# HWL R3 – 1NC v Brentwood AR

## 1

#### The only ethical demand available to modern politics is that of the Slave, the demand for the end of the world itself. The grammar of the 1AC is inadequate and parasitic on Blackness as a sentient object and distances itself from the articulation of the gratuitous violence that positions blackness as the anti-human and the structural antagonism that undergirds political life.

**Wilderson 10** (Frank B. Wilderson III is American writer, dramatist, filmmaker and critic. He is a full professor of Drama and African American studies at the University of California, Irvine. He received his BA in government and philosophy from Dartmouth College, his MA in fine arts from Columbia University and his PhD in Rhetoric and Film Studies from the University of California, Berkeley), *Red, White, & Black: Cinema and the Structure of U.S. Antagonisms*, Duke University Press, Pg. 74-78. KD

In the Introduction and the preceding chapter, we have seen how the aporia between Black *being* and political ontology has existed since Arab and European enslavement of Africans, and how the need to craft an ensemble of questions through which to arrive at an unflinching paradigmatic analysis of political ontology is repeatedly thwarted in its attempts to find a language that can express the violence of *slave-making*, a violence that is both structural and performative. Humanist discourse, the discourse whose epistemological machinations provide our conceptual frameworks for thinking political ontology, is diverse and contrary. But for all its diversity and contrariness it is sutured by an **implicit rhetorical consensus that violence accrues to the Human body as a result of transgressions, whether real or imagined, within the Symbolic Order**. That is to say, **Humanist discourse** can only think a subject’s relation to violence as a contingency and not as a matrix that positions the subject. Put another way, Humanism has no theory of the slave because it imagines a subject who has been either alienated in language (Lacan) and/or alienated from his/her cartographic and temporal capacities (Marx). It **cannot imagine an object who has been positioned by gratuitous violence and who has no cartographic and temporal capacities to lose**—a sentient being for whom recognition and incorporation is impossible. In short, political ontology, as imagined through Humanism, can only produce discourse that has as its foundation alienation and exploitation as a grammar of suffering, when what is needed (for the Black, who is always already a slave) is an ensemble of ontological questions that has as its foundation accumulation and fungibility as a grammar of suffering (Hartman).

The violence of the Middle Passage and the slave estate (Spillers), technologies of accumulation and fungibility, recompose and reenact their horrors upon each succeeding generation of Blacks. This violence is both gratuitous, that is, it is not contingent upon transgressions against the hegemony of civil society; and structural, in that it positions Blacks ontologically outside of humanity and civil society. Simultaneously, it renders the ontological status of humanity (life itself) wholly dependent on civil society’s repetition compulsion: the frenzied and fragmented machinations through which civil society reenacts gratuitous violence upon the Black—that civil society might know itself as the domain of humans— generation after generation.

Again, we need a new language of abstraction to explain this horror. The explanatory power of Humanist discourse is bankrupt in the face of the Black. It is inadequate and inessential to, as well as parasitic on, the ensemble of questions which the dead but sentient *thing*, the Black, struggles to articulate in a world of living subjects. My work on film, cultural theory, and political ontology marks my attempt to contribute to this often fragmented and constantly assaulted quest to forge a language of abstraction with explanatory powers emphatic enough to embrace the Black, an accumulated and fungible object, in a human world of exploited and alienated subjects.

The imposition of Humanism’s assumptive logic has encumbered Black film studies to the extent that it is underwritten by the assumptive logic of White or non-Black film studies. This is a problem of Cultural Studies writ large. In this chapter, I want to offer a brief illustration of how we might attempt to break the theoretical impasse between, on the one hand, the assumptive logic of Cultural Studies and, on the other hand, the theoretical aphasia to which Cultural Studies is reduced when it encounters the (non)ontological status of the Black. I will do so not by launching a frontal attack against White film theory, in

particular, or even Cultural Studies broadly speaking, but by interrogating Jacques Lacan— because Lacanian psychoanalysis is one of the twin pillars that shoulders film theory and Cultural Studies.i

