a key role in the co-ordering of ecological and social processes and the racial-capitalist planetary order. As Sheila Jasanoff writes, ‘Co-production is shorthand for the proposition that the ways in which we know and represent the world (both nature and society) are inseparable from the ways in which we chose to live in’ ([2004](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 9). Perhaps because it is so obvious, most of us do not think much about how this co-production inheres and prescribes linear progression of past, present, and future in infrastructures of thought that end up contributing to configurations of certain institutions, including the sovereign state, ecological relations of people and the material systems that support them (i.e. colonial, and genocidal regimes of extraction of labour, lands, resources, and life). These lived temporalities embody ‘a tapestry of exploitation and expropriation interwoven so as to reproduce the means of maintaining the ruling class lifestyle’ (McGee & Greiner, [2020](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 1). Universal time, or the time standard based on Earth's rotation, is deeply rooted in the ecological processes that suture fossil fuels and racial violence, for instance, and enables the shifts and entwinements of racial capitalism and world ecology. Time, thus, is a condition, that is, a set of circumstances that affect people’s and ecologies’ life, a structure (i.e. its duration), technology, and a tool at the forefront of colonial and imperial governance; it is linked with memories and imaginations of force and violence and the demands by racial others for ‘the end of the world as we know it or decolonization’ (da Silva, [2018](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400)). The stakes of such engagements in planetary conversations are high. They are about life and the possibility for decolonial and radical alterities. Focusing on the structures of time that co-produce the ecological and the racial capitalist planetary order can allow an engagement with the fatal choices made for, about, and in the name of the planetary, racial others, natures, black, indigenous, and other marginalized communities. By grappling with the language of the structure of time (i.e. the planetary as a climate emergency) and its relation to the shifts of the ecological order, including indeterminate moments, we argue against the easy conceptual inclusion of planetary worlds and experiences that have been denied or ignored. We argue against the rush of those calls that demand the integrating of longue durée or durations of geographical imperial structures and the way they inform the planetary history without grappling with the stickiness of time. Such processes crystallize time in ways that preserve some presents and some pasts and not others; each moment of such temporal structures embodies ‘what happens or what fails to happen, or what happens long after it is past, as the unity of what could not happen but do and what could have happened but did not’ (Marriott, 2013, pp. 192–193). In what follows, we engage with theorists whose work imagines, theorizes, de-potentializes, and suspends time to respond to the ecosystem’s shifts and possibilities for radical existence. A focus by some such theorists on crisis/emergency as the exception, we argue, enables restoration of an imagined desired ‘normal’ or ‘equilibrium’. First, we engage with McKibben, who calls for the restoration of a certain temporal capitalist order (e.g. by using carbon budgets). Instead of understanding time as a given in concepts of crisis or emergency or from the perspective of neoclassical economics as a ‘mechanical parameter within … production’ (Kolinjivadi et al., [2020](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 910), we argue that reflecting on the inhering epistemes and conceptualizations of time in these imaginaries and projects exposes the production of ‘crisis’ and ‘catastrophe’ as wagers that secure certain secular and teleological ends without putting pressure on the relationship of the structure of time and its suspension or tabula rasa (Fanon, [1967](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400)). Second, we engage with authors who analyse the relationship of linearity and justice, and the extent to which linearity is central to justice claims – whether transitional or revolutionary. Finally, we conclude with a question: what happens when instead of focusing on urgencies/catastrophes, we introduce invention into the planetary and existence? What happens when our work itself is an invention, a series of leaps ‘characterized by points of departure rather than endings’ (Marriott, [2014](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 518) from the world as we know it? Time as a fatal confusion? Environmentalist Bill McKibben suggests ‘the time to freak out over climate change is now’ ([2019](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400)). In earlier work, he argues one of the key problems with climate change is a ‘fatal confusion about the nature of time and space’ (McKibben, [2003](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 7). This confusion, he contends, is a result of Western society’s distinctions between the time of culture and the time of nature (McKibben, [2003](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 7). McKibben argues against this Cartesian fiction. The melting of glaciers, mass extinctions, and the depletion of resources are accelerating, but humans are reacting slowly ([2003](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 12). A leading strategist of the US climate change movement who pushed ‘the threat of climate change into the mainstream American political agenda’ (Nisbet, [2013](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 41), McKibben highlights the role of ‘time in managing the intertwined relationality of everyday life’ (Bastian, [2012](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 25). For him, the question of climate change is one of coordination and synchronization. Technologies like the clock (i.e. Coordinated Universal Time) used to universally coordinate life (Bastian, [2012](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400); McKibben, [2003](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400)) simply ‘enable the status quo to continue unimpeded’ (Bastian, [2012](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 25; citing McKibben, [2003](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400)). McKibben argues for a sense of coordination in the battle for the future: ‘It's a particular kind of fight … A battle for winning the sense of what's inevitable or not. What's the world going to look like. And that battle is, well – that's everything’ (McKibben, [2015](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400)). Distinguishing his vision for a new future for the planet from the vision of the fossil-fuel industry, McKibben tells climate activists to problematize the status quo: ‘Creativity is the absolute most important thing in this fight’ ([2015](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400)). In Deep Economy, McKibben argues it is possible for enlightened consumers to build sustainable economies through their everyday choices. The ecological footprint and the solution to twenty-first-century problems, such as climate change, can be redressed without having to give up democratic or progressive values. McKibben calls readers to act now by altering their consumption patterns and voluntarily making the transition to a viable future ‘tolerable, even sweet, instead of tragic’ ([2007](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 232). In this book, he shows how people have been involving themselves in small-scale projects by extracting themselves from the global economy. Drawing on several local and collective projects from the Global South he argues these experiments are promising paths of greener development, steps that will prove crucial in the face of global warming. He suggests such voluntary initiatives lead to the restoration of ‘the reality of what our world can provide’ ([2015](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 4), given the earth’s certain absolute limits. McKibben’s resolution of the exceptional emergency is based on a linearly punctuated voluntarism. But this simple linear coding conceals a complex series of questions about how just futures may be engineered and by whom. Historical events are not equally distributed along a linear axis. This bending of the climate linearity toward the temporal imbalance misses how these moments appear as the events that will restore the temporal order. McKibben’s calls point to how time as a fatal confusion is related to his understanding of what is to come. In fact, time as a fatal confusion stretches thought about the relationality of ‘culture’ and ‘nature.’ Some have sought to use clock time, or universal human time, to coordinate action. One example is the Hundred Months clock developed by the New Economics Foundation in 2008. It counts how many months are left for us to take action to avoid Earth’s average surface temperature rising more than 2°C. If nothing is done in this period, it will be too late. Far from indicating empty homogeneous time, the clock ‘tells us that everything that we do from now matters’ (Bastian, [2012](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 39). The use of such clocks proposes ‘a measure of the ‘before’ and ‘after’ to facilitate a communal reorientation’ and mobilization for action ‘towards the dangerous changes currently taking place’ (Bastian, [2012](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 40). However, this attempt to figure out how to coordinate ourselves may require not just ‘radical refigurations of the clock’ (Bastian, [2012](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 40) but also an understanding of how the arrangement of situations presumes a figurative capacity of theoretical and historical writing hostile to certain ecologies, knowledge, ideas, and those relegated to the margins of colonial, enslaving, and racial imperial orders. For McKibben, this change is to be driven ‘not by government fiat but by local desire and necessity’ ([2007](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 3). Local initiatives seem to be the cure-all for the excesses of global capitalism, yet he says, ‘No one wants to do away with markets, or to centrally plan economies’ ([2007](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 225). To avoid temporal confusion, he attacks ‘growth,’ ‘the cult of More’ ([2007](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 177), or ‘the doctrine of endless economic expansion’ ([2007](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 24) but without explicitly challenging or opening the ‘ecological crisis’ to questions of black, indigenous, and postcolonial designs of thought and activism, as for example, in the work of Frantz Fanon, Kyle Whyte, Leanne Simpson, and Romy Opperman (see also Black Ecologies) and Achille Mbembe to name a few. These authors are not satisfied to use the notion of time as a fatal confusion; rather, they take on time. For them, the relationship between racism/coloniality and ecological degradation cannot be addressed or even transformed by focusing on crisis or emergency. They grapple with the ways we historicize and analyse black, indigenous, and diasporic ecologies and examine how such people are ‘most susceptible to the effects of climate change, including rising sea levels, subsidence, sinking land, as well as ongoing effects of toxic stewardship’ (Roane & Hosbey, [2019](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400)) because of the relations of temporal orientations and the planetary racial imperial order: ‘these same communities, … have bearing on how we should historicize the current crisis and how we conceive of futures outside of destruction’ (Roane & Hosbey, [2019](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400)). Romy Opperman argues capitalism and white supremacist settler states are not interested in the ‘survival and the flourishing of racialized people, nor that of the environments in which we live’ (Opperman, [2020](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400)). For her, the desire to return to ‘normal’ temporal orders is a business-as-usual political imaginary, reaffirming that ‘normal [which] means the plunder of the earth’s resources, the wars for these resources, not to mention the practices that destroy, dehumanize, and oppress life in its myriad forms on this earth’ (Opperman, [2020](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400)). ‘Alternative political imaginaries-to the state and capital,’ she says, are more urgent than ever (Opperman, [2020](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400)). The naming of what we currently face as crisis or emergency evades the ways radical black ecologies, that is, black thinkers, movements, and communities and their insurgencies have been disavowed in accounts of what counts as history’s long durée or event. Radical black ecologies ‘have refused the ruse that capitalism, the state, heteropatriarchy, and the domination of more-than-human nature are the means and ends of justice and freedom’ (Opperman, [2020](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400)). For her, black ecologies open the relations of the structure of time and racial capital regimes to question by crossing colonial and enslaving historical boundaries and their contingent events or by suspending them. Françoise Vergès points to the racialized nature of modern capitalism; she proposes an expansion of Jason Moore’s alternative periodizing of our current time as the Capitalocene, what Moore calls ‘the historical era shaped by the endless accumulation of capital’ (Moore, [2015b](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 596), into an explicitly ‘racial Capitalocene,’ an epoch when the ‘environment [is] shaped by slavery and colonialism’ (Vergès, [2017](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 73). For her, this methodology allows us to ‘write a history of the environment that includes slavery, colonialism, imperialism, and racial capitalism, from the standpoint of those who were … fabricated as disposable people, whose lives do not matter’ (Vergès, [2017](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 73). For her, it is imperative that we contest colonialism and enslavement in a more general description of their language of race. Vergès puts pressure on the idea of ‘ecological crisis’ and broadens it to be an effect of a racial planetary capital regime that depends on force and violence to transmute and maintain the conditions of its existence. Such a ‘crisis’ entangles slavery, colonialism, imperialism with the planetary and racial capitalism. It is important to remember the Cartesian production of reality: the division, hierarchization, and sequencing of culture as value and nature as without value (da Silva, [2017](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400)). The Cartesian/cogito subject is redeemed by time rather than space (the ‘dark’ side of Western reason, progress, and the rational subject). Human mastery of the social realm follows the mastery of nature. Liberation from the two tyrannies – nature and irrational social authority – is inevitable, as progress set in motion will culminate in a final Tenth Epoch when ‘social art’ will triumph (Condorcet, [1793](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400)). This world is buoyed up by linear history as the new order of things, a history in which the West's advanced evolutionary development reproduces the subject and the sovereign territorial state as the telos of natural and historical development. In this understanding, Europe traditionally asserted ‘world’ history as the natural order of things, an evolutionary struggle of the fit against the unfit, with Europe leading the pack. Michel Foucault argues a semblance of European unity was shattered during the nineteenth century with the destruction of ‘natural’ time and the concomitant birth of interest in history: ‘histories of everything emerged at the moment man was ‘emptied’ of history’ (Foucault, [1973](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), pp. 367–370). Richard Terdiman says the obsession with time in the nineteenth century was a ‘crisis of diachronicity’ ([1993](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 15), an abyss opening between a past forever destroyed and a present showing no clear way to the future. The late twentieth century developed precisely when ‘nature’ and the ‘naturalizing’ of space by Europeans faced ‘a crisis of synchronicity’ (Terdiman, [1993](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 15) in the return of the ‘others’ that Europe and European discourse had systematically colonized, enslaved, and marginalized. Europe (and the US) wanted to blank out and reabsorb those racial others who refused their role as nature and nature as a thing; the answer was to rethink space. Recently, with the ‘extensive and intensive extraction of matter from the earth, in the form of fossil fuels, soil nutrients to feed crops and livestock, and the (human and more-than-human) work’ and ‘the internal energy of African slaves and Indigenous lands’ which ‘now exist … as the form of global capital’ (da Silva, [2018](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400)), thinking historically and naturally has been problematized and even replaced by thinking about crisis and the future. Despite its apparent valorization of crisis, discourse on time does not easily engorge the racial others. Even nature, the global capital's utopic wish-form, functions as a ‘cannibalistic force,’ encircling everything in its ‘gigantic phagocytosis’ (Caillois & Shepley, [1984](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 28). Drawing on indigenous climate change studies and the Plantationocene, Bikrum Gill argues the ‘decolonial turn in the epoch debates has foregrounded Indigenous and Black alterity as the necessary epistemic point of departure for overcoming social and ecological crises’ ([2021](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 913) thereby challenging the idea that the human must be removed. As he further argues, the ‘question of restoring the earth’ is ‘one of centreing Indigenous and Black sovereignties that resurge/restore social-geological capacities that both brought into being, and sustained over a long durée, the earth system as composition of distinct, yet co-constituting, earth-worldings’ (Gill, [2021](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 926). Gill orients the reader to moving beyond conquest and focusing on what he calls the Cortesian axis, that is, the time when the ‘capitalist enclosure’ and the racialized production of the society/nature distinctions occurred by ‘appropriating Indigenous and Black earth-worlds’ as well as exhausting them ecologically by erasing ‘their underlying conditions’ of possibility (Gill, [2021](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 926). This reading points to deeper temporal connections that evade the underlying ‘social-ecological/social-geological reproductive conditions’ (Gill, [2021](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 925) that make possible the epistemes of ecologists and environmentalists, including how human and nonhuman ecologies are sutured together; thus, planetary, and racial justice cannot be achieved through separated efforts and not through the dismantling of racial capitalism without engaging with its structures of time. Several authors have put pressure on the dominant structure of time of this regime by challenging its Coordinated Universal Time (e.g. Baucom, [2014](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400); Opperman, [2020](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400); Wynter, [2003](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400)) and the social-ecological relations of capitalism. They question the edifice of time: as ‘linear, predictable and [guided by the] disciplining coordination metrics of modern clocks and calendars’ (Kolinjivadi et al., [2020](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 906). Naturalizing time as a fixed and presupposed object to be leveraged for accumulation planetary regimes reinforces global capital’s assumptions about its ‘eternal scarcity’ and ‘growth imperative’ (Kolinjivadi et al., [2020](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 906). Inquiring into the ways the planetary and its contingent institutions are bounded reveals how certain structures of time are prescribed in histories and destinies in advance. It is important to challenge the easy reading of geographical contexts and time, for instance, of suturing context and nature and context and culture. A taken-for-granted geographical context such as a national territory or locality only allows circular self-referencing, ‘‘proving’ itself by means of its own production, its ‘context’’ (Walker, [2012](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 8). In this sense, analysis becomes implicit or marginalized in the name of proving history, context, or grammars and logics, as in the epoch debates of setting the ‘date,’ the ‘Anthropocene,’ and the ‘Capitalocene’ (Amoureux & Reddy, [2021](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400); Gill, [2021](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400); Kolia, [2021](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400)) as well as identifying geographies that confirm abstract notions of genocide and exploitation. The stakes in these debates are not just to get the date (origin or otherwise) right by either presupposing it or injecting it at some point in the future; the goal is to see whether it is possible for the invention of existence or that moment ‘whose destination cannot be foreseen, or anticipated, but only repeatedly traveled, and, therefore, not future at all’ (Marriott, [2011a](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 54), that ‘moment of inventiveness’ (Marriott, [2011a](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), pp. 53–54) ‘to change the order of the world’ (Fanon, [1967](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 36). We stretch these authors’ analytics. We argue colonial and enslaving extractions and grammars have immured nature and the source of existence in the making of a planetary, as their primary goal is to settle to whom the earth belongs (Mbembe, [2021](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400)). Through this process, racial imperial capital retroactively invalidates dynamic and heterogeneous temporalities and existential relations by claiming it functions because of its own birthed locality. Thus, thinking and imagining decolonial compositions requires a leap, an invention to overturn what planetary racial capitalist regimes block: potential inventions for a decolonial planetary. What’s in a date: transition, adaptation or the end of the world? The fatal confusion of time is itself a fiction. Modernity is running out of places and lives to despoil. Thus, imagining and organizing order through the technology of time created and enforced by legal and sovereign regimes, force and violence change the ecology and environments, not according to their own Promethean logic but rather to our dominant logics that equate time and matter, matter, and value. These same dominant logics, Marriott tell us through Frantz Fanon, guide the ‘originary constitutive category of race’ (Marriott, 2013, p. 194). Certain structures of time are generated and continue to give life to certain possibilities and futures because they are harnessed to a particular political vision: an imperial neoliberal world order which depends on the expenditure of existence in extraction, conquest, and obliteration. Concepts like crisis, progress, reason, equilibrium, and metabolic rifts are as temporal as they are scientific. Mann provides insight into the Anthropocene’s introduction as the fix for the liberal-Capitalocene. Drawing on Domenico Losurdo’s notion of ‘macroscopic exclusion clauses,’ Mann argues liberalism ‘displaced unfreedom from a white male bourgeois European who was the historical agent in the [liberal] narrative, [and] those exclusions were generally spatial’ ([2005](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 4). However, liberalism used a ‘principal temporal means’ to sublimate its failures through the ‘concept of crisis or emergency’ ([2005](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 4). Mann points to a crucial management of imperialism: ‘Adaptation’ supplants ‘progress’ as the telos of the age. The pairing of crisis and stability, exception, and norm, emergency, and nonemergency, is at the core of what I call liberalism’s reality management system. This family of concepts is also central to the ways in which a lot of social science, not only orthodox but ‘critical,’ tries to make sense of the world. Each of its members only makes sense insofar as it conjures up an equilibrium or ordinary against which its extraordinariness is notable … . [P]ermanent emergency is an oxymoron. ([2005](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 4) Mann highlights the absence of reason of global planetary imperialism and suggests the telos of the new imaginary guiding liberalism is adaptation. Adaptation is an evolutionary process through which species ‘claim a niche to which they are best fitted, and continually develop in a complex competivive environment’ of repeating the past by rejecting any ‘divergence within the movement of return, and the creation of a new object’ (Bignell, [2019](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), pp. 149, 150–151). Thus, the ‘dual temporality of the repetition involved in adaptation, and the ideas of progression, reworking, and return, are aspects of how this Darwinian process is connected’ to how we articulate and read history (Bignell, [2019](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 151). Liberalism’s dominant notions (progress, freedom, stability) are supplanted, and ‘adaptation’ becomes the end-goal. Such a move does not invite the reader to problematize the grounding, linear, and transcendental, and adaptation conditions that make a certain understanding of the planetary possible. Rather, it requires an expenditure of heterogeneous political energies toward the production of a coherent, national-capitalist ecological-body politic. Exposing the major elements (air, water, earth, fire) as existential natures (human and otherwise) to various morbidities, ranging from toxic environments to material risk and dangers in the name of exception and emergency places the nation-state at the helm of the consolidation of a planetary project organized in a ‘linear sequence of moments called ‘time’’ (Kolinjivadi et al., [2020](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 906), while displacing its presuppositions about the notion of change as simply the passing of time. This evades that adaptation is the process through which existence is reordered through imperialism and capitalization. Adaptation seems to be the process of reworking elements that are heterogeneous and oppositional to the conquest and capture that render the possibility of the emergence of the capitalist planetary regime uncertain. Relations of the racial capitalist planetary are ‘coordinated to temporalities that are qualitatively heterogeneous’. The racial capitalist planetary regimes use temporal mechanisms like adaptation by ‘enroll[ing] … desynchronizations back into raw material for [global] capital’ (Kolinjivadi et al., [2020](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 912). For example, notions like crisis or emergency, or projects like the SDGs that highlight green technologies, do not necessarily reveal their assumptions about their horizons or their notion of change beyond a universal clock time. The parties who set up targets and indicators ‘may align them to any arbitrary deadline set by the clock (e.g. from now until 2030) but will perpetually remain fundamentally detached from the tempos of biophysical change for which they set to respond to’ (Kolinjivadi et al., [2020](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 913). Here, of course, paying attention to biophysical change and the way we read it is imperative. These parties sustain the self-evidence of these planetary regimes without forcing us to consider that the time of change in its transhistorical essentialism, transcendental, circular or speculative modes is not simply about history and the evental moments but also about ruptures and openings for the planetary otherwise. These parties build partnerships to generate profits from ‘green’ technologies. In this sense, international development institutions articulate SDGs as projects to re-synchronize the ‘openings,’ the ‘indeterminate,’ the ‘oppositional’ back into racial capitalist planetary regimes as new sources of value and profits. But capital’s captures are moments of singularity and cannot be mapped linearly: ‘The time of capital’s own self-movement is an overall process in which phases and gradients occasionally come to the surface and then submerge’ (Walker, [2012](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), p. 57). In conversation with Denise Ferreira da Silva, we stretch this logic to consider the structures of time in relation to value and determinacy and the ordering of global racial planetary capitalist regimes. What inheres in this time horizon of capital is a notion of a ‘self-determining thing,’ the ‘very condition of existence and the determination of value in general’ (da Silva, [2017](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400)). Moreover, da Silva continues, ‘Value is an effect of determinacy’ ([2017](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400), citing Kant). Extrapolating from what she says, we argue that in a sense, value = time = self-determination. Time or universal time is conveyed as ‘at once finite and transcendent, by figuring history and life as a progressive unfolding that finds its culmination in the human condition, as it existed in post-Enlightenment Europe’ (da Silva, [2018](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400)). Three onto-epistemological-temporal pillars, ‘separability, determinacy, and sequentiality,’ da Silva says, are ‘the roots of the problem,’ separating and sequencing ‘what is known’ and determining how ‘finite organic time already maps [and should map] the surface of the earth’ (da Silva, [2018](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2021.1945400)).

### More crds

#### Temporal narrative of progress bad

**Chandler and Chipato 21** – David Chandler is Professor of International Relations at the University of Westminster. He currently edits the open access journal Anthropocenes: Human, Inhuman, Posthuman and the book series Routledge Studies in Resilience. David Chandler has contributed more than one hundred articles to international peer-reviewed journals (in the spheres of international relations, social theory, security, development, democracy, history, geography, political theory, philosophy, ethics and law) including: New Left Review; Radical Philosophy; Current History; Review of International Studies; International Political Sociology; European Journal of Social Theory; European Political Science; Security Dialogue; Political Studies; Millennium: Journal of International Studies; Human Rights Quarterly; Cambridge Review of International Affairs; International Politics; International Relations; British Journal of Politics & International Relations; Journal of International Relations and Development; Politics; Policy and Politics; Democratization; Finnish Yearbook of International Law; Ethics & Global Politics; Globalizations; Global Society; Global Dialogue; Area: Journal of the Royal Geographical Society; The Monist: An International Journal of General Philosophical Inquiry; Development Dialogue; International Journal of Human Rights; Ethnopolitics; International Peacekeeping; Journal of Conflict, Security and Development; Cooperation and Conflict; Critical Studies on Security; Global Change, Peace & Security; Peacebuilding; International Journal of Peace Studies; WeltTrends: Zeitschrift für internationale Politik; Wissenschaft & Frieden; Cahiers Marxistes; Politique Africain; Alternatives Sud; Studia Diplomatica: The Brussels Journal of International Relations; Papeles de Cuestiones Internacionales; Stratejik Öngörü Dergisi and Filozofski Godišnjak. Dr. Farai Chipato is a CIPS postdoctoral fellow (2020-2022) for the Changing Orders project. Farai has a PhD in Political Science from Queen Mary University of London. His thesis research investigated the relationship between international development donors and local civil society organisations in Zimbabwe, focusing [A call for abolition: The disavowal and displacement of race in critical security studies] neil

Security Dialogue’s call comes out of a **wider move to include race in discussions of international relations**, amid calls **to ‘decolonize’ a discipline that has always been at the heart of colonial power structures** ([Sabaratnam, 2017](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/09670106211024413)). Yet, in order to understand **what is at stake in this move** to include race in a discipline that formerly seemed to ignore it, **we must consider the relationship between Blackness and the world**, the ontological condition that makes anti-Blackness inextricable from security. In short, we must realize that questions of race and racism have always been the ground that critical security studies stands on. **The idea that racism can be isolated and extracted from an academic discipline while its effects are therapeutically addressed is challenged** **by** the weight of **Afropessimist scholarship**, critical Black feminist and anti-colonial thinking. The urge to ‘decolonize’ academia suggests that coloniality is a condition that can be uprooted within the university without addressing the broader anti-Black world that universities are in. Some prominent decolonial scholars have challengingly argued that ‘decolonization is not a metaphor’ ([Tuck and Yang, 2012](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/09670106211024413)), and **others have suggested the need for pluriversal approaches to security that allow for inclusion of a multitude of non-Western ontologies** ([Escobar, 2018](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/09670106211024413)). However, **even pluriversal approaches risk retaining parts of the edifice of modernity without addressing its anti-Black foundations**, **leaving open the possibility of ‘re-enchanting and pluralising** [international relations]’ (Rothe, 2019: 9), assuming that redemption and reparation is possible. The temporality at stake is that which **seeks to salvage ‘critique’ through an imaginary telos of progress – learning the lessons and moving onwards, ever opening and exploring new avenues and new approaches** – hence **the appeal to an ethico-political ‘openness’ that the making of reparative politics is held to enable.** This **attempt to move ‘beyond’ the problem of ‘the spectres of race and racism’** is laudable but, we argue, misguided. **It is precisely critical narratives of ‘progress’ that critical Black studies and Afropessimism seek to problematize** ([Ray et al., 2017](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/09670106211024413)). **Rather** than considering **anti-Blackness as an epiphenomenon of modernity, a glitch in our system that needs to be fixed**, **it may be understood as constitutive of a modern ontology** ([Wilderson, 2010](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/09670106211024413)). As [Nahum Dimitri Chandler (2014](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/09670106211024413): 130) states, ‘there is no contemporary discourse that is free or independent of the itinerary of the concept of race’. **The existence of Blackness is ontologically crucial in providing the boundaries of humanity, in creating the Outside, the Other, that is necessary to define the inside of modernity, civil society and human subjectivity** ([Warren, 2018](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/09670106211024413)). As [Saidiya Hartman (2017](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/09670106211024413): 33) argues, ‘**the texture of freedom is laden with the vestiges of slavery, and abstract equality is utterly enmeshed in the narrative of black subjection’**. Thus, for Afropessimists, it **is not merely the contemporary order of humanity that is enmeshed with anti-Blackness**, **but** also **the** **struggles for emancipation by those within that order**. This does not mean that there is no oppression among those who are recognized as human, but that their struggles for freedom within this space are of a different order from that of Black people, as the space of these internal conflicts is constituted by anti-Blackness. In order for there to be security for humanity, in order for the liberal subject, civil society and a world of progress to function, Blackness must remain outside, as the counterpoint to the telos of modernity. This **throws into question** calls for inclusion, for justice and for reparation, **as well as the** ability **for the** global system to be accountable for the suffering and death of Black peopl**e**. If anti-Blackness is a structural necessity for the system to exist**, then there can be no justice, no end to violence against Black people if the current system persists.** The drive to include Black people in civil society, to promote multiculturalism, diversity and inclusion, **leaves untouched the ontological condition of Blackness, which is required to maintain the borders of humanity**. The radical force of **Black liberation movements was blunted by the drive to assimilate them, to include Black people in the political sphere, to recognize and celebrate their ‘ethnic identity’, without addressing the fundamental condition of Blackness**. In the USA, anti-Black violence remains a necessity to maintain security, despite the inclusion of Black people at all levels of government. Inclusivity does not ameliorate the problem; it merely obfuscates it. As [Frank Wilderson (2010](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/09670106211024413): 103) argues, **‘few characters aestheticize White supremacy more effectively and persuasively than a Black male cop’**. American governance is not ‘haunted’ by race, it is constituted through race. Thus the line between humanity and Blackness is not shattered through the inclusion of some Black people in the space of civil society; rather, it is reinforced. In South Africa, the Black inhabitants of townships continue to endure state violence and poverty despite the formal end of apartheid. Black activists now protest against their government by ‘black boers’ (settlers), those who have crossed the line into humanity only to fortify it against their former compatriots ([Madlingozi, 2017](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/09670106211024413)). This is because, as [Tsepho Madlingozi (2017](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/09670106211024413): 14) argues, ‘the main edifice of the ontological structure of colonial-apartheid . . . remains in place’. In order to ensure the security of settler society, those few who have been inducted into it must maintain the violence of the anti-Black order that is said to be overturned. **Security, then, is sustained through anti-Blackness**, for if the abject non-subject of the Black experience does not exist as a point of contrast, then humanity cannot be safe. The subjectivity of the (non-Black) human is imperilled, without the safety of anti-Black violence that ensures its ontological integrity. If this is the case, then we must re-read the call to bring considerations of race and racism into critical security studies and question the feasibility of achieving an ethico-political reparation in a discipline that relies on the structure of an anti-Black system. Disavowal: ‘Spectres’ and ‘foundations’ Having grasped the nature of the relationship between anti-Blackness and security, let us reflect on the assumptions underpinning the desire to rejuvenate the criticality of the field through reparative approaches to race. We see a potential problem with the argument that the recent important work by the scholars like [Sabaratnam (2020)](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/09670106211024413) and [Rutazibwa (2020)](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/09670106211024413) on **security’s racial underpinnings has cleared the ground for a project of accounting and reparation while maintaining existing academic fields recognizably intac**t. Indeed, recent work on race in security and global politics has highlighted many potential issues, demonstrating the substantial challenge facing reparative projects. As [Anna Agathangelou and Kyle Killian (2016)](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/09670106211024413) demonstrate, considered ontologically, coloniality is much more than a set of space- and time-specific policy practices, but rather a world-making (and worlds-destroying) practice through which our understanding of global space and time is constructed (see also [Grovogui, 2014](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/09670106211024413); [Jackson, 2020](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/09670106211024413); [Silva, 2007](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/09670106211024413)). Moreover, critical sociological accounts of security and international relations argue that the imposition of racial difference is intimately tied to colonial and settler-colonial power as a technique of control and regulation that naturalizes and reproduces differential powers and capacities (e.g. [Henderson, 2013](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/09670106211024413); [Nisancioglu, 2020](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/09670106211024413)). **Race and white supremacy are thus inextricable from hegemonic regimes of power and imposition, at the heart of the discipline, despite the abstract categories of liberal political theory that structurally operate to occlude the centrality of race to contemporary political divisions and understandings.** As [Gurminder Bhambra argues (2017)](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/09670106211024413), the location of race is often displaced – to claims to identity and difference, seen to be racial – while white-coded framings of ‘sovereignty’ and ‘class’ obscure their racialized grounding. T**his important work on the nature of race and racism in security studies shows that the problem is not so much one of a lack of incorporation of questions of race and racism, but rather that of a thoroughgoing saturation in issues of race**. This ontological saturation implies that there can be no definitive temporal break between the colonial past and a postcolonial present. **Coloniality remains** in the present not only in residue, but rather **as an ‘ongoing and quotidian atrocity’**, inevitably problematizing attempts at reparation (see discussion in [Sharpe, 2016](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/09670106211024413): 20). We are thereby fully sympathetic to [Howell and Richter-Montpetit’s (2019)](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/09670106211024413) understanding that ‘questions of race and racism’ cannot be disentangled from critical security studies or, for that matter, the broader field of international relations. As [Jared Sexton (2008](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/09670106211024413): 22) powerfully notes, **any attempt to separate ‘questions of race and racism’ from systems, structures and institutions of power already risks disavowing the centrality of race and its reduction** to a secondary or contingent aspect.

#### Disavowal of its racist history “inverts the problem…. Becomes the solution”

Chandler and Chipato 21 – David Chandler is Professor of International Relations at the University of Westminster. He currently edits the open access journal Anthropocenes: Human, Inhuman, Posthuman and the book series Routledge Studies in Resilience. David Chandler has contributed more than one hundred articles to international peer-reviewed journals (in the spheres of international relations, social theory, security, development, democracy, history, geography, political theory, philosophy, ethics and law) including: New Left Review; Radical Philosophy; Current History; Review of International Studies; International Political Sociology; European Journal of Social Theory; European Political Science; Security Dialogue; Political Studies; Millennium: Journal of International Studies; Human Rights Quarterly; Cambridge Review of International Affairs; International Politics; International Relations; British Journal of Politics & International Relations; Journal of International Relations and Development; Politics; Policy and Politics; Democratization; Finnish Yearbook of International Law; Ethics & Global Politics; Globalizations; Global Society; Global Dialogue; Area: Journal of the Royal Geographical Society; The Monist: An International Journal of General Philosophical Inquiry; Development Dialogue; International Journal of Human Rights; Ethnopolitics; International Peacekeeping; Journal of Conflict, Security and Development; Cooperation and Conflict; Critical Studies on Security; Global Change, Peace & Security; Peacebuilding; International Journal of Peace Studies; WeltTrends: Zeitschrift für internationale Politik; Wissenschaft & Frieden; Cahiers Marxistes; Politique Africain; Alternatives Sud; Studia Diplomatica: The Brussels Journal of International Relations; Papeles de Cuestiones Internacionales; Stratejik Öngörü Dergisi and Filozofski Godišnjak. Dr. Farai Chipato is a CIPS postdoctoral fellow (2020-2022) for the Changing Orders project. Farai has a PhD in Political Science from Queen Mary University of London. His thesis research investigated the relationship between international development donors and local civil society organisations in Zimbabwe, focusing [A call for abolition: The disavowal and displacement of race in critical security studies] neil

We have seen above that **disavowal operates on the basis of stipulating that the problem of race and racism is one that can be located in the past, intimating that the problem is a difficult one of ‘spectres’ or legacies that must and can be overcome**. This is possible **because the assumption is that questions of race are somehow separable from the field of critical security studies itself, rather than constitutive of i**t. The successful accomplishment of disavowal**, then, enables a focus upon how critical security studies might move forwa**rd. This leap, we argue, is a displacement that then puts questions of the future of critical security studies at the forefront of concern. The displacement accomplishes the inversing of the problematic: critical security studies is now the solution rather than the problem. The precondition for reparative work is the disavowal that race and racism are inextricably entangled with critical security studies. The shift of displacement **is the move to reparation, the imaginary of an anti- or non-racist critical security studies**.

The problem with this move of displacement is that the ethico-political stance of reparation is necessarily an affirmative one. As [Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick (2003](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/09670106211024413): 150–151) suggests, it is through this displacement that we can learn from the ‘ways selves and communities succeed in extracting sustenance from the objects of a culture – even of a culture whose avowed desire has often been not to sustain them’. As Tiffany Lethabo King powerfully argues, while it is the case that reading ‘for what is generative and provides openings’ ([King, 2019](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/09670106211024413): 230n74) is vital for coalition and collaboration, reparative work advocated in LGBT and queer theory presupposes the positionality of a shared humanist sexual subject position. As [Fred Moten (2018](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/09670106211024413): 11–12) notes in his essay on race and the work of Levinas, the reparative stance of being ‘open to the world’ or ‘available to the world’ **can only work as a critical project for those for whom the world is accessible in these ways**. **For those structurally excluded from this political ontology of the subject**, this **openness would be critical only insofar as relationality is understood** to be an expression of power, **structured by the givenness of a transcendental subjectivity that the black cannot have** but by which the black can be had; **a structural position that he or she cannot take** but by which he or she can be taken. ([Moten, 2018](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/09670106211024413): 204)

Any project of reparative work for generative ethico-political openings **would have to be undertaken after the abolition or dismantling of critical security studies**, **not as a substitute for this, displacing the problem to that of the repair of the disciplinary field**.

Reparative work proffered from within a system where race is not merely the ‘oil’ in the engine but the engine itself offers little hope of real change. How can critical security studies offer a space for a new antiracist political ethics, from within the wider ‘prison of colonial modernity’ ([Blaney and Tickner, 2017](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/09670106211024413))? Surely, if reparative work is to be undertaken, **it should be carried out on the terms of those who are wronged, rather than on the grounds of the perpetrator of the offence**. If **critical security studies exists on the ground of the ‘human’**, as a science of the humanity from which Blackness has always been excluded, then **it cannot ameliorate the oppression that was required to clear that ground** ([Wynter, 2003](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/09670106211024413)). Instead, we might follow [Alexander Weheliye (2014](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/09670106211024413): 137) in arguing that humanity, the idea of the ‘human’, can only be overhauled from without, transformed by those who, he argues, ‘live behind the veil of the permanent state of exception’. Thus, we might argue that reparation ultimately leads us back to subjection (see [Coulthard, 2007](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/09670106211024413): 453).

‘**Questions of race and racism’ are not the spectre haunting critical security studies, they are its life blood, its arteries and the muscles that power it.** Critical security studies can have no reparative access to ‘questions of race and racism’ no matter how hard or how genuinely it tries. ‘**Questions of race and racism’ are what enable the cuts and binaries, the world, the subjects, the concerns, the practices, the methods, the understandings of critical security studies**. Critical. Security. Studies. What is it about these three words, singularly, together, in whatever order, that could make anyone think, in today’s world, there was a way beyond their imbrications in ‘questions of race and racism’? Critical of what? On what grounds? Security of what? On what grounds? Study of what? On what grounds? Answer: the grounds of anti-Blackness or ‘questions of race and racism’.

Being critical necessitates having a standpoint, being a subject in relation. For the white world of modernity, critical standpoints enabled the overturning of the relation, freeing the subject from its oppression, alienation or exploitation. As [Frank B. Wilderson (2010](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/09670106211024413): 37) notes, **these ‘grammars of suffering’ are grounded upon anti-Blackness, grounded upon the construction of the human as an abstract, autonomous, interest-bearing, rational subject**. Wilderson argues that the exclusion of Blackness from humanity was required as a counterpart, an outside that allowed for the construction of the modern human subject. Thus, **critique, in the sense of striving for emancipation under the conditions of modernity, is ontologically grounded in anti-Blackness**. For ‘**critique’, then, ‘questions of race and racism’ are problems of management and damage limitation, problems of experience not problems of ontology**. **Addressing ‘questions of race and racism’ is the form that governance takes, the practice of grounding this governance itself. Critique is what puts anti-Blackness to work in its ceaseless desire to reproduce itself,** to improve, **to better,** to be more adaptive**, to** be more inclusive **– ever changing, ever learning, ever transforming**. Therefore, the mere inclusion of questions of race and racism, which maintain the ontological structure of anti-Blackness, must perpetuate an anti-Black world. Critique is **the endless search for the emancipation of the huma**n, the quest for the realization of the full potential of an anti-Black world. The flight of critique today can be rewritten as **the perpetual denial of and war on Blackness**, that which enables **and ‘makes invisible’ its** grounds of **violence**.

# Links:

## Generic:

### Democracy -- link

#### K of democracy – calvin warren

**Warren, 21** (Calvin Warren, Calvin Warren is an Associate Professor in African American Studies. He received his B.A. in Rhetoric/Philosophy (College Scholar) from Cornell University and his MA and Ph.D. in African American/American Studies from Yale University. Warren’s research interests are in the area of Continental Philosophy (particularly post-Heideggerian and nihilistic philosophy), Lacanian psychoanalysis, queer theory, Black Philosophy, Afro-pessimism, and theology. His book Ontological Terror: Blackness, Nihilism, and Emancipation is forthcoming from Duke University Press.He is currently working on a second project Onticide: Essays on Black Nihilism and Sexuality, which unravels the metaphysical foundations of black sexuality and argues for a rethinking of sexuality without the human, sexual difference, or coherent bodies. He has published articles in various journals, including CR: New Centennial Review, GLQ, TSQ, and Nineteenth Century Context., 21, accessed on 6-25-2022, Semanticscholar, "[PDF] Abandoning Time: Black Nihilism and the Democratic Imagination | Semantic Scholar", https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Abandoning-Time%3A-Black-Nihilism-and-the-Democratic-Warren/4734fe7c47fcd401525dd940a5c37fe6e323b537)

Samuel A. Chambers defines the imagination as a “synthetic power of creation and re-creation—an ability to combine the uncombinable, to surpass binaries without merely collapsing them, to fashion something new” (620). **And from such synthesis, we are told that a democratic imagination is possible, since we would “think the limits (and their transgression) of democratic theory and of democracy as well**” (620). Here, we see that the **democratic imagination recasts limits as possibilities rather than complete failures. Limits become the resource for creation and re-creation rather than evidence of destruction and uselessness**. A couture Kantianism / Hegelianism (mixed with a splash of deconstruction) **salvages democracy from the perils of its absurdity, devastation, and brutality**. **Why** this **investment in democracy’s “intrinsic” creative power**? **Can this creativity finally bring an end to anti-Black violence and Black suffering**? Or is the knowledge of democracy’s fabulousness enough to sustain Blacks through police terrorism, environmental racism, re-enslavement through incarceration, and food / housing insecurity and discrimination? I would suggest that what makes such creative synthesis possible is an unacknowledged dependence on time. For proponents of democracy**, it is time that is malleable for creative enterprises of re-imagination, of progress fetishization, and an “ontology of change” that need not justify (or prove) itself, declaration of change seems to be enough** (Badiou, “Ontology”). What if, however, democracy is clinging to a depleted resource**? What if time is no longer enough to orient existence, especially for those inhabitants of an abyss—within which time, space, ethics, and law are weaponized against existence? Put somewhat differently, democracy has exhausted the imagination**. It is a **speculative vampire that drains the imagination of any vital resource for its own survival. This speculation is an outrageous expenditure of energy, an enjoyment without end, a scholarly surplus-pleasure requiring an incessant (and useless)** political repetition (Johnston). I would describe this speculation—the conjoining of time, democracy, and the imagination—as an interminable quest, or a certain “stuckness” in a scene of failure (a constant encircling of political and legal vacuity). This repetition is most dramatically demonstrated, for me, in **Black political participation—voting, protesting, keeping hope alive, returning to the kernel of authoritarian violence (i. e., anti-Blackness) with unbridled hope, temporal determination, and an investment in the ontology of change** (Warren; Farred). **Time mocks Blacks, requiring historical déjà vu to be re-imagined, redeemed, rethought, or ignored, rather than accepting time as anti-Black enmity and democracy as the Abandoning Time: Black Nihilism and the Democratic Imagination** Amst 66.1 (2021): 247-51 249 permanence of anti-Blackness. Chants of “yes we can!” “your vote matters!” “we have power!” “we’re moving forward,” etc., serve to **neglect the failure of Black political participation and to imprison the imagination within futurity**. As I am writing these remarks, I am witnessing the absurdity of this democratic imagination and its unrelenting time. On one news program, I hear that police shot unarmed Andre Hill, a forty-seven-yearold Black resident of Columbus, Ohio, without cause, and rather than offering him medical assistance, decided to handcuff him (just in case the supine, dying man finds a gun, magically, I guess). On the other news program, I hear Black politicians importuning, begging, and guilting Blacks into voting for change. Black political pundits assure voters that the ontology of change is realizable if you just exercise your right to vote. “Never again!” “We will transform police practices!” “This time will be different!” Did Blacks not vote when police shot twelve-year-old Tamir Rice as he was playing with his toy gun on the playground? (By the way, no federal charges will be brought against the police officers who shot him). Did Blacks not vote when Sandra Bland lost her life in police custody? Did Blacks not vote after police deprived Eric Garner and George Floyd (and apparently 70 other people) of breath (Baker et al.)? In answer to my inquiry “why should we continue to vote if anti-Black violence is not changing?” I am told, “Just keep believing, we can vote people in that can change things!” When I then ask, “But I voted for President Obama (suspending my nihilism in an intoxication of hopeaffect), I thought things were going to change for Blacks? I feel just as unsafe and endangered post-Obama as pre-Obama,” I am told, “Obama wasn’t a ‘magic Negro.’ He did the best he could.” Then I ask, “So why vote if it will take an act of magic to address the existential threat of anti-Blackness?” **Time mocks the cyclical movement of such inquiries, they are, indeed, unanswerable within the creative, synthetic, and powerful democratic horizon**. Voting **becomes the premier instrument of the democratic imagination—supposedly, it activates the imagination with futurity, avoids paralysis with action, and can be repeated. What type of creativity will finally eradicate anti-Black brutality**? And could such creativity even operate within time**? Could we still call such creativity democracy? Must we abandon time to enable the imagination to perform the mystical, the magical, and the ineffable?**

### NATO -- link

#### Nato racial

Murray 20 (A*nti-imperial world politics: race, class, and internationalism in the making of post-colonial orde*rs " Christopher Patrick ,PhD thesis, London School of Economics and Political Science)

The **discourses of Africans and people of African descent**, which ultimately helped bring about the end of formal empire in Africa and the Caribbean, took place during a particularly important moment in the formation of ‘the international.’ 62 While the first and second waves of decolonisation comprised similar dynamics of empire-colony relations, and the internal divergences within colonised societies, the third wave of decolonisation came as the result of a uniquely global discourse around the role of imperialism in the First World War, **the threat this represented to ‘world civilisation’, and the new forms of international governance and social relations needed to address global conflict. During this moment, empire came to be seen as in need of reform by some, and inherently destructive and regressive by others**. In each case, the emergence of more powerful and organised racial advocacy networks and the **depreciating returns of white imperial legitimacy galvanised arguments for non-white inclusion in governance.** **Objection to white supremacy proliferated in various transnational advocacy organizations and through colonial and metropolitan print cultures**. These ideas were facilitated by the synchronisation of racial grievance throughout colonised populations, but also by the ideological and organisational resources supplied by the COMINTERN and the United States. Black anti-imperialism is not reducible to Soviet communism or American liberalism, but its entanglements with other political movements often led to important consequences, such as the crackdown on its print materials and organising by colonial authorities.63 **The focus on black internationalism also has a rationale related to the relative neglect of certain discourses and ideologies in the formation of the international/states system**. While it would be possible to dig deeper into the **anti-imperial politics of white metropolitan activists, the view that independence was gifted to the colonies by benevolent whites does not need further elaboration.** The notion that white **Western societies came around on their own to new moral positions on practices like colonialism already forms the bedrock for a plethora of liberal constructivist studies** and popular histories.64 Analysis of the world political discourse of individuals like Marcus Garvey, Cyril Briggs, J.E. and Adelaide Casely Hayford, Paulette Nardal, George Padmore, among others, forms part of the unique contribution of this study. Although they usually referred to peasant and worker communities, the discourses I analyse here were relatively elite. However, **there is more in the history of anti-imperial, intra-elite discourse than has been sometimes suggested by historians of the subaltern. Excluded socially and politically**, but rich in cultural capital, sufficiently resourced to travel between colony and metropole, and tailored towards low level, white collar professions, many anti-imperial writers and leaders were acutely aware of the transnational pecking order, and occupied a position of relative subalternity. For the most part, these individuals fit Edward Said’s category of the ‘secular intellectual.’65 Said defines secular intellectuals by six axes of activity and thought: 1.) the ‘archival function’ of preserving and deploying ‘counterinformation’ which is hidden by the ‘prevailing consensus’; 2.) translating specialized knowledge and literature into forms accessible to broad groups of people; 3.) demystifying the language of authority which appeals to so-called pragmatic common-sense in order to highlight the underlying ethical or political implications; 4.) disrupting attempts to privatize knowledge by challenging the boundaries of specialized domains of practice; 5.) resisting a culture’s slide into total domination or trivialization; and 6.) insisting on the irreconcilability and irreducibility of oppositions.66 In Antonio Gramsci’s problematic and the European context, such figures would normally be considered intellectuals proper, the ‘organizers of culture’ contrasted with the ‘organic intellectuals’ who derive their ideology from the ‘essential task of economic production.’67 But the relative marginality of colonial anti-imperial activists created a unique position where the function of intellectual critique often needed to be exercised outside the realms of formal knowledge production—in the function rooms and public parks of metropolitan centres, through art and literature, and in transnational print media **Through its empirics and approach this study seeks to contribute to the ‘(re)turn’ to empire and race in IR**.69 A few scholars now recognise that analysis of contemporary international relations, whether it concerns Brexit; **Russian, Chinese, and Western rivalry in Africa; NATO operations in the Middle Eas**t; Salafist movements; **transnational protest movements like Black Lives Matter**; or developments in organisations like CARICOM, the African Union, or ASEAN, **is often poorer for not attending to legacies of empire and colonialism, as well as ongoing imperial relations. Critical histories of IR have pointed to IR as an academic discipline which got its start through the policy science of race development and imperial management**70; which continues to advance self-flattering myths about Western exceptionalism; and which claims or assumes the universality of European history, institutions, and technologies. This can have the effect of whitewashing Euro-American world politics, or, more insidiously, continuing to normalise state-sanctioned violence and inequality. **71 These critiques of IR as a Eurocentric discipline, historically bound up with white supremacy, have carried the discipline to a crossroads**. Down one road, **there is the possibility of attempting to address these omissions and biases with analysis based in liberal pluralist inclusion: adding a host of ‘non-Western’ categories and biases, which posit cultural and territorialised particularities**. **I argue that the likely outcome here is not an amelioration of Eurocentrism, but an extension of it. The West is still granted the terrain of the universal, with ‘the non-West’ granted tolerance to tack on a variety of cultural ‘differences’**, as long as it largely continues to adhere to disciplinary shibboleths, such as order, sovereignty, and recognition. **Another path – though not the only one -- is the relational-historical approach to empire and race I put forward in this study. This understands relations between former empires and colonies as asymmetrical and differentiated but connected, constituted through resistance and alliance as well as oppression**, and interpretable through discourse, which often concerned bounded communities, but was usually also boundary-crossing.

