### 1

#### Our interpretation is that the resolution should determine the division of affirmative and negative ground.

#### Outer space is the area outside the atmosphere

Merriam Webster ND Merriam Webster, “Outer Space”, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/outer%20space DD AG

: space immediately outside the earth's atmosphere

#### Outer space means anything above Earth’s Karman line

Dunnett 21 (Oliver Tristan, lecturer in geography at Queen’s University Belfast). Earth, Cosmos and Culture: Geographies of Outer Space in Britain, 1900–2020 (1st ed.). Routledge. 2021. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780815356301> EE

In such ways, this book argues that Britain became a home to rich discourses of outer space, both feeding from and contributing to iconic achievements in space exploration, while also embracing the cosmos in imaginative and philosophical ways.2

INSERT FOOTNOTE 2

2 This book primarily uses the term ‘outer space’ to describe the realm beyond the Earth’s atmosphere, conventionally accepted as beginning at the Kármán line of 100km above sea level. Other terms such as ‘interplanetary space’, ‘interstellar space’, ‘cosmos’, and ‘the heavens’ are used in specific contexts.

END FOOTNOTE 2

Cognisant of this spatial context, a central aim is to demonstrate how contemporary geographical enquiry can provide specific and valuable perspectives from which to understand outer space. This is an argument that was initiated by Denis Cosgrove, and his critique of Alexander von Humboldt’s seminal work Cosmos helped to demonstrate geography’s special relevance to thinking about outer space.3 The key thematic areas which provide the interface for this book’s research, therefore, are the cultural, political and scientific understandings of outer space; the context of the United Kingdom since the start of the last century; and the geographical underpinnings of their relationship.

#### Private requires control from a single person or group

Merriam Webster ND Merriam Webster, “private”, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/private DD AG

: for the use of a single person or group : belonging to one person or group : not public

#### Appropriation means to take possession

Dictionary ND, Dictionary.com, “appropriation”, <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/appropriation>, DD AG

the act of appropriating or taking possession of something, often without permission or consent.

Insert standards

#### Private entity = majority nonstate

Warners 20 (Bill, JD Candidate, May 2021, at UIC John Marshall Law School) "Patents 254 Miles up: Jurisdictional Issues Onboard the International Space Station." UIC Review of Intellectual Property Law, vol. 19, no. 4, 2020, p. 365-380. HeinOnline.

To satisfy these three necessary requirements for a new patent regime, the ISS IGA must add an additional clause ("Clause 7") in Article 21 specifically establishing a patent regime for private nonstate third parties onboard the ISS. First, Clause 7 would define the term "private entity" as an individual, organization, or business which is primarily privately owned and/or managed by nonstate affiliates. Specifically defining the term "private entity" prevents confusion as to what entities qualify under the agreement and the difference between "public" and "private."99 This definition would also support the connection of Clause 1 in Article 21 to "Article 2 of the Convention Establishing the World Intellectual Property Organization." 100 A succinct definition also alleviates international concerns that the changes to the ISS IGA pushes out Partner State influence. 101 Some in the international community may still point out that Clause 7 still pushes towards a trend of outer space privatization. However, this argument fails to consider that private entities in outer space have operated in space almostas comprehensively as national organizations. 102

#### Violation: they defend “the Unsettling of Coloniality of Being through the devalorization of Western Man” and worst case are extra-topical which links to all our offense

#### Vote neg for predictable limits—post-facto topic adjustment structurally favors the aff by manipulating the balance of prep which is anchored around the resolution as a stasis point. Not debating the topic allows someone to specialize in one area of the library for 4 years giving them a huge edge over people who switch research focus ever 2 months, which means their arguments are presumptively false because they haven’t been subject to well-researched scrutiny

#### 2 impacts:

#### First is fairness—debate is fundamentally a game which requires both sides to have a relatively equal shot at winning and is necessary for any benefit to the activity. That outweighs:

#### A] decision-making: every argument concedes to the validity of fairness i.e. that the judge will make a fair decision based on the arguments presented. This means if they win fairness bad vote neg on presumption because you have no obligation to fairly evaluate their arguments.

#### B] probability: voting aff can’t solve any of their impacts but it can solve ours. All the ballot does is tell tab who won which can’t stop any violence but can resolve the fairness imbalance in this particular debate.

#### Second—small schools disad: under-resourced are most adversely effected by a massive, unpredictable caselist which worsens structural disparities

#### There’s a topical version: antiracism must challenge space colonization

### 2

#### The aff replicates the left’s compulsive loop of infighting and purification that sacrifices material power and political organization

Frost 17 [Amber A’Lee Frost (Amber A'Lee Frost is a writer and musician in Brooklyn); June 2017; “All Worked Up and Nowhere to Go”; <https://thebaffler.com/outbursts/all-worked-up-nowhere-to-go-frost> \*brackets in original\* //BWSWJ]

Although Fisher’s work demonstrates a sprawling awareness of life deranged by capitalism, he is best remembered for the prescient, infamous essay “Exiting the Vampire Castle,” which infuriated much of the self-identified left by arguing that a shallow and noxious liberal identity critique, delivered mostly on the internet, was being used to undermine class politics and paralyze left discourse. I remember not thinking too much of his diagnosis at the time, which was late 2013, agreeing with some points, but not buying in wholesale. Later I realized it was spot-on, a preview of the farcically doomed Clinton campaign; but by then Fisher had been written off as a “toxic” white brocialist, a man doing “violence” to the “most vulnerable” people in “the movement.” Even worse, after Fisher died at forty-eight in January of this year, he was still being denounced by po-faced critics for his frankly gracious critique of the left. And I’m talking right after his death—within hours of the information going public.

The Trump administration has rekindled the internal hysteria that Fisher warned against. And though it was heartening, the first wave of solidarity marches and general actions is now fading into memory; we’re left with a familiar hostility, a recurring bad faith that so recently has smeared greater minds and gentler hearts than my own. The economic ambitions of the so-called “Sanders Effect” appear to have waned, and the focus has predictably turned to the glittering, bilious spectacle of Trumpism. Just as Trump remade politics as television, we’ve allowed political action to mimic the spiteful, futile patterns of online bickering: our fellow anti-capitalists betray us all by enjoying or creating the wrong art, reading the wrong articles, championing the wrong theories, or even laughing at the wrong jokes. The left is at once flailing and sclerotic. Afflicted by a vague autoimmune disorder, we cannot even retain what little power we have, nor do we have any institutions capable of doing so; thus, we are able to smack only those within arm’s reach of us—ourselves. Meanwhile, the bigger and stronger the right gets, the more insular we become, single-mindedly obsessed with purifying our own ranks and weeding out the problematic among us. Of course, the left requires large portions of the problematic and disparate working class to sign on, but the range of acceptable comradely thinking is becoming ever-stricter, and “deviants are sacrificed to increase group solidarity,” as the artist Jenny Holzer warned.

Marxist writer David Harvey notes that even Warren Buffett acknowledges the neoliberal era is marked by a one-sided class war, waged only by the capitalists. (“Sure there is class war, and it is my class, the rich, who are making it and we are winning,” Buffett has said.) The left lies sputtering on the mat, unable to maintain its ground, much less make any material gains. It’s hard to disagree when our gestures lack bite and our political parties—and most of our unions—are feckless at best, and capitalist quislings at worst. Whether it takes the form of insular campus activism, reactionary internet sermonizing, or impotent calls for general action, what passes for “the left” today is both parochial and completely disconnected from power. To put it bluntly, we have lost; we are decimated and we are feeble. What’s worse, we refuse to admit our failures, repeating them over and over and over again, castigating anyone who might question this pattern. In “Exiting the Vampire Castle,” Fisher alerted us to a “witch-hunting moralism”—in this case, against anyone who might try to raise class consciousness—that inevitably devolves into guilt and ineffectuality. In the wake of the election, it’s a lesson that seems to have gone largely unlearned by a self-sabotaging left.

Scabs and Flirts

I was introduced to the idea of a Women’s Strike while speaking on a panel of leftist feminists shortly after Trump was elected. During the Q&A afterwards, a feminist from the audience took the microphone and delivered an impassioned speech. Among the things participants were to abstain from:

Paid jobs

Emotional Labor

Childcare

Diapers

Housework

Cooking

Sweeping

Laundry

Dishes

Errands

Groceries

Fake smiles

Flirting

Makeup

Laundry

Shaving

At the end of her speech, I jokingly asked if I was allowed to flirt with other women during the strike, or if that would be scabbing—I did not get a laugh. Of course, tensions were high and good humor was in short supply, but there was also something genuinely irksome about the perceived usefulness of such a “strike,” and my glibness betrayed my skepticism.

For one, general strikes require a massive amount of organizing, and the proposed date for the strike was a few short months away. Also, the National Planning Committee was much heavier on academics and writers than on labor organizers. And if the turnout was low, would anyone even notice? (If a tree strikes in the woods, where no boss is there to feel it, can the tree really get the goods?) These questions were frustratingly overshadowed by criticisms from liberals insisting that only the “privileged” women would be striking. This framing, of course, misses the point; the success of a strike is not dependent on the relative “privilege” of the workers participating, but in the chaos those workers can inflict by withholding their labor.

Striking works because it fucks up someone’s day, but whose day would the participants of the Women’s Strike affect? Would the event, billed as “A Day Without Women,” amount to anything more than a day without adjuncts and freelance graphic designers? As an adjunct myself, I believe my job is important, but if I’m being perfectly honest, no one notices when I don’t show up for one day of work. It costs no money, and it doesn’t plunge the university into chaos, and without cost or chaos, a strike is an impotent performance.

In my little lefty circles, these concerns were not received graciously. Men who questioned the strike’s utility were branded sexist; women who did the same were simply ignored. It was reminiscent of the Hillary campaign’s rhetoric: every feminist who didn’t fall in line was suddenly invisible; every man with a criticism of a woman was suddenly manifesting a deep-seated and pathological misogyny. When I asked my more enthusiastic comrades why I should be striking, or what I would even be striking for, the best answer I got was “Why not? We’re just trying to see what sticks.” The worst I got was silence. There were a lot of passive-aggressive Facebook manifestos about how lefties who questioned the action were just scared, or closet liberals, or worse, “scabs.”

As early as January, many leftists expressed skepticism about calls for a general strike, but by March there was a self-justifying urgency to defend the tactic against all doubts. Maybe it was due to the reorienting of the action as a “Women’s Strike”—no one wants to be called a brocialist or a mansplainer—but I think the bigger culprit was in our general panic. We are living in an era of Post-Trump Hysteria. It’s scary out there, and so we cling to the delusion that what we are doing is working. The naysayers, the thinking goes, must be politically backward or reactionary; we should be quick to root them out. Meanwhile, the world goes on.

In the end, I called off my classes. I told myself I was setting an example for my students, but I still put “Women’s Strike” in quotation marks when I explained why class was cancelled. I told myself the students were critical thinkers, and that it would do them good to see a politically active teacher; but really, I cancelled class for the same reason I do so many fruitless and potentially self-destructive things—so that no one can call me a coward. In the meantime, I peeked at the rally; it was small by New York standards. Weeks later, I still saw colleagues and comrades defending the action as “radical.” Some were denouncing those who considered the strike a failure—even those who went on strike themselves—as insufficiently supportive of this promising new vanguard of women college professors.

The pervasive mood reminded me of church, and specifically the churches of my grandparents, who cycled through about a hundred tiny Protestant evangelical sects, each one seething with mistrust of its own parishioners. Belief, in those denominations, was fervent, and turnover was high. I grew up with a certain envy of Catholics and Jews, who are allowed to attend services regardless of their connection to God. For these evangelical Protestants, however, a loss of faith was considered a personal failing, and any hint of creeping atheism could get you purged, lest you infect the brethren with your demonic skepticism. The arbitrary piety was there, too. During the strike, I remembered when my Papaw tried to sell a car to my mother, but then refused to accept her check on a Sunday, since he couldn’t do business on the Sabbath. That event—like the Women’s Strike—was a strangely un-materialist initiative, one underwritten by the idea that we should abstain from work merely out of observance and reverence, and not to “get the goods.”