My problem with Cultural Studies is that when it theorizes the interface between Blacks and Humans it is hobbled in its attempts to (a) expose power relationships and (b) examine how relations of power influence and shape cultural practice. Cultural Studies insists upon a *grammar of suffering* which assumes that we are all positioned essentially by way of the Symbolic Order, what Lacan calls the wall of language—and as such our potential for stasis or change (our capacity for being oppressed or free) **is overdetermined by our “universal” ability or inability to seize and wield discursive weapons.** This idea corrupts the explanatory power of most socially engaged films and even the most radical line of political action because it produces a cinema and a politics that cannot account for the grammar of suffering of the Black—the Slave. To put it bluntly, the *imaginative labor* (Jared Sexton 2003) of cinema, political action, and Cultural Studies are all afflicted with the same theoretical aphasia. They are speechless in the face of gratuitous violence.

This theoretical aphasia is symptomatic of a debilitated ensemble of questions regarding political ontology. At its heart are two registers of imaginative labor. The first register is that of description, the rhetorical labor aimed at explaining the way relations of power are named, categorized, and explored. The second register can be characterized as prescription, the rhetorical labor predicated on the notion that everyone can be emancipated through some form of discursive, or symbolic, intervention.

But emancipation through some form of discursive or symbolic intervention is wanting in the face of a subject position that is not a subject position—what Marx calls “a speaking implement” or what Ronald Judy calls “an interdiction against subjectivity.” In other words, the Black has *sentient* capacity but no *relational* capacity. As an accumulated and fungible object, rather than an exploited and alienated subject, the Black is openly vulnerable to the whims of the world; and so is his/her cultural “production.” What does it mean— what are the stakes—when the world can whimsically transpose one’s cultural gestures, the stuff of symbolic intervention, onto another worldly good, a commodity of style? Fanon echoes this question when he writes, “I came into the world imbued with the will to find a meaning in things, my spirit filled with the desire to attain to the source of the world, and then I found that I was an object in the midst of other objects” (*BSWM* 109). Fanon clarifies this assertion and alerts us to the stakes which the optimistic assumptions of Film Studies and Cultural Studies, the counter-hegemonic promise of alternative cinema, and the emancipatory project of coalition politics cannot account for, when he writes: “Ontology— once it is finally admitted as leaving existence by the wayside—does not permit us to understand the being of the black...” (110).

This presents a challenge to film production and to film studies given their cultivation and elaboration by the imaginative labor of Cultural Studies, underwritten by the assumptive logic of Humanism; because if everyone does *not* possess the DNA of culture, that is, (a) time and space transformative capacity, (b) a relational status with other Humans through which one’s time and space transformative capacity is recognized and incorporated, and (c) a relation to violence that is contingent and not gratuitous, then how do we theorize a sentient being who is positioned not by the DNA culture but by the structure of gratuitous violence? How do we think outside of the conceptual framework of subalternity—that is, outside of the explanatory power of Cultural Studies—and think beyond the pale of emancipatory agency by way of symbolic intervention?

I am calling for a different conceptual framework, predicated not on the subject- effect of cultural performance but on the structure of political ontology; one that allows us to substitute *a politics of culture for a culture of politics.* The value in this rests not simply in the way it would help us re-think cinema and performance, but in the way it can help us theorize what is at present only intuitive and anecdotal: the unbridgeable gap between Black being and Human life. To put a finer point on it, such a framework might enhance the explanatory power of theory, art, and politics by destroying and perhaps restructuring, the ethical range of our current ensemble of questions. This has profound implications for non-Black film studies, Black film studies, and African American Studies writ large because they are currently entangled in a multicultural paradigm that takes an interest in an insufficiently critical comparative analysis—that is, a comparative analysis which is in pursuit of a coalition politics (if not in practice then at least as an theorizing metaphor) which, by its very nature, crowds out and forecloses the Slave’s grammar of suffering.

#### Capitalism does not explain the condition of anti-blackness. This will be the best, most comparative and historically relevant piece of evidence read in this round on this question.