Predictive analytics use a variety of techniques (e.g., statistical methods, machine learning algorithms) to make predictions about future events. Although predictive analytics have been used in many disciplines since the early 20th century (e.g., actuarial science, business intelligence, financial forecasting), increasingly, this computationally intensive technique has been employed by law enforcement and other government agencies to generate predictions about future criminal behavior. While the function of predictive analytics in policing appears to be well intentioned, upon a closer examination, one may find that the decisions generated by ‘black--box’ modeling techniques like supervised machine learning encourage a ‘blind faith’ in the mathematical process and in the ability of algorithms to produce meaningful and informative predictions. Thus, despite their widespread use, predictive policing tools are complex systems with many aspects that remain a mystery. In this paper, we critically examine the employment of predictive analytics in US criminal justice policy, with a particular focus on the ways in which these technological practices are reproducing and reinforcing structural relations of difference. We are specifically motivated by the following questions: In what ways do the algorithms become part of a larger sociotechnical apparatus of sociopolitical relations? How are the data that the algorithms inherit alwaysalready imbued with structural relations of difference? To what extent do algorithms predict or performatively enact differential patterns of sentencing decisions or recidivism? In what ways might bodies, spaces, and practices be materially formed and shaped from the performative acts of algorithmic legal reasoning? And, in what ways might the cloaking of algorithmic legal reasoning as objective, precise, and efficient enable the proliferation of racializing assemblages in the juridical field? Each of these motivating questions will be examined through a new materialist lens that posits algorithms as more--thanhuman ontologies and racializing assemblages. As argued by the first author elsewhere, we need to move beyond the dominant tendency to treat algorithms as mechanical operations that are contingent on human intervention or design and, as such, a prosthetic tool to human cognition. The concept of algo--ritmo reconceptualizes the algorithm as 1 2 3 4 D-- 3/41 engaging in more--than--human performative acts that are produced from the immanent forms of what Luciana Parisi refers to as the “soft” thought of algorithmic reasoning. As a concept, algo--ritmo not only accounts theoretically for how the more--than--human performative acts of algorithms function but also considers the ways in which those algorithmic acts are forming, shaping, hierarchizing, and differentiating bodies. Thus, algo--ritmo also refers to the ways in which algorithms become racializing assemblages**.** As articulated by Alex Weheliye, racializing assemblages are a system of sociopolitical relations that hierarchizes and differentiates bodies, designating bodies as human, notquite--human, and nonhuman; rendering certain bodies as exceptional and others as disposable. Algo--ritmo postulates that the bodily disciplining is both human and more--than--hum an. Thus, there are not just human bodies that are racialized but algorithms too. In other words, we argue that inside of the proverbial “blackbox” , algorithms become immanent agencies of racializing assemblages. By doing a close reading of policy documents and existing research literature, we critically examine the racializing assemblages of algorithmic law enforcement logic, policies and practices, followed by ethical and social policy considerations. We begin by discussing the literature on big data and the rise of predictive policing. Policing Crime & Predictive Analytics Big Data & The Rise of Predictive Policing In recent years, the private sector and government have focused their efforts on harnessing the power of big data to find meaningful patterns and make datadriven decisions. Private corporations such as Target and Walmart have analyzed their customer data to inform marketing strategies and product sales and placement. Government agencies are also leveraging big data and analytics to improve policy decision--making. Most notably, in 2012, the Obama Administration unveiled a Big Data Initiative, which sought to “improve the tools and techniques needed to access, organize, and glean discoveries from huge volumes of digital data.” Arguably, where there have been even more advancements on these fronts has been in local city governance and institutional practices. While many government institutions have turned to big data analytics to make more “intelligent” decisions, law enforcement and criminal justice have emerged as two of the most prevalent areas in which these techniques have been developed and applied. 5 6 7 8 9 10 D-- 4/41 Policing Bodies Numerically Before delving into the use of analytics in policing, it is important to understand the history of the use of statistics and numbers more broadly in criminal justice research. Prediction and forecasting have been used for nearly a century to study crime in the U.S. While much of this research has been focused on studying criminal behavior , other work has used forecasting methods to predict trends in crime and prison populations. That said, no matter the outcome, criminal justice researchers have long been obsessed with using data —and in particular quantitative data—to understand crime. One prevailing belief is that, culturally speaking, the predominance of quantitative methods in criminal justice research reflects a broader societal notion about what it means to do science, and in this context it should not be surprising that to do science requires the manipulation and calculation of numbers. The act of defining and explaining social phenomena using numbers or quantitative data is nothing new. In fact, this phenomenon has its roots in positivism. Positivism refers to the philosophical writings (circa 1830--1842) of Auguste Comte in which the scientific method—the standard procedure for gaining and producing knowledge in the natural sciences—was applied to the study of human behavior and social phenomena. According to Comte, there are three premises of positivism: 1. Universal truths exist for human behavior and social phenomena. 2. Empirical observation is the only rational means by which universal truths in the social world can be discovered. 3. Through the application of the scientific method, causal relationships among social phenomena can be established Imbued within positivist philosophy is the notion that truth cannot only be discovered but also replicated through (precise and certain) scientific measurement. It was through the application of positivism to the study of the human condition and social life that quantification and the scientific method become central features of social and behavioral science and the preferred ways of understanding populations. While the rise of positivism led to the growing use of quantitative methods in the human sciences, why were these methods so readily and widely accepted? 11 12 13 14 15 D-- 5/41 Theodore Porter in his seminal work Trust in Numbers historically traces the rise of objective empiricism and ubiquity of quantification in the modern world. To Porter, and largely society as a whole, we are drawn to numbers not only because they can be used to describe social phenomena, but also because a decision ‘made’ by numbers appears impartial and indisputable. This notion of numbers as ‘truth’ is rooted in the belief that mathematics is the language and logic of the natural world. When applied to the study of human and social life, however, in what ways and to what extent do numbers become political and reflect the normative assumptions about what is counted, how it is counted, and why it is counted? This critical question is at the heart of Porter’s work, and through the use of historical case studies he demonstrates that numbers are never void of subjectivity or judgment. Rather, numbers are “strategies of communication” that are used to legitimize one’s actions and “provide standards against which [to measure progress and compare information].” In this way, numbers become “an agency for acting on people [and] exercising power over them.” If we build off Porter’s claim about the nature of numbers and take seriously the proposition that numbers are capable of exerting power, then we must consider the possibility that numbers, which can describe the social world, can just as easily be used to control it. Michel Foucault takes up this subject in many of his works, and characterizes discipline as a mode of power that “separates, analyses, differentiates…measures…and hierarchizes in terms of value.” Importantly, for Foucault, while discipline is “exercised on the bodies of individuals…the individual is not the primary datum on which discipline is exercised.” Although this statement may seem paradoxical, it can be explained by examining Foucault’s two lecture series Security, Territory, and Population and Governmentality. In both works, Foucault provides a historical account of the evolution of government, and describes how society’s transition from feudalism to capitalism led government to be concerned with the population within its territory in order to successfully govern the territory over which it has control. Driving this concern was the desire to organize, optimize, and regulate state affairs. This, of course, required the collection of data from individuals, while privileging quantified population trends. Viewed through a Foucauldian lens, then, methods of quantification such as statistics are a means through which the state controls, categorizes, and classifies its citizens. The Rise of the Carceral State 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 D-- 6/41 If statistics and numbers have had historical significance in criminal justice research, then we must inquire about the role they have played in policing bodies in the U.S. In particular, we ask how have numbers shaped policing and legitimized mass incarceration? We contend that the origins of mass incarceration in the U.S. can be traced to the Johnson era’s War on Poverty. When Lyndon B. Johnson assumed the presidency, he not only vowed to enforce civil rights, but he also declared war on poverty. After a few years in office, however, what began as a commitment to nationwide anti--poverty programs quickly turned into something more sinister—namely, an agenda to target and punish urban, black communities across America. In 1965, Daniel Moynihan, a politician and sociologist, released a report titled The Negro Family: The Case for National Action. In the report, Moynihan used employment data to identify the causes of poverty and social--ill (e.g., crime, corruption) in the U.S. Often citing dire statistics to shock the reader (e.g. “Almost One--Fourth of Negro Families are Headed by Females”), Moynihan’s report largely painted the poverty problem in the U.S. as a “negro problem” rooted in the disintegration of the black nuclear family. Though President Johnson would come to distance himself from the blatantly racist report authored by Moynihan, by the end of his term in office, the damage had already been done. The carefully crafted communication strategy embedded within Moynihan’s report had legitimized the government’s desire to control the “negro problem,” and culminated in the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968. Crime & Carceral State The Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 signaled a profound shift in the government’s attitude and response to the root causes and correlates of crime. The Act enabled the federal government to provide financial assistance to local law enforcement agencies for the procurement of police equipment and laid the foundation for massive federal investments in crime control and prevention strategies. More importantly, however, the Act expanded the federal government’s (e.g., Department of Justice) role in local law enforcement and criminal justice matters, with the goal of creating an interconnected, coordinated system for the provision of justice and crime 24 25 26 27 28 D-- 7/41 prevention. Ultimately, the Crime Control and Safe Streets Act represented a major step by the government to federalize crime and codified the prioritization of law enforcement over welfare as a means to address social problems. Less than a decade after President Johnson signed the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act into Law, and after decades of stability in the rates of incarceration, the U.S. began to experience substantial growth in its prison population, a trend that has yet to be reversed. By the late 1960s, fear of rising urban crime and drug related activities, coupled with social and political unrest, fueled bilateral support for the United States’ punitive approach to law and order. This support translated into harsher punishments for minor offenses and mandatory minimum sentences and, ultimately, resulted in extraordinarily high rates of incarceration after 1970. According to estimates published by the Bureau of Justice Statistics, approximately 500,000 people were incarcerated in 1980. By 2000, however, the total incarcerated population had exploded to more than 1.9 million. Though the shift towards tougher penal policies exerted a significant influence on national incarceration rates, time trends show that growth in incarceration in the U.S. has not been uniform across offenses or offenders. It is commonly recognized that the War on Drugs has contributed to the rise in incarceration rates over the last 40 years. Thus, it should come as no surprise that drug offenses over time have begun to comprise a disproportionate share of arrests and prison admissions. Figure 1 shows the time trends from 1980 to 2012 in the rate of arrests for select crimes. The most striking pattern revealed in the figure is the sharp increase in the rate of arrests for drug abuse violations compared to arrests for other criminal offenses. Specifically, over the 32 years for which we have data, arrests for drug related offenses rose from 255.65 per 100,000 persons in 1980 to just under 500 per 100,000 in 2012, peaking at 633.25 per 100,000 persons in 2006. An examination of incarceration rates over the same period shows a similar pattern, where in 1980 the incarceration rate for a drug related offense was 15 per 100,000 persons, but by 2000, that rate had increased over tenfold to more than 150 per 100,000. 29 30 31 32 33 D-- 8/41 Figure 1: Arrests per 100,000 persons by offense, 1980 to 2012. Other offenses include aggravated assault and sex offenses. SOURCE: Snyder, Howard N., and Joseph Mulako--Wangota. “Arrest in the United States, 1980--2012.” Bureau of Justice Statistics, FBI Uniform Crime Reporting Program, September 2014. Accessed February 28, 2017. www.bjs.gov. On the surface, the movement toward punitive crime control in the U.S. appeared to be broad and far--reaching. When disaggregated by race, however, the data present a more troubling picture. Despite comprising less than 12% of the U.S. population in 1980, African Americans made up 44% of the total amount of state and federal inmates in the same year. By 2000, the population of African Americans in the U.S. had increased to 12.9%, and yet they accounted for 46% of all inmates in U.S. state and federal correctional facilities. In the end, the U.S.’ policy of mass incarceration not only led to an overrepresentation of African Americans in jails and prisons, but it also reflects a clear policy choice to inscribe race into the criminal justice system. Perhaps John Ehrlichman, a former Nixon domestic policy chief, best expresses these sentiments: 34 35 D-- 9/41 “You want to know what this was really all about…The Nixon campaign in 1968, and the Nixon White House after that, had two enemies: the antiwar left and black people. You understand what I’m saying. We knew we couldn’t make it illegal to be either against the war or black, but by getting the public to associate the hippies with marijuana and blacks with heroin, and then criminalizing both heavily, we could disrupt those communities. We could arrest their leaders, raid their homes, break up their meetings, and vilify them night after night on the evening news. Did we know we were lying about the drugs? Of course we did.” Policing in the Information Age Today, across the U.S., dozens of police departments, from Boston to Los Angeles, have turned to sophisticated data analytics to address criminal justice practices. Although the use of quantitative data to address crime is not novel, newer technologies fueled by algorithms, artificial intelligence, and machine learning enable law enforcement agencies to harness the power of big data to predict criminal behavior. This strategy is often referred to as predictive policing. We adopt our definition of predictive policing from the RAND Corporation and National Institute of Justice. They define predictive policing as the “the application of analytical techniques—particularly quantitative techniques—to identify likely targets for police intervention and prevent crime or solve past crimes by making statistical predictions.” Predictive policing and its tools permit law enforcement to use data to predict where crime is most likely to happen; assess who is most likely to (re)offend or be victimized; and form typologies of offenders. While the goals of predictive policing may be clear, what remains muddied is what they are doing to accomplish these goals. However, before we can examine what predictive policing tools are doing, we must have a better understanding of some of the keywords that are often used when discussing the subject, namely, artificial intelligence, supervised machine learning, and algorithm. Artificial intelligence is an umbrella term used to describe the science and engineering of creating machines and/or software with the ability to achieve a goal. , Nested within AI is supervised machine learning. Supervised machine learning, as a branch of AI, is concerned with using historical information (i.e., a dataset that includes known input (x) and output (y) data) to train a model that can be used to predict future events (or 36 37 38 39 40 41 D-- 10/41 behavior). An algorithm, on the other hand, can be defined as a list of instructions for a step--by--step execution of a specific task. Supervised machine learning algorithms, then, are computer programs that not only try to achieve a specific goal (e.g., predict the likelihood of crime in location Y) but also are capable of improving (or maintaining) their performance in service to that goal when fed new input data As Foster and colleagues note: “One key distinction in [supervised] machine learning is that the goal is not just to find the best function F that can predict Y for observed outcomes (known Ys) but to find one that best generalizes to new, unseen data.” Machine learning algorithms have been applied to a variety of criminal justice contexts. These algorithms can be used at all stages of the criminal justice process, from determining where to deploy police officers for maximum impact , to informing bail decisions (also known as pretrial risk assessment) , to assessing risk for recidivating among parolees and probationers. Police departments and other branches of the criminal justice system in cities around the country have adopted these tools, drawing on both researchers and university--based partnerships, as well as proprietary software, to develop and implement the desired algorithmic tools. One widely known proprietary tool, PredPol, is the product of a research partnership between UCLA, UC Santa Barbara, and the Los Angeles Police Department. According to their website, “PredPol’s mission is to provide a crime prevention platform to keep communities safer. Our…technology places public safety officers at the right time and location to give them the best chance of preventing crime.” Using machine learning techniques, PredPol claims to be able to predict where crime is most likely to occur using only three data points: “crime type, crime location, and crime date and time.” Another example is the COMPAS tool produced by Northpointe, which applies machine learning algorithms to risk assessment at the levels of policing and case management, promising users both a “prospective” and “retrospective look at risk and needs factors.” Yet despite widespread use of these algorithms, touted as powerful and technologically advanced methods for improving public safety, their propensity to disproportionately target individuals from lower--class neighborhoods and communities of color remains starkly understudied and underreported outside of popular news media. 41 43 41 41 46 47 48 49 50 51 D-- 11/41 Algorithmic Reasoning as Racializing Assemblages Machine learning algorithms are being employed in many sectors of US society including in the practices of predictive policing and criminal justice. Yet, we know less about the ways in which the algorithms may become part of a larger sociotechnical apparatus of sociopolitical relations. In order to examine this, we put the concept of algo--ritmo to work in analyzing the algorithmic legal reasoning of predictive policing. Algo--ritmo seeks to account for both the immanent agencies of algorithmic acts and the ways in which those acts become racializing assemblages. In conceptually developing an understanding of how algorithms may become racializing assemblages, the first author has argued that it is through the data that the algorithms inherit sociopolitical relations of society. Data are not pure, objective extractions of the world but rather are assemblages that are produced from a multiplicity of entwined and mutating apparatuses. The apparatuses of data assemblages include political economy, forms of knowledge, practices, governmentalities and legalities, and subjectivities and communities, among others. As assemblages, they are both materially and discursively produced from forces of human and more--than--human ontologies. Among the multiplicity of forces that make up data assemblages include sociopolitical relations that consist of forces that differentiate and hierarchize bodies. Thus, all assemblages of data are always--already imbued with varying degrees of sociopolitical relations and, as such, become part of the (re)programmed architectures of algorithmic reasoning. For algo--ritmo, algorithmic reasoning is not understood to be mechanical operations that are contingent on human intervention or design. It is postulated that the systematic operations of algorithms are not simply humanly designed and modeled or the prosthetic tool to human cognition. In accordance with Parisi, algorithms are understood to be actual entities that consist of finite operations of calculation as well as incomputable data sequences. As actual entities, they are sociotechnical ontologies that are always in process of becoming in relation with **sociopolitical systems,** **legal practices**, programmed inputs, and data assemblages. These are not simply humanly designed technologies, but rather as algorithms process and are trained on data assemblages they become more--than--human ontologies. For Parisi, it is the 52 53 54 D-- 12/41 actuality of incomputabilities that provide instantiation of the immanent forms of algorithmic cognition. That is to say, operating between the space of finite algorithmic operations and the incomputability of the world’s infinite complexity (i.e., information) are forms of speculative reason that are immanent to computation. If machine learning algorithms consist of immanent forms of reasoning, then the iterability of predictions or speech acts are more--than--human performative acts. Performative acts, or intra--actions, are relational acts within entangled entities that produce ongoing material (re)configurings of the world. Building on Barad’s diffractive reading of Foucault’s discursive theory and Butler’s theory of performativity via Bohr’s conception of matter, algo--ritmo engages in morethan--human performative acts, in which materiality is discursive and the discursive is always--already material. It is via the iterable intra--actions with other relational ontologies that materially reconfigures the world. Thus, algoritmos matter through their iterable intra--actions with other ontologies, whereby they enact, form, shape, and produce both human and more--thanhuman bodies. As agencies that inherit sociopolitical relations via data assemblages, the immanent forms of reasoning and more--than--human performative acts of algorithms become racializing assemblages. The theory of racializing assemblages seeks to more adequately account for the processes of power and racializations of the body/flesh. As argued by Weheliye, racialization is not to be reduced to race or racism but is the process of differentiation and hierarchization that produces the assemblages of race, gender, class, sexuality, and dis/ability among other structural relations of “difference”. The sociopolitical relations of racialization are perpetuated via technologies and sciences (among other things) and require “the barring of nonwhite subjects from the category of the human.” Thus, the data and code of algorithms inherit the sociopolitical relations of “difference” becoming a performative force of the relational and connected forces of racializing assemblages. As a way of drawing a distinction between the legal constitution of the body and the social designations of the flesh, Weheliye also calls upon Hortense Spillers’ (2003) theorizing of the flesh. As Spillers nsightfully states “before the ‘body’ there is ‘flesh,’ that zero degree of social conceptualization that does not escape concealment under the brush of discourse or the reflexes of iconography…” Prior to the legal constitution of the body is the formation of the flesh, a formation that is bound by the markings or traces of political violence designating a hierarchy of humanity. The traces of political violence of the flesh are what Spillers refers to as “hieroglyphics of the flesh” that are produced from the instruments or acts of violence such as whips, police brutality, mass shootings, or more subtly from the silence in speech acts. The data and code of algorithmic acts inherit the sociopolitical forces and “hieroglyphics of the flesh” of racializing assemblages from the iterability of algorithmic intra--actions. In this article, we examine the ways in which algorithmic legal reasoning, as materialized in practices of predictive policing, becomes racializing assemblages. As will be discussed below, sociopolitical relations of racializations become part of the algorithmic architecture in at least two ways. First is by way of the rationalities behind the metrics that operationalize and constitute the criterion of prediction. The second is more posthumanist via the algorithmic intra--action with data assemblages and through this process (re)configuring the architecture of the algorithm to becoming racializing assemblages. By putting the concept algo--ritmo to work in a close reading of the existing research and policy literature, we illuminate these sociopolitical processes.

#### Racialized surveillance is a technology of social control that seeps into educational spaces and ensures an endless racial economy of black servitude and placelessness.

**Okello 22** (Wilson Kwamagi, Assistant Professor in the Watson College of Education at the University of North Carolina Wilmington. “While Black: Race, Gender, and the Surveillance of Blackness.” A Journal of the American Educational Studies Association Volume 58. 28 March 2022. Pages 250-266. <https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/00131946.2022.2051029>) //NT

Surveillance, according to Browne ([2015](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/00131946.2022.2051029)), is “nothing new for Black people” (p. 7). Evolving from trans-Atlantic slavery (Hadden, [2003](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/00131946.2022.2051029)) racialized surveillance is a fact of Black life, a social curriculum that permits the devaluation of Black people (Callier, [2018](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/00131946.2022.2051029)). Rather than seeing surveillance as a specific set of processes ushered in by developing technologies, Browne ([2015](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/00131946.2022.2051029)) calls on readers to examine how antiblackness undergirds and sustains intersecting surveillances in the present order. Further, anti-Blackness names the ways Black people are positioned as inferior in the polity, and exist in a structurally antagonistic relationship with society (Hartman, [2007](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/00131946.2022.2051029)). In this conceptual manuscript, anti-Blackness grapples with the position of Black people as existing in a structurally oppressive society that persistently denies them access to full citizenship and regard. Moreover, this manuscript carefully examines racialized surveillance, a mechanism of anti-Black violence, or what Hartman ([2007](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/00131946.2022.2051029)) has called the afterlife of slavery, that persists in society despite the formal end of enslavement. To accomplish this, I conducted a critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, [2003](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/00131946.2022.2051029)) of an incident in an educational context and one outside the walls of education, in the larger social context, to show the ways anti-Black sentiments have evolved from, but still mirror, the racialized surveilling logics of trans-Atlantic slavery in the contemporary moment. Specifically, this analysis examined the controversial Starbucks incident that involved a White[1](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/00131946.2022.2051029) manager calling the police on two Black men, and the experience of Lolade Siyonbola, who was napping in a commons at Yale University. In this manuscript, I understand Yale, particularly the commons space, as a formal learning/meeting space, and Starbucks as an informal learning/meeting space, both with the potential to host and curate ideas. Responding to the pressing question, how do we exist, in the bodies that we hold, in this historical moment and into the future (Okello, [2018](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/00131946.2022.2051029)), methodologically, I think with (Jackson & Mazzei, [2013](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/00131946.2022.2051029)) histories of Black men and Black women in the white imaginary into Foucault's ([1980](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/00131946.2022.2051029)) instruments of power to interrogate how racialized surveillance affects Black bodies and minds, in and beyond educational contexts. As such, the guiding research question for this inquiry asked, how does racialized surveillance affect the movements of Black people in public and educational contexts? From these analyses, I point to survival and meaning-making techniques that Black people might employ to navigate racialized surveillance. To begin addressing this guiding question, I review literature on the presence of Blackness in the public sphere. Blackness and place in the public sphere: A review of literature This brief review revisits foundational ideas in Black studies, and more pointedly, the experiences of Black people in the western, United States, to illuminate the ways Blackness and surveillance are connected. To accomplish this, I address the ways conceptions of Blackness were shaped through trans-Atlantic slavery. From there, I move to discuss racialized surveillance and explicate slave patrols as an early iteration of the concept. I conclude by drawing connections to readings of Black men and Black women in the public sphere. Linking Blackness and history The mark of dark skin, according to Yancy ([2016](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/00131946.2022.2051029)), is a signifier of pejorative, poor values anchored in a racialized historical matrix. According to Frantz Fanon (1952/[1967](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/00131946.2022.2051029)), who observed, not only must Black people be Black, but they must assume their Blackness in relation to whiteness. Blackness is configured by its relation and distance to whiteness, which established the desirable norm. Whiteness, thus, determines what is out of place without being defined by the same logic. Concomitantly, as Curry ([2017](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/00131946.2022.2051029)) might suggest, (social) death seems to seek out Black people. This sentiment follows what Hartman ([2007](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/00131946.2022.2051029)) has discussed as the afterlife of slavery. In her description, she contends that Black lives are still grappling with the lingering arrangements of racism that were cemented by the capture and conversion of Black people into property. Duncan ([2017](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/00131946.2022.2051029)) echoed a similar sentiment, writing, “contemporary forms of racial oppression and inequality are expressions of allochronic discourses that inform “ontological Blackness,” or the Blackness that whiteness created as Western civilization began to emerge as a prominent force in the world” (p. 67). As such, this long shadow of enslavement lingers as the grounds of everyday existence for Black lives in the present. Racialized surveillance The question of existing while Black is to consider the role of surveillance and its relationship to race. According to Fiske ([1998](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/00131946.2022.2051029)), “racializing surveillance is where surveillance practices, policies, and performances concern the production of norms about race and exercise a power to define what is in or out of place” (p. 81). Advancing this work, Browne ([2012](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/00131946.2022.2051029)) used racializing surveillance to signal moments when various expressions of surveillance function to reify racialized, discriminatory boundaries. As a technology of social control, racializing surveillance interprets how processes change dependent on place and time and are, inextricably, connected to logics of settler colonialism that structure social relations in ways that center whiteness. Importantly, racialized surveillance is interlocking (Collins, [1990](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/00131946.2022.2051029), [1998](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/00131946.2022.2051029)) across gender, class, sexuality, nationality, and other forms of identity. From the prison on the sea, enslavement and plantation politics introduced racialized surveillance to a western, United States context. Accounting practices served as an extension of disciplining power. Among these recording procedures, transatlantic slave vessels listed Black individuals and cargo, while diaries and inventories logged observations and instructions for governing plantations. Documentation, in this way, was a mechanism for what Foucault ([1975](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/00131946.2022.2051029)) discussed as disciplinary power because it practiced invisibility while imposing compulsory visibility on its targets (Foucault, [1975](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/00131946.2022.2051029)). Disciplinary power acted as racializing surveillance in that individuals were at once subject to monitor and simultaneously produced as racial vis-à-vis enslavable (Browne, [2012](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/00131946.2022.2051029)). Plantation directives “demonstrate how disciplinary power operated by way of a set of rules, instructions, routines, inspection, hierarchical observation, the timetable, and the examination” (Browne, [2015](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/00131946.2022.2051029), p. 51). Made plain in these rules was the notion that surveillance was an attribute of disciplinary power that could be enacted sovereignly and at the discretion of those with power. Therefore, as McKittrick ([2011](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/00131946.2022.2051029)) put forth, the plantation economy evidenced an uneven racial economy that legislated Black servitude, placeless-ness, and constraint. To ensure Black subservience, slave patrols were deployed as one method of racialized surveillance. Slave patrols as extensions of racialized surveillance Hadden ([2003](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/00131946.2022.2051029)) noted that policing in the colonial Southern United States, was an outgrowth of white patrollers and their fascination with what enslaved Black people were doing. Slave owners, and White Southerners, more broadly, lived with the fear that enslaved people would rebel, thereby disrupting the plantation economy. Slave patrols, engineered, by slave owners and a unified white polity that cut across class, shared the belief that controlling the movements and behaviors of enslaved Black people was in the best interest of society. Keying into their use, slave patrols accomplished several functions: to find, re-capture, and return runaways; to facilitate organized violence that would deter rebellions from enslaved Black people; and to ensure disciplinary oversight over the time, space, and movements of enslaved Black people (Hadden, [2003](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/00131946.2022.2051029)). This informal system of racialized surveillance armed white people and white institutions with state sanctioned authority to determine who was in or outside the bounds of appropriate behavior. The residue of this authority lingers as the assumed social power that White people wield over and against Black people in formal and informal learning/meeting spaces.

#### Racial underpinnings of civil society infiltrate educational spaces and judge bias. Educators should orient towards epistemological blackness for accountability in debate.

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Black Mobilities in the absence of place: A discussion Contemporary society is laced with the racial underpinnings bound to transatlantic slavery and colonialism. As such, Black people, and a Black sense of place are outside of conceptualizations of citizens and society. McKittrick ([2011](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/00131946.2022.2051029)) suggested that a Black sense of place can be “understood as the process of materially and imaginatively situating historical and contemporary struggles against practices of domination and the difficult entanglements of racial encounter” (p. 949). Furthermore, establishing a sense of place against racialized surveillance evinces power geometry, which concerns power and its relationship to flows of movement. Responding to the question, how does racialized surveillance affect the movements of Black people in public and educational contexts, the findings show how formal and informal learning/meeting spaces can mirror history as surveilling, oppressive agents, that function to control Black people. Further, thinking with histories of Black men and Black women in the white imaginary created a nuanced frame for reading Blackness, and more specifically, the function and disciplining of anti-Blackness in varied social places. Critical readings of the accounts above demonstrate the ways racialized surveillance functions to delimit the place and movements of Black people. Surveillance in the public sphere bleeds into and back through educational contexts, as Black people become subject to “radical normalizing projects intent on pathologizing across the dimensions of race, class, gender, and sexuality. By normalizing their degradation, marginalization, and invisibility, it becomes something to which we no longer pay attention” (Cohen, [2010](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/00131946.2022.2051029), p. 128). These two scenes denote a curriculum about who is valued, outlining the parameters for citizenship in the afterlife of slavery. Again, in the afterlife of slavery, Black people are marked as socially dead, inhabiting a nonhuman, nonentity status, placing visible and invisible limitations on their mobility. Thus, “What if some subjects never achieve, in the eyes of others, the status of the ‘living'? What if these subjects merely haunt the periphery of the encountering person's vision, remaining, like the past and the ancestors who inhabit it” (Holland, [2000](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/00131946.2022.2051029), p. 15)? The scenes above present several instances where Nelson, Robinson, and Siyonbola grappled with this question, and, in doing so, reckoned with the pervasiveness of racialized surveillance and the compounding histories of anti-Blackness logged against them. In particular, Nelson, Robinson, and Siyonbola enacted three maneuvers to negotiate racialized surveillance: they assert their right to presence, they document the incidents, and they survive the moment. Negotiating racialized surveillance For Nelson and Robinson, whereas anti-Blackness assumes that Black people should comport to postures of acquiescence, or do what they are told, they claim their right to presence. Evidence of this assertion can be seen in their rebuttal to arresting officers about why they were being told to leave. Asserting presence in this incident seems to be driven by what Nelson and Robinson know about informal learning/meeting spaces, and, too, the discretionary basis by which policies were being administered. Of note, their assertion, rooted in the explanation that they were at the location for a business meeting confronts histories of racialized surveillance, like slave patrolling, that questioned Black gatherings as dangerous and unproductive. Furthermore, Nelson and Robinson’s challenge to the surveilling order by claiming their right to presence openly critiqued the power structure and called into question the uneven distribution of policies. Relatedly, although Nelson and Robinson were not explicitly engaged in documenting the incident, their assertions invited those in the vicinity into the conversation as witnesses. Here, one can see how decisions to openly question racialized surveillance can lead to a communal reckoning, where others might take up the responsibility of advocacy. That said, confrontations with anti-Blackness can be fatal, so, the importance of surviving the moment cannot be overstated. One example of survival practice can be heard from Robinson; when asked about the situation, he later noted that he was “thinking about [his] family…[his] community.” His expression reintroduced a familiar tension for Black people under the watchful gaze of whiteness that required one to think about resistance as tied to survival. Robinson conceded to a history that knows there have been instances that Black men encounter police and do not make it home to see their families. Nelson and Robinson were modeling a capacity for Black folks to maneuver through society in a manner that kept them legible in the face of premature death. The decisions they made to quiet their expression should not, then, read as acts of surrender or acceptance of guilt, but an expression of agentic memory. Relatedly, in a maneuver that flips the tools of power being used against her, Siyonbola has the presence of mind to record the incident. This practice follows a long history of Black people who have used the written and oral tradition to hold purveyors of anti-Black violence accountable for their actions. Providing a live account of anti-Black violence, while wholly imperfect, is one form of accountability and a method to convey the racialized realities of Black people beyond the occurrence. Siyonbola, too, openly troubled the discursive practices that attempt to frame her as a/the problem. In the second video, one of the officers says to Siyonbola that everything will be okay and that she is not in trouble. Siyonbola, sharply replied to his comment, stating, “I know it's going to be okay; I know I am not in trouble, my ancestors built this institution” (Siyonbola, [2018b](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/00131946.2022.2051029), 00:11:54). This expression of refusal invoked what hooks ([1992](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/00131946.2022.2051029)) described as an oppositional gaze, produced by the racialized surveillance that sought to legislate Black feeling, being, knowing, and mobilities. In choosing to look, which in this instance is to challenge perceived behavioral expectations (hooks, [1992](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/00131946.2022.2051029)), the decision declared: “Not only will I stare. I want my look to change reality” (hooks, [1992](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/00131946.2022.2051029), p. 58). Siyonbola's position is both grounded in history and charting a new curriculum for present and future students who will inhabit the institution. Educator’s relationship to racialized surveillance Educators working with Black people, inside and outside of educational contexts, should consider how structural elements may facilitate racialized surveillance. Among these elements, educators should take stock of sanctions or policies and regulations that punish disobedience and reward that which is considered good behavior. Sanctions can push students into adjudication processes by upholding narrow cultural standards. Additionally, sanctions may function as rules of social control in order to monitor the actions of those unacculturated, exposing students who are not fluent in the cultural dynamics of a place. A second structural element that educators ought to be mindful of is sentiment, or expressed feelings between people or groups that communicates superiority (e.g., those enslaved are to express victimization; enslavers express paternalism). In these instances, Black students, purposefully or inadvertently, may be made to feel powerless or that someone has clear power over them. A third structural element should examine norms within educational contexts. Different from sanctions and sentiment, the construction of norms sets the tone for how students are supposed to show up in a place, revealed in instances of institutional rhetoric, departmental practices, and classroom governance. For example, what are the rules that govern exchange in a classroom setting. Following Baszile ([2015](https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/00131946.2022.2051029)), Enlightenment rationality calls for the dispassionate and objective pursuit of truth, which too often stymies possibilities for Black student’s embodied knowing and being.

### Failed states – Howell & Richter-Montpetit 19

#### Failed state discourse is colonial and racist---turns case

Howell and Richter-Montpetit 19 Alison Howell, Rutgers University – Newark AND Melanie Richter-Montpetit, University of Sussex “Is Securitization Theory Racist? Civilizationism, Methodological Whiteness and Antiblack thought in the Copenhagen School” Journal: Security Dialogue

Classic ST is civilizationist in that it believes that there are more or less politically and morally developed civilizations, yet the problem runs even deeper than this. Worse, it also avers that ‘underdeveloped’ civilizations represent a threat to supposedly more advanced ones. This becomes especially clear when examining ST’s ideas about ‘state failure’. ST claims that in ‘developed’ states (Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998, 28) a civilized political sphere generally fends off securitization, except when “securitization is unavoidable, as when states are faced with an implacable or barbarian aggressor” (Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998, 29). By contrast, in ‘failed’ or ‘weak’ states securitization runs amok: “In well-developed states, armed forces and intelligence services are carefully separated from normal political life, and their use is subject to elaborate procedures of authorization. Where such separation is not in place, as in many weak states… much of normal politics is pushed into the security realm” (Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998, 28). This excessive securitization, in turn, leads to primal (or ‘Hobbesian’ or ‘Kaplanesque’) anarchy wherein the state “fails to take root or spirals into disintegration. This situation can lead to prolonged periods of primal anarchy, as is currently the case in Afghanistan and various parts of Africa, in which the state is only a shadow and reality is one of rival warlords and gangs” (Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998, 50, emphasis added; for analysis of the colonial preoccupation with Afghan 'tribes' see Manchanda 2018). Discourses of state failure are “irredeemably rooted in an imperial and racialized imagination” (Gruffydd Jones 2014, 65; see also Grovogui 2001; Wai 2012a; Wai 2012b; Shilliam 2013). While they may avoid overt reference to race, they operate within a lineage of racial discourse which emerged to justify colonialism, and continuing trusteeship. This racial hierarchy is fully represented in ST’s list of weak and failing states: Nigeria under Abacha, Sudan, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Liberia, and “various parts of Africa”, the USSR under Stalin, Bosnia, Colombia, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, and so on (cf. Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998, 28, 50, 69, 146). This is a racial discourse: ‘primal anarchy’ is primarily located in ‘brown’ (‘Afghanistan’) and ‘black’ (‘parts of Africa’) regions. That Copenhagen School theorists sometimes seem to be aware of how this division falls does not lead them to question it. On the contrary, they warn against Western-centrism, but only in order to emphasize that it is in the West that ‘normal’ civilized politics exists: “if domestic and international were fixed, there would be a risk of generating a cozy Western view of politics: Domestic politics is normal and without security, whereas the extreme is relegated to the international space. In other parts of the world, domestic is not cozy” (Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998, 47, note 7). For ST, primal anarchy exists, not only in the international realm, but also in non-Western ‘other parts of the world’, where a failure of normal politics leads to “‘tribalist’ forms of association” (Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998, 69). In doing so, ST refuses to seriously consider the role of modern colonialism and ongoing imperial warfare in ‘failed states’. Such consideration might reveal the significance of colonial extraction of resources and labor, colonial policies of divide and rule, colonial imposition of state borders, and military and covert intervention by Western powers, such as the US state’s arming and training of Mujahedeen forces in Afghanistan in the 1980s. Instead, ST frames ‘failed states’ as evidence of a primal state of nature. The idea that there has been (White) civilizational progress away from (racialized) primal anarchy is omnipresent in ST. Civilizationism is not just a collateral, detachable, part of ST’s imaginary, or a sadly unattended-to implication of its Kaplanesque view of anarchy or its Arendtian model of politics. ST’s vision of the world relies on a supposedly fundamental opposition between politicization and securitization. Ungrounded in the racist and civilizationist narrative that ‘normal politics’ emerged from ‘primal anarchy’, this opposition would look as arbitrary as it in fact is.

## Biotechnology

#### Even if they win CRISPR ethicality, agricultural endeavors are rooted in an anti-black economization of life that proliferates plantation-based logics.

**Schniedewind 20 (**Daniel Schniedewind “Freedom rangers and Landscapes that Move People” Daniel Schniedewind is a PhD candidate in Anthropology at the University of California-Santa Cruz. His current research addresses the human/nonhuman interface as a pivotal site of politics in relation to U.S. racial formations and nation-building.) //GUCCISUSHI

The Hudson Valley of New York state is a region with a tradition of landscape valorization and conservation that figures prominently in the history of U.S. environmentalism. For a generation, land conservation organizations have reacted to a trend of farm closures by purchasing agricultural land. They justify this expansion of their prior commitment to preserving only “wild” landscapes through allusions to regional agricultural heritage. In this paper, I consider what is carried forth into the present through the pastoral landscape and efforts to preserve it. Since the dawn of the colonial period in the Hudson Valley, agriculture, especially animal agriculture, has constituted a powerful landscape-making assemblage, one both deeply dependent on racial slavery and uniquely implicated in (never-complete) attempts at Native displacement. Importing European farm animals and their associate organisms recomposed the region ecologically, enabling the proliferation of colonial settlement. Then as now, the remaking of the land is itself a site of politics and a means of realizing possible futures. Drawing from long-term ethnographic research, I describe how the affective experience imparted to some by the pastoral scene affirms a sense of place and belonging that obscures the indelible impressions of racial slavery and ongoing settler colonialism, legitimating segregation and the centrality of Whiteness in this celebrated landscape. Long-running, generative violence flows through everyday practices and affects, delivering the present despite blending into the seemingly ahistorical scenery. Addressing the persistence of settler colonialism, antiblackness, and White supremacy requires attention to a wider range of political scenes and actors than are often considered in studies of these formations. This paper begins and ends with reflections on a fraught attempt to conduct ethnographic research with captive chickens, paradoxically called Freedom Rangers, who lived on small-scale, organic animal farms in the Hudson Valley. Species difference and the violence of confinement led me to question the promise of interlocution and instead attend more expansively to the conditions of possibility of our undeniable if unsought relation. I began with a basic question: why were the chickens here? Although my farmer interlocutors leased land from regional land conservation nonprofits, there was no obvious ecological rationale. Indeed, although the nonprofits generally prided themselves on operating in accordance with scientifically informed best practices, reports were all the time raising concerns about the role of agricultural expansion in exacerbating global biodiversity crises. There was no reason to think the situation was any different locally. Among other impacts, the native plant communities found in open areas in this part of the world cannot endure regular grazing and are rapidly replaced by European pasture plants once farm animals are introduced. Nor was the reason for the chickens primarily economic. While the farmers were capable and extremely dedicated, they had other career paths available to them that would have been more lucrative and less exhausting. This recognition led me to ask what else the chickens yielded beyond a relatively small amount of meat and a modest profit. Local residents and tourists’ repeated descriptions of the sense of affective rightness they experienced at the sight of pastures like these led me to Virginia DeJohn Anderson’s (2004) insistence that animal agriculture in early colonial North America as never merely a matter of subsistence alone but rather a practice understood to exemplify Christian civilization. Pursuing this insight through regional historical accounts, I engage Ashley Carse’s (2014) proposal of landscapes as infrastructure in which materiality and more-than-human relations are reworked toward specific economic and political ends. Such endeavors, I argue, have an essential affective component. In the Hudson Valley, the achievement of this agrarian landscape infrastructure has moved some people literally, as through Native displacement and Black banishment, and others figuratively, such as through the visceral pleasure of beholding the consecrated scene. Through a discussion of how contemporary invocations of the cute and humane in relation to small-scale animal agriculture stabilize White self-understanding and perceptions of the past, I return to the prospects for my would-be more-than-human ethnography with the chickens. Here I suggest that the freight of history both limits the capacity for such research while also obligating specific forms of accountability. This research comprises a portion of my broader dissertation project which altogether addresses long-term processes of Hudson Valley landscape generation through their entwinement with settler colonialism, racial slavery, and its aftermath. Beyond agriculture, I also studied alongside regional anti-invasive species practitioners as they contended with the accumulated fallout of centuries of species introductions motivated by colonial goals of biological improvement and replacement. Here too, particular practices of comprehending the past bore directly on the pursuit of present-day landscape ambitions. Through this paper and the larger project, I engage scholarship from feminist science studies, Black studies, and Native studies in an attempt to stage a conversation about multidimensional legacies of violence, the figure of the human, and the power of its constitutive exclusions. Approaching the materiality of the landscape as a crucial site of politics and U.S. racial formations enables new insights on the extent to which White supremacy and settler colonialism bear on, for instance, the urgencies of species loss and habitat degradation. Finally, following the notable writing of Juno Parreñas (2018) and others, I was motivated to foreground the stakes of ethnographies of captive nonhumans given that, in the United States today, roughly as many birds live in conditions of confinement as do not.[[1]](https://laptrinhx.com/news/link/?l=https%3A%2F%2Faesengagement.wordpress.com%2F2021%2F02%2F09%2Ffreedom-rangers-and-landscapes-that-move-people%2F%23_ftn1" \t "_blank) Through pursuing a multiscalar approach, I try to mediate what sometimes seems like a tension between multispecies studies that either focus on the lived experience of small groups of nonhumans and those that address whole species or populations through a more sweeping historical register.

#### CRISPR’s commercialization of innovative agricultural technologicals is indentured to a history of anti-black productivity. There’s a trade-off- growing innovation leads to a replacement of black workers with automated chemicals.

Williams and Freshour 22 (: Brian Williams & Carrie Freshour (2022) Carceral geographies of pesticides and poultry, Food and Foodways, 30:1-2, 38-57, DOI: 10.1080/07409710.2022.2030936. Carrie Freshour received her Ph.d in Development Sociology from Cornell University. Brian Williams received his Ph.d from the University of Georgia in the Department of Geography.)//GUCCISUSHI

Moreover, agricultural technologies were oriented toward replacing Black workers, particularly as growing organization and mobility led to rising wages and began to threaten the power and profits of the plantation bloc (Woodruff 1994). This process drew on herbicides and defoliants, which were, alongside mechanical cotton harvesters, explicitly intended as a means of replacing (and displacing) workers (Williams and Williams 2021). These chemicals, deployed in service of protecting the profitability and monocultural dominance of an inedible fiber, also killed vegetables and garden plots. Southern plantation and agro-industrial interests depicted agricultural chemicals in ways that reveal a deep symbolic traffic between systems for the incarceration of people and technologies for the destruction of insect and plant life. In pesticide advertisements and extension documents, weeds and insects were frequently depicted as criminals, deserving of capital punishment through chemicals. A 1960s Mississippi Cooperative Extension Service publication, for example, featured an anthropomorphized cotton boll punching a masked and armed bandit, and urged farmers to “Kill Those Cotton Robbing Weeds” using herbicides.7 During this period of growing resistance to plantation white supremacy, pests were also represented as racialized insurgents, such as a cartoon of a boll weevil holding a placard that declared “Insects si, planters no!”, or an insecticide advertisement featuring group of boll weevils mobilizing to fight for “Weevil Power”.8 Perhaps most tellingly, calcium cyanamide powder, the first commercially-available cotton defoliant, was nicknamed “Black Annie”, presumably after the infamous whip used against people imprisoned at Parchman, an emblem of racial cruelty and coercion (Crawford, et  al. 2000, Oshinsky 1996).9 In both their representation and their effects, chemicals were part of a continuum with the carceral dynamics of southern plantation prisons, and the willful production of hunger as a tool of attempted racial control. As Clyde Woods (1998) has emphasized, the Green Revolution in the plantation regions of the US South was not oriented toward self-sufficiency, food production, or even productivity for its own sake. The use of chemicals and mechanization were intended to quell dissent through the dispossession of Black southerners, putatively guided by agricultural productivity concerns. The role of chemicals as productivity-boosting technologies was oriented just as much toward the continued monopolization of land and resources as it was toward the production of an inedible commodity. We are suggesting that the monocultural dynamics of plantations were never exclusively or primarily about productivity per se, but about conjoined ecological and social control. Plantations have been fundamentally dependent on the lives, work and knowledge of enslaved or otherwise unfree workers (Carney 2001, Davis et  al. 2019). But the orientation toward political-ecological control instills a contradictory drive to deskill, to standardize, to regiment, and most crucially to constrain Black living and curtail Black agency.

#### Post-racial modernity concedes environment produces health discrepancies- proves anti-blackness is the determinant for the operationalization of pathology.

Rawson 21 (RawsonBlack fungibility and the PosthuMan: Becoming microbial geographies [Doctoral dissertationOhio State University]. OhioLINK Electronic Theses and Dissertations Center.)//GUCCISUSHI

As part of the broader post-genomic turn, ideas about variation and the environment in microbiome science, are presented as a post racial science of disease and health. Accordingly, pre- or pseudo biological ideas about the fixity of the body as natural types were granted legitimacy by racial science that culminated with Nazi genetics. Thus, the scientific shift toward understanding the body as open to the environment and thus individually variable according to Image 2: Cartoon of “Researchers Catalog Earth’s Microbiome” “The new database includes data from 27,000 samples collected at sites ranging from Alaskan permafrost to the ocean floor.” Source: (Zimmer, 2018) Cartoonist: Andrzej Krauze 8 the contingencies of converging milieusis also posed as a shift away from the days of science vested in upholding racial hierarchies. More than merely providing an alternative understanding of the body than the one cherished by racial scientists, the promise of post-racial science is to actually dismantle and redress racism by disproving race. The way the science of race today promises to undo racial science of yesteryear was embedded into pedagogy by the time I entered college in 2008. Entering college as a biology major on a pre-med track, I distinctly remember introductory courses presenting three sets of scientific claims that teachers used to destabilize racism by destabilizing race and the body. The first set of claims concern pigmentation as an adaptive variation. According to the post-racial dogma, blackness as skin color is the long evolutionary product of the level of sun in the environment, whereby too much sun, like in environments close to the equator, can destroy folic acid which is necessary for fetal cranial development. In turn, increased melanin production protects from UV rays. At the same time, too little sun in higher latitudes can lead to Vitamin D deficiency, which can cause rickets, so less melanin protection enables maximum absorption of UV rays under conditions of minimal sun. Therefore, whiteness as skin color is also considered the product of the plasticity of body-environment relations. Pigmentation here is not just about bodies’ openness to the environment but also skin color is an adaptive response, and improvement in fitness, in accordance to variegated environmental contexts. Microbial science extends these ideas by explaining how the metabolic reactions that produce melanin, a derivative of the Greek word “melonas” for black, in both mammals and the rest of the animal and plant kingdom, reflect the capacities of microorganisms to synthesize the diversity of melanin molecules (Tran-Ly et al., 2020). In other words, in this view microbes provide the mechanisms to explain how the body, far from fixed, is a palimpsest of environmental adaptations. The nature 9 of human difference is the environmentally contingent yet durable nature of microbial difference, a source of variation that is given a 3-billion-year history in the deep evolutionary time of life on earth.

#### Biotechnology is rooted in a homeostatic blackness that disavows that body through constant pathology and information.

**Thacker 10** (Eugene, is an American philosopher, [poet](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poet), and author. He is Professor of Media Studies at The New School in New York City. His writing is often associated with the philosophy of nihilism and pessimism. “Data Made Flesh: Biotechnology and the Discourse of the Posthuman.” March 11th, 2010) //NT

In her work on the technical genealogies of cybernetics and posthumanism, Hayles locates the emergence of a technologically derived episteme associated with the information theory of Claude Shannon and the cybernetics of Norbert Wiener. In The Mathematical Theory of Communication (first published in 1949), Shannon and Warren Weaver provide the technical foundations for modern communications technologies by conceiving of a unilinear transmission line (a message transmitted from A to B). Likewise, in his equally technical treatise Cybernetics (first published in 1948), Norbert Wiener established a mode of thinking of machines or organisms as relay systems that incorporate feedback, input, output, and noise (Shannon and Weaver 1965; Wiener 1996). It is in this tradition that Hayles proposes a shift from more traditional, modern notions of subjectivity, based on presence and absence (we are reminded here of Descartes's criteria of a mind present to itself), to an episteme based on a related dichotomy between "pattern" and "randomness" (1999, 39-40). At issue in each dyad (presence-absence, pattern-randomness) is a hierarchical valuation, but central to the shift itself is an increasing 82 | EUGENE THACKER acceptance of a worldview based on an essentializing of information as the source of an object. For Hayles, the danger with the shift to pattern and randomness is that it contains the potential to simply replay the ideologies and anxieties of the presence/absence dyad, resulting in a devaluation of the body and materiality and a valuation of the manipulability, replicability, and disembodiedness of information. In looking at the genealogy of information theory and cybernetics, we see a network of impelling factors that collectively and situationally contribute to the kinds of questions asked by researchers. Military research, general telecommunications research, cryptography, developments in mainframe computers in military and business applications, all play a significant role in the formation of the technical concept of information. Though Wiener (often referred to as the father of cybernetics) and Shannon (often credited with the development of information theory) worked separately on the problems of informational communication, both contributed to a solidification of information as a concept within engineering, communications, computer science, and a range of other fields. First, we might take Shannon's model for communication to distinguish several elements involved in the processing of information. Shannon depicts information not as an object but as a resultant measurement from processes, and each of these processes is a differential between some two values. Information thus passes through a sender, is encoded into a particular technological format appropriate for communication (e.g., telephone, telegraph, the Internet), is transmitted via a given technological medium (electrical wire, fiber optic cable), is decoded as it arrives at its destination, and then goes to the receiver (Shannon and Weaver 1965, 31-35). Using this model, we can distinguish three elements at work: a "message" or content, information, and the medium. This distinction is important to note because Shannon's model shows us that we are not simply dealing with a form/ content dichotomy. The quantity "information" is situated between the meaning or content it codes for and the medium that supports it. The distinction is also important because neither Shannon nor Wiener make much mention of the medium or the hardware involved in the information transmission process. Just as the quantity "information" is assumed to unproblematically signify the message, so is the medium assumed to unproblematically mediate information. As will be DATA MADE FLESH | 83 suggested later, this downplaying of the medium, and this assumption of information technology as transparent, will significantly affect the ways in which subjects and bodies are or are not mediated through newer fields such as biotechnology. Second, this emphasis on information as a quantitative unit does not mean that there is an object called "information" that is qualitatively different from the message. Ironically, the rhetorical emphasis of Shannon and Weaver on information as a value irrespective of the content or meaning implies that information is indissociable from content/meaning. Although Shannon and Weaver explicitly state that information is not the content or meaning, they do not say that information can be separated from content/meaning (Shannon and Weaver 1965, 8-95). This is an important distinction because it suggests that what is of primary concern in information theory and cybernetics is to develop a means by which a "message" (Wiener's preferred term) or "content" (the term Weaver, Shannon's collaborator, uses) may be quantified so that it may be transmitted through a feedback system (in cybernetics) or along a transmission line (in telecommunications). Thus, it is not exactly accurate to state that Wiener and Shannon want to simply encode meaning, if by this we mean that they want to take meaning as a completely separate unit, which is then translated from a language of quality into a language of quantity (in short, into a language of mathematics). Wiener and Shannon do, however, separately attempt to conceive of a kind of quantifiable signifying system whereby the message or content is always already accounted for by its status as information. In other words, information, while not an object or a thing, is nevertheless the constantly varying, quantitative value of a message or content at a given point within either the cybernetic system or the line of communication. Information, then, as a quantifiable value, must always account for the message or content, even if the message is incomplete, scrambled, or distorted (noise). Finally, there is a working assumption in cybernetics and information theory that the informational system's goal is always a state of stability and order, and, to borrow a term that is used both in cybernetics and biology, directed toward a state of homeostasis (Hayles 1999, 7-8; Wiener 1996, 8-16). What distinguishes information from noise is the stability and internal order of information as it 84 | EUGENE THACKER travels across informational channels. Although this foundational assumption of the homeostatic system was modified by later developments in cybernetic theory, it still provides a technical basis for the ways in which information is distributed to this day, and it is here that the links with modern biology make themselves evident. A homeostatic system, be it biological or informatic, continues to maintain its operational mode with a minimum of deviation from that mode-be it a pathology or static, disease or error. What both Wiener and Shannon establish for later conceptualizations of information is an identity between information and stasis, such that the primary effects of information on a system reinforce that system's stable congruity through time. In the systems mapped out by Wiener and Shannon, information does not so much alter the system's mode of operation as it primarily serves as a regulatory process that triggers the maintenance of a normative mode of operativity of a system. The assumption that Shannon and Wiener work from is that meaning is and should be stable with regard to information. However, in order to secure such stability, the transmission of meaning must also be stable: the carriers of information, the transmission of information, must also be stable, constant, and thus transparent. This is not a theoretical question, but a technical question, a question of operationality and systematicity. Ironically then, in order to secure the stability of information as meaning, researchers in computer science, information theory, and cybernetics must also focus on the transmission, carriers, and the encoding/decoding processes of information. The question for Shannon and Wiener is "how can we keep such and such a medium from affecting the meaning of the information signal?" and not "how will such and such a medium affect the meaning of the information signal?" The very language of computer science contains within it this assumption; signals may be encoded, transmitted, and decoded across a range of media, as long as the media are technically able to facilitate the transmission of information that is self-identical. Thus the questions that Shannon and Wiener separately ask result in their theoretical formulations: for Shannon and Weaver working on telecommunications problems at Bell Labs, information is a quantitative measure of the accuracy of the reproduction of a signal from point A to point B (Shannon and Weaver 1965, 8-16). For Norbert DATA MADE FLESH | 85 Wiener, working at MIT and for the military, information is the range of choices available at a particular instant, within a cybernetic system composed of inputs/sensors, outputs/effectors, and a central mechanism of feedback (Wiener 1996, 6-9). Both researchers grounded their research in a notion of information as (1) concurrent with meaning but stabilized through a medium, (2) a quantitative value independent of qualitative changes or changes in meaning, and (3) a value thus stable across media and independent of media. These characteristics, which form what we might call a "classical theory of information," are directly related to the ways in which the posthuman has traditionally equated information with disembodiedness (Hayles 1999, 4-5, 47-48). The medium of information (to be distinguished from the message and from information) is transparent with respect to information, so that information is taken to be abstracted and self-identical across different media, or across different technological platforms. As the central unit operating within systems that work toward a homeostatic state, information is seen to play a central role in maintaining, restoring, or producing a normative, regulatory operational state for the system, a system that constantly works toward a state of stasis and self-identity. While these are not problematic implications in themselves, when taken within the larger context of the relationship between information technologies and technoscience, they replay the association between disembodiedness and information characterized by Hayles. The reason information can be a self-identical value, across media, across signifying processes, and across systemic contexts, is precisely because it is conceived, from the beginning, as a value independent of material instantiation. When information is regarded as information, no matter what medium "carries" it, it then becomes a universal, disconnected from the material-technical necessities of the medium, the processes, and the context. It is this universalizing and decontextualizing of information that enables Wiener to conceive of machines and organisms as the same, from the perspective of cybernetic systems operating through feedback loops. I do not want to imply here a critique of Wiener's overall suggestions regarding cybernetic systems; it is the particular way in which information-the central unit of Wiener's and Shannon's theories-is or is not intimately constrained by the contingencies of embodiedness that provides 86 | EUGENE THACKER the point of problematization: the theory of information that these foundational texts present to us is one in which information is universalized, decontextualized, and disconnected from the necessities of technological contingency. We might refer to this process of making a certain definition of "information" foundational to considerations of the body-which I am locating in the work of Wiener and Shannon-as "informatic essentialism." Informatic essentialism is not a repression, denial, or effacement of the body; it proposes that the relationships between the biological body and information technology is such that the body may be approached through the lens of information. In other words, by making informatics a foundational worldview, the body can be considered as "essentially" information. This position-which can be ascribed to the extropian branch of posthumanism with which we began-is not, of course, exclusive to concerns over the bodytechnology relationship; however, it is in this relationship that the tensions inherent in informatic essentialism become clearer. Informatic essentialism makes the primary move of suggesting that the body-as a material substrate more often than not defined by the biological sciences-can be successfully interpreted and thus reconfigured through an informatic worldview. This also implies that, as information, this body-the body regarded through the lens of informatics-is therefore subject to the same set of technical actions and regulations as is all information. In short, when the body is considered as essentially information, this opens onto the possibility that the body may also be programmed and reprogrammed (and whose predecessor is genetic engineering). Understood as essentially information, and as (re)programmable, the body in informatic essentialism increasingly becomes valued less according to any notion of materiality or substance (as we still see in modern biology) and more according to the value of information itself as the index to all material instantiation-a kind of source code for matter. The complexity in the posthuman position outlined here is that, on the one hand, it does not necessarily deny materiality or the body, but on the other hand, in equating information with the body it interprets materiality and body in terms of an informational pattern-an asymmetrical, strategic move. With a view of materiality as DATA MADE FLESH | 87 information, materiality is, again, not denied by the posthumanist position; materiality is now a programmable informational pattern with real effects in a variety of social, political, and scientific contexts. The key to informatic essentialist thinking is not disembodiment, but something more along the lines of file conversions and data translation. To condense our analysis thus far, we might suggest that the logic of informatic essentialism is as follows: information equals the body, which by extension implies that information equals biology and/or materiality, which leads from the contingency of the biological body to the emancipation of the biological body through the technical potential of informatics. Change the code, and you change the body. FROM POSTHUMANISM TO BIOTECH What the extropian branches of the posthuman, as well as the critiques of the posthuman, divert their attention from are the ways in which an informatic essentialism is not something exclusive to the fields of computer-based, cybernetic, and information technology research. Especially when considering notions of the body, informatic essentialism becomes a powerful source of speculation, having as much to do with embodiment as with disembodiment. The model of the posthuman outlined thus far, focusing on the body-technology relationship, has been asymmetrical. It has provided a more or less linear narrative, whereby certain prevalent new research fields (computer science, cybernetics, and information technologies), through a logic of informatic essentialism, reinterpret the natural, biological body as information and then move on to incorporate all notions of materiality and body into an abstract, disembodied level of operativity based on some notion of consciousness or intelligence. What we have not accounted for are the ways in which current developments in the life sciences are equally active in the material transformations of notions of the body and life itself. This inquiry, this investigation into the informatic qualities of the biological body, is already taking place in contemporary molecular biotechnology through the immanently practical means of research, clinical trials, product pipelines, and medical applications. In press releases from 88 1 EUGENE THACKER biotech corporations, in articles in science publications, in interviews with researchers, one increasingly hears a refrain: as Nobel laureate and genomics pioneer Leroy Hood puts it, "biology is information."1 Emerging fields, from proteomics to regenerative medicine, are employing computer technology and computer science research into the "wet lab."2 Such practical transformations assumedly bolster the biotech industry by making genome mapping, gene targeting, and product development more efficient. But on the research side, such intersections between bioscience and computer science may also significantly transform some of the foundational concepts in molecular genetics. For instance, the initial report of the human genome map revealed, among other things, that the number of human genes was far less than researchers had expected, thus prompting many within the research community to call for more complex approaches to studying gene expression, biopathways, and biological systems. Similarly, the controversies over a number of population-genome projects (most notably in Iceland) have raised issues over how ethnicity and race are assumed to smoothly overlap with culture-all of which is being interpreted through genetic data. Without a consideration of the ways in which the current life sciences are reinterpreting the organism, the body, and life, we risk assuming that, in the epistemological changes brought about by the posthumanist position, the only danger is that of disembodiment. Biotechnology research presents us with a turbulent zone in which the questions that concern posthumanist thinking are brought to a tensioned pitch, in which research seems more science fictional than science fiction itself ("neo-organs" grown on demand), and in which a range of issues have attracted public controversy (governmental regulations over human cloning). Biotech research is unique in that, on the one hand, it employs technologies common to other posthuman fields (principally, computer/information technologies), but on the other hand, its constant "object" of study is the domain of the biological (a domain traditionally set apart from the technological). Instead of being focused on disembodiment and virtuality, biotech research's approach to informatics is toward the capacities of information to materialize bodies (bodies amenable to current paradigms of medicine and health care).