I still flirted that day. I have never understood this tactic of chastity, but then again, I’ve always viewed sex and romance as properly proletarian pursuits. (It never felt like work to me, but maybe I’ve been doing it wrong.) I also did my dishes. God might not want you to be prurient or fastidious on the day of rest, but capitalism doesn’t actually give a shit about your unpaid emotional labor. It’s kind of a bro like that.

What the Women’s Strike did reveal is that the self-appointed Trump Resistance is stuck in a compulsive loop, perseverating on symptoms and self-help rather than tackling the disease. The “battles” you see making headlines in our claustrophobic community have become microscopically petty: Who speaks at what campus? Who made what problematic joke? Which left magazine has a bad take and who will “take responsibility”? None of these squabbles are politics; none of them build power. I’m sorry to say, even punching the odd Nazi doesn’t build power. (It raises spirits, but little else.) We’re forever resting on the laurels of feel-good symbolic outcry rather than the material victories that make our day-to-day lives better. It suits the ruling class just fine.

#### The affirmative’s articulation of antiracist politics fails to produce social transformation by weaponizing accusations of past movement failure as a justification for refusing the egalitarian promise of revolutionary transformation

Reed 17 (Adolph, Jr, Prof of Political Science @ U of Pennsylvania, “Revolution as ‘National Liberation’ and the Origins of Neoliberal Antiracism,” Socialist Register 2017, ed. Gregory Albo and Leo Panitch, p. 299-322)