**Wilderson 10**

Wilderson 2010 [Frank, once the dot in the exclamation point of a human message that read “Off the pigs!”, *Red, White & Black: Cinema and the Structure of U.S. Antagonisms*, pages 13-15]

David Eltis is emphatic in his assertion that European civil society’s decision not to hunt for slaves along the banks of the Thames or other rivers in the lands of White people or in prisons or poor houses was a bad business decision that slowed the pace of economic development in both Europe and the “New World.” Eltis writes: “No Western European power after the Middle Ages crosses the basic divide separating European workers from full chattel slavery. And while serfdom fell and rose in different parts of early modern Europe and shared characteristics with slavery, serfs were not outsiders before or after enserfment. The phrase ‘long distance serf trade’ is an oxymoron.” He goes on to show how population growth patterns in Europe during the 1300s, 1400s, and 1500s far outpaced population growth patterns in Africa. He makes this point not only to demonstrate how devastating chattel slavery was on African population growth patterns—in other words, to highlight its genocidal impact—but to make an equally profound but commonly overlooked point: Europe was so heavily populated that had the Europeans been more invested in the economic value of chattel slavery than they were in the symbolic value of black slavery and hence had instituted “a properly exploited system drawing on convicts, prisoners and vagrants…[they] could easily have provided 50,000 [White slaves] a year [to the New World] without serious disruption to either international peace or the existing social institutions that generated and supervised these potential European victims.” I raise Eltis’s counterposing of the symbolic value of slavery to the economic value of slavery in order to debunk two gross misunderstandings: One is that work—or alienation and exploitation—is the constituent element of slavery. Slavery, writes Orlando Patterson, *“is the permanent, violent domination of natally alienated and generally dishonored persons.”* Patterson goes to great lengths to delink his three “constituent elements of slavery” from the labor that one is typically forced to perform when one is enslaved. Forced labor is not constitutive of enslavement because whereas it explains a common practice, it does not define the structure of the power relation between those who are slaves and those who are not. In pursuit of his “constituent elements” of slavery, a line of inquiry that helps us separate experience (events) from ontology (the capacities of power—or lack thereof—lodged in distinct and irreconcilable subject positions, e.g., Humans and Slaves), Patterson helps us denaturalize the link between force and labor so that we can theorize the former as a phenomenon that positions a body, ontologically (paradigmatically), and the latter as a possible but not inevitable experience of someone who is socially dead. The other misunderstanding I am attempting to correct is the notion that the profit motive is the consideration in the slaveocracy that trumps all others. David Marriott, Saidiya Hartman, Ronald Judy, Hortense Spillers, Orlando Patterson, and Achille Mbembe have gone to considerable lengths to show that, in point of fact, slavery is and connotes an ontological status for Blackness; and that the constituent elements of slavery are not exploitation and alienation but accumulation and fungibility (as Hartman puts it): the condition of being owned and traded. Patterson reminds us that though professional athletes and brides in traditional cultures can be said to be bought and sold (when the former is traded among teams and the latter is exchanged for a bride price), they are not slaves because (1) they are not “generally dishonored,” meaning they are not stigmatized in their being *prior to any transgressive act or behavior*; (2) they are not “natally alienated,” meaning their claims to ascending and descending generations are not denied to them; and (3) they have some choice in the relationship, meaning they are not objects of “naked violence.” The relational status of the athlete and the traditional bride is always already recognized and incorporated into relationality writ large. Unlike the Slave, the professional athlete and traditional bride are subjected to accumulation and fungibility as one experience among many experiences, and not as their ontological foundation. Eltis meticulously explains how the costs of enslavement would have been driven down exponentially had Europeans taken White slaves directly to America rather than sailing from Europe to Africa to take Black slaves to America. He notes that “shipping costs…comprised by far the greater part of the price of any form of imported bonded labor in the Americas. If we take into account the time spent collecting a slave cargo on the African coast as well, then the case for sailing directly from Europe with a cargo of [Whites] appears stronger again.” Eltis sums up his data by concluding that if European merchants, planters, and statesmen imposed chattel slavery on some members of their own society—say, only 50,000 White slaves per year—then not only would European civil society have been able to absorb the social consequences of these losses (i.e. class warfare would have been unlikely even at this rate of enslavement), but civil society “would [also] have enjoyed lower labor costs, a faster development of the Americas, and higher exports and income levels on both sides of the Atlantic.” But what Whites would have gained in economic value, they would have lost in symbolic value; and it is the latter which structures the libidinal economy of civil society. White chattel slavery would have meant that the aura of the social contract had been completely stripped from the body of the convict, vagrant, beggar, indentured servant, or child. This is a subtle point but one vital to our understanding of the relationship between the world of Blacks and the world of Humans. Even under the most extreme forms of coercion in the late Middle Ages and in the early modern period—for example, the provisional and selective enslavement of English vagrants form the early to mid-1500s to the mid-1700s—“the power of the state over [convicts in the Old World] and the power of the master over [convicts in the New World] was more circumscribed than that of the slave.”