#### Biotechnologies framing of ggenetic diversity and siease risk prefigures enviornmenal conditions as producers of speciation- their own framing devices code blackness as ontologically distinct.

#### Rawson 21 (RawsonBlack fungibility and the PosthuMan: Becoming microbial geographies [Doctoral dissertationOhio State University]. OhioLINK Electronic Theses and Dissertations Center.)//GUCCISUSHI

The second central dogma of post-racial science I remember learning in biology class is that genetic diversity and hybridity is linked to increased capacity to adapt and increased fitness, whereas purity or homogeneity is linked to disease. Marshalling frequently cited molecular studies of Tay-sachs disease and sickle cell disease, my teachers explained how the inheritance of one ‘abnormal’ gene and one ‘normal’ gene actually increases protection against TB and malaria respectively. It is only if the child inherits the ‘abnormal’ gene from both parents that such abnormality expresses itself as disease. In other words, homogeneity equals disease risk, heterogeneity equals adaptive potential or resiliency. In so doing, the association between racial categories and pathology (e.g., sickle cell as a Black disease and Tay-sachs as a Jewish disease) is seemingly loosened as both difference and disease risk are figured as expressions of different environmental conditions. Again, microbiome science extends these ideas by linking microbial diversity, abundance, and heterogeneity to increased resilience, adaptability and thus fitness. Conversely, decreased microbial diversity is an expression of homogenization and purity—and is linked to vulnerability, disease, and even collapse. In other words, through nature’s value of hybridity over purity, microbiome science exemplifies how post-genomics promises to unhinge ‘race’ from pathology. Extending the significance of this claim about the positive correlation (or even causation) between genetic diversity and fitness as environmental adaptability, the third post-racial claim I learned in science class is that there is more genetic diversity within Africans than between Africans and other “populations.” In other words, ideas about genetic variation renders the 10 distinction between populations moot, genetic variation is considered to be greater endemically than in-between or across groups. 4 Moreover, “Africa” is considered the “population” with the greatest internal genetic diversity precisely because it is considered the birthplace of the human species. African genetic diversity is in turn posed as the common heritage for all of humanity (Reardon and TallBear, 2012). Microbiome science extends this link between Africa and the shared evolutionary origins of the human by linking the ancestral human microbiome to the microbial diversity found in contemporary indigenous communities predominantly in Africa. This provides lifestyle-driven, environmental explanations for the speciation or divergence of the human species from primate relatives, following the out-of-Africa origin story of the human (Gomez et al., 2016; Schnorr et al., 2014). Indeed, in the context of illustrating the potential for cross-disciplinary collaborations to disrupt essentializing notions of race, Benezra provides the example of a new project called “Afrobiota” (2020). Started in 2019 by a group of microbial ecologists, biological anthropologists, and historians, the project links studying “Africa” to the production of microbiome knowledge at “multiple scales, levels of variability” as well as crossdisciplinary approaches that can “tackle questions spanning conditions from the laboratory to the field” (2020: 16, quoting Amato et al. 2019).

#### The theorization of black fungibility must be given epistemological priority in questions of biotechnology. Ontology is the only explanation for the manipulation of black flesh under the rubrics of biological experimentation.

#### Rawson 21 (RawsonBlack fungibility and the PosthuMan: Becoming microbial geographies [Doctoral dissertationOhio State University]. OhioLINK Electronic Theses and Dissertations Center.)//GUCCISUSHI

To take up the microbiomization of life from a geographical perspective, or in other words, through the epistemologies and analytical toolbox of space, scale, and place, which themselves constitute ontological claims about human-nature relations, without addressing black fungibility can only reproduce epistemological practices and ontological stakes of anti-blackness. In other words, to take up space, scale, and place, through the universal categories of the human and nature misses how both human and nature only emerge as subject-objects or bodies in the 19th century under the weight of 400 years of generating value through experimentation with the equivalencies between blackness and the captive body. This miss is not innocent but implicated in the historical erasure of these experimental equivalencies and thus perpetuates the relation between the universal (a-historical and a-geographical) and righteousness of whiteness. I argue black fungibility is an analytic that reckons with the relationship between antiblackness and microbial ontologies of life by denaturalizing antiblackness as an ontology. To do so, I first draw on scholarship that conceptualizes antiblackness as an ontology. By ontology I mean both the experience of being (existence as experience, subjective dimensions) and claims about the nature of existence (which have been institutionalized through the disciplines of biology and the rest of the fields in the natural sciences, or objective dimensions). This is not to affirm the natural sciences claims of objectivity (as in fact-based, value neutrality) but rather to highlight the relational authority of naming ontological objects, that is, the process of objectification. Secondly, I draw on scholarship that conceptualizes black fungibility in terms of the birth of human commodities. The commodification of the human articulates a relation between property and desire that links the biological human to the political human through the 28 market (or liberal humanism, where the self-mastery of the free individual emerges from the mastery of bodies). My last section draws on the particular importance of gender and sex for understanding how black fungibility is predicated on matrilineal inheritance laws under chattel slavery. As such, black fungibility is a spatial analytic of the body that resituates the bifurcation and disruptions between human and animal, natural and cultural, life and non-life, evolution and devolution, origins and extinction, and self and other that are core to the particular yet repetitive geographies and histories that render the captive body a universal metaphor of value. As stated by Spillers, “the captive body… brings into focus a gathering of social realities as well as a metaphor for value so thoroughly interwoven in their literal and figurative emphases that distinctions between them are virtually useless” (1987: 68). While drawing on the work of Wynter, Hartman, Jackson, Spillers, and King in overlapping and distinct ways, especially as it comes to gender and sex, I take up all their work in terms of black feminism—as they all link their positionalities as black women to their critique of actualizing the “human.” In turn, it is variegated conceptualizations of the relation between race, gender/sex, and anti/blackness within black feminism that constitute my framework for analyzing the microbe-as the unruly Other that constitutes the Human Self both externally and internally.

#### Technology and calculation are rooted in the extermination of blackness via metaphysical calculation and false equality.

**Warren 18** (Calvin, is an Associate Professor in African American Studies. He received his B.A. in Rhetoric/Philosophy (College Scholar) from Cornell University and his MA and Ph. D. in African American/American Studies from Yale University. “Ontological Terror.” Pages 4-8. May 18, 2018) //NT

The event also put the metaphysical infrastructure into perspective for me. Two philosophical forces were colluding (and at times conflicting) to orient the solutions proposed and the audiences’ responses, and both presented “free black” as a concept with meaning: black humanism and postmetaphysics. I use these two terms to docket a certain posture toward metaphysics—and the ontological ground metaphysics offers. Black hu- manism enters into romance with metaphysics. It appropriates schema- tization, calculation, technology, probability, and universality—all the instruments of metaphysical thinking—to make epistemological, ethical, and ontological claims concerning blackness and freedom. Freedom is possible, then, because metaphysics provides it with ontology; from there, all sorts of solutions, policies, and practices emerge to address antiblackness. Scien- tific reasoning, technological innovation, and legality are tools black hu- manists use to quantify suffering, measure progress, proffer universal nar- ratives of humanity, and reason with antiblack institutions. All problems have solutions for black humanists, and their task is to uncover the solution the problem conceals, as this uncovering equates to an eradication of the problem. Black humanism relies on an eclectic approach to antiblackness— Hegelian synthesis, Kantian rationalism, Platonic universals/idealism, Car- tesian representation, and empiricism. In short, black humanists lay claim to the  ~~being~~ of the human (and the human’s freedom) through metaphys- ical thinking and instruments. Postmetaphysics, in contrast, attempts the surmounting or twisting [verwunden] of the ground and logic of metaphysics.3 It insists that meta- physics reproduces pain and misery and restricts human freedom. Rep- resenting the human as an object of scientific thinking (e.g., biology, economics, law) destroys the spontaneity and uniqueness of the human— things that make the human special. The ground, then, upon which meta- physics relies is problematic, and this ground must be destroyed (i.e., twisted) and deconstructed (i.e., displaced) to free the human. Postmeta- physics would advocate for a self-consumption of this ground through hermeneutical strategies, unending deconstructions, and forms of plu- rality (such as hermeneutic nihilism). The post is rather a misnomer, if we think of post as an overcoming [überwunden]; the postmetaphysician will never overcome metaphysics. A residue will always remain, but the postmetaphysician hopes to reduce this metaphysical residue to render it inoperative. The postmetaphysician understands antiblackness as a prob- lem of metaphysics, especially the way scientific thinking has classified  ~~being~~ along racial difference and biology. The task of the postmetaphysi- cal project is to free blacks from the misery metaphysics produces by un- dermining its ground. Hermeneutical strategies, which contest ultimate foundations, would question the ground of race (racial metaphysics) and its claim to universal truth. Black humanism and postmetaphysics, however, leave the question of  ~~being~~ unattended as it concerns black(ness). Both assume  ~~being~~ is ap- plicable and operative—black humanism relies on metaphysical  ~~being~~ and postmetaphysics relies on multiple interpretations or manifestations of  ~~being~~. In other words, the human’s  ~~being~~ grounds both philosophical perspectives. Although postmetaphysics allows for a capacious under- standing of the human and  ~~being~~, it still posits  ~~being~~ universally as it con- cerns freedom; no entity is without it, even if it manifests differently, or as difference, if we follow Deleuze. This is to suggest that both discourses proceed as if the question of  ~~being~~ has been settled and that we no longer need to return to it—the question, indeed, has been elided in critical dis- courses concerning blackness. Ontological Terror seeks to put the ques- tion back in its proper place: at the center of any discourse about  ~~being~~. Ontological Terror meditates on this (non)relation between blackness and  ~~being~~ by arguing that black  ~~being~~ incarnates metaphysical nothing, the terror of metaphysics, in an antiblack world. Blacks, then, have func- tion but not  ~~being~~—the function of black(ness) is to give form to a ter- rifying formlessness (nothing).  ~~being~~ claims function as its property (all functions rely on  ~~being~~, according to this logic, for philosophical presentation), but the aim of black nihilism is to expose the unbridgeable rift between  ~~being~~ and function for blackness. The puzzle of blackness, then, is that it functions in an antiblack world without  ~~being~~—much like “nothing” functions philosophically without our metaphysical under- standing of  ~~being~~, an extraordinary mystery. Put differently, metaphysics is obsessed with both blackness and nothing, and the two become syn- onyms for that which ruptures metaphysical organization and form. The Negro is black because the Negro must assume the function of nothing in a metaphysical world. The world needs this labor. This obsession, how- ever, also transforms into hatred, since nothing is incorrigible—it shat- ters ontological ground and security. Nothing terrifies metaphysics, and metaphysics attempts to dominate it by turning nothing into an object of knowledge, something it can dominate, analyze, calculate, and schema- tize. When I speak of function, I mean the projection of nothing’s terror onto black(ness) as a strategy of metaphysics’ will to power. How, then, does metaphysics dominate nothing? By objectifying nothing through the black Negro. In this analysis, metaphysics can never provide freedom or humanity for blacks, since it is the objectification, domination, and extermination of blacks that keep the metaphysical world intact. Metaphysics uses blacks to maintain a sense of security and to sustain the fantasy of triumph—the triumph over the nothing that limits human freedom. Without blacks, I argue, nothing’s terror debilitates metaphysical procedures, epistemolo- gies, boundaries, and institutions. Black freedom, then, would constitute a form of world destruction, and this is precisely why humanism has failed to accomplish its romantic goals of equality, justice, and recognition. In short, black humanism has neglected the relationship between black(ness) and nothing in its yearning for belonging, acceptance, and freedom. The Negro was invented to fulfill this function for metaphysics, and the hu- manist dream of transforming invention into human  ~~being~~ is continu- ally deferred (because it is impossible). Ontological Terror challenges the claim that blacks are human and can ground existence in the same  ~~being~~ of the human. I argue that blacks are introduced into the metaphysical world as available equipment in human form. Black thinking, then, must return to the question of  ~~being~~ and the relation between this question and the antiblack violence sustaining the world. It is my contention that black thinking is given a tremendous task: to approach the ontological abyss and the metaphysical violence sustaining the world. Ontological Terror suggests that black thinking cannot be overcome— we will never reach the end of black thinking or its culmination, unlike the end of philosophy describing postmetaphysical enterprises.4 In other words, postmetaphysics has broached the question of  ~~being~~ and has com- menced the destruction [Destruktion] of the metaphysical infrastructure, which systemically forgets  ~~being~~. Postmetaphysics, then, is a project of remnants, as Santiago Zabala suggests. After we have used hermeneutics, deconstruction, rhizomes, and mathematical sets to devastate metaphys- ics, we are left with ontological rubble—a trace of metaphysics and a re- constructed  ~~being~~. Postmetaphysics, then, must ask, “How is it going with  ~~being~~?” Or what is the state of  ~~being~~ in this contemporary moment, and how does the world remain open to  ~~being~~’s unfolding and happening (as well as its withdrawal and abandoning of Dasein)? “How is it going with  ~~being~~?” is the fundamental question of our era, according to postmeta- physics; only the twisting and severe rearranging [verwunden] of meta- physics can usher this question into the world. Both metaphysics and postmetaphysics, however, have forgotten the Ne- gro, just as they have forgotten  ~~being~~—to remember  ~~being~~ one must also re- member the Negro. The Negro Question and the Question of  ~~being~~ are in- tertwined. Postmetaphysical enterprises reach a limit in destruction, since it is the Negro that sustains metaphysics and enables the forgetting of Be- ing (i.e., metaphysics can forget  ~~being~~ because it uses the Negro to project nothing’s terror and forget  ~~being~~). In a sense, the global use of the Negro fulfills the ontological function of forgetting  ~~being~~’s terror, majesty, and incorrigibility. The consequence of this is that as long as postmetaphysical enterprises leave the Negro unattended in their thinking, it inadvertently sustains metaphysical pain and violence. This, I argue, is why we will never overcome [überwunden] metaphysics because the world cannot overcome the Negro—the world needs the Negro, even as the world despises it. This is, of course, a Heideggerian approach to the thinking of  ~~being~~ and Nothing. More than any other philosopher, Heidegger pursued metaphysical violence and the question of  ~~being~~ relentlessly, and for this rea- son I find his philosophy indispensable and necessary. Ontological Terror thinks with and against Heidegger, since I believe Heidegger’s destruc- tion of metaphysics can assist black studies in the tremendous task of thinking  ~~being~~ and blackness, as Grant Farred has suggested.5 Heidegger’s Destruktion covers a wide range of philosophical issues, and it is not my objective to address all of these complexities; my interest is the relation between Heidegger’s critique of metaphysical violence, available equip- ment, and the task of remembering as it concerns blackness. What I hope to broach in this book, with all the aporias such as broaching encounters, is that the Negro is the missing element in Heidegger’s thinking (as well as in that of those postmetaphysicians indebted to Heidegger, such as Jean- Luc Nancy, Giorgio Agamben, Alain Badiou, and Gianni Vattimo). If, as we learn in  ~~being~~ and Time, Dasein uses tools to experience its thrown- ness in the world (establishing its facticity) and to develop its unique proj- ect oriented toward the future (projectionality), the Negro—as commod- ity, object, slave, putative backdrop, prisoner, refugee, and corpse—is the quintessential tool Dasein uses. The use of the Negro metaphysically and ontologically, as a tool, is what black thinking is tasked with pursuing. Thus, black thinking (and postmetaphysics) must ask the unasked ques- tion “How is it going with black  ~~being~~?” Without broaching this question, all forms of destruction are just reconstitutions, since the world continues to use the Negro (as black and nothing) to forget  ~~being~~ and the sadistic pleasure of this forgetfulness.

#### Scientific calculation within (artificial intelligence or biotechnology) is rooted in a anti-black desire to project nothing onto blackness whilst simultaneously disavowing it.

**Warren 18** (Calvin, is an Associate Professor in African American Studies. He received his B.A. in Rhetoric/Philosophy (College Scholar) from Cornell University and his MA and Ph. D. in African American/American Studies from Yale University. “Ontological Terror.” May 18, 2018) //NT

Science abhors nothing. It works tirelessly to avoid it, to disavow it, to dominate and control it. Metaphysical procedures and practices structure scientific thinking—calculation, schematization, predictability, objecti- fication, and numerical supremacy. But nothing resists such metaphys- ical strictures, and because it is not capable of capture within scientific webs, it is a horror. Heidegger claimed that nothing is but “a horror and a phantasm” for scientific thinking. Nothing is a monstrous thing, which, paradoxically, provides the condition of possibility for scientific thinking. In other words, nothing is the essence of science—the void, the abyss, the unruly thing is the repressed ground of scientific inquiry. How do you quantify nothing? How do you render nothing tangible, an object for observation? How do we predict and isolate this nothing? How do we dif- ferentiate it from the “something” metaphysics rules with an iron fist? Un- dergirding these inquiries is the most horrifying of them all: why is there something rather than nothing? Or what if there really is just nothing? In other words, science poses a proper metaphysical question through its avoidance of nothing—a nothing it must disavow and embrace all at once. But this is not the entire story. If for Heidegger science is horrified of nothing and must repress this nothing to proceed scientifically, then sci- ence has also found substitutes or embodied projections of this nothing. In this way, it comes close to the horror of nothing but can remain at a safe distance by turning this nothing into a something.1 This, I would argue, is the function of black being for science. Blackness enables a sci- entific encounter with the horrors of an entity that is nothing and some- thing at the same time. This brings us back to Alain David’s childhood riddle: “What is nothing while being something?” David’s answer, of course, is blackness. It is both nothing and something. This leads him to inquire, “Why are Negroes black?”2 Scientifically, we can suggest that Negroes are nothing incarnated because they are black. Much like black holes and other scientific mysteries, blackness functions to index the limit of science, that which it is unable to dominate through its schematized reasoning.3 But with its will to power and its will to know, metaphysical science still desires to engage this mystery, even though it horrifies. We will present a few propositions that meditate on the relation be- tween blackness, nothing, and science: (1) Science projects nothing onto black bodies as a way to engage the horror and disavow it simultaneously. (2) Life and death lose distinction and coherency for black being as nothing. Once this distinction is displaced or otherwise destabilized, the sci- entific imagination is boundless in its conquest over blackness as nothing. (3) Science performs important philosophical work in that it suspends the ethical relation to recast physical, emotional, and spiritual torture as objective scientific methodology. (4) Science is obsessed with conquering blackness—constantly searching for ways to either eliminate it, through practices such as bleeding or rubbing away, or to keep it in a netherworld of horrors to sustain brutality. (5) Science relies on numeracy or the cal- culating mind to carry out its brutal obsession. Numbers are not neutral or innocuous but are weapons of pulverization and subjection. (6) The discourse of insanity is a particularly vicious framework for making on- tometaphysical arguments about blackness. The free black will serve as our paradigm for understanding the re- lation between science and black being. Antebellum society often envi- sioned this nothing through the juxtaposition of freedom and blackness. Freedom and blackness are recast, insidiously, as scientific terms for the purpose of performing ontological work. Thus “free black” provided a conceptual frame for applying scientific procedures to work through an ontological crisis—what is this black thing? Is it property? Is it human? Is it animal? Does it lack taxonomy? Is it nothing? Dr. W. T. Wragg published “Remarkable Case of Mental Alienation” in the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal in 1846. He informs us that he is treating a young Negro named Joe (twenty years of age), and Joe has taken ill with “fever of a bilious type” on a Charleston plantation. What stunned Dr. Wragg, however, was that Joe pronounced himself dead, and word of his death traveled throughout the city. Although Dr. Wragg claimed he was not dead but was, in fact, living and breathing when he discovered him, “his case was of so serious a character as to call for most careful at- tention.” Joe became more “delirious” and “pressed with the belief that he was dead.” Dr. Wragg initiated treatment of this “irrational contention,” which was predicated on “unsound premises.” According to Dr. Wragg, “[Joe] said that, being dead, his flesh would soon begin to rot and drop from his bones; remonstrated at being kept so unburied; earnestly de- manded that his grave clothes should be prepared and put upon him, and that he be laid out in the usual form. He looked anxiously for the company to assemble, which was to follow his body to the grave, and would chant in touching language, a final adieu to his mother.”4 Joe’s delirium assumed a joyous constitution as he sang songs and gave witness about his death and burial. This troubled Dr. Wragg, and he diag- nosed Joe as having “mental alienation,” a fracture between a fantastical (or delirious) perception of reality and reality itself (the “real world”). This fracture, the irrational gulf between reason and the deadly imagination, needed suturing. Dr. Wragg’s treatment, then, proceeds to suture percep- tion with reality—to use medical science to create a place for Joe among the living, among human beings. Joe’s cure entailed “repeated bleeding, both general and local, blistering, purging, hot pediluvia with mustard, and other means of depletion and deprivation,” and as a result “his mad- ness became more calm, but he never said anything rational.” I would suggest that Dr. Wragg used medical science to address an ontometaphysical condition. The symptom treated is the nihilistic an- swer to the proper ontometaphysical question “What is black being?” Joe’s answer to the question appears resolute: black being is an always already dead thing, and this thing is worldless. Although it might appear to be alive (within the precincts of biology and scientific reasoning), this life is but an illusion—a scientific/ontic illusion. The black body is just an en- casing for a primordial death (the destruction of the flesh, thanatology). The black body, then, is a breathing tomb—a corporeal casket, containing a primordial death. Joe’s death is not a physical death, however (we might call this, after Heidegger, “perishment”).5 He makes a distinction between death and the corrosion of the body (perishment). Dr. Wragg’s astonishment is really a misunderstanding; in fact, the entire treatment procedure is predicated on a fallacy—blurring the distinction between metaphysical death and biological death—a blurring that is necessary as a form of disavowal, a not seeing of the metaphysical destruction Joe endures. Thus, Joe’s self- diagnosis, his madness, is an ontometaphysical condition. He is, indeed, already dead, awaiting his physical demise. Death is an ontological mur- der. The body is the least of Joe’s concerns (in fact, he is all but happy to get rid of the corporeal casing). The metaphysical holocaust is a blind spot (anamorphic) to the scientific eye and its hegemonic vision, despite its purported acuity. Again, this is not a Heideggerian death—where death is actually an aperture onto life, authentic life with Being—but is an onti- cide, a destruction of all ontological grounds and relation to Being. What we have, then, is the limit of science and the beyond it cannot fully broach, but can only medicalize away. Had Dr. Wragg actually taken Joe seriously, actually listened to what antiblackness muffles, he would understand that mental alienation is the only condition possible for black being in an antiblack world. The term alienation is but an inadequate placeholder for onticide, which severs the flesh from the body. Science can neither suture nor cure this fracturing. And it is this death, reconfigured as the nothing of a metaphysical world, which constitutes the limit of sci- entific thinking. Indeed, this type of death is a horror for science, since it is unable to transform it into an object of knowledge. This untranslatability is recast as madness. Joe’s madness is the nihilistic condition of the metaphysical holocaust, of living in perpetual obliteration. David Marriott provides a contrast to the Heideggerian understanding of death (as the authentic opening up onto Being through the mood anxiety). For Marriott, black death is “having lived without ever being truly alive; dead because never alive . . . black life is meaningless and so black death is meaningless—a legacy in which death is nothing . . . it is a death that cannot ever die because it depends on the total degradation and disavowal of black life. Ipso facto: death emerges as a transcendental fact of black existence but without transcendence (similarly, black existence is one condemned to live without the possibility of being) [emphasis mine].”6 Black death is nothing (existence without the possibility of being). It is not only that black death is nothing in the sense that it is meaningless or pointless (rather than paving the way for human freedom, it paves noth- ing), but also that it is metaphysical nothing, an entity without being. Black death is the symbolic form of nothing that Dr. Wragg could not understand (he needed to think philosophically). For what he patholo- gized and attempted to treat was nothing itself. Joe’s pronouncement is really about this nothing and not his physical perishment. He was never alive, and any life perceived is erroneous. The treatment, then, inverts the ontometaphysical problem: if Joe were to pronounce that he was alive and well, that would be a disjuncture between reality and perception. Dr. Wragg’s cure, then, is the true symptom in the diagnosis. We might call Joe’s ontometaphysical condition “the already dead,” following Eric Cazdyn. But in this case, black death is a chronic condition of modernity, without cure.7 Abdul R. JanMohamed would consider this disjuncture a “death bound subject,” which constitutes “a zone between the status of ‘flesh’ and that of ‘meat,’ neither quite alive nor quite dead.”8 Joe’s body is meat, the object of a rapacious, antiblack appetite. What is the ontologi- cal status of this interstice between flesh and meat? Or, what is the status of the zone of indistinction between metaphysical death and biological life? This is the proper metaphysical question that science broaches from a distance. We can also consider the “Remarkable Case of Mental Alienation” as an allegory of sorts, or a paradigm for thinking science with black being. For science cannot understand black death, or the nothing that is black death. When science reaches its limit, when its episteme is unable to com- prehend, it diagnoses the impasse as madness. Madness, I would argue, is the name for answering the proper metaphysical question, nihilistically. One is mad because one is always already dead, although appearing fully alive. Joe also allegorizes the plight of black being: it is vulnerable to the viciousness of scientific thinking and its devastating procedures. Hortense Spillers identifies medical science as a particularly terroristic field in relation to blackness. Reading through the work of William Good- ell, she traces out the vicious profit motive, which creates an economy of selling and purchasing diseased, damaged, incurable, disabled, and oth- erwise worthless black bodies. She suggests, “This profitable ‘atomizing’ of the captive body provides another angle on the divided flesh: we lose any hint or suggestion of a dimension of ethics, of relatedness between human personality and its anatomical features, between human person- ality and cultural institutions. To that extent, the procedures adopted for the captive flesh demarcate a total objectification, as the entire captive community becomes a living laboratory.”9 What Spillers describes here is a metaphysical procedure: what is to- tally objectified is more than just the captive’s body. The real object of analysis is nothing. (It is the attempt to make nothing an object through the captive’s abject body.) Thus, the essence of science is not scientific.10 This nothing horrifies science, and, consequently, the black body also horrifies science. This horror, however, translates into both a will to know and a process of disavowal (the Heideggerian conflict), and both reinforce/generate each other. In other words, black bodies become living laboratories because these bodies hold the secret of science—what it most wishes to know and what it most wishes not to know. This play between knowing and not knowing, desiring and detesting, hating and admiring would seem to land us in Lacanian territory, something like a scientific unconscious. Science is obsessed with this nothing—its limit and its pos- sibility. As Heidegger asserted, when science attempts to explore its own essence, it relies on this very nothing it rejects and detects for the explora- tion.11 The atomizing Spillers describes is a philosophical procedure under the guise of scientific objectivity. Andrew Curran would describe this scientific atomization as a textu- alization of the African through discourses such as anatomy.12 Textualiz- ing the black body would require a vicious hermeneutical-semiotic prac- tice of reading blackness as a sign of abject nothingness. The black body, then, is a scientific mediator of sorts between the dreaded nothing and a scientific field determined to calculate, schematize, and dominate this nothing. This is precisely why black being is so valuable to science: black being enables the total suspension of limits (ethical, moral, and spiritual), and this suspension leaves the scientific imagination unbounded in its antiblack quest for knowledge, truth, and power. A living laboratory has no rights that a white scientific mind is bound to respect, no limitations on scientific creativity, and no resistance against scientific objectification. As equipment in human form, black being broaches infinity, nothing en- cased in a body. Our aim, then, is to understand the function of science in this metaphysical holocaust and to dispel the myth of objectivity, which masks metaphysical cruelty behind the auspices of scientific discovery. In its schematization, science also relies on the mathematical mind and its procedures to give numerical form to the formless—the infinite and the nothing. Katherine McKittrick calls this the “mathematics of un- livingness,” where metaphysical thinking deploys numbers and calcula- tive thinking to perpetuate the metaphysical holocaust. This is to suggest that numbers are weaponized against black being, mobilized to create a destructive calculus. She understands the invention of black being as emerging through numbers and the crude economy of commerce: “This is where blackness comes from: the list, the breathless numbers, the ab- solutely economic, the mathematics of the unliving.”13 The purpose, then, of metaphysical arithmetic (schematized, calculative thinking) is to pro- duce the unliving, the very death that Joe so insisted to Dr. Wragg. Once situated on the ledger, financial documents, and wills, black being is cast outside Dasein. These numbers provide space to black being without an ontological place—this is how numbers contribute to the metaphysical holocaust. Numbers conceal this devastation behind purported objectiv- ity, but the number and its calculus are far from innocuous. The ledger is precisely the reification of this non-place (this nothing), and it is the way metaphysics can in fact contend with it. Heidegger’s critique of calculative thinking entails the destructive use of numbers to quantify man, to restrict his spontaneity and capture him in predictability.14 Badiou revisits this critique and revises it to dethrone “1,” which metaphysical philosophy uses to understand the subject and being.15 We might say, following Badiou, that “1” begins metaphysical vi- olence: man is reduced to this “1,” a quantifiable thing of science. But, if we read McKittrick through Badiou’s critique, we understand that the purpose of antiblack schematization is to deny black being metaphysical “1.” As an ontological designator, mathematics of the unliving must begin with unending subtraction of the nonexistent—a calculus that takes us into imaginary numbers, purely functional but lacking tangibility.

## Cybersecurity:

#### Cybersecurity produces a digital infrastructure of information that increases racialized. nationalist and technocratic tendiences

**Möllers 21** (.Möllers N. Making Digital Territory: Cybersecurity, Techno-nationalism, and the Moral Boundaries of the State. Science, Technology, & Human Values. 2021;46(1):112-138. doi:[10.1177/0162243920904436](https://doi.org/10.1177/0162243920904436) Norma Möllers received her Ph.D in science and technologies from Potsdam University)//GUCCISUSHI

How can we make sense of de Maizi`ere’s statement? In this paper, I argue that cybersecurity has become a key site in which states mobilize science and engineering to produce state power in the digital age. This is because the global and distributed nature of Internet infrastructure challenges purely legal-bureaucratic or political approaches to maintaining state sovereignty. Consider the following example. Like many other administrations, the German state depends on US-based technology, software, and services to run its administration; most notably those provided by Microsoft. However, because Microsoft data servers are controlled from US territory and are subject to US law, the German state can never fully control data flows from German to the United States and hence its own bureaucratic apparatus. Microsoft’s anti-piracy technology could also, in theory, remotely revoke its licenses and thereby incapacitate the entire German administration at the push of a button. States’ dependencies on globally distributed information infrastructure thus create uncertainty about state sovereignty— for example, what data belong under German jurisdiction and which belong to the US—as well as a range of vulnerabilities that could be exploited for purposes ranging from election hacking to cyberattacks on critical infrastructure. This is the problem de Maizi`ere refers to in the quote above, and which he thinks requires “strong state commitment”: for the German state, the materiality of information infrastructure has become a key problem for state power. The German state has responded to this problem with sweeping mobilization of science and engineering to extend control over information infrastructure, placing tasks of government into the hands of scientists and engineers. In more general terms, cybersecurity problems—from Germany’s struggle with Microsoft to the US/Huawei dispute—are primarily about problems of state sovereignty. // Drawing on an analysis of the German national Cybersecurity Strategy, I develop the concepts of “territorialization projects” and “digital territory” to theorize how the production of state power in the digital age relies on technoscientific expertise about information infrastructure. The notion of “territorialization projects” captures how states mobilize scientists and engineers in order to transform globally distributed information infrastructure into bounded national territory, and how they invest it with patriotic meaning, thereby making “digital territory.” “Digital territory,” in other words, is nationalized information infrastructure. It is nationalized in both a material and moral sense because it includes extending state control over the physical stuff of information infrastructure and normative ideas about nation—who is a digital citizen, and who isn’t; or what constitutes “good” and “bad” digital citizens. In the German case, a combination of nationalizing information infrastructure and placing statecraft into the hands of scientists and engineers might indicate an emerging form of “technonationalism”—it displays both nationalist and technocratic tendencies— raising questions about the consequences of territorialization projects for justice, democracy, and civic life.

#### Surveillance under the guise of cyberoperations operates as a technique of privacy violation, that uniquely targets black folk.

Li 22 (Li, Tiffany, Privacy As/And Civil Rights (2022). Berkeley Technology Law Journal, 2022, Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3851404> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3851404_> Tiffany C. Li University of New Hampshire School of Law (formerly Franklin Pierce Law Center); Yale Law School - Information Society Project; Yale Law School - Information Society Project)//GUCCISUSHI

While surveillance can generate privacy violations and harms to many people, these harms and violations often disproportionately injure people from marginalized populations. In her book Dark Matters, Simone Browne surveys the long history of surveillance against Black people in America, from the metaphor of slave ship as surveillance vessel to the phenomenon of TSA officers searching Black women’s hair. 42 As Browne writes, “Surveillance is nothing new to black folks. It is the fact of antiblackness.”43 Other scholars have also researched the disproportionate impact of government surveillance on Black and Brown people, women,44 the poor,45 immigrants and undocumented people,46 people with disabilities, 47 and more. In The Poverty of Privacy Rights, Khiara Bridges explains how poor mothers, especially Black and Brown mothers, lack privacy protections.48 It is important to note that for every marginalized group that suffers from disproportionate privacy harms or civil rights violations, there are also individuals who belong to more than one marginalized identity. Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw’s concept of intersectionality49 is key to understanding the discriminatory ways in which the law has awarded privacy protections and allowed for privacy violations. We must keep in mind the intersectional dimensions of civil rights violations, as well as privacy violations, if we are to work towards a theory of civil rights and privacy hen unequal privacy protections involve targeted surveillance of people from marginalized groups actively working to advance civil rights. For example, the United States has a long history of surveilling potential civil rights leaders, including civil rights legend Dr. Martin Luther King.50 In the 1960s, the FBI created COINTELPRO (an abbreviation of Counter Intelligence Program) a program aimed at surveilling Black civil rights leaders in the height of the civil rights movement.51 While modern Americans would likely like to consider themselves much more progressive than pre-Civil Rights Movement America, it is clear that things have not changed enough. In 2017, a whistleblower exposed another secret FBI program specifically aimed at surveilling Black activists as “Black Identity Extremists.”52 Clearly, the battle for civil rights is not over, and privacy rights are still not afforded to all on an equal basis. Modern civil rights law in the United States attempts to prohibit discrimination and equalize access to public accommodations and to rights we believe to be fundamental. Civil rights laws are an attempt to expose an inequity and remedy it. Today, our society faces a crisis of privacy discrimination, in which people are unable to equally access their privacy rights, and some face disproportionate privacy violation harms. Privacy is not only a foundational civil liberty, but also a core civil right as well. Conceiving of privacy as a civil liberty, without understanding the interplay between privacy and equality, does a disservice to both privacy and equality. As Alvaro Bedoya writes, “When we talk about privacy only as a civil liberty, we erase those patterns of harm, that color of surveillance. And when we talk about privacy only as a civil liberty, we also ignore the benefits of privacy: Surveillance threatens vulnerable people fighting for equality. Privacy is what protects them and makes it possible.”53 When we talk about privacy only as a civil liberty, we erase patterns of harm from privacy violations that amount to or exacerbate discrimination and disparate impacts on marginalized populations. For example, while surveillance can lead to privacy violations and related harms for many people, these harms are often worse for marginalized populations. Privacy conceived as a civil liberty ignores the problems of unequal access to privacy and ignores the necessary place privacy has in creating the conditions for the fight for civil rights to continue.

#### Black Privacy good- but the aff’s offensive cyber-security increases technologies of surveillance that historically target black communities.

Li 22 (Li, Tiffany, Privacy As/And Civil Rights (2022). Berkeley Technology Law Journal, 2022, Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3851404> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3851404_> Tiffany C. Li University of New Hampshire School of Law (formerly Franklin Pierce Law Center); Yale Law School - Information Society Project; Yale Law School - Information Society Project)//GUCCISUSHI

It is now time to further extend these theories into the purely offline realm. Today, the line between the cyber and physical realms is increasingly blurred. Moreover, extending the call for cyber civil rights to the equal protection of privacy in both online and offline spaces is a useful and cogent framework for the advancement of civil rights. Civil rights laws create legal protections to prohibit discrimination against individuals. Some civil rights laws can afford individuals equal access to spaces and opportunities.71 Cyber civil rights protections allow individuals equal access to online spaces and opportunities. Between these two worlds is the world of technologically-driven civil rights violations that exist neither purely online or offline. One example of this is the phenomenon of mass surveillance, driven both by new technological dimensions of government surveillance as well as increasing consumer-led surveillance capitalism,72 in which consumer driven networked technology products create webs of surveillance. If a person is barred entry into a public space on the basis of a protected characteristic, this could be considered a civil rights violation under modern civil rights law, including the American With Disability Act and the Civil Rights Act. 73 If a person is unable to access an online space due to policies or practices that amount to discrimination based on a protected characteristic, we can consider this a cyber civil rights violation.74 What is particularly interesting about the Citron and Franks approach to cyber civil rights, is the concept that barriers to equal access do not have to be physical.75 Indeed, policies and practices that allow for behavior with discriminatory effects can effectively bar a person from entry to an online space as a physical barrier in an offline space. If a woman is refused entry into a public space due to her gender, this could be a civil rights violation. (Imagine a building with a sign saying, “Men only.”) If a woman is unable to access an online space, due to gendered harassment that makes the online space uncomfortable or dangerous, this could be a cyber civil rights violation. (Imagine a web forum rife with harassing posts targeted toward women.) If a woman is unable to access an offline space due to technological privacy violations that make the offline space uncomfortable or dangerous, this, too, could be considered a civil rights violation. (Imagine a public space with large, visible cameras that record and stream to an open feed, with the promise that recorded images will be uploaded to the internet.) The same theoretical framework that could protect the expressive rights of individuals in an online space can also aid in protecting the privacy and speech rights of individuals in offline public spaces. In the past, one might conceive of civil rights violations concerning public spaces or public accommodations, and one could more easily separate the government and private companies as actors in civil rights disputes. However, today, with the advent of the internet and our increasingly connected world, humanity faces a new space—cyberspace. It can be difficult to determine the boundaries of any particular space online, raising questions about what constitutes a public space, a public forum, a space for public accommodation. 76 Protecting privacy is necessary to protect civil rights, because much of our lives today are lived through the means of technology. This is particularly apparent now during the pandemic.77 Today, much of society works online, studies online, and sometimes even celebrates and mourns and worships online. To some extent, many people now spend much of their lives online. This increasingly connected world is causing a series of context collapses, 78 as the line between physical and virtual space is further eroded. While it is still necessary to protect privacy as appropriate for each informational and social interactional context, 79 it is also possible now to take the lessons from cyber civil rights and apply them to the offline world as well.

#### Cybercrime is uniquely high in Africa now- the plan’s funding of offensive cyberspace historically targets African regions and increases racial exploitation to developing nations.

Maluleke et. Al 22 (Mphatheni, M. R., & Maluleke, W. (2022). Cybersecurity as a response to combating cybercrime: Demystifying the prevailing threats and offering recommendations to the African regions. *International Journal of Research in Business and Social Science (2147- 4478)*, *11*(4), 384–396. <https://doi.org/10.20525/ijrbs.v11i4.1714>)//GUCCISUSHI

Globally, cybercrime has cost the economy between $300 billion and $1 trillion, or 0.4 to 1.4 percent of the global Gross Domestic Product [GDP] (Farahbod, Shayo, & Varzandeh, 2020). Morgan (2020) postulates that, globally, financial losses due cybercrime are expected to increase by 15% each year over the next five years. At this rate, it will hit an annual loss rate of $10.5 trillion by 2025 [R161 151 900 000 000,00], which will be an increase from $3 trillion [R46 047 000 000 000,01] in 2015. According to Bloomberg (Ransomware, 2021, June), in 2020 cyberattacks amounted to global losses in excess of $1000 billion [R15 349 000 000 000,00] in 2020, while in that year ransom demands (I.e. Ransomware) had escalated by 40% and malicious Internet infiltration by more than 600% since 2019. These rates are extremely worrisome if one considers that they occurred in a matter of 12 months only. Kshetri (2019) argues that internet infiltration has already reached an unacceptably high level in many African economies. Economic losses due to cybercrime represent the most significant transfer of economic resources in history. This crime jeopardises incentives for innovation and investment and the financial losses that it causes are much greater than the cost of natural disasters in a single year (Morgan, 2020). Moreover, the African economy's growing exposure to cybercrime is a cause for concern, as developing countries on this continent are increasingly reliant on networked computer systems (Peter, 2017). African countries also often lack the infrastructure to counteract sophisticated cyberattacks. On this continent economic activities utilising digital technology range from data processing to a vast mosaic of social and economic activities, including millions of daily online banking transactions, communications, smartphone downloads of Television (TV) shows and music albums, as well as initiatives like electronicgovernment (e-government) -e-banking-e-health-e-learning, next-generation power grids, air traffic control and other services (Peter, 2017:50). //Despite the enormous benefits of digital services for internet users worldwide, global cyberspace exploitation by miscreants and criminals whose activities on the Internet and whose impact on computer resources have focused on wreaking havoc among legitimate consumers of such resources, has had a significantly adverse effect on the economy. Extensive and advanced cybersecurity has thus become a crucial requirement for safeguarding the global economy and governmental operations in order to ensure peace and security in all spheres of life (Nwankwo & Ukaoha, 2019). The application of technical solutions to combat cybercrime has always been the preferred option for most cybersecurity experts. However, most LEA in the African regions are not equipped with the requisite technological knowledge while most cybercriminals are experts in computer technology. Therefore, the premise of this study rests on cybersecurity as a response to combating cybercrime, to demystify the prevailing threats, while offering recommendations to the African regions.

#### Cyberspace as a securitization tactic in international relations is structured by anti-black racism.

#### Howell 20 (Howell A, Richter-Montpetit M. Is securitization theory racist? Civilizationism, methodological whiteness, and antiblack thought in the Copenhagen School. Security Dialogue. 2020;51(1):3-22. doi:[10.1177/0967010619862921](https://doi.org/10.1177/0967010619862921))//GUCCISUSHI

Securitization theory has unquestionably made a significant impact. Its founding texts are among the most widely cited international relations scholarship (see Buzan and Wæver, 2003; Buzan et al., 1998; Wæver, 1995; Wæver et al., 1993), spawning active research programs and new ‘generations’ of securitization theory. The concept of securitization has travelled to disciplines beyond international relations, and even entered public discourse. What is so appealing about this theory? Perhaps the most tempting aspect of securitization theory is its methodological rigor. It provides a clear set of steps and standards for identifying how referent objects (e.g. migration, health, cyberspace) become security problems and deciding whether they should indeed be ‘securitized’. This ready made methodology can be applied to all sorts of empirical areas. However, students and scholars of security ought to resist this temptation of a readymade approach and inquire more deeply into securitization theory’s core theoretical assumptions and methodology. This article argues that racist thought is fundamental and integral to classic securitization theory’s conceptual and methodological project. While other scholarship has worked either to incorporate analysis of race into securitization theory (Amin-Khan, 2012; Ibrahim, 2005; Mofette and Vadasaria, 2016) or to overcome securitization theory’s Eurocentrism (Bilgin, 2010, 2011; Wilkinson, 2007), this article offers something different. It is the first to excavate the foundations of securitization theory in racist thought. We demonstrate that classic securitization theory is fundamentally and inextricably structured not only by Eurocentrism but also by civilizationism, methodological whiteness, and antiblack racism. What does it mean to excavate the racist foundations of a theory? That we use the ‘r-word’ and white supremacy as categories of analysis is sure to raise eyebrows. Even sympathetic readers might wonder if the problem we identify is more appropriately characterized as Eurocentrism. Critique of the Eurocentric character of much Western scholarship and cultural production has made significant inroads across academic disciplines, including international relations (Hobson, 2012; Sabaratnam, 2013). Our analysis is inspired by this research and extends some of its insights. Yet there is more to be said. Black studies and decolonial scholarship demonstrate that much orthodox and critical Western social and political thought is predicated upon epistemological and ontological premises that are not simply Eurocentric but racist, specifically white supremacist. In international relations, recent debates have addressed the question of whether postcolonial international relations should proceed solely through an analytic of Eurocentrism or whether we need to more specifically address racism and white supremacism (Gruffydd Jones, 2016; Hozić, 2016; Rutazibwa, 2016; Sajed, 2016). Sajed (2016: 168) suggests that the term ‘Eurocentric’ potentially neutralizes the foundational and continuing racism of the discipline. Rutazibwa (2016: 192) asks, ‘what existing power structure does this reluctance [to name racism] serve?’ Echoing these concerns, we ask: What is at stake in the reluctance to name racism in analyses of international security? Racism is a fundamental system of power that has profoundly shaped the world for the past several hundred years. Moreover, as is now well established, international relations emerged to provide intellectual support for the imperial and (settler-)colonial ambitions of Western states (Agathangelou and Ling, 2004a; Krishna, 2001; Vitalis, 2000, 2015). Drawing on black studies, indigenous studies, and decolonial scholarship, we illustrate the racist modes of thought that underpin classic securitization theory by deploying three concepts beyond Eurocentrism: civilizationism, methodological whiteness, and antiblack racism.

#### Offensive cyber operations increase in multilateral responses sustains western global dominance that actively excludes African nations and reinforces racial lines of economic oppression.

**Qobo 22** (Qobo, M. (2022). Africa and Defective Multilateralism. In: The Political Economy of China—US Relations. International Political Economy Series. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. <https://doi-org.proxy.lib.umich.edu/10.1007/978-3-030-86410-1_2> Mzukisi Qobo is Head of Wits School of Governance at the University of the Witwatersrand in South Africa. He is also a political economist and Associate Professor of Strategy and International Business at the Wits Business School.) //GUCCISUSHI

In his work, The Cold War and the Colour, the historian Borstelmann points out that the sluggish economic revival in Western Europe and anxieties about the spread of communism in 1946 and 1947 softened Truman’s moral qualms about decolonization. Instead, the United States preferred to embrace colonial regimes in London, Paris, Brussels, and Lisbon (Borstelmann 2003). The Marshall Plan and NATO, as Borstelmann argues, “aimed to bolster the economies and military forces of the metropolitan governments but also served to strengthen them in their quest to retain control of valuable colonies abroad” (Borstelmann 2003, Kindle Location 990). The United States actively promoted Europe’s recovery after the Second World War. Yet it had all but ignored Africa at the end of colonialism. Africa’s heavy dependence on commodities and reliance on the European market stunted its development (Rodney, p. 192). This heavy reliance on commodities, which was further reinforced by neocolonial relations with the West—and later China—accentuated Africa’s economic vulnerabilities and dependence on external powers. As Hardt and Negri (2000, p. 43) have pointed out, “The geographical and racial lines of oppression and exploitation that were established during the era of colonialism and imperialism have in many respects not declined but instead increased exponentially.” For developing countries and Africa, the postwar era represents a long period of marginalization and structural injustice. The liberal internationalist order is an order that not only benefitted Western Europe, Japan, and a handful of other countries that were America’s client states but also actively excluded African countries from meaningful participation in various multilateral institutions, including those that established the norms for international monetary stability and reinforced the multilateral trading system. It was no accident that by the 1970s, the triad power that shaped global decision-making, for example on the international monetary system or the multilateral trade agenda, was constituted by America, Europe (West Germany), and Japan. In this book, I argue that this postwar order was never faithfully lived out; thus, we should not lament its demise.// The liberal order was indeed successful for the Western world and its allies during the Cold War, and it helped to sustain US global dominance. The same US-led liberal order condemned the Third World to the margins of the world economic system. It is thus important that we recognize multilateralism for what it is—an incomplete project that was, to a considerable extent, was instrumentalized by dominant powers to further their interests. Besides, the United States has on many occasions betrayed its own ideals by propping up military Juntas in Latin America, supporting morally questionable leaders in Africa, and undermined efforts to consolidating democracy in newly independent states. Woodward (1987) offers a comprehensive account of US government’s covert actions, from 1981 to 1987, through the Central Intelligence Agency in the Middle East, Central America, and Africa. For many decades, the United States presided over a world trading system in which the Third World had to endure unfavorable terms of trade and suffer the effects of both colonial and neocolonial relations that perpetuated structural inequalities in production and trade patterns. Indeed, the system generated positive outcomes for the United States and its European allies. For Europe, the financing support from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the Marshall Plan, the creation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and for Japan the Dodge Plan and enhanced market access in the United States for its merchandise goods, are all evidence of the selective benefits of US largesse. As Strange (1988, p. 104) point out, in a stretch of just over a decade from 1946 to 1988, “US aid and government loans to Europe amounted net to $25bn,” and this had a “pump-priming effect on infrastructural and industrial investment in Africa,” with positive psychological effects on business decisions. This largesse pushed Europe to move faster in the direction of intra-regional trade liberalization, ironically maintaining high import tariffs against the United States. International cooperation through multilateral bodies such as the UN, the World Bank, the IMF, and the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT) had mixed results, and these institutions were mainly in the service of the interests of major powers. The areas of international cooperation that showed a greater degree of success were, according to Anne-Marie Slaughter, those to do with regulatory processes, including share of information around anti-trust policy, environmental policy, criminal law enforcement, and banking supervision (Slaughter 1997). Other areas related to international tax treaties, accounting and reporting standards, other standard-setting processes in the domains of international communications technologies, counter-terrorist financing, and anti-money laundering would also prove to be more concrete areas that fostered a degree of normative convergence in ways that diffused benefits across the world. But these produced limited gains that did not go far in altering the global power imbalances. The liberal internationalist order was never created with developing countries in mind and less so African countries. The peace and prosperity dividends that flowed out of open trade did not benefit the African continent as much. Africa was on the margins of the GATT processes until the Uruguay Round that lasted between 1986 and 1994, which I discuss in detail in Chapter 3. African countries have remained weakly integrated into production and trade structures, even as advanced industrial economies warded off developing countries’ attempts to bring their development concerns to the agenda of multilateral institutions such as the IMF and the World Trade Organization (WTO). many African countries in their quest to participate more meaningfully in the global economy. As such, the participation of developing countries in the US-led international order has always been at the mercy of powerful countries. Even in the twenty-first century, many developing countries and emerging economies are still contesting the right to shape global institutions and enhance their representation around the table as equals. For a long time, they have been pushing for reforms in multilateral institutions such as the United Nations Security Council and broadening representation in global economic governance institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

#### The research methodologies and colonial tendencies that over-determine western scholars in IR produces anti-black logics, that securitize African nation.

Kwaku 2022 (Kwaku Danso, Kwesi Aning, African experiences and alternativity in International Relations theorizing about security, International Affairs, Volume 98, Issue 1, January 2022, Pages 67–83, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iiab204)//GUCCISUSHI>

The discipline of International Relations (IR) and its security studies (SS) subfield have been complicit in this endeavour. These areas of study were developed within the framework of western academic research to help minimize the incidence of war and manage economic relations among the powerful industrialized states.9 IR and SS were also instrumental in providing intellectual support to the colonial project in Africa and across other spaces and populations conquered by Europeans.10 In spite of this partial focus, the dominance of whiteness intrinsic to IR and SS leads to a claim of universality, overlooking the fact that ‘the experiences of the conquered and colonized contrast with those of the conquerors and colonizers’.11 This pretension to universality ‘mistakes “Western” experiences for the universal’,12 generating a parochial view of security that rarely corresponds to the lived experiences of African people.13 As Visoka observes, ‘most of the international scholarship on post-conflict societies derives from an unrepresentative body of knowledge which tries to mediate, deviate, reinterpret and, consequently, construct a different social reality that is interpreted through different measurements, reference points, and analytical concepts’.14 As such, that scholarship has become part of the problem, rendering African populations less secure. The failure to acknowledge the constitutive role of raciality and coloniality in the production and deployment of security knowledge has ‘allowed the proliferation of a literature on, for instance, “state failure” that finds fault with some states (or their leaders/regimes) but not with the global political–economic structure that [either encourages or] allows them to “fail”’.15 This literature fails to capture the context of hybridity in which security policies in most African states are nested within and enacted by multiple orders claiming to provide security, of which the state order is only one among many.16 It ignores, as we shall explain in detail below, the diversity of non-state actors that intersect with the Weberian state to shape the complex terrain of security governance in Africa, by either supporting or contesting the authority of the legally constituted state. In the process, the literature overlooks non-state or informal actors in their ability to act as authoritative avenues for conflict transformation. Insights from the critical IR/security literature at the margins of the disciplines point out that conventional IR and SS do not wholly suffice as settings for knowledge production and policy-making on African security as they fail to capture the diverse array of non-state entities that operate alongside the state to deliver security functions that are otherwise thought of as primary obligations of the Weberian state. These disciplines are, therefore, unable to offer a way to lasting peace and security in Africa as they are hamstrung by their Eurocentric bias, and in some cases actually do more harm than good. To eschew Eurocentrism and have relevance in African contexts, IR and SS discourses require a break from the dominance of whiteness and, hence, the hegemony of their colonial past. Indeed, Acharya and Buzan are quite right to argue that IR and, for that matter, SS theorizing, should be ‘an open domain into which it is not unreasonable to expect non-westerners to make a contribution at least proportional to the degree that they are involved in its practice’.17 For that, an episteme of alternativity that takes cognizance of the context of hybridity in which a vast array of state and non-state actors outside the formal arena interact to shape the security realities of people in Africa seems necessary. As a step towards this endeavour, and drawing on insights from postcolonial discourses and the episteme of alternativity, this article reflects on the ways in which IR and SS have been responsible for the production of a racialized mode of security knowledge that dismisses the security experiences of people in African locales. The article contends that the incorporation of African experiences and understandings, as made manifest within the context of hybrid security orders, into IR and SS scholarly and policy discourses around security can elaborate the normative grounding of IR and broaden its empirical base for theorizing about security, since they offer a perspective outside the conventional western assumptions and points of reference. Following this introduction, the article discusses the racial status quo of IR and SS from the perspective of methodological whiteness. It then moves on to illustrate the dominance of whiteness prevalent in approaches to insecurities in Africa by analysing the ‘global war on terror’ and the politics of threat construction in the Sahel region of Africa. Finally, it engages the episteme of alternativity from the perspective of orality and hybrid security orders to explore the possibility for alternative modes of signification that might elaborate IR and SS as a whole by providing alternative reference points for generating security knowledge and informing practice.