Whatever it may have been at earlier historical moments, antiracism as a contemporary politics is not necessarily aligned with projects of broad social transformation animated by the egalitarian vision that prompted the twentieth century’s iconic revolutions. Rather, antiracist politics in the United States and elsewhere in the West and much of Latin America can be, and often enough has been, an antagonistic alternative to such projects of broad transformation. That is, notwithstanding a persistent inclination among leftists to consider it a discourse at least in dialogue with the left, antiracism is as likely now to be an ideological and practical programme that fits more comfortably within neoliberalism than with a socialist left. In the United States especially, but increasingly in Western Europe and Canada also, antiracism and other political tendencies based on ascriptive identities – that is, those expressing what one supposedly is rather than what one does2 – commonly reject Marxist and other socialist politics as insufficiently attentive, if not inimical, to the special position and needs of racial or other ascriptively defined populations understood to be oppressed in ways that are not causally or most consequentially rooted in capitalist political economy. In fact, these tendencies commonly object to the universalizing perspectives associated with socialism and Marxism in particular as Eurocentric (or phallocentric, or heteronormative) homogenization that denies the specificity of ascriptive groups’ distinctive perspectives, grievances and demands. To the extent the political orientation from which antiracist and other identity-based tendencies proceed is more ‘groupist’ than broadly solidaristic, the vision of a just society around which they cohere can be more in line with liberal interest-group pluralism than with a left that relates its lineage or marks its affinities to the broad tradition that generated the revolutionary movements of the last century. Eric Hobsbawm pointed to this tension in the mid-1990s indicating that, while the left naturally has supported movements advocating for the rights of stigmatized groups, identity groups ‘are not committed to the Left as such, but only to get support for their cause wherever they can’.3 Openness to this kind of politics stems partly, as Hobsbawm points out, from the left reflex to support the cause of the oppressed. The victories won in the second half of the twentieth century against ideologies and regimes of ascriptive hierarchy, chiefly those grounded on narratives of race and gender, made leftists, and labour, all the more conscious of past failings with respect to inattentiveness to, acceptance or even overt embrace of ascriptive inegalitarianism. The generation of leftists who emerged in the 1960s came of age with the militant anti-colonial movements and national liberation struggles in what was then known as the Third World, the civil rights struggle in the United States, and anti-apartheid struggles in South Africa, as well as the resurgent women’s movement. That generation was also likely to be self-critical regarding what were perceived as failings and limitations – some would say ossification, even debasement or perversion – of the dominant practical models of socialism in Eastern Europe and elsewhere on the capitalist periphery. The New Left generation’s inclination to criticize ‘really existing socialism’ extended also to the orthodox Marxist parties in the West, which were easily enough seen as out of touch with the new spirit of insurgency coming from youth, minority groups in advanced capitalist societies, and Third World movements of national liberation. In the US, many displayed similar scepticism toward the trade union movement, which in the eyes of many radicals had settled into a narrow, self-interested class collaborationism. This is a familiar story to Socialist Register readers, and one I summarize very schematically. In addition to Hobsbawm’s account mentioned above, Leo Panitch and the late Ellen Meiksins Wood have discussed these developments more extensively, especially the impact of the intellectual left’s movement both into the academy and away from an intellectual and epistemic commitment to class struggle.4 Several features of that moment are pertinent for making sense of the subsequent development of antiracist politics in itself and the left’s embrace of it. Disillusionment with democratic centralism and sclerotic bureaucratism fed a skeptical attitude toward organizational and intellectual discipline, as well as toward commitment to specific visions and programmes of social transformation. Those tendencies became exacerbated over the 1980s and 1990s as left activity retreated increasingly into universities. In that climate, as more and more of the left came to be defined by moral stance rather than strategic politics and practical programme, self-criticism and atonement regarding racism and sexism on the part of labour and the left in the past, and bearing witness against injustice in the present, loomed steadily larger as an element of left political discourse, especially in the US. And then, with rote repetition of ever more deeply embedded commonsense knowledge, the narrative of labour’s and the left’s past failings with respect to racial and gender inequalities was increasingly shed of nuance, to the point that in recent decades it has become a truism in some activist circles that failure to challenge ascriptive inequalities, or even active reproduction of them, has been a definitive characteristic of the working-class-based left and trade unions, and is substantially responsible for the decline of either or both.5 Commitment to the accusatory narrative can underwrite extraordinary historical misrepresentation, for example, Eugene Debs’s statement that socialism has ‘nothing special to offer the Negro’ is taken as evidence of his indifference to racial inequality – when his intent was exactly the opposite.6 A left that had by and large given up the goal of radical social transformation and the objective of pursuing political power for the purpose of realizing that goal became less distinct from liberalism. Such a left, as Russell Jacoby notes, ‘ineluctably retreats to smaller ideas, seeking to expand the options within the existing society’.7 Militant embrace of the discourses of identity politics, most notably antiracism, has helped to sustain an appearance that the left is not in retreat but remains on the cutting edge of transformational politics. That is because of the prominence of a view that construes ‘oppressions’ rooted in race and gender, etc., as both foundational to American society – or the West – and so deeply embedded that most whites/men are in denial about their power. From that perspective the civil rights movement’s legislative victories in the 1960s were superficial and could not address the deep-structural sources of racism and sexism, which are effectively ontological and therefore beyond the reach of normal political or social intervention. Thus the struggle against these sources of inequality is always insurgent because their power never diminishes. CONTEMPORARY ANTIRACISM’S AHISTORICAL CHARACTER Representing racism as a transhistorical phenomenon, sometimes character- ized as a ‘national disease’ or ‘original sin’, underwrites a claim that it continues to shape life chances for blacks and other nonwhites as it did in earlier periods when, as W. E. B. Du Bois put it, ‘the walls of race were clear and straight; when the world consisted of mutually exclusive races; and even though the exact edges might be blurred there was no question of exact definition and understanding of the meaning of the word’, that is, when notions of racial hierarchy were hegemonic and were open and explicit principles of social and political organization.8 That view, to the extent that it understands racism as transcending patterns of historically specific social relations, presumes primordial understandings of race/racism as a phenomenon shared by both postwar racial liberalism and the earlier racial determinism it challenged. This is, moreover, a political problem as well as an intellectual one. The politics crafted in this antiracist framework has a rearguard character that is expressed in its proponents’ tendency to rely on evocation of past racist practices – law professor Michelle Alexander’s book The New Jim Crow is one prominent illustration9 – to mobilize outrage about injustices in the present. The argument by means of historical analogy, i.e., that current injustices that may seem to derive most directly from different, more complex sources are more significantly understood as like latter-day instances of racist practices in the past, rests on the trope that the current outrages demonstrate the deep continuity of racism as a force and at least suggests the inadequacy of the victories of the civil rights struggle. Yet that trope is also in effect an acknowledgment that big victories on that front have indeed been won. Otherwise there would be no basis for assuming that the comparison would have rhetorical force. Condemnation of an act or practice by comparing it to slavery or Jim Crow could provoke the desired effect only if we can assume consensus that slavery and Jim Crow were bad things. Moreover, sustaining the conviction that racism remains most significantly causal of contemporary patterns of inequality requires terminological gymnastics which enable positing racism – ‘institutional’, ‘structural’, even ‘post-racial’ – as, at least by default, the causal explanation for inequalities that appear statistically as racial disparity and are lived as such in day-to-day life. In fact, historical analogy typically stands in lieu of empirical argument to explain why we should automatically see contemporary disparities as evidence of the unspecified workings of a generic racism rather than as products of current and concrete political-economic processes that are very much ‘presentist’ elements of the regime of steadily intensifying regressive redistribution, the mechanisms, that is, that constitute the telos of neoliberalism. Assertion of the centrality of racist ideas and practices among labour and the left is similarly ahistorical both as a representation of the past and in its implications of continuity in the present. It is more allegory or fable than historical account. Presumptions, stances, and practices that now would be clearly recognized and negatively sanctioned as racist certainly were common enough in the Marxist left and the labour movement in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The appropriate basis of comparison – if one wants to make the sort of moral assessment that many critics of those institutions intend – would, however, not be early twenty-first century sensibilities, but whether racism and sexism were more prominent within unions and left politics than within other contemporaneous institutions. Frankly, from an historicist perspective this sort of exercise in moralistic calculation seems rather puerile, but, because antiracist criticisms of the left in the present depend so heavily on claims regarding the past, it is necessary to address them. Toward that end an important first step is recognizing that what race means and does not, how it has operated as a politically and ideologically potent category, as well as its meanings and significance, have evolved over time and context. The period of revolutionary ferment out of which the Bolshevik revolution emerged coincided with the historical moment when the race idea was at or approaching its apogee in the history of the world, before or since. At the beginning of the twentieth century race science identified between three and sixty-three ‘basic’ races in the world, including between three and six, or even thirty-six, in Europe alone.10 That ambiguity was the inevitable result of efforts to establish precise characteristics of a nonexistent phenomenon: ‘races’ simply do not exist as natural populations. Race theorists assumed that their efforts at taxonomic specification failed because generations of population movement and mixing had diluted original, ‘pure’ racial types; so they looked for racial essences beneath national or linguistic affiliations. This conviction in turn supported the manifestly unscientific approach of positing a priori ideal types and attempting to classify existing populations ‘racially’ by comparing the frequencies of geographical distribution of physical characteristics imputed to the ideal racial types constructed in the race scientists’ taxonomies.11 Marxists and other leftists were more likely to dissent from hegemonic racialism than others, but race-thinking permeated political and intellectual discourse and everyday common sense. It was reproduced among progressives, Fabians and many socialist reformers, as well as conservatives, in dominant notions of evolution as progress. Teleological presumptions about fixed stages of cultural and social evolution and the comparative method in Victorian anthropology that considered contemporary ‘primitives’ as living versions of ancestral Europeans reinforced the tendency – convenient for proponents of colonial expansion – to rank populations hierarchically on the basis of natural limits and capacities ascribed to them. And even many revolutionaries believed that colonial domination was justified because ‘backward’ peoples needed periods of tutelage to prepare them for the modern world. Many English race scientists were convinced that the indigenous working class was racially different from the aristocracy. Just as some socialists opposed imperialist expansionism on egalitarian grounds, others opposed it on racial grounds, expressing fear of degeneration through contact with racially inferior populations.12 Often class struggle was fought at least partly on the terrain of racialist ideology. In the latter half of the nineteenth century fights in the American West over importation of Chinese labour and Japanese immigration also centred around racialist ideologies. Railroad operators and other importers of Chinese labour imagined and openly asserted that those workers’ distinctive racial characteristics made them more tractable and able to live on less than white Americans; opponents, including the California labour movement, argued that those very racial characteristics would degrade American labour and that Chinese were racially ‘unassimilable’. But it was the employer class, not the workers likely to be displaced or impoverished, who established the debate on racial terms. Post-bellum southern planters imported Chinese to the Mississippi Delta region to compete with black sharecroppers out of the same racialist presumptions of greater tractability, as did later importers of Sicilian labour to Louisiana sugarcane and cotton fields.13 Large-scale industrial production in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries depended on mass labour immigration mainly from the eastern and southern fringes of Europe. The innovations of race science – that is, of racialist folk ideology transformed into an academic profession – promised to assist employers’ needs for rational labour force management and were present in the foundation of the fields of industrial relations and industrial psychology. Hugo Münsterberg, a founding luminary of industrial psychology, included ‘race psychological diagnosis’ as an element in assessment of employees’ capabilities, although he stressed that racial or national temperaments are averages and considerable individual variation exists within groups. He argued that assessment, therefore, should be leavened with consideration of individuals’ characteristics and that the influence of ‘group psychology’ would be significant ‘only if the employment not of a single person, but of a large number, is in question, as it is most probable that the average character will show itself in a sufficient degree as soon as many members of the group are involved.’14 As scholarship on race science and its kissing cousin, eugenics, has shown, research that sets out to find evidence of racial difference will find it, whether or not it exists. Thus race science produced increasingly refined taxonomies of racial groups, and the apparent specificity of race theorists’ just-so stories about differential racial capacities provided rationales for immigration restriction, sterilization, segregation and other regimes of inequality and subordination, including genocide. It also generated practical applications to assist employers in assigning workers to jobs for which they were racially suited. A ‘racial adaptability’ chart used by a Pittsburgh company in the 1920s mapped thirty-six different racial groups’ capacities for twenty-two distinct jobs, eight different atmospheric conditions, jobs requiring speed or precision, and day or night shift work.15 Of course, all this was bogus, nothing more than narrow upper-class prejudices parading about as science. It was convincing only if one shared the folk narratives of essential hierarchy that the research assumed from the outset. But the race theories did not have to be true to be effective. They had only to be used as if they were true to produce the material effects that gave the ideology an authenticating verisimilitude. Poles became steel workers in Pittsburgh, Baltimore, Buffalo, Chicago, and Gary, not for any natural aptitude or affinity but because employers and labour recruiters sorted them into work in steel mills. RACIALIST IDEOLOGY’S MATERIAL FOUNDATIONS As a significant social force, racialist ideology has always been anchored to material imperatives, in both domestic and international domains. It became commonsense truth to the extent that it connected with the perspectives and interests of powerful elites. Like all ideologies of ascriptive difference, it would pre-empt debate over evolving programmes of exploitation and domination by reading