#### Offensive cyber operations operate under racialized constructions of threat that mystify the terroristic nature of globalized white supremacy.

#### Meier 21 (Meier, Anna A. The Idea of Terror: White Supremacist Violence and the Making of Counterterrorism. The University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2021.)//GUCCISUSHI

Examining how white-majority countries undertake counterterrorism, and how they constitute what counts as “terrorism” by doing so, requires also considering the sorts of acts and actors not typically considered as terrorist threats—in these contexts, white supremacist violence. Unfortunately, there is much terrorism scholars do not know about government responses to white supremacist violence and how policy decisions to address such acts and actors are made. This is in part because terrorism scholars have historically not thought much about white supremacist violence as terrorism. This is not because such violence is new. Many countries have indeed experienced a recent surge in far-right activism, which in turn has spawned numerous new violent political actors. Yet these actors did not appear out of the ether, but rather have roots in older sources of violence and connections to older violent organizations that laid considerable groundwork. Rich historical accounts of far-right and white supremacist activity in the United States (Belew 2018), Germany (Rabert 1995; Kohler ¨ 2016b), and throughout Europe (Bjorgo 1995) emphasize that far-right violence, rather than being a series of isolated incidents by “lone wolves,” is frequently part of a larger organized movement that looks to and lauds predecessor organizations in crafting goals and messaging. Still, terrorism scholars have chosen to focus overwhelmingly on violence of other ideological stripes (Simi 2010). A commonly offered explanation for this choice is the relationship between terrorism research and state interests (and state funding), leading to under-examinations of right-wing violence in particular (Schuurman 2019). In a review of all articles published between 2007 and 2016 in nine English-language terrorism studies journals, Schuurman (2019) found that 74.5% dealt with “jihadist” groups and individuals; only 1.9% examined right-wing activity. As noted above, this is not because right-wing violence did not occur prior to 2016—and while spectacular attacks by al-Qaeda and the Islamic State may have rightly attracted considerable attention, the disparity in research focus is still enormous. Similar patterns evinced themselves in earlier literature reviews: between 2001 and 2007, some 57.3% of terrorism research was focused on Islamist violence (Silke 2007). In other words, the disparity in focus on Islamist vs. other kinds of violence has grown over time. It should be noted that social scientists have done considerable work on white supremacist activity. Scholars of the far right have written extensively on white supremacist ideologies in far-right political parties (Mudde 2016), social movements (Blee & Creasap 2010), youth cultures (Miller-Idriss 2018), and online communities (Simi & Futrell 2006; Daniels 2009; Caren et al. 2012). Far-right violence has also received extensive treatment (Koopmans & Olzak 2004; Adamczyk et al. 2014; Bencek & Strasheim ˇ 2016; Klein & Muis 2019; Durham 2008; Miller-Idriss 2020a). Still, these ideological movements and their accompanying violence are rarely described in scholarly work as terrorism. This semantic choice matters: it minimizes conversations between work on white supremacist violence and other types of extremist violence more frequently called “terrorism,” stifling opportunities to see whether theories and findings travel across ideological persuasions. Siloing studies of far-right and white supremacist violence also furthers the idea that white supremacist violence perhaps should not be placed in the same category as other kinds of “terrorism”; while a normative consideration, it is not clear that there is any objective reason, in terms of goals or tactics, not to place white supremacist violence under the “terrorist” umbrella. Recent work by terrorism scholars has offered correctives.3 Perliger (2020) details the history of white nationalist violence in the United States, presenting it firmly as a problematique for terrorism studies; K ´ ohler ( ¨ 2016a) offers a similar accounting in Europe. Piazza (2017) and Ravndal (2018) consider determinants of right-wing terrorism in a classic exploration of country-level economic and political issues, while Michael (2019) examines strategic reasons right-wing actors use terrorism, contributing to a long line of work that views terrorism as a distinct tactic.4 These are the same sorts of foundational questions that the broader terrorism literature has explored vis-a-vis Islamist violence ` for decades, and so there is much catching up to do. Accordingly, one contribution of this dissertation is purely informative: I provide descriptive data on white supremacist violence in Germany and the United States, foundations upon which future researchers can build. But my substantive contribution to a growing literature on white supremacist violence within the terrorism studies canon also goes beyond this. Notably, I shift focus to government responses to white supremacist violence—responses that might be called “counterterrorism” if they were directed against different types of actors. As with research on white supremacist violence in general, work on countering white supremacist violence is only slowly starting to appear. Much of this work is prescriptive, suggesting strategies that might be effective after laying out the scope of the threat (Kohler ¨ 2019; Blackbourn et al. 2019; Chermak et al. 2009).5 This stands in contrast to approaches in the broader counterterrorism literature, which has developed theories and models of when and how governments will choose various counterterrorism strategies while assuming a homogenous category of “terrorist” actors, ignoring differential levels of threat posed not only by tactics, but by particular political claims on the state (Enders & Sandler 1993; Sandler 2015; Kydd 2011; Pokalova 2015).

## A.I:

### Digital/molecular bioptx – Howell & Richter-Montpetit 19

#### The new information and technology age require the retheorization of securitization into a digitalized biopolitics that makes the theorization of race and coloniality impossible.

Howell and Richter-Montpetit 19 (Alison Howell, Rutgers University – Newark AND Melanie Richter-Montpetit, University of Sussex “Racism in Foucauldian Security Studies: Biopolitics, Liberal War, and the Whitewashing of Colonial and Racial Violence” International Political Sociology (2019) 13, 2–19)

Molecular and Digital Revolutions and the Whiteness of Post-human Life FSS’s undertheorization of racism and colonialism also produces inaccurate genealogies of (life) sciences and technologies, most strikingly regarding the so-called digital and molecular revolutions. FSS scholars of these revolutions purport to update Foucault for “the age of life as information” (Dillon and Reid 2009, 106) and to describe epochal breaks in scientific understandings of life, corresponding with an equally epochal shift from a biopolitics of scientific racism to a new postracial form of biopolitics. However, they do so without any serious attention to Foucault’s postcolonial critics or any serious inquiry into lines of continuity between White supremacist scientific racism and these digital and molecular “revolutions.” Thus, for instance, Dillon and Lobo-Guerrero (2008, 273) argue that “biopolitics is critically dependent, epistemically and ontologically, on what the sciences of life say that species life is.” As such, “[i]n the molecular age life is no longer simply the life of population as Foucault documented . . . because molecular science has transformed what we understand a living thing to be” (Dillon and Lobo-Guerrero 2008, 286). Dillon and Reid similarly claim to trace shifting notions of life. They assert that over the past five decades “the very ontology of biological life has shifted to the ground of ‘information’” (Dillon and Reid 2009, 22) and that distinctions between animate and inanimate, biological and nonbiological “have been newly construed and problematized” (Dillon and Reid 2009, 22). Though much of this is derivative of Ian Hacking and Nikolas Rose’s work, attention to the digital and molecular has particular impacts in the international and security fields. According to Dillon and Reid (2009, 22), digital and molecular “reproblematizations” of life have impacted the biopolitical strategies of liberal internationalism: “[t]he very space of enmity is itself re-problematized. Who is dangerous, what is dangerous, how things become dangerous are all transformed” (Dillon and Reid 2009, 107). This has apparently resulted in a shift from scientific racism to “new racism,” with an emphasis on cultural difference rather than biological hierarchies. FSS’s ability to examine how science has shaped the biopolitical strategies of security and liberal internationalism is limited by its persistent Eurocentrism and undertheorization of race. Societal notions of “life” are treated as interchangeable with the life sciences’ supposedly postracial understanding of life as generic data. This fails to engage with either the ingrained (settler) coloniality of technoscience or the stubborn (and institutionalized) persistence of broader structures of White supremacy and anti-Blackness. This has serious empirical implications. For instance, Dillon’s discussion of “new” risk analysis and biometrics does not consider how these security technologies have been designed to police enslaved populations and surveille Black people (cf. Browne 2015), as part of a long-standing legacy of colonial techniques of “identity dominance” (Bell 2013). Similarly, FSS discussions of the molecular fail to engage with the contemporary racial politics of genetic science (Duster 2003; TallBear 2013; Nelson 2016); how molecular life sciences were and are fueled by experimentation on the bodies of racialized and indigenous people (Washington 2006; Dudley 2012; Mosby 2013), including the movement of pharmaceutical clinical trials from US prisons to the Global South (Petryna 2009); or the neo-eugenic functions of genetic reproductive technologies (Roberts 2011, 2013) and related racialized economies of labor in the global surrogacy industry (Twine 2011) to name just a few examples. Instead, highly abstract formulations stand in for historically specific forms of power. Dillon and Reid write that “[p]ower is palimpsestuous. New forms and relations of power become superimposed on older ones. Previous relations and accounts of power are rubbed out but may not be entirely effaced” (Dillon and Reid 2009, 124). This statement comes with no serious empirical engagement with the persistence—and modulation—of scientific racism into the twenty-first century. Instead we are to believe that racism is now cultural, not scientific—and, for that matter, that science itself isn’t cultural. The result is an e(race)sure (Moore 2012) of the ways that racialized subjects continue to always already signify violence that once again shores up the foundational White FSS mythology that everyone is (potentially) dangerous and, therefore, vulnerable to the punitive and/or lethal dimensions of liberal power. Ironically, FSS discussions of post–WWII biopolitical liberal internationalism thus reproduce, rather than challenge, the promise that liberal war will transcend the global color line (Richter-Montpetit 2014b).

### AI – Schelenz 22

#### AI neural networks are undergirded by racial bias and white representation. “Objective” computer models reify racial sterotypes and tropes.

**Schelenz 22** (Laura, conducts research on ethical and feminist perspectives on technology development. In her dissertation at the University of Tübingen. “Artificial Intelligence Between Oppression and Resistance: Black Feminist Perspectives on Emerging Technologies.” February 1st, 2022) //NT

In the context of AI, Black women are affected by various unjust situations and structures. On the one hand, they are impacted by design architectures and algorithmic networks that have been found to exhibit bias against BIWOC. This bias can be traced to an overrepresentation of White male perspectives in datasets and design teams (Buolamwini and Gebru [2018](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR11); Wachter-Boettcher [2017](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR59); Zou and Schiebinger [2018](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR67)). Since computer models are increasingly used to make decisions that can determine subjects’ paths in life, such as decisions about loans, hiring, college admission, and even parole (O’Neil [2016](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR48)), algorithmic bias can reinforce and intensify the structural oppression of BIWOC. On the other hand, the economic and political frameworks of the production and use of AI contribute to the oppression of Black women. The operation of AI-based tools relies on the recruitment (and exploitation) of low-wage, low-skill workers in the Global South (Gray and Suri [2019](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR27)). Data flows freely and is mined with little regard for data protection (Zuboff [2019](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR68)), especially stripping poor people of their privacy rights (Bridges [2017](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR9)). This ecosystem of AI-powered services remains largely unregulated and is further legitimized by the commonly held belief that AI-based technology is neutral and fairer in its decision-making than humans (Benjamin [2019a](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR5), pp. 11 and 22). Economic Oppression This section highlights two trends in the digital economy that can add to the marginalization of BIWOC. Concerning the first trend, AI is increasingly used for the automation of hiring decisions and recruitment, especially by large employers. Applications and CVs are pre-scanned by a software to distinguish suitable from unsuitable candidates (Poster [2019](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR49), p. 139). This pre-selection of candidates is done without human oversight. Amazon stopped the usage of a hiring software after the company found that it exhibited gender bias by favoring male over female applicants (Reuters [2018](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR51)). The biased algorithm was trained on data from the last 10 years of applications at Amazon. Given societal inequalities that lead to a dominance of men in STEM fields and the technology industry, the algorithms had learned that a probable candidate for Amazon is male. Other forms of bias exist in online freelance marketplaces (e.g., TaskRabbit or Fiverr), which match employers with workers (Poster [2019](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR49), p. 139). In these platforms, AI-based algorithms suggest a list of suitable workers to employers who want to tap the online pool of workers. Hannák et al. ([2017](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR30)) show that these rankings can disadvantage Black women because of gender and racial biases. In effect, users who are perceived to be Black women are ranked lower than candidates from other social groups. They thus do not appear on the radar of employers or they are considered less skilled. According to Hannák et al. ([2017](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR30)), this bias originates in the ratings and reviews from employers. Users who are read as Black and/or female get fewer and lower ratings, and written feedback contains fewer and less positive adjectives than for other groups (p. 1927). These biases are especially damaging if we consider surging corporate calls for the inclusion of Black women in the digital economy. Big tech companies increasingly fund programs for marginalized girls that seem to address structural inequalities. These programs, of which the Google-funded Black Girls Code is a good example, educate and empower participants to become programmers (Noble [2018](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR47), 64f). It is then a big irony if not an insult that companies calling for Black women’s inclusion produce and proliferate AI-powered recruitment tools that disadvantage Black women. It is also concerning that big tech companies target Black women for recruitment into an exploitative job market, which leads us to the second worrisome trend. Contrary to scenarios where machines replace humans, human labor is still required for the development of AI-based technologies. In fact, the digital economy has produced a set of new jobs. This is what Gray and Suri ([2019](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR27)) call the “paradox of automation’s last mile”: the more we use AI, the more we rely on humans (xxii). For instance, social media platforms rely on human intervention for “cleaning” the platform. This means that workers in low-wage jobs, working out of computer centers in the Global South, manually review images and videos to decide whether the content should be removed (Cherry [2016](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR14), p. 71; Block and Riesewieck [2018](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR6)). From curating datasets to labeling images for an online shop, tech companies rely on “the power of the crowd” and distribute small tasks to thousands of workers via platforms such as Amazon Mechanical Turk[Footnote4](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#Fn4) (Cherry [2016](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR14), p. 76). These tasks help train machine learning algorithms and produce AI-based products. Given the history of massive low-wage employment of immigrant and women of color in the technology industry (Hossfeld [1995](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR34), p. 408; Gillard et al. [2010](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR25)), these new precarious home-based jobs are likely held by the same group. They pay little taxable income and workers have little or no rights. Clients, however, can determine criteria for candidates, accept or reject the work product, and review the workers (Cherry [2016](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR14), p. 76). Crowdsourcing jobs are still unregulated (Cahn et al. [2019](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR12), p. 8), and it remains unsolved whether workers count as “independent contractors” or “employees” (Cherry [2016](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR14), p. 76). There are no benefits, no mentorship, and no remedy if technical matters prevent the worker from fulfilling a task (Cahn et al. [2019](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR12), p. 8; Gray and Suri [2019](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR27), xxiv ff). Finally, the current set-up of the digital economy follows a neoliberal capitalist framework (Zuboff [2019](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR68)), which tends to manifest global inequalities including “digital colonialism.” First, the raw material (e.g., coltan) for digital technologies is extracted from conflict regions in the Congo with little consumer awareness of local human rights abuses (Noble [2016](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR46)). Second, digital technologies produced in Silicon Valley are exported to geographically and culturally different contexts without attention to local norms and values (Wakunuma and Masika [2017](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR60)). Third, workers in low-income regions of the Global South perform customer services for American consumers and are forced to fake a White identity from names to accents and greetings (Poster [2019](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR49), p. 152). Hence, White privilege and supremacy are upheld at the expense of non-White lives and identities. Existing hierarchies become solidified. White supremacy is also at the heart of political projects of oppression. Political Oppression AI-based innovations can lead to the political oppression of BIWOC. One source of discontent is the practice of AI-based surveillance. Historically, technologies have been used to enhance practices of “social sorting” (Lyon [2003](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR71)). They help categorize and classify people in order to make decisions. In society, such classifications usually occur subconsciously and involve stereotypical ideas about other people (Goffman [1990](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR26)). We sort those we encounter into categories (male or female, White or Black) because we expect to know better whom we are dealing with. In a similar way, AI-based tools today “sort out” who is potentially dangerous (e.g., in law enforcement or criminal justice) and who is eligible for welfare benefits or a suitable candidate for college admissions, insurance, and loans (O'Neil [2016](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR48); Angwin et al. [2016](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR1)). One prominent case study is facial recognition technology, which is used by law enforcement to identify suspects. In an intersectional study of facial recognition algorithms, Buolamwini and Gebru ([2018](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR11)) find that lighter and male faces are better recognized (or classified) than darker and female faces. The algorithms investigated in the study performed worse on Black and Brown women, often wrongly classifying them as male (Buolamwini and Gebru [2018](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR11), p. 10). Given the use of the technology in policing, algorithmic bias may result in Black and Brown women being wrongfully arrested and convicted more often than Whites. In the context of widespread police brutality against Black people in the United States (Hinton [2021](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR32); Ritchie [2017](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR53)), algorithmic bias in facial recognition technology has serious implications for the free movement and safety of Black women. Another source of concern is the treatment of race and gender in the design of AI. On the one hand, technology has been considered neutral to race and gender because of disembodiment in the digital sphere. Especially on the Internet—so the story goes—everyone can be and do what they want (Daniels [2015](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR21), p. 1381). Such attitudes follow a color-blind worldview, which allows White people to ignore structural inequalities by reference to universalism and equality (“I don’t see race because we are all equal”; Bonilla-Silva [2018](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR7)). Yet, color-blindness ignores the genealogy of cyberspace (e.g., dominance of a White male perspective) as well as the visual culture online (Daniels [2015](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR21), p. 1378, [2009](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR20), p. 19). As a result of color-blind approaches, designers have paid little or no attention to racial inequalities in or through technology (Benjamin [2019a](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR5), p. 63). On the other hand, designers increasingly aim at personalizing services to different users and therefore consider race and gender as distinguishing features of users. Although this is where color-blindness apparently ends, designers still consider the use of gender and racial categories neutral because technology is continuously seen as neutral. Consequently, categories of race and gender become legitimate tools of classification in AI-based technologies without attention to the structural inequalities that they represent and reinforce (Benjamin [2019a](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR5), p. 21). In the field of Machine Learning Fairness, race and gender are widely used as variables to ensure an equal outcome of algorithmic decisions for diverse groups. While the goal seems like a step in the right direction, the use of race and gender as descriptive demographic categories obscures their historical and normative baggage and social construction. It ignores the way these categories have been used in political projects of oppression, for instance in the early US census, where African-Americans were not counted properly to privilege White people (Hanna et al. [2020](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR29)). In fact, gender and race categories continue to be used as tools (technologies even) to manage access to political influence and restrict some groups’ human rights, as the example of racialized voter targeting by the Trump campaign 2016 shows (Sabbagh [2020](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR54)). A third aspect worth mentioning here is the proliferation of hate speech and White supremacist content with little regulation on behalf of social media companies and the government. While companies claim to prioritize racism online and may hire a Black spokesperson, even obvious racial aggression remains visible in social media networks (Benjamin [2019a](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR5), p. 29). There are immediate and more subtle consequences of this lack of regulation. One is the translation of online hate into physical attacks against Black women (Daniels [2009](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR20), p. 7). Another consequence is the slow erosion of accepted rights and political processes because White supremacists provide “alternative” interpretations of historical events such as slavery. Shielded by anonymity on the Internet, they question established values and ideals such as equality, insinuating that one can have an opinion on racism (as opposed to racism is prohibited by law and goes against democratic values, Daniels [2009](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR20), p. 8). Cultural Oppression. This section traces the oppression of Black women through AI-mediated representations. Symbolism and cultural imagination of identities play a crucial role in upholding or dismantling social hierarchies. Throughout American history and in contemporary media, racist and sexist stereotypes of Black women have geared to their perception as inferior (Gammage [2017](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR24)). AI systems can reinforce such harmful representations, for example through the racialized representation of robots. Cave and Dihal ([2020](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR13)) show that imaginations of AI in films, drawings, and stories are overwhelmingly racialized as White. Humanoid robots and other machines (such as chatbots) carry physical features that resemble a White face, and voice assistants use standard middle-class American English instead of African-American Vernacular English. The robot “Sophia” from Hanson Robotics is an example that enjoys big popularity in society and popular culture (Cave and Dihal [2020](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR13), Fig. 1). This racialization of AI as White has implications. It can unconsciously convey the notion that technology design and development are only for White people. It can further reinforce racial hierarchies that position machines over Black people as much as White people over Black people (Cave and Dihal [2020](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR13)). A study by Bartneck et al. ([2018](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR3)) indeed shows that consumers attribute race to differently colored robots and exhibit bias toward those robots associated with Black male identities. Bias in the representation of AI may be unconscious or intentional. Designers who are White may consider a pale skin color as neutral and normal, thus unconsciously choosing this design for their robotic creation (Cave and Dihal [2020](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR13), p. 10). However, Benjamin ([2019a](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR5)) questions whether the representation of robots as White is so unintentional. She discusses an advertisement from the 1960s which paints the picture of a robot as a dehumanized servant, whereas the ad reads: “Slavery will be back” and “Slavery will be here to stay” (p. 57, Fig. 1.2). In the past leading to the present, imaginations of robots by White people often involved a desire to dehumanize and command inferior “beings” (Benjamin [2019a](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR5), p. 56). This resembles White attitudes during slavery, when Black women were forced to work not only in the cotton fields but also as servants in the household (hooks [2015](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR33), 24ff). Going a step further, the Whiteness of robots may also be an intentional move toward an imagined White utopia, in which BIWOC as domestic workers are entirely removed from the White family’s home (Cave and Dihal [2020](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR13), p. 14; Rhee [2018](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR52), p. 94). Another case of stereotyping of Black women through AI concerns search engines like Google. Noble ([2018](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR47)) investigates “the ways in which search engine results perpetuate particular narratives that reflect historically uneven distributions of power in society” (p. 71). Analyzing Google searches of the keyword “Black girls,” she shows how the racialized sexualization and commodification of Black girls resembles broader narratives about Black women in US society. In an initial search of the term in 2011, Noble ([2018](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR47)) notices that the websites at the top of the search results advertise (free) porn or sex with Black women (cf. Figure [2.1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_2), p. 67). Even dating sites represent Black women (or “girls”) as hypersexualized. Unsurprisingly, Google searches for girls of any ethnicity generate similar search results (Noble [2018](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR47), p. 71). However, given the history of Black women’s representation in American media, their continued and exacerbated misrepresentation through AI is particularly concerning (Harris-Perry [2013](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR31)). Noble ([2018](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR47)) briefly hints at the historical construction of Black women as Jezebels, Sapphires, and Mammies (p. 98). These images have their origin during the enslavement of African people. On the one hand, Black women were perceived as exotic and desirable sex objects that were particularly wanton compared to White women. They were the subject of gruesome sexual abuse by White slave owners and even after the end of slavery, White men widely raped Black women (hooks [2015](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR33), 58ff). On the other hand, Black women were represented as Mammies or matriarchs. The “iconic” Aunt Jemima pancake brand popularized the image of the old and unattractive Black woman who happily serves the White family (hooks [2015](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR33), 84f). As a matriarch, the Black woman is considered head of the own household, stripping her husband of his masculinity. Hence, as hooks ([2015](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR33)) puts it: “Just as Whites used the myth that all black women were sexually loose as a way to devalue black womanhood, they used the matriarchy myth to impress upon the consciousness of all Americans that black women were masculinized, castrating, ball-busters” (80f). Some of these stereotypes are still used today, especially in movies and popular culture (West [2018](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR62)). While stereotypes in classic media contribute to the cultural oppression of Black women, the case of online search engines is a particular one. Search engines are gatekeepers of information (Bozdag [2013](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR8), p. 209). They have the power to define and signify sometimes ambiguous concepts. Furthermore, search engines like Google enjoy the standing of a legitimate and neutral source of information, expressed by the saying “just Google it” (Noble [2018](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR47), p. 85). They are even used in high schools and higher education for assignments or research. If we encounter biased information around a subject that is new to us, we may accept the information as truth and reality (Noble [2018](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR47), p. 65). With the enormous reach of Google and YouTube, these services have the power to control representations of concepts and identities. This is concerning not just because of the concentration of power in the hands of a few (predominantly White and male) designers situated in Silicon Valley, but due to a capitalist framework. The representation of knowledge and identities is thus bound by private commercial interests rather than public democratic values (Noble [2018](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88615-8_11#ref-CR47), 91f).

### AI – Dancy 21

#### Blackness as a signifier of dereliction within AI systems is endlessly disavowed by structures of knowing, thinking, and modeling.

**Dancy 21** (Christopher L, Associate Professor of Industrial & Manufacturing Engineering and of Computer Science & Engineering @ Penn State. “AI and Blackness: Towards moving beyond bias and representation.” 2021)//NT

I. BLACKNESS AND THE HUMAN. To ethically engage in a conversation between AI and race (and thus Blackness) requires moving beyond racial representation, bias, and discrimination. That is, it requires an understanding of antiblackness as a structuring principle for thought and action, which is enacted using concepts of race. In other words, antiblackness structures not just outcomes (e.g., racial inequality, medical apartheid, and more), but structures practices of knowing, thinking, and modeling. Just as inequality is a symptom of antiblackness, so too, it can be argued, is much of the AI design (e.g., many of the systems that have been developed and deployed have enabled particularly inequitable and anti-Black practices, [2]). The distinction between human intelligence and artificial intelligence is enabled by a belief in an onto-epistemological structure that positions Blackness as the negation of the Human or at the very least the infrahuman, as the index against which the Human is measured and constructed/designed. Blackness, in this sense, is the name given to the antagonism of the Human world, that which helps its material configuration and articulation. This configuration and articulation is key to how we define human intelligence and, thus, how we define artificial intelligence that is synthesized [5] by the Human. Thus, to explore the entanglement of Blackness within AI is to understand the Blackness beyond identity and category and understand it as follows. 1) A sign, symbol, or metaphor that represents something, namely, lack and dereliction [8]. 2) As a paradigmatic expression of the world. Put differently, the Human is predicated on a regime of the social organization that excludes Blackness. AI is configured along the political ontology of race in that it relies on the entwined nature of the Human and nonhuman (or Other). Blackness reinscribes the Human as synonymous with western Man. The Human marks the agentic properties for all AI designs, not Blackness. Human intelligence is reliant on the dominant, standard genre of the Human [9] that positions the “Western bourgeoise liberal monohumanist” as the Human. This requires the “wholly Other” status of those of African descent, that is Blackness, as well as the descriptive codes or memes that specify the “symbolic life/death” of homo oeconomicus [9, p. 29]. To draw the line between human intelligence and artificial intelligence, there must be an account for naturally human and artificial. That natural definition of the Human is reliant on our present sociogenic “Darwinian descriptive statement” [9, p. 29] that informs and undergirds what it means to be a natural human and by consequence what it means to be artificial, or, according to Simon [5, p. 5], “synthesized. . . by human beings” and “imitate appearances in natural things while lacking the reality of the latter” (emphasis ours). Indeed, even the use of intelligence as a conceptual marker brings with it a certain “value-laden” history [10]. The typical account for intelligence is reliant on historically eugenic science that used the racial hierarchy as a structuring principle. Thus, to think and act ethically about Blackness (and by extension, race) and AI, we must recognize the degree to which the political ontology of Blackness affects and structures the world; that is, we must take into consideration the innocuousness ascribed to the Human. III. STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS, ANTIBLACKNESS, AND AI. While many continue to focus on individuals and specific acts or bias toward anti-Black, racist outcomes (e.g., concepts related to implicit bias, [11]–[13], and individual acts of dehumanization [14]), this individual focus obscures a structural cause that historically has had a longer lasting and more pervasive impact [15], [16]. Structural racism, enacted through policies at social institutions above the level of the individual, acts as the environment in which AI systems are designed, developed, and deployed. Structural racism is also enacted through the sociocultural knowledge and systems created as a result of institutional policies (some of which might be considered more formal dogma, while other knowledge may take the less formal or more relaxed form of doxa [17]). These structural forms of racism result in anti-Black outcomes: they result in disparities in healthcare treatment [18], the assignment of criminality [19], [20], the continued segregation of resources [21], [22], and a plethora of other anti-Black outcomes (e.g., [23]–[25]). These outcomes further result in modification of knowledge systems that also inform structural policies, creating a pernicious cycle of implicit and explicit antiblackness. Noble [24] audits and observes the ways in which the Google search engine treats Blackness and women, particularly focusing on the intersection thereof. She notes that “search engine results perpetuate particular narratives that reflect historically uneven distributions of power in society” ([24, p. 71]). Noble uses Google because it is a “broker of cultural imperialism” ([24, p. 86]). She uses the “pornification” of Black women and girls within the Google search engine to shed light on the commodified nature of the seemingly neutral results returned. Search engine results here are not neutral, but instead a reproduction of sociocultural knowledge for the purposes of advertising as well as the collection of more “behavioral surplus” data [26], like personalized clickthrough data (e.g., [27]), all factors used to learn which results to return over-time. The example of audited Google search results is a particularly useful example when thinking about the modification of knowledge systems as one considers the growth of Google (and similar search engines) as an ever-growing important arbiter of knowledge. Sparrow et al. [28] discussed the effects of having information available via systems like Internet search engines on transactive memory (which can be thought of as a “combination of memory stores held directly by individuals and the memory stores they can access because they know someone who knows that information” [28]). They found that knowing that such information is available via a computational system like a search engine reduced the likelihood of (an individual) storing specific information about that item to memory and instead resulted in storing information on where to find that item in memory. Sparrow et al. [28] contend that we have become dependent on these systems in the same way that “we are dependent on all the knowledge we gain from our friends and coworkers—and lose if they are out of touch.” Thus, those AI systems sort and decide knowledge to give us is important given that these systems pull information from structurally anti-Black environments and because we treat the information retrieved in a manner similar to the ways we have treated knowledge from some friends and family in the past—they create a bootstrapping process that reflects existing anti-Black structures and enacts cycles of those structures through the decisions made. The pervasive use of large amounts of data to inform AI systems has resulted in a more recent push toward examining the ways one might change those AI systems or those data for less biased (which often includes some form of racial bias) outcomes in the use of those systems or data or both [1], [7], [29]–[31]. Despite general forms of bias reduction in systems, dehumanization of Blackness persists. To show an example of this persistence despite measures of bias reduction, we examine the ConceptNet semantic knowledge network.

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IV. BLACKNESS IN AI ETHICS. Any attempt to ethically explore the entanglement between AI and antiblackness requires that we attend to the paradigmatic and structural, while acknowledging the agentic power of individuals in developing artifacts that perpetuate and fortify this structure. Acknowledging the anti-Black structure of the Human as the ethical problem is important to any and all discussions about bias, race, and antiblackness in AI systems. This is to say that ethics and the applications thereof for AI systems presupposes “relations of recognition” of humanity and subjectivity—something that the “spectre of slavery destroys” [42, p. 54]; and as we discuss in a following paragraph, current codes of ethics, ethical guidelines, etc., are lacking in their attempts to explicitly address the issue of antiblackness in AI systems. To move beyond projects in AI ethics that force a certain assimilation and colonization (Benjamin [23, p. 176] provided a related discussion on design as a colonizing project), antiblackness and the foundations of this continuously maintained boundary [25] must be directly addressed. Despite this importance, AI ethics principles and frameworks continue to leave out antiblackness as paradigmatic, regardless of increasing awareness of bias and racism writ large. The previously mentioned de-biasing for the Conceptnet Numberbatch is a useful example of the issues one can encounter when not more directly considering antiblackness. Our audit of that system for semantic relatedness between the racialized terms of black\_man, white\_man, black\_woman, white\_man (as well as standardized representations of man and woman) showed a pattern reflective of known historical relations between human-related representations, animal-related representations, and existing racial structures (portraying a social order or hierarchy). Those data showed that despite the aforementioned de-biasing of the ConceptNet Numberbatch system, black\_man retained a closer semantic relatedness to animalistic terms, while white\_man retained a closer semantic relatedness to terms that portray humanity. What is more, the lack of semantic representation for black\_woman (while white\_woman remained a stand-in for woman) shows the continued issue of intersectionality [34], that is the issue of racialized, gendered intersections. The erasure of black\_woman in a system that has been “de-biased” is notable. In the same way that Saucier [42, p. 56] argues that those in ethnography believe (incorrectly) that “they can attend to social life in the midst of urban decay, the militarization of schools, police brutality,... and the like without coming to terms with the political ontology of blackness,” so to do AI ethics discussions, principles, and frameworks skip over addressing Blackness and antiblackness directly. Indeed, this issue of not tackling antiblackness head-on when considering AI bias and ethics can be seen in the general literature. For example, Jobin et al. [35] gave a picture of the “global landscape” of AI ethics guidelines and principles references in the “justice, fairness, and equity” section of that review, none of those references reference antiblackness (0) and only 14% of those references (9) even provide some discussion on racism or racist policy (and this is with a fairly low bar of providing some discussion or example of race/racism beyond listing the term race alongside other categories that are the result of forms of structural oppression, like gender or ethnicity.) General frameworks that call for the development of systems to mitigate bias (e.g., [36]), or general mapping of ethics debates (e.g., [37]) will continue to fail to adequately address systems of oppression without more directly and explicitly focusing on these systems.

#### Ethical AI discourse is a façade – only serves to stall tech regulations

**OCHIGAME 19** - Rodrigo Ochigame - PhD candidate in science, technology, and society at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and a former researcher of artificial intelligence at the MIT Media Lab, 12-20-2019, "How Big Tech Manipulates Academia to Avoid Regulation," Intercept, https://theintercept.com/2019/12/20/mit-ethical-ai-artificial-intelligence///vi

THE IRONY OF the ethical scandal enveloping Joichi Ito, the former director of the MIT Media Lab, is that he used to lead academic initiatives on ethics. After the revelation of his financial ties to Jeffrey Epstein, the financier charged with sex trafficking underage girls as young as 14, Ito resigned from multiple roles at MIT, a visiting professorship at Harvard Law School, and the boards of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, and the New York Times Company. Many spectators are puzzled by Ito’s influential role as an ethicist of artificial intelligence. Indeed, his initiatives were crucial in establishing the discourse of “ethical AI” that is now ubiquitous in academia and in the mainstream press. In 2016, then-President Barack Obama described him as an “expert” on AI and ethics. Since 2017, Ito financed many projects through the $27 million Ethics and Governance of AI Fund, an initiative anchored by the MIT Media Lab and the Berkman Klein Center for Internet and Society at Harvard University. What was all the talk of “ethics” really about? For 14 months, I worked as a graduate student researcher in Ito’s group on AI ethics at the Media Lab. I stopped on August 15, immediately after Ito published his initial “apology” regarding his ties to Epstein, in which he acknowledged accepting money from the financier both for the Media Lab and for Ito’s outside venture funds. Ito did not disclose that Epstein had, at the time this money changed hands, already pleaded guilty to a child prostitution charge in Florida, or that Ito took numerous steps to hide Epstein’s name from official records, as The New Yorker later revealed. The discourse of “ethical AI” was aligned strategically with a Silicon Valley effort seeking to avoid legally enforceable restrictions of controversial technologies. Inspired by whistleblower Signe Swenson and others who have spoken out, I have decided to report what I came to learn regarding Ito’s role in shaping the field of AI ethics, since this is a matter of public concern. The emergence of this field is a recent phenomenon, as past AI researchers had been largely uninterested in the study of ethics. A former Media Lab colleague recalls that Marvin Minsky, the deceased AI pioneer at MIT, used to say that “an ethicist is someone who has a problem with whatever you have in your mind.” (In recently unsealed court filings, victim Virginia Roberts Giuffre testified that Epstein directed her to have sex with Minsky.) Why, then, did AI researchers suddenly start talking about ethics? At the Media Lab, I learned that the discourse of “ethical AI,” championed substantially by Ito, was aligned strategically with a Silicon Valley effort seeking to avoid legally enforceable restrictions of controversial technologies. A key group behind this effort, with the lab as a member, made policy recommendations in California that contradicted the conclusions of research I conducted with several lab colleagues, research that led us to oppose the use of computer algorithms in deciding whether to jail people pending trial. Ito himself would eventually complain, in private meetings with financial and tech executives, that the group’s recommendations amounted to “whitewashing” a thorny ethical issue. “They water down stuff we try to say to prevent the use of algorithms that don’t seem to work well” in detention decisions, he confided to one billionaire. I also watched MIT help the U.S. military brush aside the moral complexities of drone warfare, hosting a superficial talk on AI and ethics by Henry Kissinger, the former secretary of state and notorious war criminal, and giving input on the U.S. Department of Defense’s “AI Ethics Principles” for warfare, which embraced “permissibly biased” algorithms and which avoided using the word “fairness” because the Pentagon believes “that fights should not be fair.” Ito did not respond to requests for comment. Joichi Ito, director of MIT Media Lab, speaks during a press conference in Tokyo, Japan, on Friday, July 8, 2016. Dentsu Inc., Japan's dominant advertising agency, launched a specialized digital marketing company Dentsu Digtial Inc. today. Photographer: Akio Kon/Bloomberg via Getty ImagesJoichi Ito, then-director of MIT Media Lab, speaks during a press conference in Tokyo on July 8, 2016. Photo: Akio Kon/Bloomberg/Getty Images MIT LENT CREDIBILITY to the idea that big tech could police its own use of artificial intelligence at a time when the industry faced increasing criticism and calls for legal regulation. Just in 2018, there were several controversies: Facebook’s breach of private data on more than 50 million users to a political marketing firm hired by Donald Trump’s presidential campaign, revealed in March 2018; Google’s contract with the Pentagon for computer vision software to be used in combat zones, revealed that same month; Amazon’s sale of facial recognition technology to police departments, revealed in May; Microsoft’s contract with the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement revealed in June; and IBM’s secret collaboration with the New York Police Department for facial recognition and racial classification in video surveillance footage, revealed in September. Under the slogan #TechWontBuildIt, thousands of workers at these firms have organized protests and circulated petitions against such contracts. From #NoTechForICE to #Data4BlackLives, several grassroots campaigns have demanded legal restrictions of some uses of computational technologies (e.g., forbidding the use of facial recognition by police). Meanwhile, corporations have tried to shift the discussion to focus on voluntary “ethical principles,” “responsible practices,” and technical adjustments or “safeguards” framed in terms of “bias” and “fairness” (e.g., requiring or encouraging police to adopt “unbiased” or “fair” facial recognition). In January 2018, Microsoft published its “ethical principles” for AI, starting with “fairness.” In May, Facebook announced its “commitment to the ethical development and deployment of AI” and a tool to “search for bias” called “Fairness Flow.” In June, Google published its “responsible practices” for AI research and development. In September, IBM announced a tool called “AI Fairness 360,” designed to “check for unwanted bias in datasets and machine learning models.” In January 2019, Facebook granted $7.5 million for the creation of an AI ethics center in Munich, Germany. In March, Amazon co-sponsored a $20 million program on “fairness in AI” with the U.S. National Science Foundation. In April, Google canceled its AI ethics council after backlash over the selection of Kay Coles James, the vocally anti-trans president of the right-wing Heritage Foundation. These corporate initiatives frequently cited academic research that Ito had supported, at least partially, through the MIT-Harvard fund. To characterize the corporate agenda, it is helpful to distinguish between three kinds of regulatory possibilities for a given technology: (1) no legal regulation at all, leaving “ethical principles” and “responsible practices” as merely voluntary; (2) moderate legal regulation encouraging or requiring technical adjustments that do not conflict significantly with profits; or (3) restrictive legal regulation curbing or banning deployment of the technology. Unsurprisingly, the tech industry tends to support the first two and oppose the last. The corporate-sponsored discourse of “ethical AI” enables precisely this position. Consider the case of facial recognition. This year, the municipal legislatures of San Francisco, Oakland, and Berkeley — all in California — plus Somerville, Massachusetts, have passed strict bans on facial recognition technology. Meanwhile, Microsoft has lobbied in favor of less restrictive legislation, requiring technical adjustments such as tests for “bias,” most notably in Washington state. Some big firms may even prefer this kind of mild legal regulation over a complete lack thereof, since larger firms can more easily invest in specialized teams to develop systems that comply with regulatory requirements. Thus, Silicon Valley’s vigorous promotion of “ethical AI” has constituted a strategic lobbying effort, one that has enrolled academia to legitimize itself. Ito played a key role in this corporate-academic fraternizing, meeting regularly with tech executives. The MIT-Harvard fund’s initial director was the former “global public policy lead” for AI at Google. Through the fund, Ito and his associates sponsored many projects, including the creation of a prominent conference on “Fairness, Accountability, and Transparency” in computer science; other sponsors of the conference included Google, Facebook, and Microsoft. Although the Silicon Valley lobbying effort has consolidated academic interest in “ethical AI” and “fair algorithms” since 2016, a handful of papers on these topics had appeared in earlier years, even if framed differently. For example, Microsoft computer scientists published the paper that arguably inaugurated the field of “algorithmic fairness” in 2012. In 2016, the paper’s lead author, Cynthia Dwork, became a professor of computer science at Harvard, with simultaneous positions at its law school and at Microsoft. When I took her Harvard course on the mathematical foundations of cryptography and statistics in 2017, I interviewed her and asked how she became interested in researching algorithmic definitions of fairness. In her account, she had long been personally concerned with the issue of discriminatory advertising, but Microsoft managers encouraged her to pursue this line of work because the firm was developing a new system of online advertising, and it would be economically advantageous to provide a service “free of regulatory problems.” (To be fair, I believe that Dwork’s personal intentions were honest despite the corporate capture of her ideas. Microsoft declined to comment for this article.) After the initial steps by MIT and Harvard, many other universities and new institutes received money from the tech industry to work on AI ethics. Most such organizations are also headed by current or former executives of tech firms. For example, the Data & Society Research Institute is directed by a Microsoft researcher and initially funded by a Microsoft grant; New York University’s AI Now Institute was co-founded by another Microsoft researcher and partially funded by Microsoft, Google, and DeepMind; the Stanford Institute for Human-Centered AI is co-directed by a former vice president of Google; University of California, Berkeley’s Division of Data Sciences is headed by a Microsoft veteran; and the MIT Schwarzman College of Computing is headed by a board member of Amazon. During my time at the Media Lab, Ito maintained frequent contact with the executives and planners of all these organizations. Comp-7-for-spot-2-1576795206Illustration: Yoshi Sodeoka for The Intercept BIG TECH MONEY and direction proved incompatible with an honest exploration of ethics, at least judging from my experience with the “Partnership on AI to Benefit People and Society,” a group founded by Microsoft, Google/DeepMind, Facebook, IBM, and Amazon in 2016. PAI, of which the Media Lab is a member, defines itself as a “multistakeholder body” and claims it is “not a lobbying organization.” In an April 2018 hearing at the U.S. House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, the Partnership’s executive director claimed that the organization is merely “a resource to policymakers — for instance, in conducting research that informs AI best practices and exploring the societal consequences of certain AI systems, as well as policies around the development and use of AI systems.” But even if the Partnership’s activities may not meet the legal threshold requiring registration as lobbyists — for example, by seeking to directly affect the votes of individual elected officials — the partnership has certainly sought to influence legislation. For example, in November 2018, the Partnership staff asked academic members to contribute to a collective statement to the Judicial Council of California regarding a Senate bill on penal reform (S.B. 10). The bill, in the course of eliminating cash bail, expanded the use of algorithmic risk assessment in pretrial decision making, and required the Judicial Council to “address the identification and mitigation of any implicit bias in assessment instruments.” The Partnership staff wrote, “we believe there is room to impact this legislation (and CJS [criminal justice system] applications more broadly).” In December 2018, three Media Lab colleagues and I raised serious objections to the Partnership’s efforts to influence legislation. We observed that the Partnership’s policy recommendations aligned consistently with the corporate agenda. In the penal case, our research led us to strongly oppose the adoption of risk assessment tools, and to reject the proposed technical adjustments that would supposedly render them “unbiased” or “fair.” But the Partnership’s draft statement seemed, as a colleague put it in an internal email to Ito and others, to “validate the use of RA [risk assessment] by emphasizing the issue as a technical one that can therefore be solved with better data sets, etc.” A second colleague agreed that the “PAI statement is weak and risks doing exactly what we’ve been warning against re: the risk of legitimation via these industry led regulatory efforts.” A third colleague wrote, “So far as the criminal justice work is concerned, what PAI is doing in this realm is quite alarming and also in my opinion seriously misguided. I agree with Rodrigo that PAI’s association with ACLU, MIT and other academic / non-profit institutions practically ends up serving a legitimating function. Neither ACLU nor MIT nor any non-profit has any power in PAI.” Worse, there seemed to be a mismatch between the Partnership’s recommendations and the efforts of a grassroots coalition of organizations fighting jail expansion, including the movement Black Lives Matter, the prison abolitionist group Critical Resistance (where I have volunteered), and the undocumented and queer/trans youth-led Immigrant Youth Coalition. The grassroots coalition argued, “The notion that any risk assessment instrument can account for bias ignores the racial disparities in current and past policing practices.” There are abundant theoretical and empirical reasons to support this claim, since risk assessments are typically based on data of arrests, convictions, or incarcerations, all of which are poor proxies for individual behaviors or predispositions. The coalition continued, “Ultimately, risk-assessment tools create a feedback-loop of racial profiling, pre-trial detention and conviction. A person’s freedom should not be reduced to an algorithm.” By contrast, the Partnership’s statement focused on “minimum requirements for responsible deployment,” spanning such topics as “validity and data sampling bias, bias in statistical predictions; choice of the appropriate targets for prediction; human-computer interaction questions; user training; policy and governance; transparency and review; reproducibility, process, and recordkeeping; and post-deployment evaluation.” To be sure, the Partnership staff did respond to criticism of the draft by noting in the final version of the statement that “within PAI’s membership and the wider AI community, many experts further suggest that individuals can never justly be detained on the basis of their risk assessment score alone, without an individualized hearing.” This meek concession — admitting that it might not be time to start imprisoning people based strictly on software, without input from a judge or any other “individualized” judicial process — was easier to make because none of the major firms in the Partnership sell risk assessment tools for pretrial decision-making; not only is the technology too controversial but also the market is too small. (Facial recognition technology, on the other hand, has a much larger market in which Microsoft, Google, Facebook, IBM, and Amazon all operate.) In December 2018, my colleagues and I urged Ito to quit the Partnership. I argued, “If academic and nonprofit organizations want to make a difference, the only viable strategy is to quit PAI, make a public statement, and form a counter alliance.” Then a colleague proposed, “there are many other organizations which are doing much more substantial and transformative work in this area of predictive analytics in criminal justice — what would it look like to take the money we currently allocate in supporting PAI in order to support their work?” We believed Ito had enough autonomy to do so because the MIT-Harvard fund was supported largely by the Knight Foundation, even though most of the money came from tech investors Pierre Omidyar, founder of eBay, via the Omidyar Network, and Reid Hoffman, co-founder of LinkedIn and Microsoft board member. I wrote, “If tens of millions of dollars from nonprofit foundations and individual donors are not enough to allow us to take a bold position and join the right side, I don’t know what would be.” (Omidyar funds The Intercept.) It is strange that Ito, with no formal training, became positioned as an “expert” on AI ethics, a field that barely existed before 2017. Ito did acknowledge the problem. He had just received a message from David M. Siegel, co-chair of the hedge fund Two Sigma and member of the MIT Corporation. Siegel proposed a self-regulatory structure for “search and social media” firms in Silicon Valley, modeled after the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, or FINRA, a private corporation that serves as a self-regulatory organization for securities firms on Wall Street. Ito responded to Siegel’s proposal, “I don’t feel civil society is well represented in the industry groups. We’ve been participating in Partnership in AI and they water down stuff we try to say to prevent the use of algorithms that don’t seem to work well like risk scores for pre-trial bail. I think that with personal data and social media, I have concerns with self-regulation. For example, a full blown genocide [of the Rohingya, a mostly Muslim minority group in Myanmar] happened using What’s App and Facebook knew it was happening.” (Facebook has admitted that its platform was used to incite violence in Myanmar; news reports have documented how content on the Facebook platform facilitated a genocide in the country despite repeated warnings to Facebook executives from human rights activists and researchers. Facebook texting service WhatsApp made it harder for its users to forward messages after WhatsApp was reportedly used to spread misinformation during elections in India.) But the corporate-academic alliances were too robust and convenient. The Media Lab remained in the Partnership, and Ito continued to fraternize with Silicon Valley and Wall Street executives and investors. Ito described Siegel, a billionaire, as a “potential funder.” With such people, I saw Ito routinely express moral concerns about their businesses — but in a friendly manner, as he was simultaneously asking them for money, whether for MIT or his own venture capital funds. For corporate-academic “ethicists,” amicable criticism can serve as leverage for entering into business relationships. Siegel replied to Ito, “I would be pleased to speak more on this topic with you. Finra is not an industry group. It’s just paid for by industry. I will explain more when we meet. I agree with your concerns.” In private meetings, Ito and tech executives discussed the corporate lobby quite frankly. In January, my colleagues and I joined a meeting with Mustafa Suleyman, founding co-chair of the Partnership and co-founder of DeepMind, an AI startup acquired by Google for about $500 million in 2014. In the meeting, Ito and Suleyman discussed how the promotion of “AI ethics” had become a “whitewashing” effort, although they claimed their initial intentions had been nobler. In a message to plan the meeting, Ito wrote to my colleagues and me, “I do know, however, from speaking to Mustafa when he was setting up PAI that he was meaning for the group to be much more substantive and not just ‘white washing.’ I think it’s just taking the trajectory that these things take.” (Suleyman did not respond to requests for comment.) REGARDLESS OF INDIVIDUAL actors’ intentions, the corporate lobby’s effort to shape academic research was extremely successful. There is now an enormous amount of work under the rubric of “AI ethics.” To be fair, some of the research is useful and nuanced, especially in the humanities and social sciences. But the majority of well-funded work on “ethical AI” is aligned with the tech lobby’s agenda: to voluntarily or moderately adjust, rather than legally restrict, the deployment of controversial technologies. How did five corporations, using only a small fraction of their budgets, manage to influence and frame so much academic activity, in so many disciplines, so quickly? It is strange that Ito, with no formal training, became positioned as an “expert” on AI ethics, a field that barely existed before 2017. But it is even stranger that two years later, respected scholars in established disciplines have to demonstrate their relevance to a field conjured by a corporate lobby. UNITED STATES - APRIL 17: Eric Schmidt, Chairman of the Defense Innovation Board, takes his seat for the House Armed Services Committee hearing on "Promoting DOD's Culture of Innovation" on Tuesday, April 17, 2018. (Photo By Bill Clark/CQ Roll Call)Former Google CEO Eric Schmidt, now chair of the Department of Defense’s Defense Innovation Board, takes his seat for the House Armed Services Committee hearing on “Promoting DOD’s Culture of Innovation” on April 17, 2018. Photo: Bill Clark/CQ Roll Call/Getty Images The field has also become relevant to the U.S. military, not only in official responses to moral concerns about technologies of targeted killing but also in disputes among Silicon Valley firms over lucrative military contracts. On November 1, the Department of Defense’s innovation board published its recommendations for “AI Ethics Principles.” The board is chaired by Eric Schmidt, who was the executive chair of Alphabet, Google’s parent company, when Obama’s defense secretary Ashton B. Carter established the board and appointed him in 2016. According to ProPublica, “Schmidt’s influence, already strong under Carter, only grew when [James] Mattis arrived as [Trump’s] defense secretary.” The board includes multiple executives from Google, Microsoft, and Facebook, raising controversies regarding conflicts of interest. A Pentagon employee responsible for policing conflicts of interest was removed from the innovation board after she challenged “the Pentagon’s cozy relationship not only with [Amazon CEO Jeff] Bezos, but with Google’s Eric Schmidt.” This relationship is potentially lucrative for big tech firms: The AI ethics recommendations appeared less than a week after the Pentagon awarded a $10 billion cloud-computing contract to Microsoft, which is being legally challenged by Amazon. The majority of well-funded work on “ethical AI” is aligned with the tech lobby’s agenda: to voluntarily or moderately adjust, rather than legally restrict, the deployment of controversial technologies. The recommendations seek to compel the Pentagon to increase military investments in AI and to adopt “ethical AI” systems such as those developed and sold by Silicon Valley firms. The innovation board calls the Pentagon a “deeply ethical organization” and offers to extend its “existing ethics framework” to AI. To this end, the board cites the AI ethics research groups at Google, Microsoft, and IBM, as well as academics sponsored by the MIT-Harvard fund. However, there are caveats. For example, the board notes that although “the term ‘fairness’ is often cited in the AI community,” the recommendations avoid this term because of “the DoD mantra that fights should not be fair, as DoD aims to create the conditions to maintain an unfair advantage over any potential adversaries.” Thus, “some applications will be permissibly and justifiably biased,” specifically “to target certain adversarial combatants more successfully.” The Pentagon’s conception of AI ethics forecloses many important possibilities for moral deliberation, such as the prohibition of drones for targeted killing. The corporate, academic, and military proponents of “ethical AI” have collaborated closely for mutual benefit. For example, Ito told me that he informally advised Schmidt on which academic AI ethicists Schmidt’s private foundation should fund. Once, Ito even asked me for second-order advice on whether Schmidt should fund a certain professor who, like Ito, later served as an “expert consultant” to the Pentagon’s innovation board. In February, Ito joined Carter at a panel titled “Computing for the People: Ethics and AI,” which also included current and former executives of Microsoft and Google. The panel was part of the inaugural celebration of MIT’s $1 billion college dedicated to AI. Other speakers at the celebration included Schmidt on “Computing for the Marketplace,” Siegel on “How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love Algorithms,” and Henry Kissinger on “How the Enlightenment Ends.” As Kissinger declared the possibility of “a world relying on machines powered by data and algorithms and ungoverned by ethical or philosophical norms,” a protest outside the MIT auditorium called attention to Kissinger’s war crimes in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos, as well as his support of war crimes elsewhere. In the age of automated targeting, what atrocities will the U.S. military justify as governed by “ethical” norms or as executed by machines beyond the scope of human agency and culpability? No defensible claim to “ethics” can sidestep the urgency of legally enforceable restrictions to the deployment of technologies of mass surveillance and systemic violence. Until such restrictions exist, moral and political deliberation about computing will remain subsidiary to the profit-making imperative expressed by the Media Lab’s motto, “Deploy or Die.” While some deploy, even if ostensibly “ethically,” others die.

#### The aff’s notion of “ethical/objective” AI is the reproduction of the dominant paradigms of whiteness that reinforce US imperialism and racial tropes of blackness.

**Katz 20** – Yarden Katz is a fellow at the Department of Systems Biology at Harvard University, and they received their PhD in cognitive sciences from MIT. (Yarden Katz, “Artificial Whiteness: Politics and Ideology in Artificial Intelligence”, Columbia University Press, New York, 2020, ISBN: 9780231551076) || PZ

THE SHIFTING NEBULOSITY OF WHITENESS The racial imagery we have encountered in AI discourse tends to be unstable. The rhetoric used by Feigenbaum and McCorduck in the early 1980s to describe a feminized and racialized Japanese “enemy,” for instance, would be less palatable today. And Feigenbaum’s declaration to the U.S. Congress that his nation must lead the world in AI, for it is the “manifest destiny of computing,” probably would not be the choice phrase for contemporary experts.15 Likewise, Herbert Simon and Allen Newell’s early 1970s hierarchical depiction of “culture”— where “student” is placed above “worker” and “hippie,” and where U.S. culture sits above that of the “French” and “Chinese”— would at best seem out of touch.16 This type of change is characteristic of the racial sciences, whose offerings have always been a moving target. As Nell Irvin Painter has observed, theorists of race such as Johann F. Blumenbach had to “walk a tightrope of contradictions” as they produced incoherent accounts of racial difference.17 And the theories rapidly changed. Blumenbach’s late eighteenth- century definition of the “five races” is long expired, for example, as is the account of the “eight races” embraced by W. E. B. Du Bois in the nineteenth century.18 By now, attempts to ground race using anthropometrics are similarly out of fashion in mainstream science.19 The instability of the racial sciences demonstrates the shaky epistemic footing of theories of racial difference. But the instability also shows how nebulous whiteness is in that it can draw on the changing and contradictory fruits of the racial sciences. And the racial sciences are merely one component of the “makeshift patchwork” (as Cedric Robinson termed it) that is used to perpetuate white supremacy in response to new challenges and social conditions.20 American history offers many glimpses into the makeshift patchwork, and with it, the nebulous character of whiteness. The Naturalization Law of 1790 admitted only “free white” persons into the colonies, but such unspecified whiteness had to be revised after the large influx of Irish and Eastern European migrants— who were considered a “lesser” shade of white than the English colonists. This eventually led to what Matthew Frye Jacobson has called “the fracturing of whiteness”: a condition where “whiteness itself would become newly problematic and, in some quarters, lose its monolithic character.”21 Americans of Japanese origin who sought citizenship on grounds of being “white” were rejected for not being “Caucasian”; migrants from India who claimed citizenship because they were deemed “Caucasian” by anthropologists were rejected for not being “white.” The appearance of Arab migrants, too, threw a wrench in attempts to ground whiteness.22 Changing social and economic conditions meant that the instruments and logics that determined whiteness also had to change. To grasp whiteness, then, is not a matter of looking for its essence in any particular theory of race, but rather seeing how its ideological flexibility works to serve political interests. In the latter part of the seventeenth century the colony of Virginia’s slave codes repeatedly redefined whiteness using a calculus of capitalist and imperial interests. As more Africans were kidnapped into slavery and the supply of European indentured labor decreased, these codes helped to sustain the system of African slave labor.23 For example, these laws instated that blacks who convert to Christianity would remain enslaved— a deviation from English law at the time, which forbade enslavement of Christians. There were other peculiar deviations from English law.24 By English convention, citizenship passed through the father, yet Virginia adopted a rule where children born to enslaved women remain in bondage. As the notion of American whiteness congealed, such rules implicitly answered the question of whether mixed children could be “white,” but did so in a way that helped slaveholders expand their labor force by exploiting black women’s reproductive labor (and while sanctioning the rape of enslaved women by white men). Yet these dictates of whiteness were inconsistent, as they often are, across race and gender lines: white women, by comparison, faced fines and potential jail time for giving birth to a “mulatto” child. A variety of relations between whites and blacks were similarly punished by law, partly to repress cross- racial rebellions.25 In settler- colonialist societies, additional considerations go into the contradictory making of whiteness. While the onedrop- of- blood rule made one “black” in the eyes of the law— as conducive to maintaining the supply of unfree labor— Native Americans often had to meet a more stringent criterion based on “blood quantum” in order to count as “Indian” for the U.S. government.26 This did not mean, of course, that Native Americans became fully “white” with respect to privilege and social standing, but rather that the settler- colonialist impulse to erase indigenous peoples, or violently assimilate them into white society, was the prevailing consideration— and that this was a distinct logic from that applied to enslaved Africans.27 These are some of the contingencies and contradictions that go into the making of whiteness. As Charles Mills has observed, racial categories are thus simultaneously “unreal,” in that they lack the solid grounding in phenotypic features such as light skin, and “real,” in that racial categories have “a massive effect on people’s psychology, culture, socioeconomic opportunities, life chances, civil rights.”28 The all too real consequences of whiteness come from its connection to concrete systems of power. From colonial America to the present, whiteness has been intertwined with capitalist conceptions of property inscribed into law. One’s whiteness functions as property in American law, as Cheryl Harris has argued.29 Harris’s breathtaking explication of whiteness as property begins with the phenomenon of blacks “passing” as whites. She recounts the story of her own grandmother, who, owing to a combination of phenotype and circumstance, could “pass” as white in her workplace in Chicago in the 1930s. At the time, this gained Harris’s grandmother access to an economic opportunity (though at incalculable psychological cost) denied to women perceived as black. Passing shows the artificiality of whiteness. Yet it also demonstrates the tangible rewards conferred by being seen as “white,” which historically include the right to vote, own property, work, and choose where to live and whom to marry. There are also less tangible, though still protected by law, elements to whiteness. These include the expectation of certain futures and the right to one’s reputation as a white person: in court rulings from as late as the 1950s, calling a “white” person “black” was considered defamation; the reverse clearly not.30 By protecting these rights and expectations, American law has reinstated whites’ “property interest” in whiteness— an interest predicated on the right to exclude others.31 How American law deals with whiteness has changed in response to popular struggle, but as Harris notes, “property interest in whiteness has proven to be resilient and adaptive to new conditions.” Calls for affirmative action, for example, have challenged the notion that societies built on white supremacy can be made just by simply removing the most overt forms of discrimination. These efforts were contested in court by whites who saw affirmative action as “reverse discrimination.” As Harris has argued, by siding with white plaintiffs and rejecting affirmative action in key instances, the courts have effectively defended white privilege. For instance, in admission to graduate schools, courts have defended the expectation of whites to be privileged over nonwhites by identifying certain criteria of “merit,” such as standardized test scores, as neutral while ignoring alternatives.32 These moves cement the notion that the law must protect the expectation of whites, as a group, to dominate educational institutions. White supremacy can therefore be defended by adopting more abstract, ostensibly nonracialized, criteria of “merit.” Indeed, while the right to exclude persists in all of forms of white supremacy— from colonial America to affirmative action cases in the 1970s— the manifestations of this right and its justifications have changed. As many have recognized, then, whiteness as an ideology cannot be stably grounded in any specific racial account because whiteness is empty. “Whiteness, alone,” Toni Morrison wrote, “is mute, meaningless, unfathomable, pointless, frozen, veiled, curtained, dreaded, senseless, implacable.”33 Whiteness gets its significance, and its changing shape, only from the need to maintain relations of power. AI reproduces this quality of whiteness. MIMICKING WHITENESS IN FORM We have seen how AI is a tool that serves the dominant aims of white supremacy. In that sense, it is not unlike financial and legal instruments, which are also used to reinforce white supremacy. But there is more to the linkage between AI and whiteness: AI can perform its service so well partly because it mimics the structure of whiteness as an ideology. Like the ideology of whiteness, AI has been a nebulous, moving target from its inception. From the moment the label “AI” was coined, its boundaries were unstable. What counts as AI has repeatedly changed, as we have seen, and attempts to ground AI in technical terms, along a set of epistemic considerations or even scientific goals, could never keep this endeavor together. There is, however, strong continuity to different iterations of “AI,” but it does not lie in the axes that cognitive scientists, philosophers, and AI practitioners have typically focused on. Continuity arises, instead, from the ways in which AI is situated and justified. As we saw in chapter 1, AI was continually remade to be that which can serve empire. This resulted in narratives that recur across different periods in striking detail. Whether it was as part of imperial competition with Japan in the 1980s or with China in the 2010s, the “magical chip” narrative— according to which the latest hardware would enable AI’s promised breakthrough— has been steadily rehearsed. Likewise, the use of AI as a pretext to advance capitalist visions of society and thwart alternatives has been a fixture of AI expert commentary (as we saw in chapter 2). In every iteration, we find the practice of situating AI within capitalist and imperialist agendas. AI’s iterations did vary significantly in epistemic terms, and these differences played into AI’s political functions. Each iteration brought distinct models of the self, which came with somewhat different implications about what it means to know, as well as about the roles AI practitioners would play in society. In the dominant narratives of the 1960s and 1970s, for example, the self was an agent in pursuit of rational goals whose inner processing was captured by symbolic representations (exemplified by Newell and Simon’s work). Later, when expert systems became the celebrated form of AI, the dominant epistemic myths still revolved around human intelligence and knowledge as a form of symbolic processing. Expert systems also came with a specific notion of “expertise.” Knowledge was to be elicited from “domain experts” by yet another set of knowledge- encoding (or “knowledge representation”) experts, while AI practitioners were in charge of building the platforms that knowledge- encoding experts use. AI practitioners were also expected to “train” the knowledge- encoding experts; to help knowledge encoders elicit knowledge from domain experts. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, neural networks— which weren’t even considered “AI” by early practitioners— became AI’s centerpieces and brought rather different fictions about the self. The self of this period was a radically empiricist machine. Since knowledge was now to be learned from data, the knowledgeencoding experts of AI’s prior iterations weren’t necessary. AI practitioners themselves also had a different role now. Their primary task was no longer to design computing platforms for encoding rich knowledge but rather to set the conditions for machines to “learn” it from data in tabula rasa fashion (a framing that shares much with neoliberal economic theory). At a technical level, their task was largely to choose a computational architecture, decide what counts as data, and train the architecture until it produced the behavior of interest. In this framing, experts were merely creating the conditions for a computational process that was supposedly independent of them— and even surpassed human capacities. Although different in all these ways, every iteration of AI consistently brought models of the self that were racialized, classed, and gendered, and predicated on the same major epistemic forgeries (like the aspiration to a “view from nowhere,” as we saw in chapter 3). The salient point, then, is that while different epistemic tenets and computing systems were repackaged as “AI” and others pushed out, the endeavor has rather stably served an imperial and capitalist agenda (as with the ideology of whiteness). But as with the ideology of whiteness, AI had to be adapted to new social conditions and struggles against oppression. The rebranding of AI in the 2010s, as we saw, helped to divert attention from a confrontation with mass surveillance and a backlash against Silicon Valley’s neoliberal visions of data- driven world governance. In this period, “AI” became a new gloss for familiar computing systems and projects, such as building platforms of behavior modification and control. Models of the self, informed by these political projects, were being served: the self as a connectionist machine, not unlike prior iterations of AI, but also an explicitly behaviorist conception of “intelligence” as the product of environmental rewards and punishments. The rebranded AI’s experts, like their predecessors in the 1980s, offered narratives about how AI would enable a capitalist utopia and presented mastery of AI as crucial to imperial hegemony. But the rebranded AI also gave rise to “critical AI experts” that speak of social justice (which we will encounter again later in this chapter). In this recent shift, AI continues to serve the same agendas, but with a progressive veneer; an example of its adaptability. As with the ideology of whiteness, this adaptability is enabled by AI’s plastic character and incoherence. Put differently, who counts as “white” and how “nonwhites” stand in relation to “whites,” historically, cannot be reduced to any given theory of the racial sciences, let alone simple phenotypic features, since whiteness bends to political and economic agendas that vary across contexts. Similarly, what has counted as “AI” historically cannot be reduced to any technical or epistemic account of computing systems divorced from the machinations of empire and capital. The latter mirrors the nebulous character of the former, and in both cases the nebulosity is used to advance the same tangible projects of empire and capital. This gives AI the “unreal- yet- real” aspect that is characteristic of racial categories. AI is unreal because it is nebulous, unstable, lacking in solid grounding, and continually redefined by powerful interests in ways that seem arbitrary. Yet it is real in that it is part of concrete, destructive practices. As we have seen, the nebulous- sounding initiatives around AI in fact support global projects of dispossession and land accumulation.

**The aff’s invocation of “objective” globalized AI is rooted in the technological project of white empire building that seeks to dominate security discourse into racially insular spheres .**

**Katz 20** – Yarden Katz is a fellow at the Department of Systems Biology at Harvard University, and they received their PhD in cognitive sciences from MIT. (Yarden Katz, “Artificial Whiteness: Politics and Ideology in Artificial Intelligence”, Columbia University Press, New York, 2020, ISBN: 9780231551076) || PZ

THE WHITE VOICE OF AI EXPERTS The unreal character of AI has also made it, like whiteness, prone to breakdowns— occasions where the incoherence surfaces. But in AI’s case, these moments are often exaggerated. As one commentator observed during the 1980s, “AI refuses to die.”34 AI persists, in part, because it captures the aspirations of the still very white expert class that reconfigures it in the service of empire and capital. In the experts’ professional milieu, AI can be invoked with little to no explanation because it shares the unstated premises of whiteness. That AI is nebulous to the point of emptiness is invisible, along with the premises of whiteness generally, to those who are invested in it. Raymond Lawrence (“Boots”) Riley’s film Sorry to Bother You (2018) brings out some of these premises of whiteness and their intimate ties to capitalism. The film’s protagonist, Cassius (“Cash”) Green, who is black, finds work at a telemarketing center. An older black colleague offers Cash some friendly advice: if you want to sell things over the phone, use your “white voice.” The colleague explains: “It’s not about sounding all nasal. It’s about sounding like you don’t have a care. Like your bills are paid and you’re happy about your future. . . . Breezy, like you don’t need this money, like you never been fired, only laid off.”35 The white voice, as the film brilliantly demonstrates, is a politically useful fiction, not an imitation of any white person’s voice. As Cash’s colleague says, “It’s not what all White people sound like— there ain’t no real White voice, but it’s what they wish they sounded like. It’s what they think they’re supposed to sound like.” The white voice merely stands for what whiteness as an ideology promises to those who think they can climb up the ladder of privilege. Robin D. G. Kelley notes that this voice rests on an expectation: “Like whiteness itself, the white voice is a chimera, masking a specific class position and conveying a sense of being genuinely worry free, with no bills to pay, money in the bank, not a care in the world. This is the expectation of whiteness— an expectation many white people never, in fact, realize.”36 A white voice dominates the expert discourse on AI. This voice tries to instill order by appealing to the expectation of whiteness. It instructs that the latest technology may be harnessed either for “our” universal good or for ill, and thus “we” have a rational choice to make about our future— a potentially marvelous future in which “our” problems are fixed by technical means through consultation with the appropriate state, military, and corporate “stakeholders.” The white voice can be heard in statements such as these: • “We have tried to promote an optimistic view of AI as an activity with positive economic and social impacts even for low- budget countries or groups.”37 • “[AI has] extraordinary potential upsides, from reducing worldwide energy consumption and addressing climate change . . . we still have an opportunity to influence the design and use of these tools for good.”38 • “[The] AI- driven economy would not only eliminate stress and drudgery and produce an abundance of everything we want today, but it would also supply a bounty of wonderful new products.”39 • “AI can make our legal systems more fair and efficient if we can figure out how to make robojudges transparent and unbiased. . . . [These could] treat everyone equally, transparently applying the law in truly unbiased fashion.”40 • “[AI] is changing the world before our eyes. Once the province of science fiction, we now carry systems powered by AI in our pockets and wear them on our wrists. Vehicles on the market can now drive themselves, diagnostic systems determine what is ailing us, and risk assessment algorithms increasingly decide whether we are jailed or set free after being charged with a crime.”41 • “The promise of AI to improve our lives is enormous. . . . Automated hiring systems promise to evaluate job candidates on the basis of their bona fide qualifications, rather than on qualities such as age or appearance that often lead human decision- makers astray.”42 • “AI will underpin our future prosperity. . . . This is only the start; the potential of AI is undeniable. . . . AI [could] free up time and raise productivity.”43 • “So what career advice should we give our kids? I’m encouraging mine to go into professions that machines are currently bad at, and therefore seem unlikely to get automated in the near future.”44 • “AI may lift us into a new kind of existence, where our humanity will be not only preserved but also enhanced in ways we can hardly imagine.”45 All these commentaries suggest that “AI” can bring a wonderful future whose direction everyone can shape, thus encapsulating the expectation of whiteness and the reassuring quality of the white voice. The white voice here also reveals the intended audience. It is mostly professional elites who would accept the notion that the latest techno- product could be put to “everyone’s” future benefit by networked leaders from the corporate, academic, and military- state worlds. To speculate on the management of these AI- based futures is to speak in the white voice. There is real investment in the continued dominance of the white voice. Through the web of partnerships and initiatives we encountered in chapter 2, the commentators quoted are invested in the idea of AI as a coherent and transformative force that they can manage and interpret. Funds, media attention, university curricula, academic publications, and policy reports all rest on this notion— hence the investment. The investment in AI can be seen as part of what George Lipsitz has called the “possessive investment” in whiteness.46 Like Du Bois and Harris, Lipsitz noted that there are tangible rewards to individuals who cling to their whiteness, possessing it like property. Leaving “AI” unscrutinized as commentators across the spectrum do pays off, and the white voice continues to dominate. The white voice within AI, as in other discourses, can be interrupted when whiteness itself is challenged. Many whites are unable to withstand such challenges, a condition Robin DiAngelo has termed “white fragility.” White fragility is the anger, defensiveness, and frustration that “racial stress” triggers in whites; stress that can be induced by simply naming structures of white privilege that are meant to be invisible. Identifying whiteness is jarring because of the widespread assumption that being white means having an “unracialized identity or location.” Whiteness, as DiAngelo pointed out, “is not recognized or named” because it is presumed to be “a universal reference point.”47 In the white voice of AI commentary, the pretense to universality is obvious, and the idea of “universal” intelligence has been one of AI’s major epistemic forgeries. Yet interruptions of white universality are rare, whether in AI or elsewhere, because, as DiAngelo writes, many whites inhabit “racially insular” environments where interlocutors who could “racialize” white people’s understandings and experiences are absent. The discourse on AI has likewise developed within such racially insular spheres, and so the white voice of AI expertise generally goes uninterrupted. In cases where AI has been challenged, however, the critics were often met with contempt, demonstrating AI’s white fragility. Even critiques of the concept of AI on narrow grounds provoked extreme defensiveness from practitioners and were sometimes recorded in AI’s histories as moments of crisis. As we saw previously, when the mathematician James Lighthill— who thought “the general purpose robot is a mirage”— challenged AI’s coherence as a field, he was met with derision, and practitioners blamed later funding shortages for AI on his critique. More general critiques, such as those offered by the philosopher Hubert Dreyfus— which we will revisit in the next chapter— were met with even greater hostility. Dreyfus was said to be merely validating “his passionately held preconceptions,” of engaging in an “infra dig” quest to “discredit” the AI community, and prominent practitioners have broadly accused critics of using “arguments of emotion” or having “animosity” toward the field of AI.48 But while these critiques evoked great hostility, they weren’t grounded in the understanding of AI as a technology of whiteness. To challenge AI as a technology of whiteness means taking seriously how its nebulous and shifting character serves power. This entails not only challenging AI’s models of the self and their epistemic forgeries but also the legitimacy of the expert industry that gives the pursuit of AI its destructive powers and superficial coherence. Challenging, in other words, the institutions that sustain the endeavor.

## FEM – link

#### The aff attempt to embrace vulnerability is an attempt at blurring the relationship between the personal and the political

**Alison Phipps 21**  - gender studies scholar and feminist theorist, who is a professor of sociology at Newcastle University's School of Geography, Politics and Sociology, University Of Sussex, Ukcorresponding Author, 1-19-2021, "White tears, white rage: Victimhood and (as) violence in mainstream feminism," SAGE Journals, https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1367549420985852//vi

The ‘wounded attachments’ of political whiteness In her 1995 book States of Injury, Wendy Brown argued that progressive movements tended to coalesce around ‘wounded identities’ that demanded recognition and protection, whether from hate speech, harassment or violence. For Brown (1995: 55), such politics not only reified said identities but ontologised trauma, producing a ‘politics of recrimination and rancor’ with deep investments in victimisation and suffering. Second-wave feminism in particular, Brown argued, had instantiated ‘woman’ as an identity based on injury. She interpreted feminist consciousness-raising and the ‘speak out’ as akin to Foucault’s (1978) ‘modern confessional’ in their production of accounts that could be appropriated by punitive (and therapeutic) state governmentalities. Solidifying the ‘truth’ of women’s experience through ‘speaking out’, she contended, was not necessarily liberation (Brown 1995: 42). As I have argued elsewhere (Phipps, 2019), the ‘wounded attachments’ Brown attributed to feminism are likely to be those of middle-class whiteness, given the domination of both first and second waves of mainstream feminism by bourgeois white women (such as myself) (Ware, 1992: 18). By ‘mainstream feminism’, I largely mean Anglo-American public feminism. This includes media feminism (and some forms of social media feminism), institutional feminism, corporate feminism and policy feminism. This is not a cohesive and unified movement, but it has clear directions and effects. Building on HoSang (2010), I call the modus operandi of this feminism ‘political whiteness’. This goes beyond the implicitly or explicitly ‘whites first’ orientation of most politics dominated by white people: it has a complex affective landscape involving attachments to the self (often the wounded self) and to power (often in the form of the state). These attachments produce a number of dynamics: narcissism, alertness to threat (which in white women’s case is often sexualised), and an accompanying need for control. Political whiteness characterises both mainstream feminism and the backlash against it, as they ‘battle it out’ (Banet-Weiser, 2018: 1) on the contemporary cultural stage. Victimhood is central to these battles (Banet-Weiser, 2018: 4). Women’s sexual victimisation has been at the forefront of recent mainstream feminist campaigns, exemplified by actions such as the Women’s March as well as the viral iteration of #MeToo. Responding to this, the backlash has been preoccupied with who the real victims are. One of its central claims is that ‘feminism has gone too far’ (Nicholas and Aguis, 2017: 31), and that men are now fearful because harmless touching has been defined as abuse. These narratives are bolstered by broader stories of white victimhood which have underpinned Brexit, the election of Trump, and the elevation of other far-right figures and parties worldwide (Corredor, 2019). Crying ‘white-lady tears’ On International Men’s Day 2019, Good Morning Britain host Piers Morgan broadcast a monologue comparing middle-class white men to endangered rhinos. ‘Yes, we do need a day’, he said. ‘We are now the most downtrodden group of men in the world’. Assertions such as this, from the heart of the backlash, have been given short shrift by white feminists who often use the idiom of ‘male tears’. In 2014, writer Jessica Valenti tweeted a picture of herself wearing a T-shirt with the slogan: I BATHE IN MALE TEARS (Phipps, 2020: 69). However, white feminists have been slower to acknowledge our own tendency to be lachrymose, which is often an attempt to avoid accountability in response to criticism by women of colour. Historically, bourgeois white women’s power has been based on ideas of virtue and goodness (Ware, 1992: 37–38): as Hamad (2019: 105) argues, this makes being criticised for bad behaviour deeply threatening. White women can also be so invested in our oppression as women that we resist addressing our privilege as white (Accapadi, 2007: 208). Robin di Angelo (2011: 57) argues that white people in general exist in a state of fragility ‘in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering defensive moves’. di Angelo has been critiqued for her individualised focus on selfimprovement rather than structural change (Jackson, 2019). However, an understanding of whiteness as the performance of structural supremacy still involves fragility, whether this is the angry brittleness of hegemonic white masculinity or the ‘delicacy’ of white bourgeois femininity (the source of its power). If anger is the main expression of white power in a masculine register, tears are its feminine equivalent. ‘Tear’, as a both a noun and a verb, has multiple meanings: bourgeois white womanhood both tears (in the sense of becoming torn or damaged), and consequently tears (in the sense of tearing up), easily. This ‘damsel in distress’ evokes a protective response: and simultaneously, colonial archetypes of people of colour as aggressive and frightening come into play. This is the pretext on which white men, enraged, tear the place apart. Hamad (2019: 105) terms this Strategic White Womanhood, a historical dynamic which endures in the contemporary, in various forms. She recounts a relevant incident in 2018 involving Cambridge professors Mary Beard and Priyamvada Gopal. Beard was challenged by Gopal and others over a tweet she had posted on allegations of sexual abuse by Oxfam staff in Haiti and elsewhere. ‘I do wonder how hard it must be to sustain civilised values in a war zone’, it said. In response to criticism, Beard tweeted a picture of herself crying; afterwards, Gopal in particular was the target of racist attacks (Hamad 2019: 102–105). For Hamad (2019: 25, 229), this exemplifies the abusive relationship women of colour have with white womanhood. When the going gets tough, she argues, white women ‘turn their sanctioned victim status’ on women of colour. While privileged white women bathe in male tears, women of colour can drown in ours. Our sanctioned victim status shields privileged white women from accountability in interpersonal interactions and in the political sphere. In her discussion of the 2017 Women’s March, Brittney Cooper (2018: 182) highlighted exit polls that found 53 percent of white women voted for Trump, compared to 94 percent of Black women who voted for Clinton (despite their reservations). Watching white women protest Trump’s election, she wrote, when we were partly responsible for it, felt like ‘an exercise in whitelady tears if I ever saw one’. Read in a structural way, the Women’s March could be seen as an action that hid white women’s complicity in Trump’s success (Phipps, 2020: 120) – in Hamad’s terms, Strategic White Womanhood writ large. Phipps 85 In May 2019, Theresa May wept outside 10 Downing Street as she resigned the UK premiership. These tears did political work, creating amnesia in some quarters over May’s record as Prime Minister, and previously as Home Secretary. Perhaps most strikingly, domestic abuse charity Women’s Aid posted a (subsequently deleted) tweet thanking May for her service to women and survivors. This prompted a critical response: prior to her resignation, May had failed to guarantee that women’s refuges would not close as part of an overhaul of supported housing. In 2015, she had been accused of allowing ‘state-sanctioned’ rape and abuse of vulnerable migrant women at the Yarl’s Wood detention centre. Her government presided over the rollout of Universal Credit, the punitive benefits system that has made it more difficult for women to leave abusive relationships. It appeared that, for some, May’s tears washed these acts out of the picture (Phipps, 2020: 70). haunting photo. Whatever you think about Theresa May's record as prime minister, it's impossible not to feel sorry for her as a person’.3 This attempt to separate the personal and political is central to white women’s tears as a strategic device. We demand to be treated as ‘just a person’ who should be granted the benefit of the doubt, who exists outside racialised structures and power relations even as our actions perpetuate them. However, while privileged white feminists deny the relationship between the personal and the political in response to critique, in our own theory and politics this relationship (and in particular, our own personal experience or that of women like us) takes centre stage. This is more than just hypocrisy; it is white supremacy. Whether we deny or emphasise the relationship between the personal and political, white women’s tears enable us to centre ourselves and marginalise women of colour. In an article on #MeToo, Jamilah Lemieux (2017) commented, ‘white women know how to be victims. They know just how to bleed and weep in the public square, they fundamentally understand that they are entitled to sympathy’. Lemieux was not claiming the disclosures of #MeToo were not genuine; she was highlighting the power brought to mainstream feminism by the power of white women’s tears. White-lady tears, to use Cooper’s phrase: bourgeois white women’s tears are the ultimate symbol of femininity, evoking the damsel in distress and the mourning, lamenting women of myth (Phipps, 2020: 71). It is likely that this power is not fully accessible to working-class white women, who are often figures of classed disgust (Tyler, 2008). While it might date back to the ancients, the power of bourgeois white women’s tears was solidified in the modern colonial period, as ‘women’s protection’ became key to the deadly disciplinary power that maintained racialised and classed regimes of extraction and exploitation. White tears, white rage, white personhood White supremacy produces both white tears and white rage, and colonialism relied on a circuit between bourgeois white women’s tears and white men’s punitive power. This was often activated by the vocabulary of rape: Indigenous, colonised and enslaved men were maimed and killed after allegations made by bourgeois white women (Ware, 1992: 11, 37). As Angela Davis (1981: 106–111) argues, both mass rape of Black women and allegations of rape against Black men have been instruments of white supremacy (Davis, 1981: 106–111). In earlier phases of capitalism, rape laws functioned to protect upperclass men, whose wives or daughters (their property) might be violated (Davis, 1981: 101). In the genocidally violent relations of theft, capture and chattel that characterised colonial capitalism, rape prohibitions took on similar meanings at the levels of community, nation and race. In colonial Australia, rape was a ‘violation of female purity’ punishable by death: politicians insisted this was necessary to keep Aboriginal and ‘disreputable’ (poor) white men under control (Kaladelfos, 2012: 159). The vulnerable bourgeois white woman was central to accounts of insurrections such as the Indian Mutiny and the Morant Bay uprising in Jamaica (Ware, 1992: 39–42): fear of rape was fear of revolution. In the United States, following the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863, white Americans used lynching to terrorise and control Black people. Rape of a white woman was one of the most common pretexts for attacks on growing Black social and economic power (Ware, 1992: 179–182). In 1921, white mobs (many of them deputised and/or given weapons by city officials) killed between 100 and 300 Black people and destroyed 1000 houses in Greenwood, Tulsa, after a Black man was falsely accused of assaulting a white female elevator operator. Greenwood Avenue had been known as ‘Black Wall Street’ because it was one of the most affluent African-American communities of the early 20th century (Madigan, 2001). The story of Emmett Till is perhaps the best-known of this history of what Sharpe (2016: 15) calls the ‘ongoingness of the conditions of capture’. A 14-year-old Till was brutalised and killed by two white men in Mississippi in 1955, after Carolyn Bryant falsely accused him of ‘uttering obscenities’ and grabbing her by the waist. Jessie Daniels (2018) has called Bryant ‘the foremother of contemporary white women who call the police on Black people sitting in a Starbucks, barbecuing in a park or napping in a dorm’, acts that have also led to fatal violence (Sharpe, 2016: 52). The 2020 Black Lives Matter protests following the police murder of George Floyd reiterated that Black lives are still the price of white affective security (see Schuller, 2018: 2), and Black death is still crucial to the operation of the white supremacist state (see Sharpe, 2016: 9). White women’s ‘safety’ is also central to contemporary border regimes, which purport to protect us from immigrants and traffickers but actually create the conditions for mass exploitation and abuse (Mac and Smith, 2018: 59–60, 75–76). Political whiteness involves a will to power: in the case of bourgeois white women, this was and is often achieved through performances of powerlessness. We exist at the intersections of capitalism, white supremacy and heteropatriarchy, with little control over the means of production (Lugones, 2008: 15) but with raced and classed dominance that requires feminine submission. Like Penelope in Homer’s Odyssey, we fling ourselves on the floor and cry. This activates the settler’s and master’s revenge, now embodied in the necropolitical (Mbembe, 2003) criminal punishment and border control that captures Black and brown people and/or leaves them to perish: what Sharpe (2016: 16) terms the ‘reappearance of the slave ship in everyday life’. This circuit between white tears and white rage means that the relationship between the personal and political in white feminism has always been corruptible or perhaps even inherently corrupt. In contrast to the damsel in distress, the woman of colour has had her innocence stripped by colonialism, often through rape (Hamad, 2019: 18–19). As Angela Davis Phipps 87 (1981) argues, colonial ideas about Black sexual ‘savagery’ created both the notions of the Black man as rapist and the Black woman as un-rapeable, encased in the notion of Black people’s bodies as objects to which anything could be done (Sharpe, 2016: 13). During #MeToo, the only allegations Harvey Weinstein publicly refuted were from actors Salma Hayek and Lupita Nyong’o: Hamad (2018: 55) argues that this was because brown and Black women are easier to discredit. Women of colour, and particularly Black women, are not able to politicise their pain in the way white women do: this both reflects and perpetuates their thingification (Césaire, 1950: 42) and ‘abjection from the realm of the human’ (Sharpe, 2016: 12).4 It is not just that the tears of white women are valued while those of Black women are dismissed. It is that race itself (and perhaps class, at least to a certain extent) is defined by the perceived capacity to cry, that the performance of bourgeois white emotion accomplishes the dehumanisation of people of colour. As Kyla Schuller (2018) has shown, in 19th-century sex and race ‘science’, ideas about sex difference (seen as a property of bourgeois whiteness) intermingled with ideas about feeling. This divided the ‘civilised’ body into two halves: ‘the sentimental woman . . . and the less susceptible and more rational man’ (Schuller 2018: 16). The bourgeois white woman’s capacity to cry was fundamental to her dominant status, as was the capacity of her male counterpart to respond to her tears with action. Humanness came to refer to both an assumed capacity for feeling and the capacity to control it.

# Alts:

#### The alternative fugitive insurgency. The proliferation of hegemony produces black statelessness. A disoriented politic is key to rupture the modern political economy upon which international violence is founded.

(Fred; Fred Moten is Professor in the Department of Performance Studies, Tisch School of the Arts. He holds an A.B. from Harvard and a Ph.D. from the University of California, Berkeley. ; “The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning and Black Study” Sameer V)

Modernity is sutured by this hold. This movement of things, unformed objects, deformed subjects, nothing yet and already. This movement of nothing is not just the origin of modern logistics, but the annunciation of modernity itself, and not just the annunciation of modernity itself but the insurgent prophesy that all of modernity will have at its heart, in its own hold, this movement of things, this interdicted, outlawed social life of nothing. Te work of Sandro Mazzadra and 94 THE UNDERCOMMONS Brett Neilson on borders for instance reminds us that the proliferation of borders between states, within states, between people, within people is a proliferation of states of statelessness. These borders grope their way toward the movement of things, bang on containers, kick at hostels, harass camps, shout after fugitives, seeking all the time to harness this movement of things, this logisticality. But this fails to happen, borders fail to cohere, because the movement of things will not cohere. This logisticality will not cohere. It is, as Sara Ahmed says, queer disorientation, the absence of coherence, but not of things, in the moving presence of absolutely nothing. As Frank B. Wilderson III teaches us, the improvisational imperative is, therefore, “to stay in the hold of the ship, despite my fantasies of fight.” But this is to say that there are fights of fantasy in the hold of the ship. The ordinary fugue and fugitive run of the language lab, black phonography’s brutally experimental venue. Paraontological totality is in the making. Present and unmade in presence, blackness is an instrument in the making. Quasi una fantasia in its paralegal swerve, its mad-worked braid, the imagination produces nothing but exsense in the hold. Do you remember the days of slavery? Nathaniel Mackey rightly says “The world was ever after/elsewhere,/no/way where we were/was there.” No way where we are is here. Where we were, where we are, is what we meant by “mu,” which Wilderson would rightly call “the void of our subjectivity.” And so it is we remain in the hold, in the break, as if entering again and again the broken world, to trace the visionary company and join it. This contrapuntal island, where we are marooned in search of marronage, where we linger in stateless emergency, in our our lysed cell and held dislocation, our blown standpoint and lyred chapel, in (the) study of our sea-born variance, sent by its pre-history into arrivance without arrival, as a poetics of lore, of abnormal articulation, where the relation between joint and flesh is the folded distance of a musical moment that is emphatically, palpably imperceptible and, therefore, difcult to describe. Having defeid degradation the moment becomes a theory of the moment, of the feeling of a presence that is ungraspable in the way that it touches. This musical moment – the moment of advent, of nativity in all its terrible beauty, in the alienation that is always already born in and as parousia FANTASY IN THE HOLD 95 – is a precise and rigorous description/theory of the social life of the shipped, the terror of enjoyment in its endlessly redoubled folds. If you take up the hopelessly imprecise tools of standard navigation, the deathly reckoning of diference engines, maritime clocks and tables of damned assurance, you might stumble upon such a moment about two and a half minutes into “Mutron,” a duet by Ed Blackwell and Don Cherry recorded in 1982. You’ll know the moment by how it requires you to think the relation between fantasy and nothingness: what is mistaken for silence is, all of a sudden, transubstantial. The brutal interplay of advent and chamber demands the continual instigation of fown, recursive imagining; to do so is to inhabit an architecture and its acoustic, but to inhabit as if in an approach from outside; not only to reside in this unlivability but also to discover and enter it. Mackey, in the preface to his unbearably beautiful Splay Anthem, outlining the provenance and relationship between the book’s serial halves (“Each was given its impetus by a piece of recorded music from which it takes its title, the Dogon ‘Song of the Andoumboulou,’ in one case, Don Cherry’s [and Ed Blackwell’s] ‘Mu’ First Part and ‘Mu’ Second Part in the other”) speaks of mu in relation to a circling or spiraling or ringing, this roundness or rondo linking beginning and end, and to the wailing that accompanies entrance into and expulsion from sociality. But his speaking makes you wonder if music, which is not only music, is mobilized in the service of an eccentricity, a centrifugal force whose intimation Mackey also approaches, marking sociality’s ecstatic existence beyond beginning and end, ends and means, out where one becomes interested in things, in a certain relationship between thingliness and nothingness and blackness that plays itself out in unmapped, unmappable, undercommon consent and consensuality. Blackness is the site where absolute nothingness and the world of things converge. Blackness is fantasy in the hold and Wilderson’s access to it is in that he is one who has nothing and is, therefore, both more and less than one. He is the shipped. We are the shipped, if we choose to be, if we elect to pay an unbearable cost that is inseparable from an incalculable benefit

#### The alternative is anti-hegemonic technology: a refusal of technical networks of oppression and efficiency in favor of grassroots praxis towards technology as a radical imaginary.

(Sucheta; Sucheta Ghoshal is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Human Centered Design & Engineering at the University of Washington. Her research focuses on studying how grassroots social movements in the United States relate to information and communication technologies (ICTs); A Grassroots Praxis of Technology: View from The South) Sameer V

As a CSCW researcher and an individual committed to the cause of public accountability toward the hegemonic culture of technology, the most important thing I have gathered along the way is hope for a liberatory future of technology and society, for resistance to a hegemonic culture of technology is not only possible it is already happening. There is massive inequality on the side of resistance, we are outnumbered and over-exhausted, but we are here. The Southern Movement Assembly (SMA) frequently uses a slogan that goes “the seas are rising and so are we”—I have always taken several quiet moments to fully grasp the power in that slogan—all the countless times I have heard it. It speaks to the impossible challenge many communities—mostly indigenous, poor people of color living in coastal areas of the South—face against the rising temperature of the earth, the sea levels, and the climate capitalism driving it all. The slogan, “so are we” carries a stubborn faith in the power of the people, in their collective anger, because they are not only rising in number they are rising in their consciousness, visions, and strategies too. The consequences of climate change are more immediate and more fatal than the consequences of Big Tech in these communities, but if I had to take away a pearl of singular wisdom from the epistemologies of the 160 South, it would be to never lose focus on the intersecting ways capitalism operates. Technologies of oppression are connected and mobilized, we who refuse to let them win have to be too. The slogan is also a reminder of the fact that no matter how big and overwhelming systems of oppression and erasure look like, the resistance can be just as loud and overpowering. In my vision, a grassroots praxis of technology–one that I studied, designed, and theorized throughout this dissertation—will facilitate a carefully nuanced analysis of technology structures in the future. This future calls for a synergistic effort from both theory and practice—a phenomenon theorized in Chapter 2 of this thesis in the name of praxis. Portuguese economist Boaventura de Sousa Santos whose book “Epistemologies of the South: Justice Against Epistemicide” has substantively influenced my writing in this thesis, notes an ever-growing distance between theory and practice in the political Left. He describes in great detail how this distance has been well warranted, especially since “Eurocentric critical theory (and the political Left it founded) has not acknowledged: women, indigenous peoples, peasants, Afro-descendants, piqueteros, the unemployed, gays and lesbians, and the Occupy movement”—movements and social groups that—“dwell not in industrial urban centers but rather in remote sites, whether in the forests and river basins in India or up in the Andes and in the larger plains of Amazonia” [7]. With this, Santos paints an important but frequently overlooked picture of the Global South and its deeply diverse epistemologies. While he sees the value in Eurocentric critical theory, he poses that it has perpetuated a deep discrepancy between what is stated in theory and what is happening in the field of liberation around the world—a discrepancy deeply rooted in the fact that these theories ignored the political existence of these global struggles. However, the disconnect between theory and practice has come with significant consequences for the political Left. For example, it has been largely failing at identifying what it is up against: is it aiming at replacing capitalism with a post-capitalist future, or is it attempting to replace neoliberalism with a type of capitalism with a more human face? I posit that the same can be argued for how we understand technology at the moment—our theories about technology getting detached from our understandings of contemporary technology practices carry the risk of this ambiguity too. Do we want 161 to build technologies toward that post-capitalist future? Or do we want to replace one capitalist technoculture with another? As a well-documented example for the latter, we can take the trend of replacing the technoculture of product design with the technoculture of “design thinking” led by Silicon Valley [85]. A grassroots praxis of technology—grounded in epistemologies of the Global South including the U.S. South—will urge designers, researchers, practitioners to take the former stance. What does it mean to take this stance—practically and intellectually? In Chapter 3, I reflected on what grassroots culture means for the regional movement of the SMA. Their commitment to grassroots praxis can be seen in the way they designed their movement structure, their mode of participatory decision-making, and perhaps most importantly how they stay ideologically open to form global solidarities. In my experience of the movement, they refuse to compromise on this commitment to grassroots culture for the sake of efficacy or political coherence. While the hegemonic culture of technology drove the movement to choose technical efficiency over inclusivity at times—the movement was fundamentally open to its growth beyond that pattern. A grassroots praxis of technology will similarly stay vigilant of the way the hegemonic technology culture may interfere with its commitment. For this, we will need to sustain a culture of technology that prioritizes its own accountability, especially prioritizes to be held accountable by the people and communities hegemonic cultures have excluded for so long. A grassroots praxis of technology will be centered on community accountability. Accountability in this sense is not just an evaluation of how smoothly our tools function in communities, it is also an evaluation of whether our tools (and our designer selves) are needed in the community at all. As discussed in Chapter 4, my work with the SMA was a constant exploration in finding what works for the community—this required me to reject the belief often perpetuated in institutions of technology i.e. as technology scholars our only way to help communities is with new sociotechnical solutions involving novel artifacts. A preoccupation with novelty in technical artifice is both misguided and narrow-sighted. I was working with a community that carried wisdom predating industrial visions of the modern world—wisdom 162 that was rooted in their survival against forced labor, migration, dehumanization of their core identities. Learning from how they relate to modern technology as well as what their technological imaginaries are proved to be more important and necessary than creating a novel technical “solution” in the name of grassroots design. Toward prioritizing community accountability, a grassroots praxis of technology will similarly prioritize marginalized cultures and their radical imaginaries over Eurocentric measures of technical e‑cacy and advancement.

#### The alternative is black radical technology: as a creative form of black expression within rebellion, resistance, and historicity.

(Ravyon; Division Director Social and Economic Sciences National Science Foundation ;Say It Loud, I'm Black and I'm Proud: African Americans, American Artifactual Culture, and Black Vernacular Technological Creativity <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40068387>) Sameer V

African American technological experiences need to be studied to alter the current discourse of American technology, rather than to multiculturalize our narrow understanding of technology in America. With new multicultural and multiracial approaches to understanding the nature of technology and American culture, traditional narratives can no longer produce, contain, and maintain the explanatory power they once possessed. To develop a more thoughtful analysis of African American technological experiences, we need to think differently about the questions we ask and the tools we use to answer those questions. Technological knowledge must be interrogated, because it is inextricably intertwined with relations of power that are regularly applied to regulate black existences. Stuart Hall writes, "Knowledge linked to power not only assumes the authority of 'the truth' but has the power to make itself true. All knowledge, once applied in the real world has real effects, and in that sense at least, 'becomes true.'"76 Following from Hall, it can be said that what we know about the relations between black people and technology primarily comes from dominant subject positions that unfortunately tell us more about how African Americans are controlled and regulated than about how black people engage technology from their own locations within American culture. The existing approaches used to understand technology in American society and culture overlook racialized power and conflict when they reduce everything to various forms of negotiation. This is not to implicate or label social theories of technology as forms of epistemological imperialism in the manner in which Edward Said writes about orientalism; but Said's thoughts are insightful.77 In writing about colonialism and imperialism, Said inveighs that "both are supported and perhaps even impelled by impressive ideological formations that include notions that certain territories and people require and beseech domination, as well as forms of knowledge affiliated with domination."78 Just as the intellectual work of which Said writes is tainted from the very beginning, social theories of technology are besmirched by similar dominant cultural ef- forts that are intended to maintain domination, but are concealed within the rhetoric of flexibility and freedom. To gain a deeper understanding of black vernacular technological creativity, it is vital to examine the experiences of African Americans from where they stand in American society and culture rather than from the dominant position reflecting back on black lives. Black vernacular technological creativity is rich in historical value and replete with rebellion, resistance, assimilation, and appropriation in forms we would often not recognize and in places we are not accustomed to looking. It is from this space that we can see how black people reclaim a level of technological agency by redeploying, reconceiving, and re-creating material artifacts in their world. By focusing on black vernacular technological creativity and engaging in uncovering the multiple layers of black communities and their interactions with technology, we can avoid making the "they are all the same" essentialization of the marginalized mistake regarding African Americans.79 Technology is often thought of as a value-neutral "black box" for inputs and outputs. Critical studies of technology have opened the black box, but there are many hidden compartments that still need to be explored. To access these concealed compartments, or the "blackness" in the black box, we need to reassess and expand our study of technology to examine how racially marginalized people, such as African Americans, interact with technology and how technology mediates multiple African American experiences with racism. To address African Americans and technology, we must think about the ways in which black people see race and racism - important realities of everyday black existence. This is difficult because race and racism, in relation to technology, have always been hidden in a mysterious place of "unlocation."80 By uncovering African Americans creating technological artifacts, practices, and knowledge that have become parts of the American material and technological cultures, black people will become visible metaphorically and materially. This work will enable black people to move out of the shadows, lift the veil, remove the mask, and solidify and develop decidedly positive technological representations and existences for African Americans within American society and culture.

#### Vote negative for an ethic of abolition to refuse to breathe life into hegemonic security studies. Only the alternative creates the conditions for a new vision of study that avoids the pitfalls of anti-black redemption.

Chandler and Chipato 21 – David Chandler is Professor of International Relations at the University of Westminster. He currently edits the open access journal Anthropocenes: Human, Inhuman, Posthuman and the book series Routledge Studies in Resilience. David Chandler has contributed more than one hundred articles to international peer-reviewed journals (in the spheres of international relations, social theory, security, development, democracy, history, geography, political theory, philosophy, ethics and law) including: New Left Review; Radical Philosophy; Current History; Review of International Studies; International Political Sociology; European Journal of Social Theory; European Political Science; Security Dialogue; Political Studies; Millennium: Journal of International Studies; Human Rights Quarterly; Cambridge Review of International Affairs; International Politics; International Relations; British Journal of Politics & International Relations; Journal of International Relations and Development; Politics; Policy and Politics; Democratization; Finnish Yearbook of International Law; Ethics & Global Politics; Globalizations; Global Society; Global Dialogue; Area: Journal of the Royal Geographical Society; The Monist: An International Journal of General Philosophical Inquiry; Development Dialogue; International Journal of Human Rights; Ethnopolitics; International Peacekeeping; Journal of Conflict, Security and Development; Cooperation and Conflict; Critical Studies on Security; Global Change, Peace & Security; Peacebuilding; International Journal of Peace Studies; WeltTrends: Zeitschrift für internationale Politik; Wissenschaft & Frieden; Cahiers Marxistes; Politique Africain; Alternatives Sud; Studia Diplomatica: The Brussels Journal of International Relations; Papeles de Cuestiones Internacionales; Stratejik Öngörü Dergisi and Filozofski Godišnjak. Dr. Farai Chipato is a CIPS postdoctoral fellow (2020-2022) for the Changing Orders project. Farai has a PhD in Political Science from Queen Mary University of London. His thesis research investigated the relationship between international development donors and local civil society organisations in Zimbabwe, focusing [A call for abolition: The disavowal and displacement of race in critical security studies] neil

It is perhaps the most harmless of the ‘three little words’, **but ‘studies’ contains all we need to know of hierarchies and cuts** – of the ‘human’ from the world, of the knowing subject from the object to be known and ‘studied’. For critical security studies, **the study itself is already the violence that enables the violence of ‘sustained discrimination’**, the violence that we are told is both ‘invisible and acceptable’ (Security Dialogue, 2020). Study is a practice of the world of the subject, the world of critical security, the world of anti-Blackness. **Yes, ‘study’ as a concept could be reclaimed for a world beyond anti-Blackness, but this would not be the ‘study’ that demarcates one ‘field’ from anothe**r. Fred Moten and Stefano Harney (2013: 118), for example, talk of **study as the disruption of the grounds that would enable the study of ‘studies’**. This form of study **is the refusal of the settled order of academia**, the **flight from the institutional demands of disciplinarit**y, the **embrace of dissonance instead of clarity**. Study is **the reason for the abolition of critical security studies**, the reason why you would **leave the world of policy and academia**, **not** why you would **seek to expand it**. **Study is the work and the interaction and the care that is in the world. ‘Study’ is not the product of critical security studies**; **it can only be what critical security studies sets itself against, to carve itself out of, to separate itself from**. Critical security studies can no more undertake this form of study than it can engage with ‘questions of race and racism’. Conclusion

What, then, does it mean for the field **if the grounds of critical security studies are the grounds of anti-Blackness**? Not ‘just’ the ‘foundations’ but the grounds that enable the divide between the ‘foundations’ and the ‘novel and ethico-politically committed ways’ (Security Dialogue, 2020) to be discovered in the present or in the future. **The grounds that enable the authorized critical security** studies **subject to articulate the desire for ‘reparation’ and for ‘ethico-politically committed ways’** to enable the **continuation of a project that has no ground of its own**. The investigation of **anti-Blackness we have presented suggests that, at an ontological level, only questions of race and racism exist, and critical security studies is a form of their expression**. To reiterate our position: we have sought to make two fairly straightforward points. First, on the questions of race and racism, there is a possibility that **no reparative ethico-political openings can be made from within the subject position of critical security studie**s. **To pursue this reparative project would require the reinstatement of the series of closures and exclusions that constitute the hegemonic imaginaries of the discipline**. Second, critical security scholars should consider whether in fact there can be any repair-ation or repair of critical security studies. We build on the important existing critiques of race in security studies to argue that to take seriously the question of race and racism would clarify the difficulty, perhaps even the impossibility, of any reparation. Indeed, **perhaps the only possibility of a truly novel and ethical future lies in abolition of the entire intellectual, institutional, ontological edifice that critical security studies is embedded in**. As [Harney and Moten (2013](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/09670106211024413): 152) **argue, for the field of critical or radical thought more generally, ‘what it is that is supposed to be repaired is irreparable.** **It cannot be repaired. The only thing we can do is tear this shit down completely and build something new**.’

# AFF:

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#### Their understanding of the state as unified, immutable, and inevitably dangerous to Indigenous actors creates a pessimism trap that stifles Indigenous agency and activism.