them into nature. While the discourse of white supremacy certainly has had no shortage of sincere adherents, it became hegemonic over the second half of the nineteenth century because it comported well with upper-class prejudices and capitalists’ economic programmes. That is how, as the Pittsburgh racial adaptability chart illustrates, it became the conceptual frame of reference within which other groups and strata came to understand their social position, articulate their own interests and thus constitute themselves practically as groups. In the US for instance, in the late 1830s and 1840s, in a context of rising abolitionist sentiment and the democratization of public discourse associated with the spread of universal (white male) suffrage, white supremacist ideology undergirded and propelled a shift in defences of slavery. Previously, pro-slavery arguments centred on defending the institution as a ‘necessary evil’, an unpleasant and even morally dubious requirement of the plantation- based economic order of the southern states. One antebellum planter put the matter succinctly: ‘For what purpose does the master hold the servant? Is it not that by his labor, he, the master, may accumulate wealth?’16 In the changing political climate, the rhetorical centre of gravity of defences of slavery shifted to an argument that the institution was indeed a positive good for all involved, including the enslaved. This moment coincided with the formation of the embryo of what by the end of the century would become race science. As the sectional crisis sharpened in the late 1840s and early 1850s, propagation of white supremacist ideology – both rhetorically and institutionally, through carrots and sticks – became important as a basis for accommodating non-slaveholding southern whites to the possibility of secession. Appeals to racial solidarity provided a narrative of political cohesion and negatively sanctioned dissent. To be clear, indicating that it had a material foundation is not to suggest that embrace of white supremacy was ‘purely’ instrumental, even among proto-race scientists and pro-slavery ideologues. An important feature of ideologies of ascriptive difference is that they hopelessly cloud the distinction between principled belief and pursuit of self-interest. Josiah C. Nott and George R. Gliddon, the authors of Types of Mankind, one of the most prominent texts of mid-nineteenth century race theory, both no doubt believed sincerely that the races they identified were equivalent to separate species and that blacks were naturally fit for enslavement. They were also, respectively, a wealthy slave-owning Alabama physician and an English Egyptologist who also wrote on the cotton economy in Egypt.17 A striking testament to the harmonizing power of ideology is the appearance of an antebellum field of slave medicine, devoted to identification and treatment of conditions peculiar to blacks. Among those was drapetomania, a ‘disease of the mind’ that afflicted slaves with an irrational inclination to ‘run away from service’. Samuel A. Cartwright, the slave-owning Louisiana physician who discovered and reported the malady in the early 1850s, when ‘positive good’ arguments had become dominant among slavery’s defenders, was convinced that he had identified a genuine medical condition, preposterously transparent as it seems to a twenty-first century sensibility.18 White supremacist ideology, and the racialism in which it was embedded, operated similarly, of course, in relation to European and American colonialism in the late nineteenth century. Pioneer sociologist Edward A. Ross in 1901 laid out an especially clear account that links scientific race theory, rooted in the neo-Lamarckian evolutionism common in the early social sciences, and an argument for imperialism and colonization as inexorable imperatives of the ‘vigorous’ races.19 In an illustration of the complex ways that hegemonic racialism could work, Ross had been fired from the Stanford University faculty the year before for having run afoul of Jane Lathrop Stanford, widow of Leland Stanford of the Union Pacific railroad and domineering force on the University’s board of trustees. Ross had earned Mrs Stanford’s ire for two particular transgressions: he militantly advocated, in league with trade unions, intensified enforcement of Chinese exclusion on racial grounds (Union Pacific was a principal proponent of importing Chinese labour, also on racial grounds); and he advocated with equal militancy public ownership of utilities.20 Rudyard Kipling, a literal product of British imperialism, extolled ‘The White Man’s Burden’, which – in a gush of enthusiasm at the US’s recent acquisitions from the Spanish- Cuban-American War – he urged Americans to take up. I am agnostic with respect to how earnestly Kipling held the brew of condescension dressed as altruism projected in his infamous contention. We can say with certitude, though, that he understood that there was much more to colonialism than altruistic tutelage. In response to Kipling, one of the most emphatic racists of the day in American politics, Democratic US Senator from South Carolina Benjamin R. ‘Pitchfork Ben’ Tillman, denounced imperialist expansionism on racial grounds, stressing concerns that sustained contact with inferior populations would lead to white racial degeneration.21 By the turn of the twentieth century racialist ideology had become a global frame of reference through which arguments about colonialism and economic and political hierarchy were commonly conducted. Therefore, it should not be surprising that opposition to those hierarchies would be expressed, at least initially, in that same language. An oft-cited instance of that perception is W. E. B. Du Bois’s 1903 observation that ‘the problem of the Twentieth Century is the problem of the colour line’, which he went on to specify as ‘the re lation of the darker and lighter races of men in Asia and Africa and the islands of the sea’.22 In the US, mass disfranchisement of blacks and imposition of strictly codified white supremacist apartheid in nearly all the South made the colour line particularly salient as a bulwark against egalitarian political interests. This is consistent with how ascriptive ideologies naturalize contingent material relations of inequality by making them invisible within narratives of fixed hierarchy. The racialized discourse of tutelage, persistence of the presumptions of the Victorian comparative method, and direct and overt racialized domination all reinforced a similar understanding of the driving impetus of colonialism. It was reasonable for egalitarian opponents to assume either that racialist ideology was the proximate source of the inequality and exploitation, or that combating that ideology was a necessary precondition for attacking the inequality. It is noteworthy that both in the US and in much of the fin-de-siècle colonial world, as Du Bois’s colour line apothegm illustrates, the first tentative expressions of modern political assertiveness from the dominated populations were formulated within the paradigm of tutelage of the underdeveloped. The nascent professional and functionary classes in the colonies and the American South, the ‘new men’, as Judith Stein describes them, began to yield a stratum who pursued advocacy for subordinate populations alongside managerial authority over, and organized guidance of, their progress toward self-government. In the US that stratum of racial advocates, often describing themselves as ‘race men’ and ‘race women’, attained civic voice in the context of mass disfranchisement and shared a commitment to the large ideal of ‘racial uplift’.23 This established a recognized social role and occupational niche for the race or ethnic group leader as a sort of freelance broker or ethnic-group entrepreneur. Booker T. Washington and Du Bois were prominent voices of this stratum. Both in the US and colonial territories this politics of group advocacy often rested on racialist presumptions about the subordinate populations’ general backwardness and the stewardship role the group’s more cultivated and advanced members should play in leading the masses out of their benighted state. This was a petition politics that addressed governing elites as its principal audience because it understood them to be the only source of e ective political agency. That meant as well that the mission of group uplift was defined within parameters set by the ruling class. By the 1930s racialist ideology was increasingly under attack on biological, anthropological, and political fronts, in part as an expression of the left’s social momentum, which helped to buttress and disseminate egalitarian ideas and sensibilities. In that environment, the Great Migration from the Jim Crow South to big cities in the North and Midwest encouraged popular mass politics among black Americans, particularly as black workers were incorporated into the new industrial unionism. Mass organization as a political form as well as trade unionism also spread through much of the colonial world. In both settings, insurgent politics understandably joined opposition to racism with opposition to exploitation, as defences of those hierarchical regimes still depended on racialist arguments and would continue to do so for several decades. But the cultural and ideological victory of egalitarianism over racialism that consolidated in post-Second World War intellectual life came with a very large asterisk. What was largely defeated was the historically specific strict bio-determinist discourse of race that had prevailed as common sense between the last decades of the nineteenth century and the first quarter of the twentieth. Walter Benn Michaels and Werner Sollors have shown that the retreat from race to culture in theories of social di erence that began in the 1920s was in some ways more an exchange of one metaphor of essential di erence for another than a rejection of the notion of essential group di erence. As historian of anthropology George Stocking, Jr points out, from its origins in the early twentieth century the modern culture idea never fully escaped race theory’s presumptions.24 In the postwar years, culture increasingly supplanted race in discourses legitimating inequality, particularly regarding exploitation of colonized societies and racial minorities in the US. In its taxonomy of ‘stages of development’, modernization theory in the academic study of comparative political development merely rehearsed hoary racialist accounts, such as that by E. A. Ross cited above, and the logic of the Victorian comparative method, while dressing them in a later generation’s scientistic raiment. Robert Vitalis has shown recently how the academic field and political practice of international politics in the US remained rooted in substantively racialist paradigms well into the 1960s.25 And the State Department’s and other national elites’ concerns about the impact that domestic civil rights agitation could have on US imperial designs in former colonial territories led to a concern with damage control that generated, on the one hand, censorship of news broadcast abroad and intense monitoring and policing of domestic activists’ overseas engagements and, on the other, liberal Cold Warriors’ pressure on the domestic front in support of some versions of the movement’s aims.26 AMBIGUITIES OF RACE AND CLASS IN POSTWAR INSURGENCIES Anti-colonial and national liberation movements also paid attention and to some extent drew inspiration from the postwar black American insurgency and vice versa. At least through the 1950s, movements on both planes of insurgency mobilized in general terms on a popular front basis. In both spheres – economic position and racial or national category – each signified the other. In the black American case, the postwar insurgency, which had germinated since the mid-1930s, incubated by industrial unionism and socialist agitation, was propelled partly by a tension between what Preston Smith characterizes as racial democratic (i.e., committed to radical equality of opportunity within American capitalism) and social democratic tendencies and programmes.27 Occasionally, the ultimate contradiction between those tendencies would erupt as open conflict around specific initiatives. However, in quotidian experience racial discrimination and subordination and economic exploitation and degradation seemed, and on one level were, elements in a singular system of oppression. For leftists in both loci of insurgency, pursuit of redistribution along racial and class lines each seemed to be a necessary condition for successful pursuit of the other, if they were not treated as indistinguishable. By the end of the Second World War, even very conventional black liberals and moderates were emphatic that continued growth of industrial unionism and expansion of public social wage policies were indispensable for black Americans’ advancement toward equality.28 For many, including activists, the social-democratic and racial-democratic imperatives were so tightly melded that, even on those occasions when tension between them erupted into explicit conflict in relation to specific initiatives, the sources of conflict typically were interpreted as deriving from individual, idiosyncratic di erences rather than more portentous ideological contradiction. A downside of the popular front style of politics, which was very successful through the major legislative victories of the mid-1960s, was that it proceeded from an abstract commitment to the interests of the race as a whole as a governing norm for political judgment, which was by definition murky and facilitated evasion of those sharp, potentially zero-sum disagreements over political vision that would surface in strategic or even tactical debates. This murkiness left many popular front black radicals ill- prepared for a critical moment in the mid-1960s when the submerged class contradiction sharpened in debate over ways forward after the legislative victories against segregation. THE CLASS CONTRADICTION That tension in black politics was at its core a class contradiction; racial democracy is the social ideal of the aspiring professional-managerial and business strata. Failure, inability or reluctance to address class dynamics in black politics as such, while understandable in the context of dynamic racial popular front insurgency as a strategic desideratum or even simple oversight, nonetheless has had consequences for subsequent understandings of the relation of race and politics and assertions of the scope of authentically black political interests that eventually undermined possibilities for sustaining a working-class agenda in black politics. Antagonistic reactions from both antiracist activists and political elites to Senator Bernie Sanders’s campaign for the 2016 Democratic presidential nomination, on a platform inspired by social democracy, threw into bold relief the extent to which what is now generally recognized as black politics is fundamentally a professional- managerial class programme that constitutes the left-wing of neoliberalism. This politics actively invokes the cultural authority of earlier moments of black insurgency, shorn of their working-class programmatic character, and spectres of the racial order it opposed, to align with a neoliberal ideal of social justice – parity in the distribution of capitalism’s costs and benefits among recognized ascriptive categories – as the boundary of the politically thinkable, even among a nominal left. This odd state of affairs is the product of several developments in postwar American politics, beginning with the impact of the business counterattack on labour in the years after the war and the aggressive anti-communism of the late 1940s and 1950s, and including the terms on which the victories of the mid-1960s were consolidated institutionally within black politics and the country at large. And, perhaps counter-intuitively, identification with Third World anti-colonial and national liberation movements in the 1960s and 1970s played a significant role in rendering invisible the class dynamics that shaped the thrust and impact of post-segregation black politics. The decade after the end of the Second World War was a key moment in helping form the trajectory that has culminated in contemporary antiracist politics in the US. Two linked pressures, one suppressive and the other affirmative, shifted the balance in black popular front radicalism sharply in favour of the racial-democratic tendency. The reactionary anti- communist offensive of those years, as was its domestic intent, stigmatized and suppressed expressions of socialist or anti-capitalist politics or critique. Its effects on accelerating purges of the left from the labour movement are well known. Leah N. Gordon and Risa Golubo have examined its impact on the strategic orientation of black politics and racial advocacy.29 Crucially, aggressive, putschist anti-communism and its ‘loyalty’ apparatus drove a retreat from political-economic interpretations of the bases of racial inequality and toward an individualist, psychologistic perspective focused on racism as prejudice, bigotry, or intolerance. On the affirmative side of the ledger, that new racial liberalism divorced from political economy encouraged a litigation strategy of challenging the codified apartheid in the South as violating the guarantees of equal protection against discriminatory state action provided by the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution. By the mid-1940s the federal courts had shown that that direction could produce positive results for litigants, and that potential opening impelled a focus on the segregationist southern order and its infringements on the civil rights of blacks as a class of individuals. Of course, segregation violated the Fourteenth Amendment no more in 1954, when the US Supreme Court found state-sponsored racially segregated education unconstitutional by definition, than