Lightfoot, 20—associate professor in First Nations and Indigenous Studies and the Department of Political Science, University of British Columbia, Ojibwe (Sheryl, “The Pessimism Traps of Indigenous Resurgence,” *Pessimism in International Relations*, Chapter 9, pp 162-170, SpringerLink, dml)

Pessimism Trap 2: The State is Unified, Deliberate and Unchanging in Its Desire to Dispossess Indigenous Peoples and Gain Unfettered Access to Indigenous Lands and Resources In other words, colonialism by settler states is a constant, not a variable, in both outcome and intent. Further, the state is not only intentionally colonial, but it is also unifed in its desire to co-opt Indigenous peoples as a method and means of control. In 2005’s Wasase, Alfred presents the state as unitary, intentional and unchanging in its desire to colonise and oppress Indigenous peoples noting, ‘I think that the only thing that has changed since our ancestors first declared war on the invaders is that some of us have lost heart’.22 Referring to current state policies as a ‘self-termination movement’, Alfred states, ‘It is senseless to advocate for an accord with imperialism while there is a steady and intense ongoing attack by the Settler society on everything meaningful to us: our cultures, our communities, and our deep attachments to land’.23 Alfred’s Peace, Power, Righteousness (2009) also argues that the state is deliberate and unchanging, stating quite plainly that ‘it is still the objective of the Canadian and US governments to remove Indians, or, failing that, to prevent them from benefitting, from their ancestral territories’.24 Contemporary states do this, he argues, not through outright violent control but ‘by insidiously promoting a form of neo-colonial self-government in our communities and forcing our integration into the legal mainstream’.25 According to Alfred, the state ‘relegates indigenous peoples’ rights to the past, and constrains the development of their societies by allowing only those activities that support its own necessary illusion: that indigenous peoples today do not present a serious challenge to its legitimacy’.26 Linking back to the aim of co-option, Alfred argues that while the state’s desire to control Indigenous peoples and lands has never changed, the techniques for doing so have become subtler over time. ‘Recognizing the power of the indigenous challenge and unable to deny it a voice’, due to successful Indigenous resistance over the years, ‘the state has (now) attempted to pull indigenous people closer to it’.27 According to Alfred, the state has outwitted Indigenous leaders and ‘encouraged them to reframe and moderate their nationhood demands to accept the fait accompli of colonization, (and) to collaborate in the development of a “solution” that does not challenge the fundamental imperial lie’.28 In a similar vein, Coulthard’s central argument is centred on his understanding of the dual structure of colonialism. Drawing directly from Fanon, Coulthard finds that colonialism relies on both objective and subjective elements. The objective components involve domination through the political, economic and legal structures of the colonial state. The subjective elements of colonialism involve the creation of ‘colonized subjects’, including a process of internalisation by which colonised subjects come to not only accept the limited forms of ‘misrecognition’ granted through the state but can even come to identify with it.29 Through this dual structure, colonial power now works through the inclusion of Indigenous peoples, actively shaping their perspectives in line with state discourses, rather than merely excluding them, as in years past. Therefore, any attempt to seek ‘the reconciliation of Indigenous nationhood with state sovereignty is still colonial insofar as it remains structurally committed to the dispossession of Indigenous peoples of our lands and self-determining authority’.30 Concerning the state in relation to Indigenous peoples on the international level, Corntassel argues that states and global organisations, for years, have been consistently framing Indigenous peoples’ self-determination claims in ways that ‘jeopardize the futures of indigenous communities’.31 He claims that states frst compartmentalise Indigenous self-determination by separating lands and resources from political and legal recognition of a limited autonomy. Second, he notes, states sometimes deny the existence of Indigenous peoples living within their borders. Thirdly, a political and legal entitlement framing by states deemphasises other responsibilities. Finally, he claims that states, through the rights discourse, limit the frameworks through which Indigenous peoples can seek self-determination. Like Alfred and Coulthard, Corntassel has concluded that states are deliberate and never changing in their behaviour. With this move, Corntassel limits and actually demeans Indigenous agency, overlooking the reality that Indigenous organisations themselves chose the human rights framework and rights discourse as a target sphere of action precisely because, as was evident in earlier struggles like slavery, civil rights or women’s rights, these were tools available to them that had a proven track record of opening up new possibilities and shifting previous state positions and behaviour. Indigenous advocates also cleverly realised, by the 1970s, that the anti-discrimination and decolonisation frames could be used together against states. States did, in no way, nefariously impose a rights framework on Indigenous peoples. Rather, Indigenous organisations and savvy Indigenous political actors deliberately chose to frame their self-determination struggles within the human rights framework in order to bring states into a double bind where they could not credibly claim to adhere to human rights and claim that they uphold equality while simultaneously denying Indigenous peoples’ human rights and leaving them with a diminished and unequal right of self-determination. But, because he is caught in the pessimism trap of seeing the state only as unified, deliberate and unchanging, Corntassel overlooks and diminishes the clear story of Indigenous agency and the potential for positive change in advancing self-determination in a multitude of ways. Pessimism Trap 3: Engagement with the Settler State is Futile, if Not Counter-Productive Since the state always intends to maintain, if not expand, colonial control, and is seeking to co-opt as many Indigenous peoples as possible in order to maintain or expand its dispossession and control, it is therefore futile, at best, and actually dangerous to Indigenous existence to engage with the state. Furthermore, all patterns of engagement will lead to co-optation as the state is cunning and unrelenting in its desire to co-opt Indigenous leaders, academics and professionals in order to gain or maintain control of Indigenous peoples. Alfred argues, in both his 2005 and 2009 books, that any Indigenous engagement with the state, including agreements and negotiations, is not only futile but fundamentally dangerous, as such pathways do not directly challenge the existing colonial structure and ‘to argue on behalf of indigenous nationhood within the dominant Western paradigm is self-defeating’.32 Alfred states that a ‘notion of nationhood or self-government rooted in state institutions and framed within the context of state sovereignty can never satisfy the imperatives of Native American political traditions’33 because the possibility for a true expression of Indigenous self-determination is ‘precluded by the state’s insistence on dominion and its exclusionary notion of sovereignty’.34 Worst of all, according to Alfred, when Indigenous communities frame their struggles in terms of asserting Aboriginal rights and title, but do so within a state framework, rather than resisting the state itself, it ‘represents the culmination of white society’s efforts to assimilate indigenous peoples’.35 Because it is impossible to advance Indigenous self-determination through any sort of engagement with the state, Coulthard also advocates for an Indigenous resurgence paradigm that follows both his mentor Taiaiake Alfred but also Anishinaabe feminist theorist Leanne Simpson.36 As Coulthard writes, ‘both Alfred and Simpson start from a position that calls on Indigenous peoples and communities to “turn away” from the assimilative reformism of the liberal recognition approach and to instead build our national liberation efforts on the revitalization of “traditional” political values and practices’.37 Drawing upon the prescriptive approach of these theorists, Coulthard proposes, in his concluding chapter, five theses from his analysis that are intended to build and solidify Indigenous resurgence into the future: 1. On the necessity of direct action, meaning that physical forms of Indigenous resistance, like protest and blockades, are very important not only as a reaction to the state but also as a means of protecting the lands that are central to Indigenous peoples’ existence; 2. Capitalism, No More!, meaning the rejection of capitalist forms of economic development in Indigenous communities in favour of land-based Indigenous political-economic alternative approaches; 3. Dispossession and Indigenous Sovereignty in the City, meaning the need for Indigenous resurgence movements ‘to address the interrelated systems of dispossession that shape Indigenous peoples’ experiences in both urban and land-based settings’38; 4. Gender Justice and Decolonisation, meaning that decolonisation must also include a shift away from patriarchy and an embrace of gender relations that are non-violent and refective of the centrality of women in traditional forms of Indigenous governance and society; and 5. Beyond the Nation-State. While Coulthard denies that he advocates complete rejection of engagement with the state’s political and legal system, he does assert that ‘our efforts to engage these discursive and institutional spaces to secure recognition of our rights have not only failed, but have instead served to subtly reproduce the forms of racist, sexist, economic, and political confgurations of power that we initially sought…to challenge’.39 He therefore advocates expressly for ‘critical self-refection, skepticism, and caution’ in a ‘resurgent politics of recognition that seeks to practice decolonial, gender-emancipatory, and economically nonexploitative alternative structures of law and sovereign authority grounded on a critical refashioning of the best of Indigenous legal and political traditions’.40 Corntassel also demonstrates the third pessimism trap, that all engagement with the state is ultimately futile. For the most part, however, Corntassel’s observation is that the UN system operates like a reverse Keck and Sikkink ‘boomerang model’ and ‘channels the energies of transnational Indigenous networks into the institutional fiefdoms of member countries’, by which an ‘illusion of inclusion’ is created.41 He argues that, in order to be included or their views listened to, Indigenous delegates at the UN must mimic the strategies, language, norms and modes of behaviour of member states and international institutions. Corntassel fnds that ‘what results is a cadre of professionalized Indigenous delegates who demonstrate more allegiance to the UN system than to their own communities’.42 In his final analysis, he charges that the co-optation of international Indigenous political actors is highly ‘effective in challenging the unity of the global Indigenous rights movement and hindering genuine dialogue regarding Indigenous self-determination and justice’.43 Finding that states deliberately co-opt and provide ‘illusions of inclusion’ to Indigenous political actors in UN settings, Corntassel comes to the same conclusion as Alfred concerning the futility of engagement, arguing that because transnational Indigenous networks are ‘channeled’ and ‘blunted’ by colonial state actors, ‘it is a critical time for Indigenous peoples to rethink their approaches to bringing Indigenous rights concerns to global forums’.44 Imagining a Post-Colonial Future: Pessimistic ‘Resurgence’ Versus the Optimism and Tenacity of Indigenous Movements on the Ground All of these writers advocate Indigenous resurgence, through a combination of rejecting the current reconciliation politics of settler colonial states, coupled with a return to land-based Indigenous expressions of governance as the only viable, ‘authentic’ and legitimate path to a better future for Indigenous peoples, which they refer to as decolonisation. While inherently critical in their orientation, these three approaches do make some positive and productive contributions to Indigenous movements. They help shed light on the various and subtle ways that Indigenous leaders and communities can become co-opted into a colonial system. They help us to hold leadership accountable. They also help us keep a strong focus on our traditional, cultural and spiritual values as well as our traditional forms of governance which then also helps us imagine future possibilities. As I have pointed out here, however, all three theorists are also caught in the same three pessimism traps: authenticity versus co-option; a vision of the state as unified, deliberate and never changing in its desire to colonise and control; and a view of engagement with the state as futile, if not dangerous, to Indigenous sovereignty and existence. When combined, these three pessimism traps aim to inhibit Indigenous peoples’ engagement with the state in any process that could potentially re-imagine and re-formulate their current relationship into one that could be transformative and post-colonial, as envisioned by the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The pessimism traps together work to foreclose any possibility that there could be credible openings of opportunity to negotiate a fairer and just relationship of co-existence with even the most progressive state government. This pessimistic approach is not innocuous. By overemphasising structure and granting the state an enormous degree of agency as a unitary actor, this pessimistic approach does a remarkable disservice to Indigenous resistance movements by proscribing, from academia, an extremely narrow view of what Indigenous self-determination can and should mean in practice. By overlooking and/or discounting Indigenous agency and not even considering the possibility that Indigenous peoples could themselves be calculating, strategic political actors in their own right, and vis-à-vis states, the pessimistic lens of the resurgence school unnecessarily, unproductively and unjustly limits the field of possibility for Indigenous peoples’ decision-making, thus actually countering and inhibiting expressions of Indigenous self-determination. By condemning—writ large—all Indigenous peoples and organisations that wish to seek peaceful co-existence with the state, negotiate mutually beneficial agreements with the state, and/or who have advocated on the international level for a set of standards that can provide a positive guiding framework for Indigenous-state relations, the pessimistic lens of resurgence forecloses much potential for new and improved relations, in any form, and is very likely to lead to deeper conflicts between states and Indigenous peoples, and potentially, even violent action, which Fanon indicated was the necessary outcome. The pessimism traps of the resurgence school are therefore, likely self-defeating for all but the most remote and isolated Indigenous communities. Further, this approach is quite out of step with the actions and vision of many Indigenous resistance movements on the ground who have been working for decades to advance Indigenous self-determination, both domestically and globally, in ways that transform the colonial state into something more just and may eventually present creative alternatives to the Westphalian state form in ways that could respect and accommodate Indigenous nations. Rather, it aims to shame and blame those who wish to explore creative and innovative post-colonial resolutions to the colonial condition. The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (the Declaration or UN Declaration) was adopted by the General Assembly in 2007 after 25 years of development. The Declaration is ground-breaking, given the key leadership roles Indigenous peoples played in negotiating and achieving this agreement.45 Additionally, for the first time in UN history, the rights holders, Indigenous peoples, worked with states to develop an instrument that would serve to promote, protect and affirm Indigenous rights, both globally and in individual domestic contexts.46 Many Indigenous organisations and movements, from dozens of countries around the world, were involved in drafting and negotiating the UN Declaration and are now advocating for its full implementation, both internationally and in domestic and regional contexts. In Canada, some of the key organisational players—the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee), the Assembly of First Nations, and the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs, or their predecessor organisations—were involved in the drafting and lengthy negotiations of the UN Declaration during the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s. In the United States, organisations like the American Indian Law Alliance and the Native American Rights Fund have been involved as well as the Navajo Nation and the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, who represent themselves as Indigenous peoples’ governing institutions. From Scandinavia, the Saami Council and the Sami Parliaments all play a key role in advancing Indigenous rights. In Latin America, organisations like the Confederación de Nationalidades Indígenas del Ecuador (CONAIE) and the Consejo Indio de Sud America (CISA) advocate for implementation of the UN Declaration. The three, major transnational Indigenous organisations— the World Council of Indigenous Peoples, the International Indian Treaty Council and the Inuit Circumpolar Council—were all key members of the drafting and negotiating team for the UN Declaration, and the latter two, which are still in existence, continue their strong advocacy for its full implementation. Implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples requires fundamental and significant change, on both the international and domestic levels. Because implementation of Indigenous rights essentially calls for a complete and fundamental restructuring of Indigenous-state relationships, it expects states to enact and implement a signifcant body of legal, constitutional, legislative and policy changes that can accommodate such things as Indigenous land rights, free, prior and informed consent, redress and a variety of self-government, autonomy and other such arrangements. States are not going to implement this multifaceted and complex set of changes on their own, however. They will require significant political and moral pressure to hold them accountable to the rhetorical commitments they have made to support this level of change. They will also require ongoing conversation and negotiation with Indigenous peoples along the way, lest the process becomes problematically one-sided. Such processes ultimately require sustained political will, commitment and engagement over the long term, to reach the end result of radical systemic change and Indigenous state relationships grounded in mutual respect, co-existence and reciprocity. This type of fundamental change requires creative thinking, careful diplomacy, tenacity, and above all, optimistic vision, on the part of Indigenous peoples. The pessimistic approaches of the resurgence school are ultimately of little use in these efforts, other than as a cautionary tale against state power, of which the organisational players are already keenly aware. Further, by dismissing and discouraging all efforts at engagement with states, and especially with the blanket accusations that all who engage in such efforts are ‘co-opted’ and not ‘authentically’ Indigenous, the resurgence school actually creates unnecessary negative feelings and divisions amongst Indigenous movements who should be pooling limited resources and working together towards better futures.

#### Calculative thinking and maximizing resources is inevitable and good

Stanescu ‘14 [James, January 7, Professional Lecturer in Philosophy at American University, in Washington, D.C. Critical Animal, “Abstraction, Calculative Thinking, Global Warming, and Environmental Ethics; or the Polar Vortex of Thinking!,” http://criticalanimal.blogspot.com/2014/01/abstraction-calculative-thinking-global.html]

Moreover, we will not be saved by virtue, infinite responsibility for the infinite other, or voluntarism. What we need is better abstractions, more calculative thinking, more en-framing, and stronger institutional responses. As David Wood has shown, when it comes to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, Katrina, global warming, and a variety of other events, it has been the conservative response to embrace the impossibility of calculative thought. Perhaps our project going further is to, as Isabelle Stengers has argued, to calculate again. This is not the calculative thought of the capitalist cost-benefit system, but a different calculation. It is, to steal a phrase from Jane Bennett, about mutually enabling instrumentalizations. Long quotation from Stengers ahead, so bear with me: The cosmopolitical Parliament is not primarily a place where instantaneous decisions are made, but a delocalized place. It exists every time a "we" is constructed that does not identify with the identity of a solution but hesitates before a problem. I associate this "we" with the only slogan Leibniz ever proposed: Calculemus. Let us calculate. It's an odd expression, constructed to conceptualize the possibility of peace during a time of war. But Leibniz was a mathematician, not an accountant or statistician. For him, calculation was not a mere balance sheet contrasting homogeneous quantities, calculations of interest or benefits that were presented as being commensurable. For a mathematician, the accuracy of a calculation and the validity of its result are relatively simple questions, "trivial" in the language of mathematics. What is important, and which is not in the least trivial, is the position of the problem that will, possibly, allow it to be calculated, the precise creation of relationships and constraints, the distinction between the various ingredients, the exploration of the roles they are liable to play, the determinations or indeterminations they engender or bring about. There is no commensurability without the invention of a measurement, and the challenge of Leibniz's calculemus is, precisely, the creation of a "we" that excludes all external measures, all prior agreements separating those who are entitled to "enter" into the calculation and those subject to its result. [...] Calculemus, therefore, does not mean "let us measure," "let us add," "let us compare," but, first and foremost, let us create the "we" associated with the nature and terms of the operation to be risked. It is not a question of acting in the name of truth and justice, but of creating commensurability. It is a question of knowing that the "truth" of the created common measure will always be relative to what such creation will have been capable of, knowing also that a radical heterogeneity preexists such creation, the absence of any preexisting shared measure among the ingredients to be articulated. (Cosmopolitics II, pp. 399-401).

#### Anticipating nuclear extinction breeds empathy and care – distancing ourselves from considering extinction reifies detached elitism

Offord, 17—Faculty of Humanities, School of Humanities Research and Graduate Studies, Bentley Campus (Baden, “BEYOND OUR NUCLEAR ENTANGLEMENT,” Angelaki, 22:3, 17-25, dml) [ableist language modifications denoted by brackets]

You are steered towards overwhelming and inexplicable pain when you consider the nuclear entanglement that the species Homo sapiens finds itself in. This is because the fact of living in the nuclear age presents an existential, aesthetic, ethical and psychological challenge that defines human consciousness. Although an immanent threat and ever-present danger to the very existence of the human species, living with the possibility of nuclear war has infiltrated the matrix of modernity so profoundly as to paralyse [shut down] our mind-set to respond adequately. We have chosen to ignore the facts at the heart of the nuclear program with its dangerous algorithm; we have chosen to live with the capacity and possibility of a collective, pervasive and even planetary-scale suicide; and the techno-industrial-national powers that claim there is “no immediate danger” ad infinitum.8 This has led to one of the key logics of modernity's insanity. As Harari writes: “Nuclear weapons have turned war between superpowers into a mad act of collective suicide, and therefore forced the most powerful nations on earth to find alternative and peaceful ways to resolve conflicts.”9 This is the nuclear algorithm at work, a methodology of madness. In revisiting Jacques Derrida in “No Apocalypse, Not Now (Full Speed Ahead, Seven Missiles, Seven Missives),”10 who described nuclear war as a “non-event,” it is clear that the pathology of the “non-event” remains as active as ever even in the time of Donald Trump and Kim Jong-un with their stichomythic nuclear posturing. The question of our times is whether we have an equal or more compelling capacity and willingness to end this impoverished but ever-present logic of pain and uncertainty. How not simply to bring about disarmament, but to go beyond this politically charged, as well as mythological and psychological nuclear algorithm? How to find love amidst the nuclear entanglement; the antidote to this entanglement? Is it possible to end the pathology of power that exists with nuclear capacity? Sadly, the last lines of Nitin Sawhney's “Broken Skin” underscore this entanglement: Just 5 miles from India's nuclear test site Children play in the shade of the village water tank Here in the Rajasthan desert people say They're proud their country showed their nuclear capability.11 As an activist scholar working in the fields of human rights and cultural studies, responding to the nuclear algorithm is an imperative. Your politics, ethics and scholarship are indivisible in this cause. An acute sense of care for the world, informed by pacifist and non-violent, de-colonialist approaches to knowledge and practice, pervades your concern. You are aware that there are other ways of knowing than those you are familiar and credentialed with. You are aware that you are complicit in the prisons that you choose to live inside,12 and that there is no such thing as an innocent bystander. You use your scholarship to shake up the world from its paralysis, abjection and amnesia; to unsettle the epistemic and structural violence that is ubiquitous to neoliberalism and its machinery; to create dialogic and learning spaces for the work of critical human rights and critical justice to take place. All this, and to enable an ethics of intervention through understanding what is at the very heart of the critical human rights impulse, creating a “dialogue for being, because I am not without the other.”13 Furthermore, as a critical human rights advocate living in a nuclear armed world, your challenge is to reconceptualise the human community as Ashis Nandy has argued, to see how we can learn to co-exist with others in conviviality and also learn to co-survive with the non-human, even to flourish. A dialogue for being requires a leap into a human rights frame that includes a deep ecological dimension, where the planet itself is inherently involved as a participant in its future. This requires scholarship that “thinks like a mountain.”14 A critical human rights approach understands that it cannot be simply human-centric. It requires a nuanced and arresting clarity to present perspectives on co-existence and co-survival that are from human and non-human viewpoints.15 Ultimately, you realise that your struggle is not confined to declarations, treaties, legislation, and law, though they have their role. It must go further to produce “creative intellectual exchange that might release new ethical energies for mutually assured survival.”16 Taking an anti-nuclear stance and enabling a post-nuclear activism demands a revolution within the field of human rights work. Recognising the entanglement of nuclearism with the Anthropocene, for one thing, requires a profound shift in focus from the human-centric to a more-than-human co-survival. It also requires a fundamental shift in understanding our human culture, in which the very epistemic and rational acts of sundering from co-survival with the planet and environment takes place. In the end, you realise, as Raimon Panikkar has articulated, “it is not realistic to toil for peace if we do not proceed to a disarmament of the bellicose culture in which we live.”17 Or, as Geshe Lhakdor suggests, there must be “inner disarmament for external disarmament.”18 In this sense, it is within the cultural arena, our human society, where the entanglement of subjective meaning making, nature and politics occurs, that we need to disarm. It is 1982, and you are reading Jonathan Schell's The Fate of the Earth on a Sydney bus. Sleeping has not been easy over the past few nights as you reluctantly but compulsively read about the consequences of nuclear war. For some critics, Schell's account is high polemic, but for you it is more like Rabindranath Tagore: it expresses the suffering we make for ourselves. What you find noteworthy is that although Schell's scenario of widespread destruction of the planet through nuclear weaponry, of immeasurable harm to the bio-sphere through radiation, is powerfully laid out, the horror and scale of nuclear obliteration also seems surreal and far away as the bus makes its way through the suburban streets. A few years later, you read a statement from an interview with Paul Tibbets, the pilot of “Enola Gay,” the plane that bombed Hiroshima. He says, “The morality of dropping that bomb was not my business.”19 This abstraction from moral responsibility – the denial of the implications on human life and the consequences of engagement through the machinery of war – together with the sweeping amnesia that came afterwards from thinking about the bombing of Hiroshima, are what make you become an environmental and human rights activist. You realise that what makes the nuclear algorithm work involves a politically engineered and deeply embedded insecurity-based recipe to elide the nuclear threat from everyday life. The spectre of nuclear obliteration, like the idea of human rights, can appear abstract and distant, not our everyday business. You realise that within this recipe is the creation of a moral tyranny of distance, an abnegation of myself with the other. One of modernity's greatest and earliest achievements was the mediation of the self with the world. How this became a project assisted and shaped through the military-industrial-technological-capitalist complex is fraught and hard to untangle. But as a critical human rights scholar you have come to see through that complex, and you put energies into challenging that tyranny of distance, to activate a politics, ethics and scholarship that recognises the other as integral to yourself. Ultimately, even, to see that the other is also within.20

#### Nuclear fear is compatible with avowing the everyday apocalypse -- BUT -- assessing the world before a nuclear strike as no different than a world after one is whitewashing.

Thompson ’18 [Nicole; April 4th; Creative Writer; RaceBaitR, “Why I will not allow the fear of a nuclear attack to be white-washed,” https://racebaitr.com/2018/04/06/2087/]

I couldn’t spare empathy for a white woman whose biggest fear was something that hadn’t happened yet and might not. Meanwhile, my most significant fears were in motion: women and men dying in cells after being wrongly imprisoned, choked out for peddling cigarettes, or shot to death during ‘routine’ traffic stops. I twitch when my partner is late, worried that a cantankerous cop has brutalized or shot him because he wouldn’t prostrate himself.

As a woman of color, I am aware of the multiple types of violence that threaten me currently—not theoretically. Street harassment, excessively affecting me as a Black woman, has blindsided me since I was eleven. A premature body meant being catcalled before I’d discussed the birds and the bees. It meant being followed, whistled at, or groped. As an adult, while navigating through neighborhoods with extinguished street lights, I noticed the correlation between women’s safety and street lighting—as well as the fact that Black and brown neighborhoods were never as brightly lit as those with a more significant white population.

I move quickly through those unlit spaces, never comforted by the inevitable whirl of red and blue sirens. In fact, it’s always been the contrary. Ever so often, cops approach me in their vehicle’s encouraging me to “Hurry along,” “Stay on the sidewalk,” or “Have a good night.” My spine stiffening, I never believed they endorsed my safety. Instead, I worried that I’d be accused of an unnamed accusation, corned by a cop who preys on Black women, or worse. A majority of my 50-minute bus ride from the southside of Chicago to the north to join these women for the birthday celebration was spent reading articles about citywide shootings. I began with a Chicago Tribute piece titled “33 people shot, seven fatally, in 13 hours,” then toppled into a barrage of RIP posts on Facebook and ended with angry posts about police brutality on Tumblr. You might guess, by the time I arrived to dinner I wasn’t in the mood for the “I can’t believe we’re all going to die because Trump is an idiot” shit.

I shook my head, willing the meal to be over, and was grateful when the check arrived just as someone was asking me about my hair. My thinking wasn’t all too different from Michael Harriot’s ‘Why Black America Isn’t Worried About the Upcoming Nuclear Holocaust.” While the meal was partly pleasant, I departed thinking, “fear of nuclear demolition is just some white shit.”

Sadly, that thought would not last long.

I still vibe with Harriot’s statement, “Black people have lived under the specter of having our existence erased on a white man’s whim since we stepped onto the shore at Jamestown Landing.” However, a friend—a Black friend—ignited my nuclear paranoia by sharing theories about when it might happen and who faced the greatest threat. In an attempt to ease my friend’s fear, I leaned in to listen but accidentally toppled down the rabbit hole too. I forked through curated news feeds. I sifted through “fake news,” “actual news,” and foreign news sources. Suddenly, an idea took root: nuclear strike would disproportionately impact Black people, brown people, and low-income individuals.

North Korea won’t target the plain sight racists of Portland, Oregon, the violently microaggressive liberals of the rural Northwest, or the white-hooded klansmen of Diamondhead, Mississippi. No, under the instruction of the supreme leader Kim Jong-un, North Korea will likely strike densely populated urban areas, such as Los Angeles, Chicago, Washington D.C., and New York City. These locations stand-out as targets for a nuclear strike because they are densely populated U.S. population centers. Attacking the heart of the nation or populous cities would translate to more casualties. With that in mind, it’s not lost on me that the most populous cities in the United States boast sizeable diverse populations, or more plainly put: Black populations. This stresses me out! There’s a creeping chill that follows me, a silent alarm that rings each time my Google alert chimes letting me know that Donald Trump has yet again provoked Kim Jong-Un, a man who allegedly killed his very own uncle. I’ve grown so pressed by the idea of nuclear holocaust that my partner and I started gathering non-perishables, candlesticks, a hand-crank radio, and other must-buy items that can be banked in a shopping cart. The practice of preparing for a nuclear holocaust strike sometimes feels comical, particularly when acknowledging that there has long been a war on Black people in this country.

Blackness is bittersweet in flavor. We are blessed with the melanized skin, the MacGyver-like inventiveness of our foremothers, and our blinding brightness—but the anti-blackness that we experience is also blinding as well as stifling. We are stuck by rigged systems, punished with the prison industrial complex, housing discrimination, pay discrimination, and worse. We get side-eyes from strangers when we’re “loitering,” and the police will pull us over for driving “too fast” in a residential neighborhood. We get murdered for holding cell phones while standing in our grandmother’s backyard.

The racism that strung up our ancestors, kept them sequestered to the back of the bus and kept them in separate and unequal schools still lives. It lives, and it’s more palpable than dormant. To me, this means one thing: Trump’s America isn’t an unfortunate circumstance, it’s a homecoming event that’s hundreds of years in the making, no matter how many times my white friends’ say, “He’s not my president.”

In light of this homecoming, we now flirt with a new, larger fear of a Black genocide. America has always worked towards Black eradication through a steady stream of life-threatening inequality, but nuclear war on American soil would be swift. And for this reason I’ve grown tired of whiteness being at the center of the nuclear conversation. The race-neutral approach to the dialogue, and a tendency to continue to promote the idea that missiles will land in suburban and rural backyards, instead of inner-city playgrounds, is false.

“The Day After,” the iconic, highest-rated television film in history, aired November 20, 1983. More than 100 million people tuned in to watch a film postulating a war between the Soviet Union and the United States. The film, which would go on to affect President Ronald Reagan and policymakers’ nuclear intentions, shows the “true effects of nuclear war on average American citizens.” The Soviet-targeted areas featured in the film include Higginsville, Kansas City, Sedalia, Missouri, as well as El Dorado Springs, Missouri. They depict the destruction of the central United States, and viewers watch as full-scale nuclear war transforms middle America into a burned wasteland. Yet unsurprisingly, the devastation from the attack is completely white-washed, leaving out the more likely victims which are the more densely populated (Black) areas.

Death tolls would be high for white populations, yes, but large-scale losses of Black and brown folks would outpace that number, due to placement and poverty. That number would be pushed higher by limited access to premium health care, wealth, and resources. The effects of radiation sickness, burns, compounded injuries, and malnutrition would throttle Black and brown communities and would mark us for generations. It’s for that reason that we have to do more to foster disaster preparedness among Black people where we can. Black people deserve the space to explore nuclear unease, even if we have competing threats, anxieties, and worries.

#### The alt can’t solve states going to war AND makes alleviating “concrete human woes” irrelevant. They have no feasible way to solve miscalculation.

**Isacoff ’15** [Jonathan; 2015; Associate Professor of Political Science and the Chair of Environmental Studies at Gonzaga University; *Why IR Needs Deweyan Pragmatism*, “Perspectives on Political Science,” p. 26-33; GR]

I mean that what IR is or is not is not nearly as important as what it achieves. So the question should not be whether IR is scientific, but rather, how scientific does it need to be to get the job done? To this, there are many answers, but I suggest a line of reasoning: the scientific method in the most general sense is useful in helping to explain how and why, all else equal, causal processes work. Put differently, if we want to know how and why some states go to war and others do not, it would be more useful—in the sense of getting logically coherent, empirically verifiable answers—to analyze historical cases systematically than it would be to consult with a shaman or use a crystal ball to obtain an answer. This is not say that there is not an important role for textual interpretation in the process of studying war and other international phenomena. Indeed, I elsewhere argue that interpretation of historical texts is crucial to making valid claims about wars.47 But the main point here is that interpretation is a means toward an end, namely, the process of coping with the world via human experience. Toward that end, interpretation is necessary and useful, but it is not the end itself.

A second point is that there is clearly a pragmatic and justifiable need for certain types of quantitative methods, namely, statistics, though not necessarily formal models, in some segments of IR. Taking a simple example for illustrative purposes, if one wished to study the effect of speed limits on motor vehicle fatalities, the use of aggregate data statistically analyzed would be far superior to standing on the corner waiting for an accident to observe or reading several diary accounts of individual accidents. The key point here, however, is not that statistical methods are inherently better, or more “rigorous” than any other type of method. Rather, the use of statistically analyzed data to find answers to problems of highway fatalities creates knowledge that if properly applied, would alleviate “concrete human woes,” which is to say it would help to save lives. That is pragmatic political science.

48 What Is a Problem?

Many political scientists believe in the idea of having a “problem orientation” for the field. For example, Atul Kohli asserts that there is a strong consensus among leading experts “that comparative politics is very much a problem-driven field of study.” “What motivates the best comparative politics research are puzzles of real-world significance,” writes Kohli, in “The Role of Theory in Comparative Politics: A Symposium.”49 Similarly, Ian Shapiro, responding to the question of what would be a better alternative than RCT asks the question: “What is the phenomenon to be explained?… The formulation of alternative explanations, in other words, should be a problem-driven activity.”50 This is clearly consistent with Deweyan pragmatism; in fact, it is inherently pragmatist. “A Deweyan pragmatic approach to political inquiry,” writes Maurice Meilleur, “would transform political science from a discipline, based on a set of methods, into a profession, based on a set of problems.”51 But what, more specifically, is a “problem orientation?” First, it is clear that Kohli and his colleagues mean an empirically driven problem orientation. That is, the study of politics should be driven by empirical, not theoretical, or methodological problems. Careful not to push this point too far, a Deweyan pragmatist would suggest that theorization is an important activity, but it must not lose its link to problems of human experience, which is to say empirical problems. However, Kohli and others advocating an empirically driven problem orientation have little to say about how to identify and value problems. After all, there is a limitless supply of political problems only a fraction of which can be studied.

In response, I would argue that some problems are more significant to the detection and response to human suffering and thus more deserving of study, than others. This is itself a tricky ethical problem, for who is to say what is or is not a “real problem?” One reader of this manuscript suggested that “What is really going on here, when one scratches the analytical surface, is not that IR theorists aren't discussing problems; it's that they are discussing problems that the author does not feel are worthy of attention. But why should we accept that the author's “problems” are more important or privileged? Why does the author get to decide what a “real” problem is?” This is a good question but it is a misreading of the argument. Nowhere does Dewey or this author imply that any individual could or should decide or dictate which problems matter and which do not. To the contrary, the question of “who decides” is a public deliberation problem, a subject Dewey addressed exhaustively in his classic The Public and Its Problems.52 According to Dewey, problems are the direct outcome of a public's determination of its common good. A full analysis of how this works, or in some cases, fails to work in practice is beyond the scope of this article. But it is important to note that there is no argument here for the privileging of one private individual's notion of what constitutions “real problem” versus that of another. That is for the public to decide.

Human Woe and Issues That Matter

The final point to be made about reconstruction stems directly from the previous discussion: some problems matter more than others with regard to the alleviation of concrete human suffering. Which issues matter the most in our world? Ultimately, per Dewey's political philosophy touched on above, that is for the public to decide. Assuming that there ever could be a “common good,” we can hypothesize that people might choose to focus on issues that affect them daily, issues such as climate change, poverty, health care, education, racism, and sexism, as well as war and peace, all issues that are of grave importance to humanity. IR, especially in its American form, with its disproportionate emphasis on global security and great power war, has given scant attention to too many other issues, and when attention is given to the “lesser” topics, they are relegated to sub-sub-specializations within the discipline, “Gender and IR,” for instance. More problematic from the standpoint of pragmatism, the approach-driven wing of the discipline is more concerned with which paradigm has scored more points in the epic contest for paradigmatic supremacy than with the matter of how the world could or should respond to climate change or why hundreds of million of children lack basic nutrition and medical care. The interpretivist/linguistic wing, in contrast, is more concerned with how texts are interpreted in graduate seminars than with the fact that children in inner cities cannot even read a text at all.

53 Many IR scholars are still fighting over whether and to what extent “unit-level variables” should be taken into consideration in understanding international politics (and if so, whether one might still rightly be accepted in the club of realism).54 Others are trying to demonstrate that IR constructivism is really “liberalism in disguise.”55 This is not a stab at “why realism is (yet again) wrong.” It is a critique of the self-definitionally obsessed, paradigm-driven culture of academic IR. I would not go so far as to claim that there are no scholars who study everyday politics; many clearly do.56 Rather, the problem is that that the incentive structure to contribute to the “big debates” of the discipline, namely, those at the paradigmatic level, is a project that drifts ever afar from the problems of “concrete human woe” that affect the other millions of people who happen not to have graduate degrees in IR.

#### No root cause of war and they can’t solve it --- their “intervention” impact can’t explain why Western intervention happened in Libya and Iraq but not in Yemen --- prefer grounded historical analysis

Benno Gerhard **Teschke 11**, IR prof at the University of Sussex, “Fatal attraction: a critique of Carl Schmitt's international political and legal theory”, International Theory (2011), 3 : pp 179-227

For at the centre of the heterodox – partly post-structuralist, partly realist – neo-Schmittian analysis stands the conclusion of The Nomos: the thesis of a structural and continuous relation between liberalism and violence (Mouffe 2005, 2007; Odysseos 2007). It suggests that, in sharp contrast to the liberal-cosmopolitan programme of ‘perpetual peace’, the geographical expansion of liberal modernity was accompanied by the intensification and de-formalization of war in the international construction of liberal-constitutional states of law and the production of liberal subjectivities as rights-bearing individuals. Liberal world-ordering proceeds via the conduit of wars for humanity, leading to Schmitt's ‘spaceless universalism’. In this perspective, a straight line is drawn from WWI to the War on Terror to verify Schmitt's long-term prognostic of the 20th century as the age of ‘neutralizations and de-politicizations’ (Schmitt 1993). But this **attempt to** read **the history of 20th century international relations in terms of a succession of confrontations between the carrier-nations of liberal modernity and the criminalized foes at its outer margins** seems unable to comprehend the complexities and specificities of ‘liberal’ world-ordering, then and now. For in the cases of Wilhelmine, Weimar and fascist Germany, the assumption that their conflicts with the Anglo-American liberal-capitalist heartland were grounded in an antagonism between liberal modernity and a recalcitrant Germany outside its geographical and conceptual lines runs counter to the historical evidence. For this reading presupposes that late-Wilhelmine Germany was not already substantially penetrated by capitalism and fully incorporated into the capitalist world economy, posing the question of whether the causes of WWI lay in the capitalist dynamics of inter-imperial rivalry (Blackbourn and Eley 1984), or in processes of belated and incomplete liberal-capitalist development, due to the survival of ‘re-feudalized’ elites in the German state classes and the marriage between ‘rye and iron’ (Wehler 1997). It also assumes that the late-Weimar and early Nazi turn towards the construction of an autarchic German regionalism – Mitteleuropa or Großraum – was not deeply influenced by the international ramifications of the 1929 Great Depression, but premised on a purely political–existentialist assertion of German national identity. Against a reading of the early 20th century conflicts between ‘the liberal West’ and Germany as ‘wars for humanity’ between an expanding liberal modernity and its political exterior, there is more evidence to suggest that these confrontations were interstate conflicts within the crisis-ridden and nationally uneven capitalist project of modernity. Similar objections and caveats to the binary opposition between the Western discourse of liberal humanity against non-liberal foes apply to the more recent period. For how can this optic explain that the ‘liberal West’ coexisted (and keeps coexisting) with a large number of pliant authoritarian client-regimes (Mubarak's Egypt, Suharto's Indonesia, Pahlavi's Iran, Fahd's Saudi-Arabia, even Gaddafi's pre-intervention Libya, to name but a few), which were and are actively managed and supported by the West as anti-liberal Schmittian states of emergency, with concerns for liberal subjectivities and Human Rights secondary to the strategic interests of political and geopolitical stability and economic access? Even in the more obvious cases of Afghanistan, Iraq, and, now, Libya, the idea that Western intervention has to be conceived as an encounter between the liberal project and a series of foes outside its sphere seems to rely on a denial of their antecedent histories as geopolitically and socially contested state-building projects in pro-Western fashion, deeply co-determined by long histories of Western anti-liberal colonial and post-colonial legacies. If these states (or social forces within them) turn against their imperial masters, the conventional policy expression is ‘blowback’. And as the Schmittian analytical vocabulary does not include a conception of human agency and social forces – only friend/enemy groupings and collective political entities governed by executive decision – **it** also lacks the categories of analysis to comprehend the social dynamics that drive the struggles around sovereign power and the eventual overcoming, for example, of Tunisian and Egyptian states of emergency without US-led wars for humanity. Similarly, it seems unlikely that the generic idea of liberal world-ordering and the production of liberal subjectivities can actually explain why Western intervention seems improbable in some cases (e.g. Bahrain, Qatar, Yemen or Syria) and more likely in others (e.g. Serbia, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Libya). Liberal world-ordering consists of differential strategies of building, coordinating, and drawing liberal and anti-liberal states into the Western orbit, and overtly or covertly intervening and refashioning them once they step out of line. These are conflicts within a world, which seem to push the term liberalism beyond its original meaning. The generic Schmittian idea of a liberal ‘spaceless universalism’ sits uncomfortably with the realities of maintaining an America-supervised ‘informal empire’, **which has to manage a persisting interstate system in diverse and case-specific ways**. But it is this persistence of a worldwide system of states, which encase national particularities, which renders challenges to American supremacy possible in the first place.

#### IR isn't colonialist -- it's a minimalist theory to explain the occurrence of interstate war -- purity in scholastic exercises have zero concrete solvency.

Wæver & Buzan **’**20 [Ole and Barry; May 15th; Professor of International Relations at the University of Copenhagen; Emeritus Professor of International Relations at the London School of Economics; KU, “Racism and Responsibility -- The Critical Limits of Deep-Fake Methodology in Security Studies: A reply to Howell and Richter-Montpetit,” Racism and Responsibility -- The Critical Limits of Deep-Fake Methodology in Security Studies: A reply to Howell and Richter-Montpetit; GR]

Racism is a powerful, malignant force in world politics, and our discipline, IR, has deeply problematic entanglements with it. It is a serious matter both to come intellectually to grips with this and to find the most effective strategies to act on it. We worry that more serious problems and possibilities are marginalised by an ultimately very inward-looking and scholastic exercise where a particular definition of racism and a specific theoretical perspective makes it possible to deem the vast majority of scholarship in IR ‘racist’, ‘methodologically white’ and ‘antiblack’- every work that does not explicitly follow one exact version of anti-racist scholarship. Especially, the role played in H&RM’s argumentation by our sins of omission does ultimately seem to rest on the premise that only their distinct form of scholarship can be redeemed, because even post-colonial scholarship and critiques of euro-centrism are not enough; you are a racist if you do not follow exactly this particular route. It is not important whether your scholarship actually supports or hinders anti-racist analysis or political engagement; it is all about who you cite and what declarations you make. Here, a theory is not judged by what can be done with it, but by the question whether self-appointed anti-racists can find supposedly problematic sentences somewhere in its key texts. In this section, we will first point out that the H&RM article is a personal attack on us for racism, despite their reassurances about the opposite. Then, we discuss what an analysis of structural racism (systems of power) could amount to, given that they claim to do one but utterly fail to do so, resorting instead to a pretend examination of the foundations of ST. Next, we discuss what could be methodological guidelines for actually proving whether or not a theory like ST is racist.

H&RM’s usage of the term racism for all scholarship that does not foreground race as the primary theme, means that 99% of IR will be ‘racist’. There will be no room for any other scholarship (unless you will live with the moniker of being racist). Not only does this seem very unproductive in terms of disciplinary conversations, not to talk of diversity and pluralism, it also means that it becomes very hard to use the category of ‘racism’ for critical purposes for those cases where it actually is at stake in a sense closer to what the rest of the discipline, and indeed the public discourse, means by it. It has been watered down by the fact that everyone but those in critical whiteness studies have been deemed racist, one by one, where we just happened to get the special honour of being among the first. H&RM might protest that this is not their plan, but we fail to see how this can be avoided when the logic they apply is that the term racist can be based primarily on sins of omission in the sense of a theory being focused around other categories.

As documented above, they claim numerous times that ST ‘occludes’ or ‘refuses’ various dynamics relating to race that they find important, but they never offer any basis for concluding that the theory makes it harder to see these things, only that it does not as such zoom in on them. This does not have to do with a choice particularly regarding race but the structure and nature of the theory as a general analytical apparatus that can be applied to all instances where actors try to securitize or desecuritize something, and the user is free then to include race more or less in this analysis, just as the theory is not deciding how important nationalism is or gender51, but it enables the analysis of the way different categories and distinctions become politically mobilised in security struggles.

H&RM will probably argue that if you do not mention race in these contexts, you ‘hide’ it. Three answers: 1) no, there is a difference between not mentioning and hiding, it takes a step more of the critic to show that the theory prevents something from being articulated or that it uses abstractions that stand in the way of articulating race; that certainly is the case for some theories, so it is a legitimate avenue of critique, but they haven’t shown this, 2) the theory is intentionally (as we have explained numerous times) minimalist in having a clear conceptual core and then not putting all kinds of factors like the role of media or populism into the theory -- not because we haven’t noticed these factors but because they belong in applications, and the theory exactly allows you to study these phenomena, 3) we are very explicit that one of the advantages of a minimalist theory is the ability to combine it with other theories especially general theories about the nature and structures of society; one should not build out ST to become a general theory of society or international relations, better in any specific usage of the theory combine it with the theories one finds productive for the particular research project. (Wæver 2011, 2015) The latter point has come up in replies to the ‘sociological’ version of ST (Balzacq), which has more of a tendency to add all relevant factors to the theory, while the classical Copenhagen version is tight and invites combination with theories that complement it, which could exactly be theories of race and racism. Our ultimate concern here is: how do we actually get to study racism in world politics in a practically and politically helpful way?

When developing our own framework, ST, we took care to make sure it could do critical work in concrete analyses, in our view on racism as well, and H&RM fail to show that this is not the case. In addition, we have then on a more mundane, human level engaged ourselves in various ways to foster non-Western scholarship and theories in IR (Tickner & Wæver 2009; Acharya & Buzan 2010, 2019). One has for instance co-founded a book-series with the aim to identify “alternatives for thinking about the ‘international’ that are more in tune with local concerns and traditions outside the West” and “provincializing the West” (quoting from the Routledge homepage of the book series); the other has amongst many other things re-written this history of the IR discipline to show both that it has ignored non-Western contributions and that the Western part of it is indebted to ‘scientific racism’ (Buzan & Lawson 2015; Acharya and Buzan 2019). Closer to ST, the project in Buzan & Wæver 2003 was to a large extent to challenge the euro-centrism enshrined in dominant conceptions of polarity and of the relationship between global and regional, to enable theories to be more attentive to actual security dynamics in ‘most of the world’.

Surely, all of these efforts can be critically assessed as to what has been helpful and what hasn’t. But we find it strange that H&RM choose to ignore completely the possibility of assessing the ability of ST to form the basis for helpful analyses of racism. They neither look at those analyses that have actually been done, nor do they show systematically why it would be impossible to do so. On the contrary, they limit themselves to highly abstract and indirect attributions of racism to the theory as such through various unconvincing routes. From this they deduce (without any discussion) that ST can’t inform studies of racism (and when it has actually done it, they presumably are able to magically make those publications go away) (see section 6 below).

H&RM offer no explanation as to how their type of analysis helps in combating racism. It is unclear if it is a kind of ground clearing operation to be followed up by new and better theories after getting us out of the way. Or whether they believe that we are so much a part of the oppressive structures that attacking us is in itself liberating. Or -- as we will consider below in more detail -- the whole exercise is more about making universities more inclusive and hospitable to students and scholars of colour. Closely linked to the latter option, their rationale could be that the attack is meant more as a kind of ‘happening’ drawing attention to the question of race. Especially in the latter case, it would be intentional that the article plays ambiguously with making a very personal attack while pretending not to.

**Negating war reps is good for black political mobilization.**

Michael C. **Dawson 13**, the John D. MacArthur Professor of Political Science and the College at the University of Chicago, 7/7/13, “What’s next for the black left?,” <http://www.salon.com/2013/07/07/whats_next_for_the_black_left/>

When we start the process of imagining new worlds, “we must tell no lies, claim no easy victories,” as Amilcar Cabral succinctly put it. We must understand the conditions from which we must build. Even though much of modern public policy appears raceless, the black community is under severe attack as a result of the neoliberal political agenda. The Tea Party’s devastating attack on public sector unions is, for example, greatly increasing the amount of poverty and misery in American black communities. Steven Pitts demonstrated that public sector employment remains the foundation for black employment that it has been since before World War II. Consequently, an attack on public sector employment is an attack on the black community: “The public sector is the largest employer of Black workers; there is a greater likelihood that a Black Worker will be employed by in the public sector compared to a non-Black worker; wages earned by blacks in that industry are higher than those earned by Blacks in other sectors; and inequality within an industry is less in the public sector compared to other industries”.

Workers of all races and ethnicities are facing hard times during yet another jobless “recovery,” and building political unity among them is still a daunting task. Lani Guinier argued that the burdens of integration were distributed unfairly among the poor and working people of the country, thus further under- mining the basis for bringing those at the bottom together across racial lines. Building interracial unity was always more difficult than liberals (and in particular white leftists) imagined it would be, since white workers had an investment in whiteness that often led them to privilege race over class when making decisions about political alliances. Any new rebuilding of interracial unity has to confront how to change the white working class’s (and, to the degree possible, the white middle class’s) perceptions so that they see it as in their interest to ally with nonwhite Americans.

These are just two examples of the very large obstacles that must be overcome by any utopian project. We need a pragmatic utopianism—one that starts where we are, but imagines where we want to be. Pragmatic utopianism is not new to black radicalism. King’s work, and that of the civil rights movement more generally, was based on the utopian imagining of a much different America—one they were repeatedly told was impossible to obtain—combined with the hardheaded political realism that generated the strategies and tactics necessary to achieve their goals. Indeed, it was the combination of utopian imagining of a better world and political realism that led King to Memphis in support of black sanitation workers. The Memphis campaign, and even more so the Poor People’s Campaign that he was about to launch, was designed to explicitly take on what Mosley called the “voracious maw of capitalism” in order to achieve economic justice for all, and in the process build the interracial unity that Guinier correctly observed has been difficult to achieve.

Dreams of a New Society?

I am no longer twenty, so I no longer know everything about how the world should be. I myself do not have anywhere near a developed utopian vision. What I do have are a few tentative suggestions about what I see as necessary to get the discussion started. My suggestions are not listed in order of priority, and this list is not exhaustive. As Mosley notes, we must all develop our own lists, share them, and argue in public about them.

1. Barbara Ehrenreich’s and Derrick Muhammad’s work on the racial realities of the economic crisis and white racial resentment reinforce the need for a conversation on the left about how to openly discuss race in such a way that Americans have to both confront the facts of race in this country and listen to each other so that they begin to understand their real interests.7 Otherwise white resentment will continue to be aimed at the wrong people (different types of white resentment have different targets). We will have to counter Fox News and its allies. We still have Glenn Beck shouting to a very large and receptive audience that universal programs such as health care are actually “stealth reparations” because they disproportionately affect people of color.

Why can we not have a truth and reconciliation discussion here? In South Africa, truth telling was transformative of both society and individuals. Progressive change necessitates a psychological transformation as well as a societal one. While Meister argues that in South Africa the Truth and Reconciliation Commission became a substitute for success—it symbolized satisfaction with the democratic victory rather than full economic emancipation and full defeat of settler colonialism—he points out that if one looks to Gandhi, then one realizes that reconciliation, relent- less political struggle for justice, and eventual victory need not be incompatible. Dialogue and eventual reconciliation would be steps along the way the road to full victory, not full victory itself.

Political theorist Wendy Brown was skeptical of claims of reparations, apologies, and calls for remembrance and reconciliation, basing her point of view on a critique of identity politics very different from the one found in Rorty, Gitlin, and Brubaker and Cooper. Brown argued that identity politics is a form of politics based on weakness and thus has limited possibilities for generating progressive change. Its investment in the past and in suffering all but forecloses the chance that such a movement could become the basis for a democratic future:

What are the particular constituents—specific to our time yet roughly generic for a diverse spectrum of identities—of identity’s desire for recognition that seem often to breed a politics of recrimination and rancor, of culturally dispersed paralysis and suffering, a tendency to reproach power rather than aspire to it, to disdain freedom rather than practice it? In short, where do the historically and culturally specific elements of politicized identity’s investments in itself, and especially in its own history of suffering come into conflict with the need to give up these investments, to engage in something of a Nietzschean “forgetting” of this history, in the pursuit of an emancipatory democratic project?

She added that “politicized identity” leads to, as Nietzsche predicted, “impotence . . . incapacity, powerlessness, and rejection.” Identity, according to this view, becomes a substitute for action, though Brown agreed that these characteristics do not describe the civil rights movement . She was skeptical about the current reparations movement, which she saw as based on weakness, rancor, and perhaps a sense of impotence, and she worried, “Once guilt is established and a measure of victimization secured by an apology or by material compensation, is the historical event presumed to be concluded, sealed as past, ‘healed,’ or brought to ‘closure’?”

The current reparations movement need not be based on a politics of rancor (although it has generated plenty of rancor on the part of those who feel their privilege and comfort threatened). Redistributive justice and political power are at the center of the demands this movement has advanced, as is the desire for freedom. Reparations are not about the triumph of the weak; rather, they are a demand for a conversation about justice and the way that racial oppression in the past is linked to black disadvantage today and to the continued existence of an unjust racial order. Indeed, the demand for reparations is frequently associated with the demand for self-determination. Self-determination is not about revenge, and definitely not about victimhood. The crux of self- determination—the key demand of the politicized nationalist and leftist wings of the black power movement—was the collective ability to choose the future that has the highest likelihood of being just; depending on one’s ideology, this was a future that was often seen to be egalitarian and sometimes nonpatriarchal, one where blacks would be able to govern themselves. This was a politics more consistent with Marx than Nietzsche. The demand for a discussion of reparations, like the best of the truth and reconciliation movements, is an invitation to discuss how to build a system free from domination, racial and otherwise. I partly agree with Brown’s argument that

making a historical event or formation contemporary, making it “an outrage to the present” and thus exploding or reworking both the way in which it has been remembered and the way in which it is positioned in historical consciousness as “past,” is precisely the opposite of bringing that phenomena to “closure” through reparation or apology (our most ubiquitous form of historical political thinking today). The former demands that we redeem the past through a specific and contemporary practice of justice; the latter gazes impotently at the past even as it attempts to establish history a irrelevant to the present or, at best, as a reproachful claim or grievance in the present.

We must begin the process of “making a historical event . . . ‘an outrage to the present.’” Yet there is no inherent contradiction that prevents a reparations movement or truth and reconciliation movement from taking on this role. There is no inherent reason that such movements need wallow impotently in the past. How reparations and truth and reconciliation movements unfold is a product of the political contestation that takes place within these movements—of the politics that govern their development. I do energetically agree that Brown’s critique well describes much of post-black-power-era black politics, a politics that by and large embraces the values and constraints of neoliberalism, including an emaciated understanding of the politically allowable and feasible. A process of truth and reconciliation, as messy and undoubtedly rancorous as it would be, could help us move beyond the current degenerate state of American politics to a politics that is more truly democratic.

2. The black public sphere, what I have called the black counterpublic, must be rebuilt from the bottom up, and quickly. We need to learn from some of the more technologically innovative forces within the progressive movement to use technology as a way to help people in neighborhoods meet and talk face-to-face, have these smaller groups link to each other’s discussion, and give people at the local level an online set of tools to help them organize themselves. The black public sphere has historically been central to the multiple social movements that have emerged out of black civil society, movements that in turn transformed America for the better. The black public sphere, as King and many others have said, has also been the site of trenchant, effective and influential critiques of democracy in America, as well as the instrument through which African Americans have been able, sometimes effectively, to influence political debate within the country as a whole. That is why it must be rebuilt.

3. People do have to hit the streets. Franklin Delano Roosevelt told progressive members of Congress that he agreed with them and they needed to force him to do what they all wanted. The people best following that advice today are right-wing, racist, but strategic fanatics who have already hijacked political discourse and are on the verge of winning a series of policy and political victories that would be truly devastating. I do not understand why broad sections of the liberal and progressive movements still believe that bringing about serious change, let alone the revolution dreamed of by those such as King, is like a dinner party. It is not. Making change entails being willing to fight. This country needs a social democratic movement with teeth, not one that exhibits better manners than those found at most academic dinner parties. We need a real grassroots movement, not the ersatz one foisted on us by the 2008 Obama presidential campaign, as Berlant incisively argues—one that transforms, not just tweaks, the system. If, as Berlant suggested, “the beast of civil society stirs from [a] long sleep,” then it is black radicals’ task to once again organize so that the beast awakes—once again shaking the pillars of heaven. It is past time—Albo and his colleagues were absolutely correct when they bluntly reminded us, “The [financial] crisis has shown . . . neoliberal claims to be ideological rubbish”.

For some, the Occupy movement, which began to spread during 2011 and focused intense political attention on various forms of economic injustice and inequality, potentially represented such a movement, but in many regions it grew largely without organized participation from black radicals.

We saw this process begin in Wisconsin as public workers there and across the nation, along with their supporters, began to massively mobilize against the state’s right-wing governor, Scott Walker, and his successful attempts to destroy state workers’ unions (which were followed by parallel initiatives in other states). As gratifying as the countermobilizations in Wisconsin and elsewhere were, they were entirely defensive in nature. People have to hit the street offensively, not to try to gain back what has been taken away (although that too) but to make demands for action that will improve people’s lives, not just barely maintain them at a desperate level of survival.

We must heed Marta Harnecker when she argues, “it is a huge mistake to try to lead grassroots movements by ordering them around, by coming to them with already-worked-out plans”. As she continued to explain, progressives must involve everyone at some level. We need to work to ensure that people can participate at the level they are able, while finding venues through which as many as possible have a stake in progressive social movements.

4. We have to renew our commitment to the value of meaningful work that can actually support oneself and one’s loved ones, and to education for all that not only makes it possible to acquire meaningful and rewarding work but allows each person to dis- cover for themselves what it means to flourish while contributing to society. Berlant put it well:

Optimism for the present would require the Left to focus on rethinking the structure of labor or work in relation to being- with. . . . There is so little work now, the sense of value might as well be reinvented. There is so little commitment to public education now, its purposes might as well be reimagined from the bottom up—but not its people, for education has to be the ground for the popular. Not the education that preunderstands a vocation, but education as the inculcated relation to work whose value is not just ends-oriented apprenticeship or putting in time but diffused, risky, and a bit random not just about tasks but about making worlds.

5. One area that desperately needs the type of innovation and experimentation generated by pragmatic utopian thinking is the institutional arrangements that govern the functioning of modern civil society, the state, and the relationship between the two. In his book Democracy Realized, Roberto Unger argued that to achieve truly democratic societies we must concentrate on institutional innovations and experimentation that put into place a robust and humane democracy. For this type of innovation to be designed and implemented, Unger suggested, a “transformative and solidaristic” political project is necessary. That transformative political process in turn requires that “we speak in the two languages of interest calculation and political prophecy,” what I have called the language of pragmatic utopianism. One might disagree with Unger’s specific institutional proposals, but he was right in stating that institutions shape our perceptions of our interests as well as our ideological predispositions, and that when designing institutions we must remain flexible so as to be able to adapt to new situations, adopt good ideas from elsewhere, and correct mistakes. In short, given the central role that institutions play in shaping our lives, economics, and politics, we can no longer allow them to become rigid and inflexible, unable to serve the needs of society’s citizens. Not only must the institutions themselves remain flexible, but we must be willing to constantly innovate, to tinker, to experiment. Only through this type of flexibility and willingness to experiment will it be possible to discover the type of educational institutions Berlant described. Badiou characterized this process as “combining intellectual constructs, which are always global and universal, with experiments of fragments of truth, which are local and singular, yet universally transmittable.”

6. We must also reclaim the proud black radical anti-imperialist tradition that began in the nineteenth century and has continued into the twenty-first century. As I have shown in other work, grassroots African Americans generally continue to be against the use of the American military abroad. Further, blacks, unlike a majority of whites in the first years of the twenty-first century, also believed that protesting what one thought was an unjust war was perfectly patriotic. Yet now, for the first time in over a century, black elites are often silent when it comes to commenting on U.S. involvement in foreign wars, particularly those in the Middle East. An anti-imperialist analysis of the mass protest from the streets of Egypt and Tunisia to those of an increasingly leftist Latin America is also conspicuously missing from the black public sphere. One of the central reasons for quickly rebuilding a strong black counterpublic is to enable the type of foreign policy debates that have been missing from black discourse for much of the last dozen years. We should learn from the moral and analytical failures of the first two periods of black leftist insurgency and eschew any blind faith in foreign models. We have to engage in the hard task of trying to understand the currents at work in this world and embrace those that are most promising for increasing democracy and the well-being of humanity, even if they are in opposition to current American foreign policy.

7. Finally, we have to become comfortable with trying to effect change without knowing all the answers in advance. This is the only possible route to the dismantling of oppressive hierarchies of power such as those based on gender, class, and race and their protean intersections. Traditional Marxism is like game theory— both are based on precise analysis of the world but have built into those analyses assumptions that make analysis tractable. Both ultimately recoil from and then ignore the inherent messiness of mass human behavior and politics. In the end our teleologies are shackles. We should not fly blind, but we no longer can afford the certainty that has proved to be a deadly illusion.

Marx despised utopian thinking, but I argue that since we can no longer pretend the social world works in a Newtonian manner, with deterministic laws and a predestined end, we must utilize utopian thinking. We can still be realists, pragmatists if we must, but at least we must not limit ourselves in imagining what could be better futures. We can argue about what these would entail and how they could be realized. But dream we must. Those dreams must be debated and eventually transformed into political programs aimed at transformative change.

Where Do We Go from Here?

Pragmatic utopianism demands not just the critically important step of beginning to imagine a just and good society but action. Movements must be organized to build that society, test competing visions, and fight off the forces of reaction and privilege that profit from the degradation of the great majority of humanity and the very earth itself. King understood that the answer to his question “Where do we go from here?” demanded a program of action. It demanded mobilization and education. It demanded that black radicals of all stripes—feminist, social democratic, Marxist, and nationalist—step “once more unto the breach, dear friends, once more.”

When it comes to the struggle for a just society, for a good life for the majority of humanity, for the end of an ever-mutating but oppressive racial order, stepping unto the breach necessitates that the lessons of the two key periods of twentieth-century black radicalism and the lessons of the sundering be applied and adapted for this century. Independent radical organizations dedicated to fighting for justice and equality for blacks, for an end to the deadly racial order, must be rebuilt. Organizations of black leftists, feminists, egalitarian liberals, and nationalists must be rebuilt or strengthened to take on the issues of economic inequality, the continuing disadvantage that faces blacks and especially black children, gender disadvantage, and the incarceration state. They must stand with the majority of humanity and against the new imperialist land grabs and division of the world by this era’s great powers. These powerful forces are no less interested in dominating markets, extracting natural resources (including energy and increasingly food resources), and exploiting cheap overseas labor than the imperialists that black radicals fought in the past. Organizations of black radicals must once again embrace a radical domestic agenda that is tied to a worldview that demands justice for all of humanity, not just those who live in rich and privileged countries. These organizations need to hold elected officials, corporate executives, public intellectuals, and scholars accountable to the communities they purport to represent, exploit, speak for, and study.

The black radical organizations I describe here do bear some similarities to the third-path organizations discussed in the previous chapters. There must be some changes in addition to the ones already specified. First, black radical organizations need to be nimble, innovative, willing to experiment, and flexible—traits often missing from the organizations that have attracted black radicals in the past. Being nimble and innovative means being willing to change organizational forms as needed, even being open to experimenting with different forms simultaneously. This means that there will be a mix of small collectives, medium-sized organizations, and perhaps some of regional scope. There will be black radical organizations, and multiracial organizations to which black radicals belong; some black radicals may belong to both types. These organizations are also more likely to be able to respond to and use the vast amount of information that is the hallmark of the digital age. Large, rigidly structured organization in fields of endeavor from business to government have failed due to their inability to work with and within the ever-growing infosphere. The black public sphere, which we must strengthen and rebuild, already exists partially in cyberspace.

Black radical organizations also need to be far less hierarchical than in the past. This will help them avoid penetration by hostile forces and attempts to silence a small and easily identifiable leadership. But it will also help them avoid a pitfall for black radical organizations of both past periods: being far too undemocratic. We must move from the patriarchal and antidemocratic leadership of past black radical organizations and adopt styles and principles of leadership from the black feminist wing of black radicalism.

Black organizations of different types must once again be willing to test their ideas in theory and practice against those of other forces, but unlike in the past—unless we want to relive the sundering before we have even rebuilt the movement—we must also learn to work with each other despite our differences. Black movements are at their strongest when several different types of organizations with multiple points of views are working within black communities. The united fronts of the past, both the black and multiracial varieties, are desperately needed to confront a system of inequality that viciously attacks democratic movements wherever they appear.

And we must do this now. We must remember one of the positive lessons that black Maoist movements understood a generation ago: “[Maoism] challenged the idea that the march to socialism must take place in stages or that one must wait patiently for the proper objective conditions to move ahead” . Crisis after crisis is devastating peoples and nations; the environment and entire economies are held hostage so that the bankers of the most powerful countries can continue to derive extraordinary profits while gaming the system so that there exists nothing like either a free market or a level playing field. Black radical movements are once again needed to take their place in the growing worldwide struggles against multiple forms of radical inequality and injustice. The example of Hubert Harrison and all of his black radical comrades with all of their human flaws should inspire us to build movements that can in the twenty-first century fight racism, class oppression, patriarchy, and homophobia. We may no longer take the classic third path, but it still has much to teach us.

**Permutation---2AC**

**Permutation---do both---either the alternative overwhelms the links, or the status quo makes the links inevitable.**

**Viewing perms as tests of competition is good---perms don’t need net-benefits if they’re not mutually exclusive and do not link.**

**The claim that the U.S. is responsible for all global violence actively sanitizes Russian imperialism and colonialism---it’s not anti-war or radical to deny efforts to deter a racist, kleptocratic autocracy---their arg is indistinct from KGB propaganda**

Alaric **DeArment 22**, journalist, 2/14/22, “Russia Plays Western ‘Anti-War’ Left For Fools,” https://abovethelaw.com/2022/02/russia-plays-western-anti-war-left-for-fools/

I call it prescient because 17 years later, as Russia looks poised to invade Ukraine, there is yet again a vocal segment of the left that, far from being anti-war, effectively excuses Russian dictator Vladimir Putin’s revanchism and gives him tacit approval to attack, while showing utter contempt for Ukraine’s sovereignty and right to set its own domestic and foreign policies. Most public attention has focused on the pro-Russian appeasement by right-wing figures like Fox News host Tucker Carlson, but the left-wing equivalent to that appeasement is no less dangerous or despicable.

As of Sunday, Putin had positioned an estimated 130,000 soldiers and advanced weaponry along Ukraine’s borders with Russia and Belarus, as numerous Western countries warned their citizens to leave. The US and other Western countries have promised a raft of economic sanctions and sent weapons to Ukraine to defend itself, but they have ruled out actually sending forces into Ukraine.

But let’s be clear: If war breaks out, it will be an act of unprovoked aggression and entirely the fault of Putin’s regime and nobody else – not Ukraine, not NATO and not the US. And when thousands of Ukrainian men, women and children die, it will be Russian bombs and bullets killing them.

But listen to some people on the Western left, and you’d think they live in the “Star Trek” Mirror Universe, where the US about to invade Ukraine, while Russia is just an innocent victim defending its interests.

A Feb. 9 article by Jacobin magazine writer Branko Marcetic is a prime example of this bizarro view. Citing a Feb. 8 op-ed in The Guardian by Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., Marcetic – like Sanders – takes at face value Russia’s phony concerns about “NATO expansion” and whines that it’s “neo-McCarthyism” to suggest people parroting Russian propaganda are pro-Russian. But he really takes the cake when he gives a nod of agreement to views from right-wing figures like Carlson and Sen. Josh Hawley, R-Mo.

Marcetic doesn’t bother mentioning Carlson’s white nationalism or Hawley’s support for the Jan. 6 insurrectionists, only halfheartedly admitting they’re “the worst people in the world” before saying they “have a point.”

Hawley, apparently, has a point in “warning that ‘our interest is not so strong’ in Ukraine’s independence and sovereignty that it would ‘justify committing the United States to go to war with Russia.’” Carlson, meanwhile, “accurately” compared Ukraine joining NATO to Mexico allying with China and questioned Ukraine’s strategic value to the US, while Marcetic gushes that Republicans adopting Carlson’s positions marks “a notable shift for a party that has typically never met a war it didn’t want to charge into.”

It’s weird that Hawley is speaking of going to war with Russia, given that the US has explicitly taken that option off the table. And Carlson’s comparison of Ukraine joining NATO to a Chinese-Mexican alliance is nonsensical given the US does not pose any military threat to Mexico, whereas Russia poses an immediate one to Ukraine, after having already invaded and occupied Crimea. But both of these statements display contempt for Ukraine, its safety and its right to sovereignty without Russian interference, as Marcetic does in approvingly reprinting them.

As for Sanders’s view that Russia has “legitimate concerns” about post-Soviet countries joining NATO, that overlooks the fact that the whole reason why the Baltic countries, Ukraine and Georgia – which Russia invaded in 2008 – would want to join NATO is that they have far more legitimate concerns about Russian aggression.

Ryan Grim, Washington bureau chief for The Intercept, displayed similar contempt on Feb. 11 when he sarcastically tweeted, “If Russia retakes Ukraine, what if it becomes a hotbed of corruption, ruled by bickering oligarchs? We can’t have that.”

Despite his problematic use of the word “retakes,” he subsequently tweeted that he is “100% opposed to Russia invading Ukraine.” But his tweet showed the same disregard for Ukraine’s sovereignty as Marcetic and a sneering dismissiveness toward its efforts to develop rule of law and root out corruption, as every nascent democracy recovering from decades of dictatorship must do.

One of the worst comments came in the form of a Feb. 3 tweet by ice cream producer Ben & Jerry’s that said, “Sending thousands more US troops to Europe in response to Russia’s threats against Ukraine only fans the flame of war” and suggesting the Biden administration was “[preparing] for war.” The day before, Rep. Ilhan Omar, D-Minn., sounded a similar note, criticizing the administration for sending weapons to Ukraine because it “escalates the conflict.”

Weird, because I thought it was Russia’s deploying, without provocation, 130,000 soldiers to the Ukrainian border, poised to invade, that was escalating things.

The basic premise of these ideas is that the US and NATO should do nothing substantial to deter Russia from invading and then sit on their hands if it actually does invade. The bigger question is why so many leftists who claim to be anti-war and anti-imperialist would give succor to Russia as it engages in the very warmongering and imperialism they claim to deplore.

One possible reason is a longstanding binary worldview that sees the US as the main cause of the world’s problems and so irredeemably evil that it praises any nation opposing its interests – e.g., the Soviet Union during the Cold War, Russia in the present, China, Venezuela or Syria. This inevitably leads to double standards when it comes to imperialism and human rights abuses and a tendency to blame the US and its allies first.

The Iraq war didn’t help either, giving rise to isolationism and kneejerk cynicism about American foreign policy whereby anything emanating from the Pentagon or State Department is assumed to be a lie. But unlike Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction, Russia’s forces amassed along Ukraine’s border are clearly visible.

Another is Russian propaganda, disseminated by state-owned outlets like RT and Sputnik. They have been tremendously successful at pumping pro-Russian ideas into Western political discourse while also promoting anti-system populist politics aimed at exacerbating divisions and destabilizing democracies. Kremlin propagandists can count every Westerner sincerely arguing Russia has “legitimate concerns” about “NATO expansion” as a success story.

But a larger reason is a failure to admit what Russia actually is and always has been, which is a colonial empire, every bit as much as its Spanish, British and French counterparts. The differences are that it was an empire of land rather than sea, and that with the collapse of the monarchy in 1917 it slapped a left-wing revolutionary coat of paint onto a state that remained just as imperialist as when the tsars ruled from Petrograd.

That’s why Georgia’s first tenure as a democratic republic after declaring independence in 1918 lasted only three years, ending with the Red Army invading and taking over the country in 1921. Armenia and independence movements in Central Asia experienced similar fates.

Consequently, the decolonization that Spain, the UK and other European powers underwent after World War II didn’t come to Russia until 1991, when the Soviet Union collapsed. That decolonization is what Putin referred to as “the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the century” in 2005.

But where other former European colonial powers are content to let their former colonies govern their own affairs, Putin cannot tolerate former Russian colonies doing the same. That’s why pro-democratic uprisings in post-Soviet countries – most recently Belarus and Kazakhstan – scare him so much and is likely the reason he has his eyes on Ukraine. After all, a Ukraine that is free, democratic and prosperous and enjoys close ties with the West threatens his ill-gotten power and wealth, as it might cause Russians to start asking why they can’t have democracy and prosperity too.

If a war breaks out in Europe, it will happen because a predatory, kleptocratic mafia state presided over by a psychopathic dictator started it. It will be because all the diplomacy in the world could not stop Putin’s revanchist desire to restore Soviet power. Undermining efforts to prevent that from happening or punish Putin’s regime if he does invade isn’t anti-war.

**Contingency is true and denying that strengthens white supremacy.**

Robin **Kelley 17**, professor of American history at UCLA, 6/15/2017, “Robin D.G. Kelley & Fred Moten In Conversation,” transcribed by dml, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fP-2F9MXjRE>, 1:57:36-2:02:56, pacc

KELLEY: Um, Fred—Fred will take most of these questions. So that's why I'm going to begin first because he's gonna, he's gonna—he's gonna end it because he, he, he has the answer to all these questions ‘cause I turn to him for these questions. On the specific, on the first question, I just want to make sure I understand it because I'm, you know, I don't always recognize, uh, it may be because I'm just old, but I don't always recognize, uh, that black politics, black [unclear—maybe “guys”] work politics have been structured or defined by white supremacy. I mean, white supremacy is there. And I guess maybe because I'm such a student of Cedric Robinson, you know, not everything is about, or in response to, white supremacy. And in fact, one of the critiques coming out of doing Southern history was this idea that race relations framework, that race relations defines, uh, African-American history or Black history. And it's simply not true because much of what people do in terms of, of social formation, community building, um, is, is, is what Raymond Williams might call alternative cultures. In other words, it may be structured in dominance in some ways, but not defined by it. And Cedric's Black Marxism, you know, really made this point. He talks about the ontological totality, you know, the, this sense of being and making ourselves whole, in that we come out of an experience, again, structured by white supremacy, structured by violence, structured by enslavement and dispossession, but, but one in which western hegemony didn't work, you know, that modes of thinking wasn't defined by Enlightenment modes of thinking. In other words, that, that part of the Black radical tradition is a refusal to be property, to even admit that human beings could be property. You know, so we sometimes give white supremacy way too much credit, and maybe I misunderstood the question. And so I think that there's lots of things that happen outside of joy and survival, and survival is important, but survival is not the end all, you know. So I think, and I'll give you one very, very specific example, and now I'm not gonna say anything else after this. The way we have tended to more recently treat slavery, Jim Crow and mass incarceration as a piece, as the reinstantiation of the same thing, the continuation, that denies the fact that these systems are actually distinct, that they are historically specific, and in fact they’re responses to, in many ways, to the weakness of this as a racial regime. So if you think of like the whole idea of the new Jim Crow to me is very, very problematic. Um, although that book by Michelle Alexander is very, very powerful and very useful in terms of educating people about prisons. Jim Crow was not the continuation of slavery. It was not. Jim Crow was a response to the Black Democratic, uh, upsurge after slavery. It was a revolution of Reconstruction. It was a way to try to suppress that. The fact that, that, you know, there was this incredible response. That's why there's a, there's a huge gap between 1877 at the official end of Reconstruction and the rise of Jim Crow, which is the 1890s, disfranchisement, lynching. That's because you've had 13, 14, 15, 20, 25 years of a democratic possibility and struggle. The same thing with mass incarceration—yes, we've had incarceration, but it's, but that, that, that, that upward swing has a lot to do with, again, responses to the struggles in the 1960s, the assault on the Keynesian welfare-warfare state, the fact that you know the, the war on political, the formation of political prisoners, those struggles in fact was the state's response to opposition. And so if we don't acknowledge that, then what we end up doing is thinking that somehow there's a structure of white supremacy that's unchanging, fixed, and so powerful we can't do anything about it when in fact it's the opposite. White supremacy is fragile. White supremacy is weak. Racial regimes actually are always having to shore themselves up precisely because they're unstable. We can see that. We can't see it because the whole system of hegemony is to give us the impression that it is so powerful, there's no space out. And yet it’s working overtime to, to respond to our opposition. Right. That may not answer your question, but that's sort of a way I think about it. Maybe it’s not satisfactory, but yeah.

**Political hope is good, and denying it erases Black agency.**

Johs **Rasmussen 20**, German scholar citing Eddie Glaude, chair of the Center for African-American Studies and distinguished professor of African-American studies at Princeton University, “Pragmatic Strategies of Resistance: Ralph Ellison’s Radical Second Act,” *aspeers*, issue 13, pp 61-66, <http://www.aspeers.com/sites/default/files/pdf/rasmussen.pdf>, pacc

1. Dewey, Glaude, and the Shortcomings of US Democracy

In John Dewey's terms, 'democracy' is not a fixed value, nor is it even a system of governance. Rather, democracy denotes an ongoing process wherein the egalitarian struggle for equal social and political participation is undertaken. According to literary critic and cultural historian Louis Menand, Dewey sought to promote "in every area of life, including industrial life, democracy, which he interpreted as the practice of 'associated living'—cooperation with others on a basis of tolerance and equality" (373). In his view, democracy is a structural impossibility in the absence of individual efforts to change the social practices that organize the sociopolitical order. Moreover, Dewey's philosophical doctrine suggests that a democratic social formation takes the individual to be a "function" of the total political body (Dewey, "Ethics" 205). To vote in representative democratic systems is not simply a mechanic expression of political participation but rather "a manifestation of some tendency of the social organism through a member of that organism" ("Ethics" 189). The norms and values of the polity are, in other words, determined and expressed at the level of the individual.

In "Creative Democracy" (1939), Dewey repeats this sentiment. "Instead of thinking of our own dispositions and habits as accommodated to certain institutions," he writes, "we have to learn to think of the latter [institutions] as expressions, projections and extensions of habitually dominant personal attitudes" ("Creative" 226). Proper democracy materializes in individual practices, not theoretical abstractions nor institutionalized policies. The democratic process is 'always' in the stage of becoming. In that spirit, Dewey concludes his essay with idealistic fervor, positing that "the task of democracy is forever that of creation of a freer and more humane experience in which all share and to which all contribute" ("Creative" 230).

In its ideal mode, then, democracy manifests in effective action, a process that allows for the continuous reconfiguration of the structures that undergird US society. Scholar of pragmatism Giles Gunn has noted that such democratic impulses, which are part and parcel of a vibrant political community, promise to enrich the political experiences of all who partake in the community's formation, especially when these democratic impulses are framed by "forms of creativity and critical discourse" (79). Eddie Glaude, who self-identifies as a "Deweyan pragmatist," (Shade of Blue 5) has nonetheless commented that if "pragmatism is native to American soil,"(2) then it "carries with it all the possibilities and limitations that have defined our [American] fragile experiment in democracy" (2). As Glaude points out, the subjects who occupy society's margins define the boundaries of the US democratic experiment. In this context, the social practices that inform ordinary people's day-to-day routines—the spaces we inhabit along with the ways we include or exclude other people in our personal lives—crystallize as "projections and extensions of habitually dominant personal attitudes" (Dewey, "Creative" 226). In order to transform the political status quo, this line of argumentation implies that the individual subject must be willing to critically and creatively examine and thereafter modify her habits.

"Habits" is a keyword in Deweyan pragmatism. Dewey views the individual subject's behavior as systematically organized by a set of experientially learned responses, the primary function of which is to automatize how we individually address both quotidian and unexpected events in our daily lives. But, for Dewey, "habit" is an unfixed, unstable category. The formation of habits is an ongoing endeavor, and "an individual" can undergo "a modification through an experience, which modification forms a predisposition to easier and more effective action in a like direction in the future" ("Theories" 212). In Deweyan pragmatism, lived experiences constitute a rich source for cultivating and refining one's own relationship with the material world; Dewey even endows this mode of knowledge production with the capacity to transform the individual subject's social and political outlook.

However, the vitality of Dewey's philosophy will be undercut if one's engagement with the past is perfunctory or superficial. On that account, it is crucial to act shrewdly and with care, because a "habit apart from knowledge does not make allowance for change of conditions, for novelty" ("Theories" 212). Phrased more succinctly, habits form a backdrop for life choices, and it is not only the formation of habits but also their re-formation that influences how an experience can lead to "easier and more effective action" (212) in the future. The democratic thrust of habit (re-)formation should thus be clear: It requires an intelligent response from the individual subject to the particular circumstances that engulf her life. To that end, past experiences must govern the subject's life choices if these experiences are to affect how she [the individual] navigates and, in turn, influences social, cultural, and political landscapes. "While the content of knowledge," in Dewey's formulation, "is what has happened, what is taken as finished and hence settled and sure, the reference of knowledge is future or prospective. For knowledge furnishes the means of understanding or giving meaning to what is still going on and what is to be done" (214). As a matter of course, we are bound to reproduce regressive habits if we do not engage our lived experiences creatively and intelligently. Only by way of intelligent action—which "includes deliberate choice," that is, agency—can we institute a more egalitarian future (212).

Dewey proposed that a modern democratic society only could be improved when the social and political practices of its participants are grounded in the creative application of experiential knowledge. Thus, lived experiences are inseparable from habit formation; and, given that habits are ultimately expressed in actions, it is important to identify how the individual subject orients herself in the world of experience. To that end, Dewey distinguishes between what he calls 'cognitive experiences' and 'cognized experiences.' The term "cognitive experience" describes an experience that transpires immediately without any deep or significant reflection on the part of the individual subject ("Postulate" 396). In contrast, the concept of "cognized experiences" charts a series of experiences in retrospect, which enables the actor to "transform" or "reorganize" the meaning of those experiences so they can be oriented towards meaningful prospective action (396). As a consequence, Deweyan pragmatism has serious political ramifications. Subjects who have been excluded from the "fragile experiment in democracy" (Glaude, Shade of Blue 2)— African Americans, in the present context—can, within this philosophical framework, develop future-oriented strategies of sociopolitical participation that subvert the authority of the political powers that be.

These strategies demand an imaginative leap by the African American subject, Glaude observes, and he asserts that African American slaves achieved a unique type of personal freedom when they imagined themselves "in terms that are not those of the slave master" (Uncommon 9). In light of the historical continuity of racial oppression, Glaude's commentary on the possibility of self-creation during slavery informs how African Americans have carved out spaces, or gaps, that are theirs to define within an oppressive sociopolitical structure in antebellum and postbellum United States alike. For even though African American subject positions have evolved over time and transcended the relation of legalized enslavement, "the afterlife of slavery," to borrow Saidiya Hartman's term, always already structures African Americans as second-class citizens (Mother 6).7

Similar to Glaude's observation that the imagination can be a powerful resource for self-making, Dewey posited: "The connection between imagination and the harmonizing of the self is closer than is usually thought," and "the whole self" is indeed "an ideal, an imaginative projection" (Common Faith 17). A subject's life unfolds in accordance with certain 'known' circumstances or facts, but these only partially reveal the world of experience. Indeed, it is at any given time impossible to actively perceive more than a small fragment of the social world. At the level of the imagination, however, vast spaces of possibilities emerge and African Americans have in these novel spaces imagined ideal ends, or particular purposes, that are independent from the fixed ascriptions of subjectivity that otherwise limit their prospects of political agency.

As Glaude would have it, the African American subject's imaginative engagement with her lived experiences elicits a mode in which she can envision alternative futures that deviate from the status quo. This "new vision," Dewey might add, "does not arise out of nothing, but emerges through seeing, in terms of possibilities, that is, of imagination, old things in new relations serving a new end which the new end aids in creating" (Common Faith 46). Undoubtedly, such a commitment to an open-ended, future-oriented life world can result in the violent subjection of the dissenting subject and her political ideas. But Glaude notes that the imaginative disengagement from the structures of domination already in place incites social change as well. He uses the term "meliorism" to describe "the belief that our circumstances at a given moment, be they comparatively good or bad, can be improved (Shade of Blue 31). Glaude further states that "[s]uch a view commands intelligent action in the sense that it encourages us to inquire into the amelioration of problems, individual and social, and the obstructions to their resolution" (31). As Glaude explains, meliorism calls for categorically open-ended and intelligent action; therefore, the African American subject must be prepared for potentially fatal consequences when embracing the possibility of improvement.

In his short essay "I Believe" (1939), Dewey identifies the impact that subjects who deviate from the social, cultural, and political norms can have on large-scale social change. Dewey argues that "those who can escape the hypnotic influence exercised by the immediate contemporary scene are aware that movements going on in the interstices of the existing order are those which will in fact shape the future [emphasis added]" (271). Creative and intelligent utilization of the unaccounted for gaps in the sociopolitical structure may thus gradually transform the US social formation, even as African Americans embrace the melioristic view that the "open-ended character of experience does not offer clear pathways to achieve desired ends" (Glaude, Uncommon 48). Rather than constituting a preexisting material structure that ensures the rights and liberties of all citizens, Dewey holds that democratic societies constantly reconfigure their outer boundaries to produce a more inclusive social formation.

As highlighted above, the democratic process is, in Dewey's view, an experimental enterprise. Although he admits, "democracy is a complex affair," Dewey's ideas still equip the individual subject with the capacity to impact the sociopolitical structure ("The Public" 287). According to Dewey, political communities, whether progressive or regressive, always follow the will and actions of individuals, not a priori notions of 'Truth' or other abstract philosophical principles.8 Rather, all subjects are individually responsible for the state of US democracy, because habits can always be changed to reflect a greater degree of empathy and inclusion. With recourse to creative experimentation and a liberated imagination, Dewey in fact maintains that each subject always already possesses the tools necessary to re-form her habits and thus the larger sociopolitical world.

**Cultural norms, not libidinal drives, explain racism. Err AFF---NEG ev artificially isolates race from social factors.**

Helen **Lauer 19**, professor of philosophy at the University of Ghana, 2/21/2019, “Implicitly Racist Epistemology,” *Angelaki: Journal of the Theoretical Humanities*, 24(2), pp 35-40, <https://doi.org/10.1080/0969725X.2019.1574076>, Taylor & Francis, pacc

Neurocognitive mapping indicates that people respond subliminally to stimuli according to culturally regulated norms and patterns which appear resistant to revision, in contrast to the ways that representational beliefs with logical syntactic structure are readily adjustable in light of new evidence (Levy, "Am I a Racist?" 541). For instance, I can believe consciously that I am in a safely enclosed ski lift with transparent walls and floor; yet when moving on a sturdy rail away from a cliff edge, my body reacts as if I am going to fall (Gendler, "Alief and Belief" 634). Subjects know one thing about their environment but contextual cues suggest the illusion of another — such as when sitting comfortably and safely in a cinema, the subject is subsumed with anxious tension while watching a horror film, or experiences revulsion at an artefact verified to be chocolate but is shaped like faeces. Sometimes, people's affective responses to experimentally constructed illusions and environmental distortions have been regarded on a par with puppies and kittens reacting in alarm at their own reflections in a mirror (Gendler, "Alief in Action" 552, 566).

It is discouraging how many philosophers of cognition treat implicit racial bias as fitting into this category. Unconscious racial stereotyping is routinely discussed as a "natural" automated reaction of fear, or arousal or distress which is inconsistent, deviant, or otherwise "discordant" with the egalitarian subject's carefully considered judgments. For instance, Tamar Gendler ("Alief in Action" 552 et passim) interprets the surge of cortisol levels triggered by staged prompts and detected consistently in experimental subjects as an evolutionary survival pattern, signifying the activation of genetically encoded propensities to respond in ways that are no longer serviceable — implying, though, that they once would have been. Alternatively, the view of racial aversion and ethnic conflict as physiologically "hardwired" into human biology has been countered by "nurture" theories that account for these aberrant vestigial reactions as acculturated traits, once acquired through social reinforcement as compulsory habits which have since become mistaken or pointless.

Among all the proponents on different sides of these debates, however, it is generally assumed that eliminating unwanted subliminal bias is a priority which requires bio-feedback or some other strategy for heightening the subject's self-awareness of autonomic responses as deviant or wayward, in light of his or her rationally formed evidence-responsive beliefs, in particular these egalitarian postulates (Neville, "Color-Blind Racial Ideology" 457 ff.): (i) racial appearance bears no relation to moral characteristics such as intelligence, diligence, and trustworthiness; (ii) all human beings are fundamentally the same; and (iii) no racially distinguishable group is either superior or inferior to any other. These "colour-blind" commitments will be examined in more detail in section 3, in so far as a range of psychologists and critical race theorists have highlighted their function in a contemporary rationale for the "laissez-faire" (Bobo, Kruegel, and Smith) perpetuation of power dynamics constitutive of racially stratified societies such as the United States and South Africa (e.g., Block; Gallagher; Lebakeng, Phalane, and Dalindjebo; Mills; Neville et al.; Yancy). But rather than referencing critical race theorists, mainstream analytic philosophers, moral theorists and epistemologists studying the psychology of racial bias adopt the presuppositions of experimentalists whose empirical results they rely upon in their analytic work.

Experimental psychologists are disciplined to perfect as far as possible the isolation of the variables they use to measure subjects' subconscious reactions, in order to meet the confidence levels and related standards of reliability expected of the data their studies produce. Just so, in order to demonstrate aberrant biases within the cognitive anatomy of avid egalitarians, experimentalists must disassociate the disorderly social environmental factors that influence rational judgments, reasoned choices, alongside the subconscious reactions, of experimental subjects and experimentalists alike (Cudd; Lauer).

Yet social norms are an integrated and uneliminable component of how we process incoming stimuli collaboratively in order to navigate our daily social milieus successfully. So it is entirely artificial to isolate and disassociate individuals' subliminal affective responses from their logical deliberations (Schwitzgebel), while bracketing and deflecting attention away from their broader social environments. Of course, as just remarked, controlling variables is essential for replicable testing of any empirical hypothesis. But this experimental finesse is indulged at a high cost in the move from social science to social philosophy. By artificially separating our conative and cognitive processes from the complex human environments that influence us, there is the danger of ignoring the fact that what gets interpreted as an individual's wayward, idiosyncratic implicit attitude may be the manifestation of a public's widely entrenched illicit norm. The functionality of an illicitly racist norm remains a taboo topic, unchallenged and uncharted by the majority of psychologists conducting research in the United States, for example, where the dominant intellectual and academic cultures are overtly inclusive and egalitarian but covertly elitist and hierarchical.5

When analytic philosophy turns to psycho-neural research to enhance understanding of an earnest egalitarian's implicit racial bias, negative stereotyping is framed as a feature of the individual's "mental apparatus" (Mavda and Brownstein 24). But as will be discussed next, when derisive discrimination is treated as if it were an individual's subconscious aberration, then the causes of an egalitarian's cognitive dissonance are confused with the effects themselves, i.e., the replicable artefacts (EEG patterns, eye-blink rates, rising cortisol levels). For instance, Mavda and Brownstein announce that by studying "the cognitive architecture that perpetuates discrimination and inequality" (ibid.), their aim is to understand "the way affective and conative states function interde-pendently" so that they may "choose a model that will inspire the greatest transformation [ ... ] to achieve the most de-biasing bang for our interventional buck" (23).

Given that these and other philosophers are seeking strategies to ameliorate the racial discrimination that implicit bias purportedly fuels, it is surprising that they neglect the sizeable wealth of uncontested data clearly demonstrating that effective behavioural intervention requires focusing on "systems and policies to directly facilitate action, rather than trying to change what people think and feel" (Brewer 149). In section 4 we will see why effecting change necessarily entails intervening directly into the policies and procedures constitutive of institutionalized environments that are overtly egalitarian and racially inclusive while remaining covertly hierarchical and racially exclusive due to prevailing illicit social norms.

Arguably, the method of testing and analysing subliminal mental processes is not merely an ineffective approach to controlling implicit racial bias; it actually contributes to the maintenance of illicit racial stereotyping, not only through the interpretation of replicated data but also through the manner in which that data are assembled. For instance, experimentalists choose subjects for these studies from samples that are representative of the population's norm. But in a "laissez-faire" (Bobo, Kruegel, and Smith) racial hierarchy such as the contemporary United States, the relevant norm is defined by racially advantaged elites who presume, among other "colour-blind" dogmatic convictions, that everyone's experience of the shared social world is like their own. Thus a stock example of a stimulus regarded by philosophers as being a self-evident "threat," evoking "feelings of fear" in subjects generally (Mavda and Brownstein 20) is the image of an ambiguous object held by a brown eyed, dark toned man with dreadlocks in a dashiki — rather than by a blue-eyed, light skinned man with blond hair in a police uniform.

But one would assume that if social injustice is a priority concern, then the data set of greater philosophical significance, as well as greater complexity and interest, contains the subject for whom standard racist stereotypes are internalized against himself, and whose cortisol levels are triggered, for instance, by the image of the white policeman. Some of this "Other" subject's subliminal implicit expectations are far from irrational; nor are his all subliminal responses ordinarily discordant with evidence-based, inferentially structured, true beliefs, given the statistical disparity between the fate of different racial groups encountering white uniformed law enforcement authorities. Some of his subliminal feelings of self-disregard are adaptive mechanisms which suffice to cope in a threatening social environment (Cudd). For instance, the posture of stooped shoulders, or giving way to others in a queue, affects perhaps of conceding to one's subordinate status or low self-esteem, are essential to avoid attracting the resentment or outrage of uniformed policemen in a busy Burger King fast food restaurant in a small town of southern Georgia, just to take a random example.

If the theoretician's goal in studying implicit bias is to understand the contribution that subliminal mental processes make to perpetuating racial injustice (Gendler; Levy; Brownstein and Saul), then surely it will prove inadequate to depend solely upon the armchair intuitions complemented by the researched affective states of subjects belonging to racially privileged groups. But in the main, analytic philosophers who rely upon current psychological research depicting implicit bias appear oblivious to the inherent distortions — not to mention irony — of embracing uncritically the premises of experiments whose intuitive, self-evident significance is restricted almost exclusively to those who are potentially advantaged by racial bias — albeit passively and regrettably. Only in rare cases is this selective standpoint assumed explicitly, as when Neil Levy proposes to explore the conative capacities of subliminal autonomic reactions on behalf of readers "like [him]" ("Am I a Racist?" 534, 544, 546 inter alia).

The inevitability of error in philosophical theories dependent upon such a narrow (indeed, racially biased) empirical data base hearkens back to the theoretical shortfalls of developmental moral psychology exposed in the early 1980s. Not until Carol Gilligan's seminal critique did anyone realize the fundamental defect of Lawrence Kohlberg's erroneous, albeit widely accepted "finding" that adult women measure as congenitally incapable of making fully mature moral judgments on his aptitude scale for measuring ethical reasoning in five gradated stages. This gross misrepresentation was not attributed to Kohlberg's being any kind of sexist, implicit or otherwise; but because Kohlberg's model of childhood moral development was based upon Piaget's classic studies in the field, which derived solely from tests conducted exclusively on boys (Gilligan).

3 ontologizing negative racial stereotypes

Of course not all philosophers addressing implicit racial bias neglect the copious data depicting the predicaments of those bearing the brunt of negative stereotyping. Lauren Freeman's work of extending the implications of research on "stereotype threat" (Steele) is devoted to stressing the debilitating effects of feeling discrimination first hand. In the Heideggerian tradition, she elevates to a non-contingent, metaphysical postulate the trauma of being the target of negative racial stereotypes: "The experience of living as a member of a racially oppressed group [ ... ] cuts to the core of who one is and who one can become" ("Phenomenology" 36). She argues that such an invasive impact affects everyone who bears the personal identity of negative stereotyping so inescapably, and in ways so alien to any other form of social injustice, assault or injury (like rape or war crime) that being racially oppressed constitutes belonging to an altogether unique ontological kind. Freeman employs the language of ontology to highlight the schismatic polarization of oppressor and oppressed via racial stigmatization. "To be racially oppressed means to have a different ontological constitution on account of one's social position" such that "[ ... ] the structure of one's being is different from those who are not racially oppressed [ ... ] one lives in a different world" (38—39). Freeman is keen to stress that this ontological architecture is not inherent; it is a socio-historical effect of one's social position. Thus "[ ... ] racial oppression is reversible and preventable: if personal, social, cultural, and political attitudes were to change, then this type of [ . ] ontological [ ... ] harm could be alleviated" (40).

But it is not clear whether one can coherently countenance a distinct ontological kind on the basis of a certain type of experience which can be known about only by the members belonging to that kind who share their own special point of view (Rosenthal). In a footnoted reply to an objection accredited to David Owen, Freeman remarked:

[... ] it is true that I [ ... ] a white woman [... ] cannot experience first-personally what it is like to exist in a Black body [... ] I can still understand testimonies of what it is like. There is sufficient first-person evidence to suggest the ontological structures of experience are substantially different. (41-42 n. 15)

Yet another concern about treating direct experience as the essential criterion of membership in this ontological kind is the fact that experiences associated with racial stereotyping contrast starkly not only between members of different racial groups but more significantly between members of the same marginalized racial group (Neville et al.; Block 255). The available psychological research indicates that derogatory stereotyping gets internalized self-destructively by some victims of prejudice, whereas it is dismissively deflected by others (Block; Neville et al.) — not as a result of other people's attitudes but through the agent's own transformative experiences, bias awareness building, role models and the ability to dismiss the false consciousness of colour-blind ideology (Neville, Viard, and Turner, "Race and Recognition"). A theoretical apparatus that invokes everyone belonging to an historically stigmatized social group as sharing an experience of oppression which commits all of them to an indelible diminution of capacity "is arguably both false and counterproductive" (Block 255).

Freeman observes this herself, in another footnote: "there is no such thing as the Black experience" (41 n. 8). She acknowledges that differences determined by circumstance — class, gender, sexual orientations — will yield very different experiences:

[... ] my phenomenology of racial oppression can apply to both Black men and Black women in that it can account for the ways in which their worlds can be constituted differently from one another at the same time from being constituted differently from white men and women [sic]. (Ibid.)

But again, the studies referred to here demonstrate that it is not by virtue of their physical traits, class, or economic circumstance that the abuse of being stigmatized and vilified is experienced differently among those who are racially stereotyped. The empirical research shows that individuals are hurt by negative stereotyping in varying degrees depending upon how far they have freed themselves of the false consciousness that they should be carrying the blame for it (Block; Neville et al.). This fact threatens again to weigh heavily on the claim that one unique ontological kind exists for all embodiments of racial oppression rather than indeterminately many, since none should be regarded as the definitive prototype of experiencing this kind of harm.

Another way that Freeman highlights the experiential basis for this ontological status is by elaborating the notion of objectifying oneself in a repulsed way consistent with illicit public norms, discussed by celebrated seminal advocates of positive black self-identity (and quoted insightfully by Freeman: Du Bois; Fanon; Mills; Yancy). "Double consciousness is the prolonged experience or way of being in which one views and understands oneself through the eyes of the oppressor" ("Embodied Harm" 653). But if the ontological kind unique to racial oppression is defined solely by the experience of double consciousness, then the question again arises whether only members can properly know what it means to belong to that kind.

Can testimony ever be sufficient evidence to know what it is like to have double consciousness without being oppressed by it oneself? Knowledge by testimony would involve knowing by being told how the oppressed sees herself as she imagines she is seen through the gaze of the oppressor; and to know this sufficiently might require knowing what it is like for the oppressed to see herself as one who knows now (having told) that she is being seen to be seeing herself as she imagines she is seen through the gaze of the oppressor; but once that gaze has been adjusted in the light of this knowledge, then the oppressed may see herself as she thinks she is seen differently by the oppressor seeing her knowing that she is seen as seeing herself as she thinks the oppressor sees her; and this might require that the oppressed adjust her way of seeing herself as being seen by the oppressor whose gaze she may believe or hope has been adjusted in light of what she has disclosed, and so on. It appears that full disclosure of the knowledge required to know who is a member of the onto-logical kind unique to racial oppression threatens to collapse not only from the infinity of reflections in two mirrors facing each other but also from the infinitely expanding image as the mirrors ceaselessly recede from each other to capture the growing content of what they are reflecting. Or, more productively, the implication worth pursuing from testifying about one's double consciousness may be that this kind of self-disclosure cannot be conferred without the conferral itself having a transformative effect on the informant, depending upon who it is that is receiving the disclosure. This suggests that the ontology of racial oppression is dynamic and fluid, not endemic and static; for it can be changed from within by implicit attitudes and actions, and interactions and reactions initiated by the subjective agent. The reversal that Freeman speaks of is not dependent wholly upon the attitudes of others who are in positions of indefensible power to dismiss, reject and ignore. Confrontation, disclosure, seeking role models and avoidance of the white gaze altogether may all be different paths suggesting others to self-affirmation, self-acceptance and building a positive sense of black identity despite the manifest conditions of oppression (Neville, Viard, and Turner, "Race and Recognition" 23). Psychological studies by the leading researcher and theorist Helen A. Neville have detailed the roles of colour evasion, power evasion and bias evasion that sustain racial assumptions of undue entitlement and privilege, as well as the many different journeys travelled by individuals distancing themselves from still being targets of racial discrimination. This cutting-edge work, together with the wealth of empirical data and theory it has inspired, indicates there is no basis for supposing that the very real disadvantages incurred by some kinds of racial identity necessarily entail for anyone a fixed ontological status characterized by "a bodily comportment experienced as an 'I cannot' as opposed to an 'I can' [ ... ]" (Freeman, "Embodied Harm" 659).

**Implicit racism is malleable and declining.**

Tessa **Charlesworth 21**, Postdoctoral Experimental Psychologist at Harvard University; Mahzarin R. Banaji, Ruben Post Halleck Professor of Psychology at Yale from 1992–2002, Richard Clarke Cabot Professor of Social Ethics at Harvard University, September 2021, “Patterns of Implicit and Explicit Attitudes II. Long-Term Change and Stability, Regardless of Group Membership,” *American Psychologist* 76(6), Stras

Data Source

Data were retrieved from volunteer respondents to the Project Implicit demonstration website (https://implicit-harvard-edu.proxy.lib.umich.edu/), who provided informed consent and selected either the Race, Sexuality, or Age IAT. Data inclusion began January 1, 2007, and ended December 31, 2016; for a total of 10 years of data and 2,553,745 respondents. Only U.S. respondents were included in the analyses, ensuring a sample with shared understanding of the social categories of sexuality, race, and age. Additionally, we only included respondents with complete IAT scores (within the conditions of the revised scoring algorithm for the IAT; Greenwald et al., 2003); complete explicit measures and complete demographics of age, gender, race, political ideology, education, and sexuality (for the Sexuality IAT). Demographics and sample sizes for each Test are provided in Table 1.

Table 1 omitted.

Materials

The IAT (Greenwald et al., 1998) is a computerized Task comparing reaction times to sort stimuli related to groups (e.g., old vs. young people) and attributes (e.g., good vs. bad). Average response latencies to sort the groups and attribute stimuli are compared across two blocks, a societally congruent block (e.g., old/bad are sorted to the same side, and young/good are sorted to the opposite side) and a societally incongruent block (e.g., old/good vs. young/bad). Faster responses are interpreted as stronger associations between the paired concepts. Positive IAT D-scores reflect a pro-Young/anti-Old, pro-White/anti-Black, or pro-Straight/anti-Gay attitude.

Analytic Strategy

Analytic Framework: ARIMA Time Series Models

As argued elsewhere (Charlesworth & Banaji, 2019) investigating patterns of long-term change in population-level data is best achieved through autoregressive-integrated-moving-average (ARIMA) time-series models (Cryer & Chan, 2008; Jebb et al., 2015). These models offer several advantages over linear multiple regression approaches including that they can (a) accommodate temporal autocorrelations (i.e., temporal dependencies resulting from measures close in time being more similar than measures far apart in time); (b) address nonlinear patterns and seasonal variation; and (c) offer forecasts about future patterns of change, providing an intuitive index of how much change has occurred in the past as well as the range of change that may occur in the future.

Identifying Parallel or Nonparallel Demographic Trends in Explicit and Implicit Attitude Change

To identify parallel or nonparallel trends in implicit and explicit social group attitudes we perform a two-step analysis. First, in line with a wealth of research on demographic polarization (e.g., focusing on ideological divergence; Fiorina & Abrams, 2008) we begin by examining how the gap between the two demographic subgroups has changed (e.g., has the difference between men and women’s attitudes increased, decreased or remained stable over time?). Second, we also test the individual subgroup trajectories to investigate whether both subgroups reveal trends in the same direction and at the same rate. The conclusions from both steps generally converge (see Supplemental Table S5 in the online supplemental material), indicating robust results. Finally, to further support inference, we perform a supplemental analysis using generalized least squares (GLS) regressions testing the interaction of demographic subgroup-by-time (reported in Supplemental Tables S3 and S4). Even this unique non ARIMA approach reveals convergent evidence with the observed conclusions.

To give further detail on each of the steps: The first step in the analyses is to examine the gap between two subgroups (e.g., male vs. female) over time by subtracting the time series of one subgroup from that of the relevant comparison subgroup (e.g., the time series for women’s attitudes is subtracted from the time series for men’s attitudes). ARIMA models are then fit to the demographic gap time series using the automated forecasting algorithm implemented in the forecast package in the R computing environment (Hyndman & Khandakar, 2008).

The demographic gap time series can reveal one of three patterns: (a) remaining stable (either at neutral or above/below neutral), (b) moving toward neutral (i.e., decreasing gap), or (c) moving away from neutral (i.e., increasing gap). If the gap is stable, this indicates that the two demographic subgroups have parallel trends (Patterns 1, 2, 3, and 4 in Figure 1). If, however, the gap is moving toward or away from neutral this indicates that the subgroups have nonparallel trends (i.e., in different rates or directions; Patterns 5, 6, and 7 in Figure 1). Specifically, if the gap is moving toward neutral (Pattern 7), the subgroups are converging over time (becoming more similar); if the gap is moving away from neutral (Pattern 5 and 6 in Figure 1), the subgroups are diverging over time (becoming more different). Formally, parallel change is indicated by no differencing parameter in the ARIMA models (i.e., p, 0, q), and forecasts that are hovering around neutrality, indicating that the series is already stable. Nonparallel change is indicated by the presence of a differencing parameter in the ARIMA model (indicating a trend), as well as by forecasts that are not hovering around neutrality. The results of all demographic gap series are reported in Table 2 and visualized in the SM (Supplemental Figures S2 and S3 in the online supplemental material).

Figure 1 omitted.

Figure 1. Note. a: Plots represent all possible hypothetical patterns of two demographic subgroups in their implicit attitude change over time. The solid line represents the hypothetical trajectory for one of the demographic subgroups (e.g., White, nonreligious, elderly, etc.), the dashed line represents the trajectory for the relevant comparison demographic subgroup. The list below each plot reports the attitudes and demographic subgroup comparisons that follow the given pattern. b: Plots represent all possible hypothetical patterns of two demographic subgroups in their explicit attitude change over time. Att = attitudes. See caption to Figure 1a.

Table 2 omitted.

Trends in the Gap Between Demographic Subgroups for Implicit and Explicit Age, Race, and Sexuality Attitudes

In the second step of the analyses, ARIMA models are fit to each individual demographic subgroup time series (e.g., just to men’s attitudes and, separately, just to women’s attitudes). Because we are focused on whether the two subgroups reveal the same trends (i.e., change or remain stable at the same rate and in the same direction) we focus on comparisons of the order of the differencing parameter in the ARIMA models and the raw amount of change. Formally, parallel trends are indicated when both subgroups have the same order of differencing parameters and descriptively similar amounts of raw change. Nonparallel trends are indicated when the two subgroups have different orders of differencing parameters and/or descriptively different amounts of raw change. Individual trajectories are visualized in Figures 2–5 and reported in the SM (Supplemental Tables S1 and S2 in the online supplemental material).

Figure 2 omitted.

Figure 2. Note. Thin light-blue or light-purple lines indicates the observed monthly weighted means of the two demographic subgroups as noted in the legend, thick dark-blue or dark-purple lines indicates the decomposed trend lines of the observed monthly data (removing seasonality and noise), dark-blue or dark-purple shaded areas indicate 80% confidence intervals (CIs) and light-blue or light-purple shaded areas indicate 95% CIs of the ARIMA model forecasts, dark-blue or dark-purple lines inside shaded areas indicates the means of the ARIMA model forecast. IAT = Implicit Association Test. See the online article for the color version of this figure.

Figure 3 omitted.

Figure 3. Note. See figure caption to Figure 2. IAT = Implicit Association Test. See the online article for the color version of this figure.

Figure 4 omitted.

Figure 4. Note. For further details see figure caption to Figure 2. IAT = Implicit Association Test. See the online article for the color version of this figure.

Figure 5 omitted.

Figure 5. Note. For further details see figure caption to Figure 2. IAT = Implicit Association Test. See the online article for the color version of this figure.

Figure 2 omitted.

Figure 2. Note. Thin light-blue or light-purple lines indicates the observed monthly weighted means of the two demographic subgroups as noted in the legend, thick dark-blue or dark-purple lines indicates the decomposed trend lines of the observed monthly data (removing seasonality and noise), dark-blue or dark-purple shaded areas indicate 80% confidence intervals (CIs) and light-blue or light-purple shaded areas indicate 95% CIs of the ARIMA model forecasts, dark-blue or dark-purple lines inside shaded areas indicates the means of the ARIMA model forecast. IAT = Implicit Association Test. See the online article for the color version of this figure.

Figure 3 omitted.

Figure 3. Note. See figure caption to Figure 2. IAT = Implicit Association Test. See the online article for the color version of this figure.

Figure 4 omitted.

Figure 4. Note. For further details see figure caption to Figure 2. IAT = Implicit Association Test. See the online article for the color version of this figure.

Figure 5 omittted.

Figure 5. Note. For further details see figure caption to Figure 2. IAT = Implicit Association Test. See the online article for the color version of this figure.

Finally, we also examine U.S. state differences in implicit and explicit attitude change. However, because of the many differences in analytic approaches (e.g., states cannot be summarized in binary comparisons to create demographic “gaps”), geographic analyses are only summarized briefly below but reported in detail in the in the online supplemental material.

Controlling For Demographic Covariates and Sample Changes Over Time

In cross-sectional data, spurious attitude change could arise from demographic changes in the sample over time (e.g., a sample becoming increasingly liberal or female). Furthermore, observed demographic differences across one demographic group (e.g., race) could actually be due to differences along a correlated demographic group (e.g., political orientation). To address both issues of sample change and demographic covariates, we extended the weighting approach used by Charlesworth and Banaji (2019). First, target weights were set for the demographic representation of the whole sample over all time. Second, the sample was split across the demographic subgroups of interest (e.g., into liberals and conservatives) and subsequently split across years, yielding 10 yearly subsamples for each demographic subgroup (e.g., liberals in 2007, 2008, and so on through 2016; as well as conservatives in 2007, 2008, and so on through 2016). Third, the yearly subsamples for each demographic subgroup were weighted to effectively “match” the demographic representations of the full sample over all time, thereby controlling for both demographic covariates and demographic change. For example, the weights ensured that the demographic representations of liberals in 2007 approximated the demographic representations of liberals or conservatives (on age, race, gender, and education) in any other given year. Weighted monthly means were calculated for each subgroup using the anesrake package in R (Pasek, 2016), and the demographic gap time series was calculated by subtracting the two weighted subgroup trajectories. Further details are provided in the online supplemental materials. In addition, to ensure robustness, we repeat all analyses but weighting only to yearly weights (not demographic covariates); all conclusions remain consistent regardless of weighting approach.