it had in 1896, when the Court’s ruling in Plessy v. Ferguson upheld codified segregation in the ‘separate but equal’ doctrine. Moreover, black activists had fought against the segregationist regime with whatever means available since before Plessy had established it as legitimate. What had changed was the political and cultural centre of gravity with regard to racial inequality and discrimination. To be sure, the social-democratic tendency in black politics did not disappear. It remained an important engine of popular political action through the 1960s. The fabled 1963 March on Washington was organized principally by labour leader A. Philip Randolph’s Negro American Labor Council, and was officially called the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, organized and carried out with considerable trade union support. The impetus for the protest in Memphis at which Martin Luther King, Jr was assassinated was a sanitation workers’ strike that was an outcropping of a regional organizing campaign of the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME). Labour and class-related issues were central to much of the militant action that made up the high period of southern civil rights activism from the 1940s through the 1960s, as well as a two-decade long struggle – mainly outside the South, where ruling-class dominance was too complete – for local, state, and federal Fair Employment Practices legislation. This would extend beyond anti-discrimination efforts to authorize public intervention in labour markets to pursue full employment, which had been a central goal of black political agitation – and the black-labour-left alliance in which it was embedded – since the war years. Even in the South, however, as the Memphis case illustrates, labour and class issues were often as not high on the movement’s agenda. Even such proceduralist liberal staples of the anti-segregation struggle as restoration of voting rights were linked in the minds of activists and rank-and-file movement supporters to working-class and labour objectives. NATIONAL LIBERATION, BLACK POWER AND CLASS POLITICS As Cold War liberalism and postwar racial liberalism converged, activists increasingly tended to link the civil rights agenda to the Cold War international agenda, especially regarding the decolonizing Third World, characterizing southern segregationists as out of step with world opinion and harmful to national security. Thus, at the same time as politically attentive black Americans drew inspiration from and inspired decolonization and national liberation movements abroad, many also found it at least instrumentally useful to identify their domestic struggles with US international aspirations. Not many perceived that there was a possible contradiction between those positions. Black Americans’ identification with anti-colonial struggles rested on an almost unavoidable and a ectively powerful sense of common, or at least comparable condition. I recall, on first seeing the film soon after its release, finding the ‘Battle of Algiers’ immensely resonant; it seemed that I had lived some of it as a child and adolescent in New Orleans and other American cities. But that general identification was also in important ways superficial and naïve, and it would eventually become implicated in the critical defeat of the social-democratic tendency in black politics in the late 1960s and 1970s. Black American Third Worldism was more nationalist than revolutionary. Going back to Du Bois’s apothegm about the colour line – and it is much less known that he essentially recanted it by the early 1950s, specifically describing race as an ‘excuse’ in class war30 – black identification with colonized populations stemmed partly from an idealized racial nationalism that presumed white supremacist constructions of the stakes of western imperialism. Du Bois’s 1928 novel Dark Princess is a romance based on the premise of a global rising of united peoples of colour.31 In the 1930s and even into the war, many black Americans cheered on Japanese imperialism as a non-white challenge to white supremacy.32 The roots of the characterization of black Americans’ position as an instance of ‘domestic colonialism’ in the early 1960s lay in an e ort not merely to elevate the black insurgency’s power and significance through association with Third World struggles, but also to advocate a model of national liberation as a programme and approach for black politics in the US.33 Third Worldism was in general more a rhetorical phenomenon than a substantively programmatic one. Marxist revolutionaries on the capitalist periphery embraced it as an aspiration. Mao propounded a ‘three worlds’ theory, and Cuba still maintains the Organización de Solidaridad con los Pueblos de Asia, África, y América Latina (OSPAAL). Left governments in Venezuela and elsewhere have drawn on imagery at least evocative of Third Worldism and Non-Alignment in their e orts to organize regional and supra-regional (typically based on common export commodities) economic and political blocs. The Alianza Bolivariana para los Pueblos de Nuestra América (ALBA), with member states in South America, Central America, and the Caribbean, is arguably the most extensive and successful of those e orts. For the most part, however, the history of Third Worldism and the Non-Aligned Movement as predicated on the goal of global alliance of ‘peoples of colour’ – anti-imperialist or otherwise – has been very much oversold.34 Moreover, the view that non-whiteness provides a basis for transnational political alliance simply rehearses the mystification that colonialism had been driven fundamentally by white supremacist ideology. As Fanon observed early in the period of decolonization, that mystification, in identifying racial transfer of formal authority as the essence of national liberation, also obscured the extent to which imperialism was always first and foremost a class project, of which colonialism buttressed by racialist fables was only one historically specific form. In any event, as anti-colonial and national liberation struggles intensified in the 1960s against the backdrop of the escalating Indochina War, Western leftists, almost as a reflex, generally supported those insurgent movements and defended them against inegalitarian critics and imperialist state power; doing so was consistent with the left’s egalitarian and democratic values. Many of those movements contained different ideological and class tendencies, a complexity often obscured by their populist rhetoric, which posited claims to represent the authentic ‘people’. How class dynamics played out in national liberation movements that succeeded in winning independence and official self-determination is well known. Even several of those movements that embraced socialism and attempted to link the national liberation struggle to a popular class politics – e.g., the FLN in Algeria, the African National Congress in South Africa and those that came to power in the former Portuguese colonies in Africa – were ultimately incorporated into the logic of capitalist globalization in ways that articulated with domestic class contradictions.35 In the US, escalation of the war on Vietnam encouraged greater attentiveness in the left to imperialist interventionism, and over that decade armed national liberation or revolutionary struggles intensified in much of the former colonial world and Latin America. At the same time the Black Power nationalist embrace of the domestic colonial analogy and the discourse of national liberation gave a radical halo to what was, militant rhetorical flourishes aside, programmatically an ethnic politics fully incorporable with the pluralist interest-group system. Notwithstanding the sincere convictions of adherents, Black Power was, consistent with ethnic politics in general, very much a class-based affair, harnessing an abstract and symbolic racial populism to an agenda that centred concretely on advancing the interests and aspirations of new political and entrepreneurial strata which emerged from the victories of the civil rights movement and demographic racial transition in American cities.36 In relation to a history of racial exclusion, it was reasonable and appropriate that many leftists supported what was substantively a programme for inclusion on a racial-democratic model. And the rhetorical militancy and racial-populist symbolism associated with Black Power, including the tropes of national liberation, reinforced the sense that it was a radical or revolutionary tendency that leftists should support. For more than half a century that view of Black Power has obscured the significance of the mid-1960s debate in black politics over the movement’s direction in the wake of the legislative victories. On one side, a working- class and labour-based black radicalism, propounded principally by A. Philip Randolph and his associate and longtime civil rights activist Bayard Rustin, argued that the struggle for black equality faced new, larger challenges opened by the defeat of Jim Crow that required building a different sort of movement centred on the familiar black-liberal-labour-left alliance. In questioning whether ‘civil rights movement’ even remained an accurate description, Rustin argued, in a widely read essay published a year before Stokely Carmichael introduced the Black Power slogan to the world, that the next phase of the struggle called for expanding the movement’s vision ‘beyond race relations to economic relations’. He argued that it could not succeed ‘in the absence of radical programs for full employment, abolition of slums, the reconstruction of our educational system, new definitions of work and leisure. Adding up the cost of such programs, we can only conclude that we are talking about a refashioning of our political economy.’ For that reason, he contended: ‘The future of the Negro struggle depends on whether the contradictions of this society can be resolved by a coalition of progressive forces which becomes the effective political majority in the United States. I speak of the coalition which staged the March on Washington, passed the Civil Rights Act, and laid the basis for the Johnson landslide – Negroes, trade unionists, liberals, and religious groups.’37 This was an unambiguous assertion of the social-democratic tendency in black politics, which Randolph and Rustin followed up with introduction of a ‘Freedom Budget’ that laid out an agenda for realizing a full-employment economy and its benefits for the society as a whole, noting that black Americans’ circumstances would be improved disproportionately if the Budget were implemented.38 For a variety of structural and idiosyncratic reasons, their call did not gain social traction.39 Contributing to its defeat was that the racial-democratic tendency aligned more comfortably with new institutional opportunities made available by the Voting Rights Act, racial transition in cities, anti-discrimination enforcement and the War on Poverty, all of which constituted a class-based racial redistribution that comported with the material aspirations of the emerging, post-segregation black professional-managerial class.40 Incipient Black Power racial populism obscured the class character of those developments. Particularly ironic, in light of the subsequent development of black politics, is that many radicals successfully deployed racial populism, reinforced by allusions to anti-colonial and national liberation struggles, to portray the social-democratic approach advocated by Randolph and Rustin as a conservative ‘integrationist’ call for subordination to white interests. Because black radicals never had the political capacity to challenge for state power or a broad and deep popular base, the movement’s class tensions seldom surfaced in political debate. By the mid-1960s the racial-democratic tendency’s cultural force and institutional clout – including its incorporation within postwar liberalism – had made its commitment to racial redistribution practically hegemonic as the standard of justice and equality for black Americans. In retrospect, that moment marked the birth of antiracism as a claim to a discrete politics. The ambiguity and murkiness in black popular front radicalism regarding intra-racial class dynamics undercut the ability of social-democratic advocates to mount appropriate critical responses. For the most part, such advocates also fell back on a discourse of racial authenticity and objections that the strategies and objectives of the emerging political class did not properly represent the interests of the ‘community’ or the ‘people’. The conceptual limitations imposed by that fetishized racial populism testified to and reinforced professional-managerial class hegemony in black politics. Partly from ideological purblindness, partly from material imperatives, the expressions of political radicalism that purported to dissent from the consolidating new black class politics – openly idealist cultural nationalism, a new, anti-imperialist Pan-Africanism, and a potted Marxism-Leninism – defined their radicalism through withdrawal from mundane political dynamics and embrace of one or another flavour of millenarian revolutionary catechism.41 Some black radicals, particularly in the 1970s moment of the largely Maoist New Communist movement in the US, strove to meld their fundamentally nationalist discourse of national liberation with a Marxist anti-imperialism. The Black Panther Party had been an early expression of this inclination.42 However, that turn retained the crucial assumptions of national liberation discourse, especially the most significant one – the nationalist premise that posits the group as an authentically communitarian and singular ‘people’ united against external oppression, and represents the character of class struggle within the population (e.g., black Americans) as that ‘people’ arrayed against inauthentic ‘misleaders’ or a co-opted, comprador element. That view originated in the ‘domestic colonialism’ analogy that emerged from some radicals’ early 1960s identification with Third World insurgencies. The great irony of this apparently radical tendency is that the communitarian populism on which it rested worked mainly to obscure class dynamics within black politics. It is a marker of retreat from programmatic commitment to social transformation that many who consider themselves on the left accept the stance that racial politics is more radical or inclusive than class politics and that pursuit of socialism is suspect on identitarian grounds. Ascriptive identity becomes the primary basis for political commitment, and solidarity on the basis of who we are trumps solidarity on the basis of what we believe only when the left no longer has a transformative vision around which to cohere as a basis for political judgment. Antiracism does not have an affirmative agenda, a fact that complements a left that by and large has little clarity of social vision itself. Antiracist politics mimes radicalism with posture and performative evocation of earlier insurgent politics like Black Power radicalism in the US and the national liberation movements of the 1960s and 1970s, but with complete erasure of the class and political-economic tensions in which those movements were immersed. CONCLUSION Positing a singular black community or racial political aspiration has had long- reaching effects on black politics, and leftist scholarship on black Americans, that have facilitated accommodation to neoliberal imperatives often while intending quite the opposite. Proliferation of a literature that presumes a singular ‘black freedom movement’, ‘black liberation movement’ or even a ‘long civil rights movement’ divests black Americans’ political activity of its tensions and structural contradictions. The effect is to de-historicize examination of black politics. Politically, this tendency has obscured thirty years or more of steadily lowered expectations for what can be gained from political action. This was exemplified clearly during the 2016 campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination when in South Carolina, longtime Georgia Congressman and former civil rights movement icon John Lewis and his fellow black Congressman James Clyburn from South Carolina denounced the Sanders campaign’s proposal for free public higher education as irresponsible because it sent the bad message that people should expect free things – that is, decommodified public goods and services – from government. ‘Nothing is free in America’, Lewis snarled.43 Left-neoliberal exuberance surrounding the Democratic National Convention’s official nomination of Hillary Clinton as its presidential candidate made undeniably clear that antiracism and other identitarian expressions are more than simply compatible with neoliberalism but are most meaningfully active components of its ideological reproduction. Dara Lind, writing in vox.com, exulted that ‘a commitment to diversity has become the [Democratic] party’s unifying principle’, and Jeet Heer gushed in The New Republic that ‘the Democratic Party opened their arms to Republicans – without compromising their liberal values’.44 Identity and social liberalism in this happy vision will completely override the Democrats’ enduring class loyalties, and contradictions. There are two final ironies to note regarding the left embrace of antiracist politics. First, all politics in a class society is class politics. Antiracism is not exempt from that reality. What its proponents will not admit is that it is a class politics but not a working-class politics. Second, representing race as a primordial identity also elevates it as a social force above the dynamics of the reproduction of capitalist social relations; in that sense, antiracist politics of the contemporary sort proceeds from the same primordialist view of race as did fin-de-siècle race theorists. And that is also a case of argument by historical analogy coming home to roost.

#### Capitalism is the root cause of everything and you started from the wrong place – listing violence isn’t going to get it done – we need to start with a methodology that links violences to capitalism and calls for unified organization against it

Sell 15 (Hannah, Socialist Party of England and Wales, sister party of Socialist Alternative, “IDENTITY POLITICS AND THE STRUGGLE AGAINST OPPRESSION” http://www.socialistalternative.org/2015/11/02/identity-politics-struggle-oppression/)

Over recent years there has been a growth in support for what can broadly be described as ‘identity politics’ among many mainly young people who are rightly angry about and radicalised by, their experience of sexism, racism, homophobia, prejudice against disabled people and other forms of oppression. In one sense, identity politics is an inevitable part of the political awakening of many members of oppressed groups within society. Recognising that you are oppressed, and that you can fight against your oppression through a common struggle with others who share the same oppression, is a vital first step. However, the history of struggle against oppression shows that, on the basis of experience, those participating tend to go beyond identity politics as they recognise the root cause of their oppression lies in the structure of society. The highest point of the vast rebellion against racism in the US in the 1950s and 1960s, for example, was reached by the Black Panthers, who were founded in 1966 with the magnificent concept: “We do not fight racism with racism. We fight racism with solidarity. We do not fight exploitative capitalism with black capitalism. We fight capitalism with basic socialism”. Today, both the #BlackLivesMatter rebellion and the movement for $15 Now are the first stages of a new mass uprising against poverty and racism in the US. However, the pushing back of consciousness globally over the decades following the collapse of Stalinism in the late 1980s and the capitalist triumphalism that accompanied it, mean that the new movements did not begin where the Panthers left off, with a socialist outlook. Nonetheless, there is a growing anti-capitalist mood among young people in the US, which is a first step to drawing socialist conclusions. At the same time, identity politics is many activists’ starting point. While those involved in struggle may see this mainly as a means to fight back, the form of identity politics that has emanated from the universities and has dominated over recent decades concentrates overwhelmingly on discussing personal experience of oppression rather than trying to find the means to end it. This includes all the strands of identity politics that have become more prominent in recent years, such as intersectionality and privilege theory. In Britain these concepts remain little known in wider society but have become commonplace in, for example, university feminist societies. Intersectionalists argue that different oppressions ‘intersect’. Indeed, they do: a black working-class woman is triply oppressed, for example. But intersectionalists often see their role as cataloguing and describing oppressions and their intersections rather than abolishing them. Supporters of ‘privilege theory’ are best known for telling people to ‘check their privilege’ during (often online) debates. The founder of privilege theory, Peggy McIntosh, argued that a white, upper-class, heterosexual man, for example, is carrying around an ‘invisible knapsack’ full of unearned privileges. The argument goes that power is not concentrated in the hands of one class, or in the state, but is spread throughout society and therefore exists in all social and interpersonal relationships. Privilege theory states that every individual is part of a multiplicity of oppressive relationships. It concentrates overwhelmingly on exhortations to individuals to change, to check their privilege. But it is not possible to eliminate either oppressions or privileges merely by exhorting individuals to change their behaviour. In fact, in many countries there have been significant improvements in social attitudes to different forms of oppression in recent decades, but they have not resulted in the ending of the oppressions concerned. Racism ingrained In Britain, for example, while racist prejudices are still widespread, crude racist ideas are far less socially acceptable than they were 30 years ago. This has come about for a number of reasons, above all the determination and increased confidence of black and Asian people to fight discrimination and racism. Another important factor was the widespread involvement of black and Asian workers in the trade unions in a common struggle alongside white workers. Both of these factors helped to foster a strong feeling among a large section of the white population, especially youth, that racism is wrong and should be combated. Nonetheless, racism remains deeply ingrained in British society. The police are up to 28 times more likely to stop and search you if you are black or Asian. The gap between average pay for white workers and those from ethnic minorities has actually increased over recent years despite an improvement in social attitudes. Over half of young black men are unemployed, more than double the unemployment rate for young white men. In the US the situation is even starker. While deep-rooted racism remains there has also been an improvement in social attitudes. There has been the development of a black middle class and even a small black elite. Both processes are reflected in the election of a black man as US president. The vast majority of the black population, however, remain among the poorest and most oppressed in society, facing violent state repression. One hundred and thirty five African Americans were killed by the police in the first half of 2015 alone. Racism does not just stem from individual prejudices but from something more fundamental: the nature of capitalism as it has actually developed. Malcolm X correctly declared that, “you can’t have capitalism without racism”. Capitalism, as Karl Marx famously said, came into being “dripping from head to foot, from every pore, with blood and dirt”. (Capital, Volume 1, Chapter 31) He was referring, particularly, to the role of slavery in the accumulation of capital. With slavery came the development of all kinds of pseudo-scientific racist theories designed to justify the enslavement of African peoples. Racist ideas were then adapted to justify the colonial oppression of large parts of the world. Capitalism was forced to abandon direct colonial rule as a result of the magnificent revolutionary movements that took place against it. Economic exploitation, however, is more brutal than ever. Two hundred and fifty years ago the gap between the richest and poorest countries was around five to one. Today it is 400 to one. Racism is used to justify this vast gulf and also that black workers are usually among the poorest and most oppressed sections of the working class even in the ‘rich’ countries. Women’s oppression Similarly, blatant sexism is no longer acceptable in the way it would have been in the past, particularly in the economically advanced capitalist countries. Women have won greater rights in recent decades. There are different factors that have led to this, including the development of improved and widely available contraception. However, many of these gains can be traced back to the growing confidence of women as a result of many more women working rather than being isolated in the home. Nonetheless, women continue to be oppressed. This oppression stems, not merely from the attitudes of men, but from the role of women and the family in capitalist and earlier class societies. Most of us think of ‘the family’ as the individuals who make up our own family, who are often the people who are closest to us. Historically, however, the family as an institution has also acted within class societies as an agent of social control with the father as ‘head of the household’ having responsibility for disciplining women and children. While this concept has been weakened in the modern era by the growing confidence of women, it is far from eliminated. The idea remains deeply ingrained that women are possessions of men and that we need to be loyal and obedient to our partners, and that violence and coercion are acceptable means for men to achieve that, both towards ‘their’ women and ‘their’ children. It is no longer socially acceptable to openly state that women are the possessions of men, yet these ideas were enshrined in law until relatively recently. Marital rape only became illegal in Britain in 1991, Spain in 1992, and Germany in 1997. While no longer legal or openly acceptable, marital rape is still widespread and rarely punished. It is estimated that in Britain only 15% of all rapes are reported to the police, and only 7% of those result in conviction. According to the UN, of all the women killed globally in 2012 almost half were killed by their partners or family members. In contrast, only 6% of killings with male victims were committed by intimate partners or family members. At the same time, women continue to bear the brunt of domestic responsibilities despite increasingly also going out to work. In many cases women are still, as the Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky put it, the ‘slaves of slaves’. While in Britain, for example, most studies show men accepting that they should do an equal amount of domestic chores as women, there is still a considerable gap between intentions and reality. One survey showed that on average women did 17 hours a week of domestic chores (excluding childcare) whereas men did less than six. It is true, therefore, that men get some gain from women’s disproportionate bearing of the domestic burden, in having a few more hours leisure time. The main gain, however, is for capitalism. By putting the main burden of domestic life, the bringing up of the next generation (from which the future workforce is drawn), and caring for the sick and elderly on women, they are removed from the responsibility of society as a whole. Power concentrated in the capitalist class To suggest that power is not concentrated in one class is to completely misunderstand the nature of capitalism. Today, wealth and power is concentrated in fewer hands – the owners of the major banks and corporations – even than when Marx was writing. According to Oxfam, the richest 85 people on earth – a double-decker bus full – have as much wealth as the poorest half of the world’s population. The richest 85 include five women and one African, although white men predominate. Their role in society, however, does not stem primarily from their colour or gender but that they are part of a tiny super-wealthy ruling elite. The world’s 100 biggest companies now control 70% of global trade. Even if their boards of directors included many more black people or women it would not make any material difference to the exploitation suffered by the working class and poor worldwide, not least black women. Look at South Africa, where the incorporation of a tiny minority of blacks into the capitalist class has made no difference to the dire poverty suffered by the majority. And capitalism is increasingly incapable of taking society forward. Many of the rights partially taken for granted by previous generations in Europe, like a relatively secure job, home and pension, are now things of the past. To say that social relations in modern society are capitalist relations is not to take an ‘economic determinist’ view of society: arguing that every aspect of the ‘superstructure’ of society – the state, politics, culture, social attitudes and so on – are rigidly determined by the character of the economy. On the contrary, there is an inter-relationship between the two. At the same time, politics and social attitudes reflect not only the current character of capitalism but also remnants of the past and – particularly in mass struggles of the working class and the oppressed – the seeds of a potential better future. Nonetheless, it is clear that as long as we live in a capitalist society, where wealth and power rests with the tiny elite who own and control industry, science and technology, then the superstructure of that society will also ultimately reflect and act in the interests of that ruling elite. No amount of demanding that people ‘check their privilege’ will eliminate social attitudes generated and sustained by capitalism. While determined mass struggle can force capitalism to adapt to a certain extent – as has been the case with LGBT rights, equal pay legislation and other measures – permanent and deep-rooted change, particularly where it threatens the functioning of capitalism, will only be achieved by the socialist transformation of society. The horrific bureaucratic degeneration and then collapse of the Soviet Union have obscured the importance of the Russian revolution in giving a glimpse of what socialism would mean for those suffering oppression. In Russia in 1917 the working class led a movement of the oppressed which successfully overthrew capitalism for the first, and so far, the only time. Russia’s extreme poverty and the isolation of the new workers’ state led to its degeneration. Nonetheless, in the early days it gave a glimpse of how a new society could overcome oppressions that had existed for millennia. In ‘backward’ Russia, legal changes were introduced very quickly which were many decades ahead of any capitalist country. These included universal suffrage, civil marriage and divorce when requested by either partner, equal pay, paid maternity leave, the right to abortion and the legalisation of homosexuality. Oppressed nationalities were given the genuine right to self-determination. Measures were taken to encourage nationalities and cultures oppressed under tsarism, including the development of a written form of some languages for the first time. Of course, legal or formal measures do not in themselves end oppression. Decades after the passing of equal pay legislation in Britain, for example, women still earn an average of £5,000 a year less than men. Addressing women’s oppression in the Soviet Union, Trotsky described how legal equality was a step forward but actual equality in social relations required a far more “deep-going plough”, capable of providing real economic equality and lifting the domestic burden from women, and transforming social attitudes ingrained over millennia. A whole number of measures began to be introduced in the aftermath of the Russian revolution (including free childcare, communal restaurants and public laundries) which, while never fully implemented due to the degeneration of the Soviet Union, gave a glimpse of how the domestic burden could be lifted. That, in turn, could have laid the foundations for the building of a society based on women’s equality. Many intersectionalists put very little emphasis on campaigning for economic and practical measures to lift the burden on women, instead concentrating overwhelmingly on social attitudes, and trying to create spaces within society that are free of oppression. Yet freeing women from the heavy load of being the carers, cooks and cleaners for the whole of society is an essential prerequisite for ending women’s oppression. Twenty-first century capitalism, far from taking steps towards this, is driving in the opposite direction. Austerity affects women severely. It includes huge cuts in public services that partially lifted some of the responsibilities that fall on women. David Cameron’s big society could be summed up as demanding that women compensate for the cuts to health, child and elderly care by taking the burden on themselves. This is a demonstration that under capitalism, even where oppressed groups make gains, they are never guaranteed to be permanent. This also applies to the devastating, sometimes life-threatening, consequences of austerity for disabled people. Combating prejudice Pointing out the need for fundamental change in society does not in any way downgrade the importance of combating oppressive and reactionary ideas and practices while we live in this society, including within the workers’ movement. However, this will by necessity be a constant battle. Intersectionalists call for ‘safe spaces’ with zero tolerance for anything considered an oppressive view. But it is utopian to try and create a safe space which is sealed off from the society in which we all live and are affected by. Turning inwards in order to concentrate on doing so – rather than turning out to build a movement capable of winning real change – is doomed to frustration and failure. Far from creating safe spaces, this can often lead to an undemocratic environment, where the individuals dominant in a particular ‘space’ assert that they feel oppressed by ideas and opinions they disagree with. There is also a dangerous tendency to suggest that the value of someone’s contribution to a discussion should be based primarily on what oppressions they as an individual suffer from. This is completely false. Britain’s first and only female prime minister, Margaret Thatcher, undoubtedly suffered individual oppression as a woman, but the neo-liberal programme she drove through was completely against the interests of working-class women. Recently, Jeremy Corbyn, the new left leader of the Labour Party, has been attacked supposedly for not having enough women in his shadow cabinet, although his front bench is the first that has been majority women. More women voted for Corbyn than for the other right-wing candidates (two of whom were women) in the leadership election because he stood against austerity. Had he chosen a pro-austerity woman as shadow chancellor rather than the left MP, John McDonnell, most of the women who voted for him would have correctly been deeply disappointed. The issue of safe spaces also relates to intersectionalists’ views on gender: that the concept of two genders is a social construct and, in reality, gender is more like a spectrum. Emphasis is often put on supporting transgender people and all those who rebel against societal gender constraints. This includes some who do not identify as either male or female but as ‘gender-non-conforming’. This reflects a positive rejection of current gender relations and homophobia by a growing number of young people. Socialists, of course, support the democratic right of individuals to define both their own gender and sexuality. However, while there is radicalisation among an important layer on this issue, that does not mean it is possible to create, as some intersectionalists attempt, spaces within capitalist society completely free from societal pressures regarding gender. Capitalism shapes the outlook of all of us from the time we are born, with all of the distortions of the human personality that creates. This includes how we are expected to behave appropriately for our given gender. It is not possible to fully escape this; in this society capitalist gender roles are an objective reality. Even rejecting capitalist gender norms means reacting to, and therefore being affected by, those norms. It is not possible to prescribe exactly how human relations, including the role of gender, would flower in the future when freed from the rigid straitjackets imposed by capitalism. The role of the working class The crucial issue for anyone determined to end oppression, therefore, is how to end capitalism and begin to build a world that is free of oppression: a ‘safe space’ for all. Today, just as when Marx described the working class as the ‘grave digger of capitalism’, it is the key force on the planet capable of ridding us of this bankrupt system. Both privilege theory and intersectionality would list social class – what they would describe as ‘classism’ – as one form of oppression. However, it features as one item on a list and is often discussed in terms of the prejudice people face because of having a working-class accent or postcode. The centrality of class in the structure of society is not recognised. The basic idea that a Nigerian worker would have more in common with a worker in Britain or the US than they would with Aliko Dangote, the only African to make it on to the list of the richest 85 on the planet, would not be understood. The fact that it is the working class that is ultimately responsible for the creation of the capitalists’ profits and that by collective action it is capable of bringing capitalist society to a halt is discounted as outmoded. Yet the working class is not ‘disappearing’. In fact, it is potentially stronger today than it was at the time of the Russian Revolution. Many countries where workers were a tiny minority of society a century ago now have large and powerful working classes. In the economically advanced countries, like Britain, deindustrialisation has meant that the industrial working class is much smaller. However, there still remain groups of workers with enormous power to bring society a halt when they strike – anyone who lives in London and witnessed the recent London Underground strikes knows that. Deindustrialisation has not led to young people becoming ‘middle class’, but has forced them into low paid, temporary work, often in the service sector. At the same time, large sections of the population – including teachers and civil servants – who would have previously considered themselves middle class have been driven down into the ranks of the working class in their living conditions and social outlook. The history of the 20th century repeatedly demonstrated the preparedness of working-class people to fight for socialism. However, it also demonstrated that the capitalist class does all it can to cling to power, not least by attempting to divide and rule by turning different sections of the working class against each other. In recent years, there has been increasing radicalisation and struggle globally, including revolutionary movements. Out of these, largely unsuccessful, struggles conclusions will begin to be drawn about what is necessary to change society. That requires a mass revolutionary movement, bringing together different sections of the working class – with different experiences and outlooks – in a mass party with a clear programme and a determined and accountable leadership. Such a party would not be a model of a new society, but a tool to bring it about. Nonetheless, it is crucial that such a mass party would include in its ranks all of the most oppressed sections of the working class and that it is a vibrant and democratic force in which all participants feel able to express their views. Its programme, as was the case with the Bolsheviks in Russia, has to fight for the rights not just of the working class in general but also for different specifically oppressed groups. Undoubtedly, such a movement would also win the support of wide sections of the middle class and even individuals from the capitalist class who saw the need for a break with capitalism. This would particularly include those who suffer oppression under capitalism and who recognise that the only way to end homophobia, racism or women’s oppression is to join the struggle for a new society. Struggle itself unifies It would be ludicrous and deplorable to argue that those fighting their particular oppression should hold back and ‘wait’ for a unified struggle of the whole working class. Mass struggle is a thousand times more effective than exhortations to individuals to change their attitudes in winning social progress. It is always the case that a movement has a greater chance of success if it is able to reach out to other sections of the working class, and that therefore it is important that the programme put forward by a particular movement attempts to do this. However, that is in no way to suggest that any group should artificially delaying fighting back until they, for example, convince more white or male workers of their cause. Nonetheless, to permanently end racism in the US, for instance, will require ending capitalism and will therefore have to involve a struggle uniting different sections of the working class – black, Hispanic, Asian and white. This is a practical question. The African American population, who suffer the worst police racism, are 13% of the population and will not be able to win alone. The capitalist class will try to increase divisions between different sections of the oppressed, particularly at times of heightened struggle. The oppressed need to increase their strength by trying to maximise unity. The $15 Now movement in the US, and the election of Socialist Alternative member Kshama Sawant in Seattle, give a glimpse of the growing possibilities in the US to build a united workers’ movement. Achieving unity does not mean downplaying the importance of combating the specific oppressions different groups in society face. On the contrary, it is vital that socialists campaign for the workers’ movement to fight to take up every aspect of oppression. The Socialist Party has a proud history of doing this – for example, spearheading the Campaign Against Domestic Violence in the 1990s which was central to getting the trade unions to take the issue up. Intersectionality on university campuses in Britain has had a tendency to turn campus feminist societies inwards, focusing on a fruitless attempt to grade degrees of oppression rather than fighting to end it. However, many of those initially attracted to these ideas are searching for a way to change society and will quickly come up against the limits of identity politics in all its forms. One small indication of this is the popularity among young people of the film Pride, which tells the true story of Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners (LGSM). LGSM recognised the common ground between their struggle against the Tories and that of the 1984/85 miners’ strike. Their attempt to support the miners was not without difficulties – with prejudices on both sides – but ultimately forged a real unity. LGSM understood that a victory for the miners would have been a massive defeat for Thatcher, the Tories and the capitalist class – and that was in the interests of LGBT people. They never once responded to white, straight miners, who were often initially homophobic, by telling them to ‘check their privilege’. One result of their heroic efforts was big parts of the workers’ movement wholeheartedly taking up the struggle for LGBT liberation, including National Union of Mineworkers lodges from across the country leading the 1985 Pride demonstration. The miners’ strike was a major event in the class struggle in Britain, but it will be dwarfed by events that will take place in the future against the background of a crisis-ridden capitalism trying to drive the living standards of the majority into the dirt. For some intersectionalists it will require witnessing the power of the working class in action in order for them to draw the conclusion that the route to ending their specific oppression is not as part of fragmented separate groupings but by throwing their lot in with the class struggle. However, growing numbers of young people, particularly when they become active in concrete struggles, are already being attracted to socialist ideas as the only way to achieve real liberation for all humanity.