Results

Overview

Across all attitude topics (age, race, sexuality) and demographic subgroup comparisons (e.g., male-female, White American-Black American), we examined 32 demographic group comparisons for parallel (Patterns 1–4, Figure 1) or nonparallel trends (Patterns 5–7, Figure 1).

Implicit Attitudes

By far the most frequent pattern for implicit age, race, and sexuality attitudes was parallel trends, with 26/32 comparisons showing demographic subgroups that were changing at similar rates and in similar directions (see summary in Figure 1a and Table 2). That is, most demographic subgroups changed in parallel toward neutrality for implicit race and sexuality attitudes, and most demographic subgroups remained stable in parallel for implicit age attitudes. In contrast, nonparallel trends, whether divergence (four of 32 comparisons) or convergence (two of 32 comparisons), were relatively rare for implicit attitudes. Geographic differences in implicit attitude change also revealed relatively narrow ranges of change as well as significant rank-order stability, implying that most U.S. states were changing or remaining stable in parallel. Theoretically, this suggests that the sources of long-term change in implicit age, race, and sexuality attitudes are likely to be widespread phenomena, cutting across demographics in similar ways.

As summarized in Figure 1a, the exceptions to this conclusion of parallel change were as follows. First, Black versus White Americans (as well as Black vs. Asian Americans) have converged over time on implicit race attitudes, because Black Americans have maintained a weak, stable pro-Black/anti-White implicit attitude, whereas White (and Asian) Americans have moved in the direction of neutrality over time (moving from a strong pro-White/anti-Black implicit attitude to a weaker attitude). Second, younger versus older respondents and liberal versus conservative respondents have diverged over time for both implicit race and sexuality attitudes, with younger or liberal respondents generally changing faster in the direction of neutrality than older or conservative respondents. Younger or liberal subgroups may therefore be uniquely receptive to, or exposed to, the current forces motivating societal change (e.g., Krosnick & Alwin, 1989).

Explicit Attitudes

For explicit age, race, and sexuality attitudes (summarized in Figure 1b and Table 2), the modal pattern was again parallel trends across demographic subgroups (18 of 32 comparisons). However, relative to implicit attitudes, more comparisons revealed nonparallel trends (10 of 32 showed convergence and four of 32 showed divergence). This suggests that these explicit attitudes are relatively more susceptible to the mezzo-level influences of demographic-specific experiences and motivations (e.g., intergroup contact, SDO/SJ). In line with this interpretation, explicit attitudes also showed relatively larger ranges of change across U.S. states.

Together, these findings show that (a) implicit age, race, and sexuality attitudes reveal surprising similarity in trends across most demographic subgroups, with most groups changing in parallel toward neutrality (i.e., decreasing bias) over the past decade; (b) two exceptions were race differences for implicit race attitudes, as well as age and political differences for implicit race and sexuality attitudes; and (c) explicit attitudes also showed a modal pattern of parallel trends toward attitude neutrality, but nevertheless revealed relatively more nonparallel trends than implicit attitudes. Below, we elaborate on the individual demographic comparisons; further details on all analyses are provided throughout the online supplemental materials.

Gender Differences

On all three implicit attitudes, the trends of men and women’s attitudes have moved in parallel, in the same direction and at similar rates over time (Figure 2 and Supplemental Table S1 in the online supplemental material). Thus, the gap between men and women’s implicit age, race, and sexuality attitudes has remained stable over the past decade and is not forecast to converge in the future. In contrast, for explicit attitudes, men and women’s attitudes have converged over time (Figure 2 and Supplemental Table S2). Indeed, the ARIMA forecasts indicate that gender differences on explicit race, age, and sexuality attitudes could converge as early as 2020, 2025, and 2028, respectively. Such convergence is the result of men shifting toward attitude neutrality by greater amounts than women: for race, age, sexuality attitudes, respectively, men’s raw change = .17, .20, .50 points and women’s raw change = .08, .17, .32 points (Supplemental Table S2).

Figure 2 omitted.

Figure 2. Note. Thin light-blue or light-purple lines indicates the observed monthly weighted means of the two demographic subgroups as noted in the legend, thick dark-blue or dark-purple lines indicates the decomposed trend lines of the observed monthly data (removing seasonality and noise), dark-blue or dark-purple shaded areas indicate 80% confidence intervals (CIs) and light-blue or light-purple shaded areas indicate 95% CIs of the ARIMA model forecasts, dark-blue or dark-purple lines inside shaded areas indicates the means of the ARIMA model forecast. IAT = Implicit Association Test. See the online article for the color version of this figure.

Race Differences: White Versus Asian Americans, White Versus Black Americans, and Asian Versus Black Americans

For all implicit attitudes, White and Asian Americans revealed parallel trends over the past decade (Supplemental Table S1 in the online supplemental material and Table 2). Similarly, for all explicit attitudes, White and Asian Americans had parallel trends over time (Supplemental Table S2 and Table 2). Thus, when it comes to evaluating groups defined by age, sexuality, or Black/White racial groups, White and Asian Americans appear to be shaped by similar macrolevel forces over time.

A different pattern emerges when contrasting the attitudes of Black and White Americans. Although Black and White Americans revealed parallel trends on implicit age and sexuality attitudes (Figure 3; Supplemental Table S1; and Table 2), they have converged over time on implicit race attitudes. This convergence is due to faster change toward neutrality among White Americans (who started at an IAT D-score of .40 and decreased in pro-White/anti-Black attitudes by .06 points) and relative stability among Black Americans, who maintained a weak pro-Black/anti-White implicit attitude (no measurable change around IAT D-scores of −.08 to −.09; Supplemental Table S1). Identical patterns emerged for the comparison of Asian and Black Americans: Asian and Black Americans revealed parallel trends on both implicit age and sexuality attitudes but converging trends on implicit race attitudes because of faster change toward attitude neutrality among Asian Americans and stable, weak pro-Black/anti-White implicit attitudes among Black Americans.

Figure 3 omitted.

Figure 3. Note. See figure caption to Figure 2. IAT = Implicit Association Test. See the online article for the color version of this figure.

Given that White and Asian Americans have moved in the direction of more neutral implicit attitudes (i.e., in the direction of pro-Black/anti-White implicit attitudes), why did Black Americans not also move in the direction of pro-Black/anti-White implicit attitudes, especially given that this would be in the direction of greater ingroup preference? Theoretically, the stable but weak implicit ingroup preferences among Black Americans aligns with previous research suggesting a limit to implicit ingroup preference when such preferences go against the persistent status hierarchy (e.g., Axt et al., 2014; Dunham et al., 2014). In other words, there may be a limit to Black Americans’ implicit ingroup preferences (i.e., implicit pro-Black/anti-White attitudes) because of internalized associations of Black-bad/White-good that are embedded in systemic collective representations.

Similar results were observed for explicit attitudes: White and Black Americans moved in parallel on sexuality attitudes but both explicit age and race attitudes showed demographic convergence between White and Black Americans (as well as between Asian and Black Americans). For explicit race attitudes, the gap is converging rapidly because both White (and Asian) Americans and Black Americans are changing toward neutrality, but from opposite directions. Specifically, White Americans have decreased in their explicit pro-White/anti-Black preference by .18 points, and similarly, Asian Americans have decreased their explicit pro-White/anti-Black preference by .22 points, showing a trend downward. In contrast, Black Americans have decreased in their explicit pro-Black/anti-White preference by .28 points (Supplemental Table S2 in the online supplemental material), showing a trend upward.

Education Differences

For all implicit attitudes, education subgroups (<college education, college education) moved in parallel (Supplemental Table S1 and Table 2). Identical findings emerged for explicit attitudes (Supplemental Table S2). Although such a result may be initially surprising, similar conclusions are obtained in representative samples, where all education subgroups are changing in parallel on beliefs about race and sexuality (see Key Trends in General Social Survey, 2019).

Religion Differences: Nonreligious, Christian, Jewish, Other Religions

For all implicit attitudes, all religious subgroup comparisons indicated parallel trends over the past decade, with gaps between most religions indicating only small baseline differences, and forecasts that hovered around neutrality (Supplemental Table S1). Identical findings emerged for explicit attitudes, with all religious subgroups revealing parallel trends toward neutrality for all attitudes (Supplemental Table S1). This result may seem counterintuitive given previous literature showing how religion shapes social opinions over time (e.g., abortion, Evans, 2002). It is possible that religion may shape change in religion-relevant attitudes/opinions (e.g., abortion) but not so in intergroup attitudes that are not immediately applicable to religious discussions (e.g., race, age). Further, it is possible that the decreasing centrality of religion in U.S. life (Gallup, 2017; Pew Research Center, 2015) may lead to a decreasing role of religious identity in how social attitudes change.

Sexuality Differences

On implicit sexuality attitudes , all sexual orientations, whether straight, lesbian/gay, or bisexual respondents, revealed parallel trends toward more pro-Gay/anti-Straight attitudes (although there were baseline differences in magnitude; Supplemental Table S1). Nevertheless, for explicit sexuality attitudes, although all groups were again moving toward more progay/antistraight attitudes, the trends were nonparallel. Specifically, there was convergence because straight respondents decreased at a faster rate (changing by .36 points) than either lesbian/gay or bisexual respondents (changing by .11 and .12 points, respectively; Supplemental Table S2).

Age Differences

A unique pattern of nonparallel implicit attitude change emerged for age comparisons. First, within implicit attitudes, younger respondents (<20 years old at time of test) and older respondents (>40 years old at time of test) have diverged on implicit sexuality attitudes and, somewhat less consistently, on implicit race attitudes (see Figure 4). This divergence is because younger respondents have changed faster than older respondents. Specifically, younger respondents have decreased by .15 and .06 IAT points on implicit sexuality and race attitudes, respectively, whereas older respondents have decreased by only .07 and .04 IAT points (Supplemental Table S1). Moreover, both implicit race and sexuality attitudes have actually flipped the sign of their age differences over time, with younger respondents initially more biased, but now less biased, than older respondents. In contrast, for implicit age attitudes, younger and older respondents have both shown stable pro-Young/anti-Old preferences over the past decade. Thus, ingroup preference motivations do not appear to activate faster movement toward pro-Old/anti-Young preferences among elderly respondents, perhaps as a result of internalized collective representations that value “youth” (Axt et al., 2014).

Figure 4 omitted.

Figure 4. Note. For further details see figure caption to Figure 2. IAT = Implicit Association Test. See the online article for the color version of this figure.

For all explicit attitudes, younger respondents have revealed faster trends toward neutrality than older respondents (see Figure 4): younger respondents have decreased in bias by .17, .18, and .46 points on explicit age, race, and sexuality attitudes, respectively, while older respondents have decreased in bias by only .08, .07, and .24 explicit points (less than half the raw change of younger respondents; Supplemental Table S2). Thus, across the board, age differences on all but one attitude (implicit age attitudes) indicate nonparallel trends across time.

Political Differences

Political groups have revealed nonparallel trends for both implicit race and sexuality attitudes, with an increasing (diverging) gap between the two groups over time. This divergence is due to more rapid change among the initially less-biased liberal respondents (decreasing by .15 and .07 IAT points for sexuality and race attitudes, respectively) and relatively slower change toward attitude neutrality among the more-biased conservative respondents (decreasing by .07 and .04 IAT points; Figure 5 and Supplemental Table S1). It is nevertheless worth noting that, for implicit race and sexuality attitudes, both liberal and conservative respondents show trends in the direction of neutrality, just at different rates.

Figure 5 omitted.

Figure 5. Note. For further details see figure caption to Figure 2. IAT = Implicit Association Test. See the online article for the color version of this figure.

For explicit attitudes, liberals and conservatives reveal nonparallel trends for all three attitudes. For explicit race attitudes, liberals have changed faster (decreased by .17 points) than conservatives (decreased by .11 points), resulting in divergence across time. For explicit age and sexuality attitudes, however, conservatives have changed faster toward neutrality (decreased by .20 and .44 points for age and sexuality attitudes, respectively) than liberals (decreased by .12 and .34 points; Supplemental Table S2 and Figure 5). Thus, on explicit age and sexuality attitudes, the political gap is, perhaps surprisingly, converging over time.

Geographic Differences

All implicit attitudes indicated relatively limited geographic variability in rates of change over time (see individual states listed in Supplemental Tables S10.1–10.8 and interactive visuals at https://outsmartinghumanminds.org/interactive/change-timelapse/index.html). It is particularly notable that, for implicit sexuality attitudes, every single U.S. state has moved toward neutrality over the past decade, reinforcing the surprisingly broad spread of change across people and places. Moreover, U.S. states revealed significant and high rank-order stability for implicit sexuality and race attitudes, suggesting that the states are largely changing in parallel and maintaining their rank-ordering (Supplemental Table S9). Explicit attitudes, in contrast, revealed greater variability in the rate and direction of change across states (Supplemental Table S9).

General Discussion

Across three social group attitude topics (age, race, and sexuality) and a total of 32 demographic group comparisons (e.g., men vs. women, old vs. young, liberal vs. conservative) as well as all U.S. states, we report the first comprehensive record of demographic patterns of implicit and explicit attitude change over a decade (2007–2016). In so doing, we offer insights into the nature of long-term, societal-level change in implicit and explicit social cognition. We show that (a) long-term change in implicit age, race, and sexuality attitudes appears to be widespread, with parallel trends toward attitude neutrality (i.e., decreasing bias) across most demographic groups; (b) exceptions to this pattern are age and politics, where younger and liberal respondents revealed faster trends toward neutrality than older and conservative respondents; and (c) explicit attitudes revealed more nonparallel trends (with demographic groups changing toward neutrality at differing rates across time), although explicit attitudes also revealed a modal pattern of parallel change toward neutrality. In addition, we illustrate a methodological approach for identifying demographic differences within large-scale cross-sectional temporal data, a setting that will become increasingly frequent in this era of big data.

Implicit Attitude Trends Largely Unfold in Parallel Across Groups

For implicit social group attitudes, the majority (26 of 32) of demographic comparisons revealed that the trends of demographic subgroups have changed, or remained stable, in parallel over the past decade. Parallel implicit attitude change occurred even regardless of baseline differences in subgroups’ implicit attitude magnitude (e.g., women consistently had lower implicit attitudes than men, but both men and women consistently changed in parallel). This finding is perhaps surprising, as it stands in contrast to the prediction that differences in attitude magnitude correspond to differences in change (Charlesworth & Banaji, 2019; Petty & Krosnick, 1995). Perhaps, the relationship between attitude magnitude and change may not apply when looking at aggregated demographics, although further explorations are necessary.

Overall, the results suggest that, whatever the rate or direction of change/stability, implicit attitude change is occurring at the macrolevel of society. This conclusion aligns with the “bias of crowds” theory (Payne et al., 2017), which proposes that implicit attitudes can be interpreted as products of societal environments. Thus, as societal environments change, so too will implicit attitudes transform across a wide range of demographic groups. Although this model was principally derived to explain implicit attitude magnitude, the current results suggest an important extension to the model: Implicit attitude change is also likely a product of the macrolevel, rather than the mezzo-level of demographic groups. Given this result, future research is poised to identify which macrolevel variables are at play, whether widespread exposure to ecological stressors (e.g., pathogen threat, Grossmann & Varnum, 2015; Varnum & Grossmann, 2017b), legislations (e.g., Ofosu et al., 2019); mainstream media (e.g., Ravary et al., 2019); and/or social norms (Jackson et al., 2019).

That implicit attitudes are found to change at the macrolevel is particularly notable in the current social moment of 2020 when massive macrolevel events, including the Covid-19 global pandemic and the large-scale Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement, are shaping our daily lives. These macrolevel phenomena have the potential to profoundly reshape attitude trajectories across wide swaths of the population. For instance, increases in pathogen threats from the Covid-19 pandemic may ultimately reverse the trends we observed toward attitude neutrality (since pathogen threats are correlated with trends in social attitudes; Inbar et al., 2016; Varnum & Grossmann, 2017b). On the other hand, the surprisingly widespread approval of BLM across various cross-sections of society (Cohn & Quealy, 2020) points to the possibility that implicit attitudes (and especially race attitudes) may continue to shift toward more neutral and equitable attitudes. Ultimately, only time can tell what impact these macrolevel phenomena will have on the implicit and explicit attitudes of our society. For now, what is clear is this: Although many social attitudes and opinions are found to change slowly or idiosyncratically across society (Rosenfeld, 2017), the current data suggest that social attitudes, and especially implicit social group attitudes, can, under the right conditions, also reveal widespread transformations over the span of just a single decade.

### Intra-ontology/perm crd

#### All or nothing gains frame anti-blackness through a lens of whiteness, only the perm solves

**BARLOW 16** - Michael Barlow, 2016, graduated in 2016 with a Bachelors degree in Sociology from United States Military Academy at West Point in West Point, NY. “Addressing Shortcomings in Afro-Pessimism” http://www.inquiriesjournal.com/articles/1435/2/addressing-shortcomings-in-afro-pessimism//vi

While the ontological state of Black social death is an important concept for resistance scholars to understand, the typical advocacy of complete societal pessimism in response to that ontological arrangement is incomplete at best. Many in Afro-Pessimism use the basis of social death to determine the question of Black political orientation in a way that is problematic. This is not to say that social death theorization is not important, but that there is a vital distinction that needs to be made both in terms of its application toward traditional political processes and ensembles of Blackness. Frank Wilderson, Associated Professor of African-American Studies and Drama at the University of California-Irvine, is quite possibly the leading Afro-Pessimist scholar. He concludes his discussion of social death by advocating for one to “embrace its disorder, its incoherence, and allow oneself to be elabo­rated by it if, indeed, ones politics are to be underwritten by a desire to take down this country” (2007). In summary, his application of social death is used as a reason why Black life cannot be oriented at any level of meaningful production within society. While Wilderson is correct that the material labor and symbolic currency born out of Blackness will always be consumed by whiteness, his conclusion is paradoxical at some level. If humanism is the grammar by which civil society determines the register of subjectivity, why then is that matrix appropriate in determining the state of Black life, if Black life is inherently the position of what is incommunicable? If social death theory’s application is one that concludes an impossibility of meaningful Black productivity, then Afro-Pessimism becomes nothing but a body of literature that echoes the same sentiments as those who would understand Black life as a state of nothingness in plain racist terms. Understanding Black ontology should definitely involve an understanding of the social deadness of the Black subject in relation to society, but it should not be used as the standard to measure internal liberation. The distinction here is important because too often Afro-Pessimists scholars like Wilderson conceptualize Black resistance as a singular orientation toward society. Indeed their work is important to understand the manner in which society operates upon Black subjects, but it is insufficient to describe an ethic that allows for the pursuit of meaning within Blackness itself. In this regard, scholars should understand Black resistance as occurring on two different levels: the ontological and the intra-ontological. The distinction being made is between the ontological state of Blackness as determined outside of humanity proper versus the life within the ontological state of Blackness as understood through social death. If social death is the state of the Black, what then speaks to the state of the Black amongst Blacks? It would be a mistake on the part of any scholar to concern themselves with one and not the other. This paper uses the term intra-ontology in reference to the varying ontologies within social death. This is the Black among Blacks. These are those spaces within Blackness that only the Black can ever understand or occupy. Though they exist outside of the production of the human (within the category of social death), there are Black affektual politics that have been with the slave since the ship. These are the emotional and spiritual ontologies within Blackness that connected slaves of different lands, languages, and religions into one community. Black intra-ontology can never achieve the plane of recognition because it can only be understood within Blackness, which by definition is the position of social death, but those affektual spirits and emotions ought not be neglected. Social death should guide Black resistance strategy in understanding the position of the Black within civil society, but it speaks not to the arrangement of Black intra-ontological questions. If this is measured by social death it only produces a cycle of endless internal psychic violence because the Black would only be met with the discovery of a violent reality of its existence through affirmations of social death. Intra-ontological resistance must not be a question of how the world understands Blackness, because the position of the slave is one that cannot be articulated in terms of hegemony. If it is so that the Black inherently experiences the world through a different ontological register, then measures of Black liberation cannot be articulated through the lens of humanist grammars. Jared Sexton, the Director of the African-American Studies School of Humanities at the University of California-Irvine, is another leading scholar in Afro-pessimism. He explains that there is indeed social life that exists within social death. There are many that condemn the invocation of social death as overly pessimistic, but “this acceptance or affirmation is active; it is a willing or willingness, in other words, to pay whatever social costs accrue to being black, to inhabiting blackness, to living a black social life under the shadow of social death. This is not an accommodation to the dictates of the antiblack world” (Sexton 2010). This is to say that it is indeed possible to both affirm the state of social death and actively pursue the social life that exists within Blackness. This is not the typical critique of social death, but rather it is a necessary specification of the social life within social death that Sexton speaks. Social death is adequate in terms of measuring the ontological state of the human versus the Black, but a different rubric is required in mapping social life within social death. One such rubric is fleshly politics. This concepts derives from the plantation in regards to the manner in which slaves would temporarily reclaim and weaponize their bodies as a site of political protest against their state of enslavement. Fleshy politics is an example of an appropriate rubric for measuring liberation within intra-ontological politics because these bodily resistances surely did not change the physical state of enslavement, but it did immeasurable good for the mental and psychological state of those in the master’s cage. Alternate orientations to the flesh “excavates the social (after)life of these categories: it represents racializing assemblages of subjection that can never annihilate the lines of flight, freedom dreams, practices of liberation, and possibilities of other worlds” (Weheliye 2014). In contrast to Wilderson’s line of flight away from bodily coding, it is important to reclaim the atrocity of the flesh as a means of agency within capture through the remapping of whiteness. The enslaved female flesh was the site of great violence, but there is a false “dichotomy between the material/political and the personal, in large measure [because even though the] body, so deeply personal, is also a political arena. Their work has demonstrated the extent to which women's bodies were unique sites of domination under slavery” (Camp 2002). Though the body was in the possession of the slave master, the enslaved found personal meaning in its temporary recapture in fleshliness which satisfied an innate desire for selfhood. The illegality of using the flesh as a site of pleasure became a political counter-investment. While conventional Afro-Pessimist would argue that this personal orientation does nothing in terms of the ontological position within Blackness, the personal victory the enslaved experiences as a result of that temporary reclamation is meaningful in both psychological and emotional terms. This is important because if there is never room for personal liberation, and Black resistance is only understood in terms of material questions within civil society, it reproduces the same sacrificial logic that social death explains. Resistance strategies that only take meaning in notions of full agency are recipes for failure because these only measure Black liberation on the register of civil society which can never grapple with the inherent confine in which Black life exists. Balancing Ontological versus Intra-Ontological To take the conclusion of the previous section and use the call from intra-ontological liberation as a justification for the ontological state of Blackness would be a violent imposition of whiteness. The arrangement of Blackness as an ontological question versus Blackness as an intra-ontological question is a criminalization of Black thought. The two are not mutually exclusive, nor should one be viewed as a sufficient substitute for the other. Instead, they are complimentary; they are necessary components to the assemblage of Black resistance strategy. for free political autonomy absent British restrictions, there is also a less told narrative. Early desires for Manifest Destiny began not with the Constitution of the United States but with the pressures of the early American state to explore Native lands out West in order to take those lands as their own. They felt as though limiting themselves to the eastern shores deprived them of a natural right to own territory occupied by the Natives, and when the British government denied these desires for further colonial expansionism, it fuelled war tensions (James 2007). This trend is also true for slavery, and the American Civil War is an example. The maintenance of Slavery played a pivotal role in fuelling the American Civil War. Southern States wanted to continue the institution of slavery in new states admitted into the Union, and when this was denied, it fuelled the outbreak of the Civil War. These desires for empire not only created America, but they also sustained it through more war. This is why there exists an antagonistic relationship between the slave and civil society. The Black relationship to the United States, and really western civil society writ large, has always been one defined through violent terms. The very being of the Black comes to be in the world through the active colonial murder of the African. Often it is forgotten that Black itself is not an identity that it denoted by a specific topography or practice, but rather it is known through constructionist conceptions that are projected upon, and not by it. The case is a simple one; “Give Turtle Island back to the "Savage.” Give life itself back to the Slave. Two simple sentences, fourteen simple words, and the structure of U.S. (and perhaps global) antagonisms would be dismantled” (Wilderson 2010). Slavery provided not only the economic means for which the United States to produce itself, but it provided the map by which it could exist culturally and socially as well. If the United States was founded upon the genocide of the indigenous and the death of the African, then how can it ever be an ethical entity? It is not, and it should not be the end-point of Black political emancipation. Black movements in particular should abandon the United States as a source of hope because of the antagonistic relationship that it has with civil society. In terms ontological positioning, the ultimate point of freedom for the Black subject is the disorganization of society’s operation upon Black flesh because “for Black people, civil society itself- rather than its abuses or shortcomings - is a state of emergency” (Wilderson 2003). The power dynamic in the status quo exists as such through the continuous destructive consumption of the Black. Obviously, chattel slavery has ended but the slave relationship the Black has with the United States, and the world as a whole, is unchanged. In every major institution, Black bodies experience oppression and inequality at a systemic level. From ailing educational structures in overly impoverished neighborhoods, to the state of mass incarceration, Black subjects in America are targeted and subjected to overwhelming discrimination and abuse in every field. This is no coincidence. Recent theorizations have even gone as far as to identify the state of mass incarceration as the newest era of Black enslavement. Though not on the plantation, there is a case to be made that the slavery now exists in “the mass incarceration of people of color. Although African American men comprise less than seven percent of the population, they comprise half of the prison and jail population. Today, one out of three African American men is either in prison, on probation, or on parole” (Alexander 2006). This pattern of surveillance, restriction, and destruction of Black bodies is the very same process of enslavement from the plantation. This has been and continues to be the truth of Black life in western civilization since the dawning of the Middle Passage. Now, there are a myriad of liberal scholars who will point to sentimental hollow policies such as the Civil Rights Act to make the case for why the state of Black oppression is getting better. While the form of Black slavery has definitely changed and become more nuanced in its application, the foundational truth of said slavery remains unchanged. The question remains of how to create consistency in ontological and intra-ontological resistance. Is it materially possible to both call for a disruption of civil society while finding points of productivity in society? The answer is yes, at the margins. It is here that this paper makes another substantive departure from conventional pessimistic theorization, and again, it is useful to refer to Wilderson’s work. His theorization of the Black’s antagonistic relationship with the world concludes that the world is parasitic on Black life. Thus, he forwards the end of the world as the only ethical alternative. Afro-Pessimists are often criticized for their highly theoretical abstraction with this concept. Though there are no explicit specifications of what the end of the world is or how Black resistance movements are to specifically get there, it is widely accepted that the position is more of an epistemic orientation rather than one that forwards literal destruction. In addition, Wilderson calls for Black refusal to engage in civil society in an unflinching paradigmatic analysis meaning that any form of engagement with civil society would require Black abjection. This is the point of friction that this paper seeks to address. Even though Black bodies stand in an antagonistic relationship to the world, there needs to be a distinction made. The notion that any level of stability within civil society affirms Black Death has two major problems. First, it produces the exact same pattern of ressentiment which reproduces the internalization of self-hate which only sets the stage for communal violence in an attempt to cleanse. If the standard for measuring the effectiveness of Black movements is the destruction of every part of society, then failure is the only appropriate descriptor for every Black resistance strategy in history. If this is the case, the internalization of Black slaveness becomes all but inevitable by reinforcing psychological, mental, and emotional chains of depression on all those who seek to resistance. The second problem is that Black bodies have no means of creating instability at the state or societal level. Society is a manifestation of hundreds of years of economic and political accumulation that has yielded countless weapons against the oppressed. Simply expecting the dominant order to forgo the use of those weapons is a fantasy. The scope of orienting towards the end of the world in terms of instability is far too large. The end of the world is not possible. Afro-Pessimism is far too separated from the material practice of resistance in this regard. If the justification for detaching from state involvement is that it requires a sacrificing of Black flesh, then resistance strategies must consider the effect of a complete embrace of political refusal. Calls for absolute Black pessimism is also an abjection of Black flesh in the same manner Wilderson bases the need for the end of the world because an open refusal and rejection to at least seemingly conform to degrees of social norms will have deadly consequences for Black bodies. For pessimists to call for Blacks to openly embrace physical death in pursuit of theory is irresponsible and unethical. Wilderson uses the question of flinching as a misnomer. The term seems to suggest that any participation in or any implicit affirmation of society is an insufficient Black politic. The problem is that at its core the very nature of Black life is one that requires a series of strategic and tactical flinches. This means that in different situations and settings, Black bodies take different forms. If confronted on the street by a racist police officer, asking for one to unconditionally refuse to recognize the position of the officer is in turn asking for Black suicidal politics. As posited above, there is something inherently valuable within Black intra-ontological arrangements, and as such, suicide is a non-starter. Not only is this a strategy for sustaining intra-ontological freedom, but it is also a strategy for pursuing the disorganization of civil society. It problematizes society’s ability to easily script the nature of Black life and Black resistance. Tactical flinches allow Blackness to become a thousand different villains disguised as citizens. It is a protective mechanism for those who seek to fight against tyranny without inciting the wrath of the tyrannical. This is not to say that Black resistance should ever flinch in its orientation to civil society at a fundamental level. It is to say that in order for Black life to exist in a world that wishes its death, it is necessary to disguise that orientation and strategically present it in certain settings. Some will be highly critical of this notion because it will be perceived as a call to sacrifice expressions of authentic self in an appeasement of the dominant order. Instead, this is a call to reassess the very understanding of political orientation. Black resistance should embody refusal at the core level; that should be internalized, and it is the very process of mystifying that core refusal in acts of fugitive transgressions against civil society that renders its violence inoperable. This is not a sacrifice of the authentic self, but the mystification and protection of authentic Blackness in an act of rebellion against societal production of anti-Black violence. This is an effective means of navigating Black ontological questions. Again, Black liberation cannot be measured in terms of the absence of white violence, but it must be measured using different rubrics. In terms of Black ontological resistance as an ensemble, this resistance is a question is the maintenance of Black communities through the inoperability of violence by complicating perceptions of Black criminality. Since the slave has no capacity to orchestrate the manifestation of the end of the world, then Black orientation to the end of the world must begin with one of constructing the illegality of the body. This is the means in which Black movements must employ fleshly politics in modern resistance strategies. The end of the world should not be understood through the instability of civil society or the state, but rather, it should be understood through the ability of Black communities to render themselves self-sufficient which should very well include a strategic and criminal relationship with civil society.

## Diaspora Turn

#### Afropess is too totalizing theory of power -- it doesn’t account for individual experiences

**DAWSON 21** - Michael C. Dawson is the John D. MacArthur Professor of Political Science at the University of Chicago, and founding director of its Center for the Study of Race, Politics, and Culture, 5-17-2021, "Against Afropessimism," IDEOLOGY THEORY PRACTICE, https://www.ideology-theory-practice.org/blog/against-afropessimism//vi

Afropessimists argue that we can only understand the global system of racial domination if we acknowledge that it is, first and foremost, a system defined in toto by anti-blackness. Moreover, Afropessimism rejects a central role for political economy and politics for understanding the essence of black oppression. For the past few years, this branch of critical race theory has gained a number of supporters in and out of the academy. For example, Frank Wilderson’s highly influential 2020 book Afropessimism was long-listed for the National Book Award and was praised by several outstanding black intellectuals. This essay centres the work of Frank Wilderson and Jared Sexton as they are widely recognised leaders of the Afropessimism school of thought.[1] Wilderson and Sexton claim that the enslavement of Africans constituted a rupture; a rupture that was essential for the development of capitalism but also a rupture that put black bodies and black people outside of the logics of capitalism and colonialism. For Sexton and Wilderson, anti-blackness is both a unique system of structural dominance as well as an ideology. Anti-blackness, they claim, is defined by racial slavery and impervious to change. Sexton argues for example, “the application of the law of racial slavery is pervasive, regardless of variance or permutation in its operation across the better part of a millennium”.[2] In this essay, I offer a critique of Afropessimism, both as a theory of black oppression and as a political project. I make the following claims. First, Afropessimism incorrectly centres the experiences of people of African descent that were enslaved within the U.S. This results in the homogenisation of the experiences of peoples of African descent, and, equally importantly, mischaracterises and belittles the oppression of non-African colonised subjects. While I agree that anti-blackness is a central structural feature of global white supremacy that emerged with the mid-15th-century Iberian slave trade, I argue that it is not the only critical structural feature that historically defined white supremacy. Further, the ontological centring of the experiences of people of African descent in the U.S. radically and incorrectly homogenises the history and conditions of the peoples of Africa and those in the African Diaspora. Secondly, I argue that Afropessimists overemphasise the continuities in the black experience in the U.S. While Afropessimists are correct that there are structural continuities across time that continue to contribute to black oppression—not the least of which is a continuing vitriolic and violent global anti-blackness—they underemphasise the achievements of black freedom struggles. Even Wilderson’s own biography is a testimony to critical changes in the black experience in the U.S. The positive changes that are elided in the work of many Afropessimists—such as the formation of modern black civil society and a great expansion of a robust and often revolutionary black politics— serves to erase the often heroic struggles of black activists; struggles that often tragically failed to bring substantial progress, but that also sometimes achieved victories in the struggle for black liberation. Finally, and critically, Wilderson and Sexton present a fatally flawed account of the relationship between black oppression, white supremacy and the capitalist social order. I will demonstrate that this is a flaw that not only makes impossible any accurate account of black oppression, but also prevents us from understanding the contradictions and cleavages that exist within black communities and black politics. Afropessimism Incorrectly Centres the Experiences of People of African Descent Enslaved within the U.S. Afro-Pessimists homogenise the black experience. I agree with Wilderson when he argues that the enslavement of blacks, and specifically the slave trade, was a condition for the development of global capitalism, particularly as the Atlantic became more economically important than the Mediterranean.[3] The large-scale sale of Africans in 1444 by the Portuguese marked Africans as the Other, justifying in the minds of royal, religious, and secular Portuguese elites the brutal and exceptional enslavement of Africans. Previously, only prisoners of war were subject to enslavement. This marked the moment when Africans were marked as the exception to natural law in service of accumulation; in service of profits.[4] I also agree with Wilderson that this marks the inception of a set of anti-black logics that have taken a life of their own and have rendered black lives less valuable, subject to excessive and often arbitrary violence, and ultimately disposable during the entire history of capitalist development. I disagree, however, when Sexton and Wilderson privilege the role of enslaved Africans and their descendants in the “New World” and homogenise the black experience. They fail to understand that black people have played a number of roles viz colonialism and have been valued differently by capitalist states and managers depending on those roles.[5] Sexton’s claim “[t]he United States provides the point of focus here, but the dynamics under examination are not restricted to its bounds” glosses over the differences in black experience at the time of slavery and the present day, and between “New World slavery” and old-world colonialism.[6] It assumes that the figure of the enslaved African in the “New World” can represent the entirety of black experience. This is untenable: After all, one might well argue that the experience of colonised Africans was more akin to that of the other colonised populations of Asia and the “New World” than that of their enslaved cousins. The work of scholars such as Michael Ralph and Andrew Zimmerman, among many others, demonstrate that those enslaved in the so- called “New World” was not the same, for example, as the experience of Africans in Senegambia who worked as agents on behalf of European colonial powers.[7] Further, these Afropessimists incorrectly belittle the oppression of non-white peoples who are not of African descent. If the threat and shadow of slavery followed those of African descent across generations, the very real threat of dispossession, massacre and even genocide at the hands of Euro-American imperialists and their clients similarly hung over entire indigenous populations across multiple continents and islands. But Afropessimists deny this. Sexton, for example, argues that with respect to black folks, indigenous populations had the same relationship to people of African descent as the Europeans that colonised the western hemisphere, Asia, and Africa. Sexton argues, “freedom from the rule of slave law requires only that one be considered nonblack, whether that nonblack racial designation be “white” or “Indian” or, in the rare case, “Oriental”—this despite the fact that each of these groups has at one point or another laboured in conditions similar to or contiguous with enslaved African-derived groups.”[8] In other words, Sexton here argues that modern racial slavery was so momentous than even the indigenous victims of genocide, or the conquered colonised peoples throughout the world, had more in common with whites than they had in common with enslaved African populations and their descendants—even though arguably colonised Africans had more in common with other colonised peoples than with their enslaved cousins in the Western Hemisphere. Sexton declares, “we note the fact that ‘the absolute submission mandated by law was not simply that of slave to his or her owner- but the submission of all the enslaved before all whites. The latter group is better termed all non blacks (or, less economically, the unequally arrayed category of non-blackness), because it is racial blackness as a necessary condition for enslavement that matters most, rather than whiteness as a condition for freedom.”[9] Even bracketing the historical inaccuracies, the logical and temporal slippage in the above passages that lead to the transformation from “enslaved before all whites” to “better termed non blacks” is stunning. The genocide of indigenous peoples in the New World preceded black slavery and was in many ways as or more brutal even if the dehumanisation processes markedly differed. Nine out of ten indigenous people died due to European diseases in the New World—yet that category was a condition for freedom? The American empire as well as that of its European counterparts required periodic massacres of racialised “natives” at places such as Sand Creek and Wounded Knee, or in the early 20th century, the Philippines where an extraordinary percentage of the population was killed during the American military intervention before World War I. In his work on racialised U.S. imperialism in the Philippines, Kramer calls estimates of 250,00 Filipinos dying as a result of U.S. military intervention during the late 19th early 20th century “conservative”.[10] Massacres such as these were conducted by from Southern to Northern African by brutal imperialists such as the Germans and British. To sum up: White supremacy was and is a global imperial project that divided the world into civilised, human, citizen-subjects, and non-civilised, sub-human colonised subjects. The enslavement of Africans and the centrality of the slave trade for the early development of capitalism and empire for Atlantic sector European states ensured that anti-blackness would be an enduring structural feature of white supremacy. But the processes of racialisation, domination, dispossession and exploitation associated with white supremacy differed within and across regions. Only by not homogenising the experiences of the various racially subordinated populations—including the experiences of people of African descent—will we be able to analytically forge theories and practices needed for black liberation. Afropessimism is Anti-Political and Erases the History and Achievements of Black Liberation Movements. Wilderson argues that blacks are not of the world, they are also not part of the “narrative,” not part of history. Wilderson states: “As provocative as it may sound history and redemption (and therefore narrative itself) are inherently anti-Black.”[11] For Wilderson, blacks are outside of history; “space and time” are absent: “just as there is no time for the Slave, there is also no place for the Slave.”[12] In asserting that black people are outside of history, Wilderson is making the claim that Blackness is irrevocably marked as slaveness—there is no historical change in the meaning of blackness and position of black people. In Afropessimism, for example, Wilderson claims that “Afropessimism is premised on an iconoclastic claim: that Blackness is coterminous with Slaveness.”[13] “Blackness,” Wilderson emphasises, “cannot exist other than Slaveness”.[14] This is not so much an iconoclastic claim as a false one. It is true, of course, that Black lives after slavery continued to be marked by domination and violence. The spectre of extreme violence aimed at individuals and black communities, the expropriation that marked share cropping in the rural south, the super-exploitation of black industrial workers, the precarious position of black women performing paid and unpaid domestic labour, and the continued vulnerability of black women to all of the above as well as gender-based domination, all serve to emphasise the continuities of domination. But while there were important continuities between in the condition of black people during and after slavery, the rupture caused by the end of slavery nonetheless represented a massive change in how black life was organised—a reorganisation that transformed the articulation between white supremacy and the capitalist social order. The end of slavery presented new and important opportunities for black agency even if full “freedom” was not achieved. It was marked by the formation of black civil society, the emergence of new possibilities as well as new challenges for black politics. It was during this period that the institutional backbone of black civil society was developed—including the black church (which was as much a political institution as a sacred one); black institutions of higher learning; cooperative and mutual aid societies; and. a myriad of other organisational initiatives. All were launched and/or consolidated during this period. The ability to form families, expand black politics, and build black civil society represented a type of real if limited progress. Further, Wilderson’s claim that the black condition is defined by “slaveness,” that blacks are not of the world, they are also not part of the “narrative,” not part of history is also profoundly anti-political. For Wilderson, blacks exist outside of the domain of politics: “The violence of the slave estate cannot be thought of the way one thinks of the violence of capitalist oppression. It takes an ocean of violence to produce a slave, singular or plural, but that violence never goes into remission. Again, the prehistory of violence that establishes slavery is also the concurrent history of slavery. This is a difficult cognitive map for most activists to adjust to because it actually takes the problem outside of politics.”[15] Wrong. What progress has been made has been the result of fighting through social movements that, as Malcolm X urged, used any means necessary. Fighting oppression is inherently political. The anti-political nature of Wilderson’s central claim casts aside the momentous struggles of black people for liberation in the U.S., massive struggles for freedom throughout the African Diaspora, the 20th-century African national liberation struggles, as well as contemporary African struggles against neocolonialism, neoliberal regimes, and against the new imperial project of redividing Africa. Perhaps the most immoral implication of Wilderson’s claim that slaveness defines blackness is that the human is defined against blackness. If blacks are not human then it is easier to claim that black people are outside of history, and blacks are outside the realm of politics. For Wilderson, all human life is defined in opposition blackness, in opposition to the condition of being a slave. Wilderson explains, “Human Life is dependent on Black death for its existence and for its conceptual coherence. There is no world without Blacks, yet there are no Blacks who are in the World.”[16] This claim places Wilderson outside of both the black radical and black nationalist traditions. Black movements whether black liberal, black Marxist, or black nationalist fought and died insisting on Africans’ humanity—although some, particularly but not exclusively many black nationalists, questioned the humanity of those that enslaved others. Black movements have historically, and correctly, demanded a place in a world the recognition of one’s own humanity regardless of one’s status as enslaved, expropriated, and oppressed. Afropessimism Distorts the Relationship Between Anti-Blackness, White Supremacy, Patriarchy, and Capitalism Finally and critically, this version of Afropessimism severely mischaracterises the relationship between anti-blackness, white supremacy, and capitalism.[17] Wilderson asserts that political economy is of little use for analysing the black condition as the condition of the slave, the condition of blacks, is subject to violence that cannot be explained by political economy. Further, the status of the slave is invariant to “historical shifts.” I assert that only by understanding the interaction between the multiple systems of domination blacks are subject to—white supremacy (of which anti-blackness is a central structural feature), patriarchy and capitalism—will we be able to understand for any given era the status of blacks; the massive and multiple forms of violence that blacks experience, and the way forward toward full black liberation. In Afropessimism, Wilderson only briefly considers the role of political economy in black subjugation. He argues that the use/study of political economy cannot explain the violence committed against blacks. This violence, Wilderson argues, is invariant across time. Specifically: “Black people exist in the throes of what historian David Eltis calls ‘violence beyond the limit,’ by which he means: (a) in the libidinal economy there are no forms of violence so excessive that they would be considered too cruel to inflict upon Blacks; and (b) in political economy there are no rational explanations for this limitless theatre of cruelty, no explanations that would make political or economic sense of the violence that positions and punishes Blackness….the Slave’s relationship to violence is open-ended…unaccountable to historical shifts.”[18] What Wilderson misses is that blacks are subject to multiple sources of violence—the cumulative nature of which is monstrous. Simultaneously analysing the articulation of white supremacy, patriarchy, and capitalism leads one to the realisation that blacks depending on context in various combinations experience violence as workers, women, and/or as black people. Each system of domination routinely inflicts violence for those at the bottom of each hierarchy. I would add that an aspect of white supremacy and anti-blackness is that for blacks even the forms of violence that derive from patriarchy and capitalism are intensified due to white supremacy. This violence is also rational to the degree that each form of violence is ultimately aimed at reinforcing the rule of those at the top of each system of domination. In a much earlier essay, Wilderson more directly addresses the relationship between capitalism and black subjugation. Wilderson asserts that “…the United States is constructed at the intersection of both a capitalist and white supremacist matrix.”[19] This statement is promising in that it hints at the simultaneous analysis of the interaction between capitalism and white supremacy. Yet, he does not sufficiently explore the consequences of this statement and does not analyse the actual dynamics created by the articulation of capitalism and white supremacy. For example, in Afropessimism Wilderson correctly asserts that “….the emergence of the slave, the subject-effect of an ensemble of direct relations of force marks the emergence of the capitalism itself.”[20] The “primitive” accumulation necessary for the establishment of the capitalist social order does have at its centre the brutal and hideous social relations of slavery and the slave trade, but not only slavery.[21] But unlike what Wilderson argues, the historical record shows that under white supremacy and colonialism blacks are not the only racially subordinate group to be subject to “direct relations of force.” As Ince argues, “direct relations of force” do not only mark the subject of the slave, but of the colonised more generally such as the genocide of the indigenous peoples of particularly the “New” World (itself a precondition of capitalism).[22] Establishing and maintaining capitalism has required the expropriation of resources and labour—simultaneously wedded to the violation of black, brown, and yellow bodies throughout the world. In the end, non-white bodies are disposable in the global North and South; in the ghettoes, barrios, reservations, prisons, refugee camps and immigration detention centres that can be grimly found throughout the world. The particularities are important—and anti-blackness is a key particularity that shapes capitalism and white supremacy, but as argued earlier, it still a part a global system of white supremacy marked by direct relations of force, and which non-whites are racialised differently by that force. Within the context of the U.S., only a type of stubborn blindness, a refusal to acknowledge the historical record, and refusal to see the interrelationship between capitalism and racial domination can lead those such as Wilderson to argue that “we were never meant to be workers…..From the very beginning, we were meant to be accumulated and die.”[23] This assertion flies against the historical evidence. No, blacks were meant to work, die, and be accumulated as need be. White supremacy often demands that blacks die. Capitalism demands that blacks must also, when necessary work and/or be accumulated. Each, and patriarchy as well, continually make their bloody demands. Through politics and other means of struggle blacks continually resist. This resistance can only be successful by understanding the mutual articulation between each system of domination. Conclusion: What is at Stake? What is at stake is far more critical than an abstract academic debate between theorists. These debates speak directly to how we understand Trump’s victory in the 2016 presidential elections and the racist, authoritarian and potentially fascist phenomenon of “Trumpism” and the rise of neo-fascist movements in the global north and south. It speaks to how we best understand the accelerating rates of inequality in both the global north and south popularly described by Thomas Piketty.[24] It speaks to how we understand the rising wave of violence that black folks face here, throughout the Diaspora, and within Africa itself. Afropessimists have an ahistorical narrative that distorts the relationship of white supremacy to capitalism—insisting despite all historical and contemporary empirical evidence to the contrary that the core logics of slave-based anti-blackness exists outside of, and ultimately invariant to, the dynamics of the capitalist political economy. This strand of theorising has taken root in real-world activism—in this case among young black activists struggling once again for black liberation. Afropessimism, however, presents real political dangers for those organising for black liberation. I will mention three such dangers here. By arguing that black subjugation lies outside the realm of the political, Afropessimism serves as a basis for political demobilisation rather than mobilisation. Indeed, Wilderson is correct when he states, “This is a difficult cognitive map for most activists to adjust to because it actually takes the problem outside of politics.”[25] Second, Afropessimism severely undermines those attempting to build solidarity with other racially subordinate groups. Do we still need to be building independent radical black movements and organisations? Yes. Is building solidarity hard. Yes. Is one likely to experience anti-black racism from some other peoples of colour? Yes. Is it still a necessary task if meaningful political victories are to be achieved? Yes. Third, by ignoring the class and gender dynamics within black communities, Afropessimism makes it far more difficult to understand the dynamics of intra-black politics. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for fighting all forms of oppression and domination that are experienced within black communities. Afropessimists are correct to insist that the logics of racial domination are autonomous and not fully determined by a capitalist social order. Afropessimists fail to understand, however, the effects of the interaction of multiple systems of domination have on black life and politics. It is our task to forge better theoretical weapons to not only illuminate the nature of oppressive systems of domination, but also to provide effective tools to combat oppression.

#### Totalizing analysis of power structures fail to account for complex identities

**VALAYEDEN & MCABE 21**- Diren Valayden, Assistant Professor of Human Development at Binghamton University. Megan McCabe, medical research and consulting fields as Director of Research at SafeTech Solutions, LLP. She lectures in the Department of Human Development at Binghamton University. https://uchri.org/profiles/megan-mccabe///vi

We live in a time grappling with anti-black racism, in which the term “anti-blackness” has become part of the public lexicon. Descriptively, anti-blackness seems self-evident; however, the term’s relationship to race and racism is undertheorized. We argue here that the recent discourse of anti-blackness needs to be situated not as more than, or beyond, race but in and as a racial discourse. The emergence of “anti-blackness” as a concept is recent, dating back a little more than a quarter of a century. The first substantive use of the concept appears in Joseph R. Washington’s (1984) Anti-Blackness in English Religion to argue that anti-blackness (a negative attitude towards all things black, dark, etc.) provided the basis for anti-Blackness (anti-black racism). His account is largely impressionistic and it does not systematically explain the transformation of attitudes into racial/racist theories. Amiri Baraka, in a 1987 article published in The Black Scholar, used the term to denounce how White art reproduces racism in the process of incorporating “Black images.” Yet, the use of “anti-blackness” in Baraka is understated, and the conceptual apparatus pivots on other analytics such as racism, imperialism, socialism, and self-determination. By the 1990s, there emerged a clear conceptual discussion of anti-blackness in Lewis Gordon’s works within an existentialist and phenomenological framework. For Gordon, the problematic was the possibility of Black existence in a world predicated on denying the validity of blackness. Yet, the operative term remains “antiblack racism,” i.e. the set of conditions and practices that seek to create “an antiblack world.” By the 2000s, the use of anti-blackness increases exponentially with the appearance of self-styled “Afropessimist” literature in the academy. Here, a discourse of anti-blackness begins to emerge, with the term anti-blackness operating largely in rhetorical mode (see for example Frank Wilderson’s Bildungsroman narratives about his emergence as the last political radical in a world of neoliberal sell-outs). More recently, as Afropessimism has reached a broader audience via social media and other online channels, anti-blackness has assumed widespread currency in both the academic and popular presses. Recent years have witnessed calls in the mainstream media for greater attention to “anti-blackness” as opposed to “racism.” Proponents of anti-blackness have sought to distinguish the two concepts and have made claims in the name of anti-racism that nevertheless critique its very grounds. For example, in a widely circulated New York Times piece, kihana miraya ross argues that, while “the word ‘racism’ is everywhere,” it fails to capture just “what black people in this country are facing.” Rather than “racism,” ross argues, “the right term is ‘anti-blackness.’” Anti-blackness, according to ross, describes “the kind of violence that saturates black life” – a violence that is “gratuitous and unrelenting.” According to ross, the term “racism” is not only too broad (a “catch-all,” as she calls it), it also fails to capture the complexity of anti-blackness. Similarly, Ahmed Olayinka Sule’s 2019 piece in The Guardian, argued that “it is an appropriate time for anti-blackness to be classified separately from racism and given its own prominence.” His argument against a “one-size-fits-all” approach to anti-racist scholarship and organizing, like ross’s piece, validates and extends a discourse of anti-blackness that purports to be more specific and more trenchant than other (though unnamed) critical theories of race and racism. “In setting anti-blackness apart from and against theories of race and racism, its proponents not only refuse to historicize their concept, they also refuse to contextualize it in relation to and as a racial discourse.” It would be wrong to understand arguments like ross’s and Sule’s solely, or even primarily, as clamorings for greater recognition of, and attention to, the particularity and immediacy of anti-black racism. Rather, the authors build on a subtle but troubling argument that positions anti-blackness against racism and which has implications for evaluating each piece (ross’s and Sule’s) as an anti-racist work. According to its proponents, the durability of anti-blackness—its “relentlessness” to use ross’s term—is its defining characteristic and what distinguishes it as more than another type of racism among racisms. Rather than contingent and contestable, as critical theories of race and racism have emphasized, anti-blackness endures. To again quote ross, anti-blackness is a “structural reality” and is nothing if not deeply embedded. Anti-blackness, then, significantly shifts the terms of racial discourse. In contrast to critical theories of race and racism that have emphasized contingency and historicity, anti-blackness asserts a permanence that is theoretically explicated in Afropessimist literature. Afropessimism locates the origins of anti-blackness in slavery and then asserts its “relentlessness” and durability over time. As ross’s article from above states, Afropessimism “argues that anti-blackness indexes the structural reality so that in the larger society, blackness is inextricably tied to ‘slaveness.’ While the system of U.S. chattel slavery technically ended 150 years ago, it continues to mark the ontological position of black people.” In Afropessimist theorizations, slavery serves more as origin story than historical contextualization. The connections between anti-blackness and slavery are crystallized in Afropessimist writing and erected as a foundational truth rather than emerging as an unstable, historical articulation. The shift that anti-blackness presents for thinking about race and racism is made obscure precisely because it is the field of racial discourse that new theorizations of anti-blackness disavow. Normatively, critical theories of race and racism involve a certain epistemological and political reflexivity towards racial discourse. This is because theorists understand that their statements on race participate in reproducing and potentially deepening racial conditions. By contrast, proponents of anti-blackness have abjured this reflexivity. They paradoxically deny the applicability of anti-blackness to the discursive field it participates in. As ross writes, anti-blackness is “more than just ‘racism against black people.’” Instead, she asserts that it is “a theoretical framework,” or as Wilderson has claimed of Afropessimism, it is a “metatheory.” In setting anti-blackness apart from and against theories of race and racism, its proponents not only refuse to historicize their concept, they also refuse to contextualize it in relation to and as a racial discourse. This double elision explains why the shift in racial discourse that anti-blackness presents has yet to register with many theorists of race, even as the term has proliferated in and outside the academy. It is important to recognize this shift and to note its implications for racial theory and the praxis of antiracism. To conclude, we want to clarify the implications of the argument at hand and ask what it would mean to situate anti-blackness not as more than, or beyond, race but in and as racial discourse. In spite of claims to the contrary, what does a reading of anti-blackness as racial discourse reveal? As a racial discourse, anti-blackness becomes clearer when understood in the postracial moment. The postracial constitutes raciality anew by paradoxically denying the salience of race and racism. Anti-blackness, correspondingly, fixes racial meaning in the very moment it purports to move beyond race. By refusing discursive and historical analysis in favor of a theory of permanence or relentlessness, anti-blackness obscures the instability of racial power and the ways racial meaning is made and unmade in the postracial moment. What we have outlined here suggests that the discourse of anti-blackness risks camouflaging postraciality as anti-racist work. To the extent that proponents of anti-blackness refuse to theorize the historical particularity and relationality of race and racism, they reject the very tools necessary to explain or combat the operation of the racial power they diagnose.