#### The alternative is to affirm the form of the party—against the subjective atomization of contemporary politics, only a vertical form of organization aimed at transformation of constituted structures of power can actualize change

Dean and Mertz ‘16 (Jodi and Chuck, Donald R. Harter ’39 Professor of Humanities and Social Sciences @ Hobart and William Smith Colleges and Host at This is Hell!, “The JFRP: For a New Communist Party,” aNtiDoTe Zine 1/23/16, <https://antidotezine.com/2016/01/23/for-a-new-communist-party/>)

CM: Great to have you on the show.¶ Let’s start with Occupy. What, to you, explains the impact that the Tea Party had on Republicans, relative to the impact that Occupy seems to have had on the Democratic Party? All of the sudden there were “Tea Party Republicans.” There weren’t “Occupy Democrats.”¶ JD: That’s a good point. The Tea Party took the Republican Party as its target. They decided that their goal was going to be to influence the political system by getting people elected and basically by trying to take over part of government. That’s why they were able to have good effects. They didn’t regard the mainstream political process as something irrelevant to their concerns. They thought of it as something to seize.¶ The problem with many—but not all—leftists in the US is that they think the political process is so corrupted that we have to completely refuse it, and leave it altogether. The Tea Party decided to act as an organized militant force, and too much of the US left (we saw this in the wake of Occupy) has thought that to be “militant” means to refuse and disperse and become fragmented.¶ CM: So what explains the left turning its back on the collective action of a political party? It would seem like a political party would fit into what the left would historically want: an apparatus that can organize collective action.¶ JD: There are multiple things. First, the fear of success: the left has learned from the excesses of the twentieth century. Where Communist and socialist parties “succeeded,” there was violence and purges and repression. One reason the left has turned its back is because of this historical experience of state socialism. And we have taken that to mean that we should not ever have a state. I think that’s the wrong answer. That we—as the left—made a mistake with some regimes does not have to mean that we can never learn.¶ Another reason that the left has turned its back on the party form has been the important criticism of twentieth century parties that have been too white, too masculine, potentially homophobic; parties that have operated in intensely hierarchical fashion. Those criticisms are real. But rather than saying we can’t have a party form because that’s just what a party does, why not make a party that is not repressive and does not exclude or diminish people on the basis of sex, race, or sexuality?¶ So we’ve got at least two historical problems that have made people very reluctant to use the party. I also think that, whether or not you mark it as 1968 or 1989, the left’s embrace of cultural individualism and the free flow of personal experimentation has made it critical of discipline and critical of collectivity. But I think that’s just a capitalist sellout. Saying everybody should just “do their own thing” is just going in the direction of the dominant culture. That is actually not a left position at all.¶ CM: So does identity politics undermine collectivism? And did that end up leading to fragmentation and a weakening of the left? Because there are a lot of people we’ve had on the show—and one person in particular, Thomas Frank—who say that there is no left in the United States.¶ JD: First I want to say that I disagree with the claim that there is no left. In fact, I think that “the left” is that group that keeps denying its own existence. We’re always saying that we’re the ones who don’t exist. But the right thinks that we exist. That’s what is so fantastic, actually. Did you see the New York Post screaming that Bernie Sanders is really a communist? Great! They’re really still afraid of communists! And it’s people on the left who say, “Oh, no, we’re not here at all!”¶ The left denies its own existence and it denies its own collectivity. Now, is identity politics to blame? Maybe it’s better to say that identity politics has been a symptom of the pressure of capitalism. Capitalism has operated in the US by exacerbating racial differences. That has to be addressed on the left, and the left has been addressing that. But we haven’t been addressing it in a way that recognizes how racism operates to support capitalism. Instead, we’ve made it too much about identity rather than as an element in building collective solidarity.¶ I’m trying to find a way around this to express that identity politics has been important but it’s reached its limits. Identity politics can’t go any further insofar as it denies the impact of capitalism. An identity politics that just rests on itself is nothing but liberalism. Like all of the sudden everything will be better if black people and white people are equally exploited? What if black people and white people say, “No, we don’t want to live in a society based on exploitation?”¶ CM: You were saying that the left denies its own collectivity. Is that only in the US? Is that unique to the US culture of the left?¶ JD: That’s a really important question, and I’m not sure. Traveling in Europe, I see two different things. On the one hand I see a broad left discussion that is, in part, mediated through social media and is pretty generational—people in their twenties and thirties or younger—and that there’s a general feeling about the problem of collectivity, the problem of building something with cohesion, and a temptation to just emphasize multiplicity. You see this everywhere. Everybody worries about this, as far as what I’ve seen.¶ On the other hand, there are countries whose political culture has embraced parties much more, and fights politically through parties. Like Greece, for example—and we’ve seen the ups and downs with Syriza over the last two years. And Spain also. Because they have a parliamentary system where small parties can actually get in the mix and have a political effect—in ways that our two-party system excludes—the European context allows for more enthusiasm for the party as a form for politics.¶ But there’s still a lot of disagreement on the far left about whether or not the party form is useful, and shouldn’t we in fact retreat and have multiple actions and artistic events—you know, the whole alter-globalization framework. That’s still alive in a lot of places. CM: You mentioned the structure of the US electoral system doesn’t allow for a political party to necessarily be the solution for a group like Occupy. Is that one of the reasons that activists dismiss the party structure as something that could help move their agenda forward?¶ JD: We can think about the Black Panther Party as a neat example in the US context: A party which was operating not primarily to win elections but to galvanize social power. That’s an interesting way of thinking about what else parties can do in the US.¶ Or we can think about parties in terms of local elections. Socialist Alternative has been doing really neat work all over the country, organizing around local elections with people running as socialist candidates not within a mainstream party. I think that even as we come up against the limits of a two-party system, we can also begin to think better about local and regional elections.¶ The left really likes that old saw: “Think Globally, Act Locally.” And then it rejects parties—even though political parties are, historically, forms that do that, that actually scale, that operate on multiple levels as organizations.¶ That we have a two-party system makes sense as an excuse why people haven’t used left parties very well in the US, but that doesn’t have to be the case.¶ And one more thing: there is a ton of sectarianism in the far left parties that exist. Many still fight battles that go back to the twenties, thirties, forties, fifties, and haven’t let that go. That has to change. We don’t need that kind of sectarian purity right now.¶ CM: You ask the question, “How do we move from the inert mass to organized activists?” You mention how you were at Occupy Wall Street; you write about being there on 15 October 2011 as the massive crowd filled New York’s Times Square. And you mention this one young speaker, and he addresses the crowd; they’re deciding if they should move on to Washington Square Park or not, because they need to go somewhere where there are better facilities. You then quote the speaker saying, “We can take this park. We can take this park tonight. We can also take this park another night. Not everyone may be ready tonight. Each person has to make their own autonomous decision. No one can decide for you. You have to decide for yourself. Everyone is an autonomous individual.”¶ Did that kind of individualism kill Occupy Wall Street from the start?¶ JD: Yeah, I think so. A lot of times I blame the rhetorics of consensus and horizontalism, but both of those are rooted in an individualism that says politics must begin with each individual, their interests, their experience, their positions, and so on. As collectivity forms—which is not easy when everyone’s beginning from their individual position—what starts to happen is that people start looking for how their exact experiences and interests are not being recognized.¶ I think that the left has given in too much to this assumption that politics begins with an individual. That’s a liberal assumption. Leftists, historically, begin with the assumption that politics begins in groups. And for the left in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the operative group is class. Class is what determines where our political interests come from.¶ I try to do everything I can in the book to dismantle the assumption that politics, particularly left politics, should begin with the individual. Instead I want people thinking about how the individual is a fiction, and a really oppressive fiction at that. And one that’s actually, conveniently, falling apart.¶ CM: You write about Occupy Wall Street having been an opening but having had no continuing momentum. You mention that the party could add that needed momentum. That’s one of the things that parties can do. The structure of the party can continue momentum and keep the opening alive.¶ When you say that a party could be a solution for a movement like Occupy, you don’t mean the Democratic Party, do you?¶ JD: I’ve got a lot of layers on this question. My first answer is that no, I really mean the Communist Party. My friends call this “Jodi’s Fantasy Revolutionary Party” as a joke, because the kind of Communist Party I take as my model may not be real, or may have only existed for a year and a half in Brooklyn in the thirties. And I don’t mean the real-existing Communist Party in the US now, which still exists and basically endorses Democrats.¶ My idea is to think in terms of how we can imagine the Communist Party again as a force—what it could be like if all of our left activist groups and small sectarian parties decided to come together in a new radical left party.¶ So no, I don’t envision the Democratic Party as being that. That’s not at all what I have in mind. I’m thinking of a radical left party to which elections are incidental. Elections might be means for organizing, but the goal isn’t just being elected. The goal is overthrowing capitalism. The goal is being able to build a communist society as capitalism crumbles.¶ Second, it could be the case—as a matter of tactics on the ground in particular contexts—that working for a Democratic candidate might be useful. It could be the case that trying to take over a local Democratic committee in order to get communist/socialist/radical left candidates elected could also be useful. But I don’t see the goal as taking over the Democratic Party. That’s way too limited a goal, and it’s a goal that presupposes the continuation of the system we have, rather than its overthrow.¶ CM: But how difficult would it be for a Communist Party to emerge free of its past associations with the Soviet Union? Can we even use the word “communist” or is it impossibly taboo?¶ JD: We have to recognize that the right is still scared of communism. That means the term is still powerful. That means it still has the ability to instill fear in its enemies. I think that’s an argument for keeping the word “communism.”¶ It’s also amazing that close to half of Iowa participants in the caucuses say that they are socialist. Four or five years ago, people were saying socialism is dead in the US. No one could even say the word. So I actually think holding on to the word “communism” is useful not only because our enemies are worried about communism, but also because it helps make the socialists seem really, really mainstream, and that’s good. We don’t want socialism to seem like something that only happens in Sweden. We want it to seem like that’s what America should have at a bare minimum.¶ One last thing about the history of communism: every political ideology that has infused a state form has done awful things. For the most part, if people like the ideology, they either let the awful things slide, or they use the ideology to criticize the awful things that the state does. We can do the same thing with communism. It’s helpful to recognize that the countries we understand to have been ruled by Communist Parties were never really communist—they didn’t even claim to have achieved communism themselves. We can say that state socialism made these mistakes, and in so doing was betraying communist ideals.¶ I don’t think we need to abandon these terms or come up with new ones. I think we need to use the power that they have. And people recognize this, which is what makes it exciting.¶ CM: You write, “Some contemporary crowd observers claim the crowd for democracy. They see in the amassing of thousands a democratic insistence, a demand to be heard and included. In the context of communicative capitalism, however, the crowd exceeds democracy.¶ “In the 21st century, dominant nation-states exercise power as democracies. They bomb and invade as democracies, ‘for democracy’s sake.’ International political bodies legitimize themselves as democratic, as do the contradictory and tangled media practices of communicative capitalism. When crowds amass in opposition, they pose themselves against democratic practices, systems, and bodies. To claim the crowd for democracy fails to register this change in the political setting of the crowd.”¶ So are crowds today, the protesters today, opposed to democracy? Or are they opposed to the current state of, let’s say, representative democracy?¶ JD: Let’s think about our basic environment. By “our,” now, I mean basically English-speaking people who use the internet and are listening to the radio and live in societies like the United States. In our environment, what we hear is that we live in democracy. We hear this all the time. We hear that the network media makes democratic exchange possible, that a free press is democracy, that we’ve got elections and that’s democracy.¶ When crowds amass in this setting, if they are just at a football game, it’s not a political statement. Even at a march (fully permitted) that’s registering opposition to the invasion of Iraq, for example, or concern about the climate—all of those things are within the general environment of “democracy,” and they don’t oppose the system. They don’t register as opposition to the system. They’re just saying that we want our view on this or that issue to count.¶ But the way that crowds have been amassing over the last four or five years—Occupy Wall Street is one example, but the Red Square debt movement in Canada is another; some of the more militant strikes of nurses and teachers are too—has been to say, “Look, the process that we have that’s been called democratic? It is not. We want to change that.”¶ It’s not that we are anti-democratic. It’s that democracy is too limiting a term to register our opposition. We want something more. We want actual equality. Democracy is too limiting. The reason it’s too limiting is we live in a context that understands itself as “democratic.” So democracy as a political claim, in my language, can’t “register the gap that the crowd is inscribing.” It can’t register real division or opposition. Democracy is just more of what we have.¶ CM: We are so dependent. We use social media so much, we use Facebook so much, we use so many of these avenues of what you call communicative capitalism so much. How can we oppose or reject this system without hurting ourselves and our ability to communicate our message to each other? Can we just go on strike? Can we become the owners of the means of communicative production?¶ JD: One of the ways that Marxism historically has understood the political problems faced by workers is our total entrapment and embeddedness in the capitalist system. What makes a strike so courageous is that workers are shooting themselves in the foot. They’re not earning their wage for a time, as a way to put pressure on the capitalist owner of the workplace.¶ What does that mean under communicative capitalism? Does it mean that we have to shoot ourselves in the foot by completely extracting ourselves from all of the instruments of communication? Or does it mean that we change our attitude towards communication? Or does it mean that we develop our own means of communication?¶ There’s a whole range here. I’m not a Luddite. I don’t think the way we’re going to bring down capitalism is by quitting Facebook. I think that’s a little bit absurd. I think what makes more sense is to think of how we could use the tools we have to bring down the master’s house. We can consolidate our message together. We can get a better sense of how many we are. We can develop common modes of thinking. We can distribute organizing materials for the revolutionary party.¶ I don’t think that an extractive approach to our situation in communicative media is the right one. I think it’s got to be more tactical. How do we use the tools we have, and how do we find ways to seize the means of communication? This would mean the collectivization of Google, Facebook, Amazon, and using those apparatuses. But that would probably have to be day two of the revolution.¶ CM: Jodi, I’ve got one last question for you, and it’s the Question from Hell, the question we might hate to ask, you might hate to answer, or our audience is going to hate the response.¶ How much did the narrative that Occupy created, of the 99% and the 1%, undermine a of collectivity? Because it doesn’t include everyone…¶ JD: Division is crucial. Collectivity is never everyone. What this narrative did was produce the divided collectivity that we need. It’s great to undermine the ~~stupid~~ myth of American unity, “The country has to pull together” and all that crap. It’s fantastic that Occupy Wall Street asserted collectivity through division. This is class conflict. This says there is not a unified society. Collectivity is the collectivity of us against them. It produced the proper collectivity: an antagonistic one.

### 3

#### Embedding hope for liberation to an object like a ballot enacts cruel optimism that the 1AC’s rhetoric sustains.

Berlant 06 Lauren, professor of Literature at the University of Chicago. “Cruel Optimism” in Differences, 17.3. 2006.

When we talk about an object of desire, we are really talking about a cluster of promises we want someone or something to make to us and make possible for us. This cluster of promises could be embedded in a person, a thing, an institution, a text, a norm, a bunch of cells, smells, a good idea—whatever. To phrase “the object of desire” as a cluster of promises is to allow us to encounter what is incoherent or enigmatic in our attachments, not as confirmation of our irrationality, but as an explanation for our sense of our endurance in the object, insofar as prox- imity to the object means proximity to the cluster of things that the object promises, some of which may be clear to us while others not so much. In other words, all attachments are optimistic. That does not mean that they all feel optimistic: one might dread, for example, returning to a scene of hunger or longing or the slapstick reiteration of a lover or parent’s typi- cal misrecognition. But the surrender to the return to the scene where the object hovers in its potentialities is the operation of optimism as an affective form (see Ghent). “Cruel optimism” names a relation of attachment to compromised conditions of possibility. What is cruel about these attachments, and not merely inconvenient or tragic, is that the subjects who have x in their lives might not well endure the loss of their object or scene of desire, even though its presence threatens their well-being, because whatever the content of the attachment, the continuity of the form of it provides something of the continuity of the subject’s sense of what it means to keep on living on and to look forward to being in the world. This phrase points to a condition different than that of melancholia, which is enacted in the subject’s desire to temporize an experience of the loss of an object/scene with which she has identified her ego continuity. Cruel optimism is the condition of maintaining an attachment to a problematic object in advance of its loss.¶ One might point out that all objects/scenes of desire are prob- lematic, in that investments in them and projections onto them are less about them than about the cluster of desires and affects we manage to keep magnetized to them. I have indeed wondered whether all optimism is cruel, because the experience of loss of the conditions of its reproduction can be so breathtakingly bad. But some scenes of optimism are crueler than others: where cruel optimism operates, the very vitalizing or ani- mating potency of an object/scene of desire contributes to the attrition of the very thriving that is supposed to be made possible in the work of attachment in the first place. This might point to something as banal as a scouring love, but it also opens out to obsessive appetites, patriotism, a career, all kinds of things. One makes affective bargains about the costliness of one’s attachments, usually unconscious ones, most of which keep one in proximity to the scene of desire/attrition.¶ To understand cruel optimism as an aesthetic of attachment requires embarking on an analysis of the modes of rhetorical indirection that manage the strange activity of projection into an enabling object that is also disabling. I learned how to do this from reading Barbara Johnson’s work on apostrophe and free indirect discourse. In her poetics of indi- rection, each of these rhetorical modes is shaped by the ways a writing subjectivity conjures other ones so that, in a performance of phantasmatic intersubjectivity, the writer gains superhuman observational authority, enabling a performance of being made possible by the proximity of the object. Because the dynamics of this scene are something like what I am describing in the optimism of attachment, I will describe the shape of my transference with her thought

#### This turns the case, is an independent solvency takeout, and serves as a trauma DA—your frame posits revolutionary hope that debate and society might change but ultimately reinstitutes the same system that solidifies and naturalizes divisions within the world.

Berlant 2 Lauren, professor of Literature at the University of Chicago. “Cruel Optimism” in Differences, 17.3. 2006.

It is striking that these moments of optimism, which mark a possibility that the habits of a history might not be reproduced, release an overwhelmingly negative force: one predicts such effects in traumatic scenes, but it is not usual to think about an optimistic event as having the same potential consequences. The conventional fantasy that a revolutionary lifting of being might happen in proximity to a new object/scene would predict otherwise than that a person or a group might prefer, after all, to surf from episode to episode while leaning toward a cluster of vaguely phrased prospects. And yet: at a certain degree of abstraction both from trauma and optimism, the experience of self-dissolution, radically reshaped consciousness, new sensoria, and narrative rupture can look similar; the emotional flooding in proximity to a new object can also produce a similar grasping toward stabilizing form, a reanchoring in the symptom’s predictability.¶ I have suggested that the particular ways in which identity and desire are articulated and lived sensually within capitalist culture produce such counterintuitive overlaps. But it would be reductive to read the preceding as a claim that anyone’s subjective transaction with the optimistic structure of value in capital produces the knotty entailments of cruel optimism as such. This essay focuses on artworks that explicitly remediate singularities into cases of nonuniversal but general abstraction, providing narrative scenarios of how people learn to identify, manage, and maintain the hazy luminosity of their attachment to being x and having x, given that their attachments were promises and not possessions after all. Geoff Ryman’s historical novel Was provides a different kind of limit case of cruel optimism. Linking agrarian labor, the culture industries, and therapy culture through four encounters with The Wizard of Oz, its pursuit of the affective continuity of trauma and optimism in self-unfold- ing excitement is neither comic, tragic, nor melodramatic, but metaformal: it absorbs all of these into a literary mode that validates fantasy (from absorption in pretty things to crazy delusion) as a life-affirming defense against the attritions of ordinary history.

Berlant Continues,

In Was, Baum goes on to write The Wizard of Oz as a gift of alternativity to the person who can’t say or do anything to change her life materially and who has taken in so much that one moment of relief from herself produces a permanent crack in the available genres of her survival. In “What Is a Minor Literature?” Deleuze and Guattari exhort people to become minor in exactly that way, to deterritorialize from the normal by digging a hole in sense, like a dog or a mole. Creating an impasse, a space of internal displacement, in this view, shatters the normal hierar- chies, clarities, tyrannies, and confusions of compliance with autonomous individuality. This strategy looks promising in the Ashbery poem. But in “Exchange Value,” a moment of relief produces a psychotic defense against the risk of loss in optimism. For Dorothy Gael, in Was, the optimism of attachment to another living being is itself the cruelest slap of all.¶ From this cluster we can understand a bit more of the magnetic attraction to cruel optimism, with its suppression of the risks of attach- ment. A change of heart, a sensorial shift, intersubjectivity, or transference with a promising object cannot generate on its own the better good life: nor can the collaboration of a couple, brothers, or pedagogy. The vague futurities of normative optimism produce small self-interruptions as the utopias of structural inequality. The texts we have looked at here stage moments when it could become otherwise, but shifts in affective atmosphere are not equal to changing the world. They are, here, only pieces of an argument about the centrality of optimistic fantasy to reproducing and surviving in zones of compromised ordinariness. And that is one way to take the measure of the impasse of living in the overwhelmingly present moment.

### Case