#### The 1AC’s attempt to reform capitalism misdiagnoses the root cause of global capital accumulation as the exploitation of any workers’ labor – rather, the negation of black life and the treatment of black bodies as ever-present sites of accumulation sustains global capitalism. This turns the case because sovereign expressions of power disqualify Black agency to open more spaces for appropriation.

Bledsoe & Wright 2018 [Adam and Willie Jamaal. Adam Bledsoe is an assistant professor in the Department of Geography and African American Studies Program at Florida State University. His research interests concern the spatial and political thought and practices of Afro-descendant populations in the Americas. Willie Jamaal Wright is an assistant professor of geography at Florida State University. His research interests include Black geographies, theories of (anti)Blackness, urban geography, public art/performative place making, and social movement studies. “The Anti-Blackness of Global Capital.” *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* pp. 4-7 https://doi.org/10.1177/0263775818805102 ghs-rodz]

The increasing globalization of capital and spatial marginalization of “superfluous” pop- ulations is fundamentally tied to the negation of Black life and assumptions of Black non- being. The treatment of Black lives as the embodied absence of value, or, “the very condition of existence and the determination of value,” underpins Black non-being and the assumed lack of Black cartographic capacity in the dominant spatial imaginary, making global cap- italism possible (Ferreira da Silva, 2017: 1). The interconnected nature of capitalism and race is a well-worn topic**.** Scholars have theorized race as an ideological outgrowth of the economy (Hall, 1996); as an apparatus used to facilitate flows of people and commodities (Lowe, 2015); as a central component of capitalist maturation (James, 1989); and as a phenomenon necessary for the establishment of the world system (Robinson, 2000), among countless other approaches. Geographers, too, have unpacked the ways in which regimes of capitalism employ racialized concepts to reproduce. Geographic interrogations of racial capitalism have analyzed the role of racist assumptions in implementing neoliberal reforms in the wake of a natural disaster (Derickson, 2014); the manipulation of racial distinction to prevent labor organizing (Wilson, 2000); how resistance to Black landowner- ship underpinned early 20th-century industrial agriculture (Williams, 2017); the role of capitalism in perpetuating environmental racism (Pulido, 2017); and the centrality of plan- tation relations to numerous variations of capitalism (Woods, 1998). Nonetheless, we must push further to explicate the ways in which capitalism is actually dependent on anti-Blackness to realize itself, instead of understanding anti-Black racism as a secondary effect of the economy or a phenomenon that emerges periodically. That is to say, reflections on the interlinked nature of race and capitalism must move beyond an assump- tion of economic causality and grapple with the ways in which anti-Blackness is actually an always-present precondition for capital accumulation. In explicating anti-Blackness, we draw on an Afro-Pessimist framework, as Afro-Pessimism makes distinct claims about the nature of Blackness in the modern world. An Afro-Pessimist analysis of anti- Blackness does not treat anti-Black racism as a contingent phenomenon (Wilderson, 2011: 3–4) but rather as a global, ever-present factor that exists as the basis “for expansion and unending space within the symbolic economy of settlement” (King, 2014). Such an approach forces us to recognize how anti-Blackness punctuates the modern epoch by iden- tifying the underlying logics that inform concrete manifestations of anti-Black racism around the world. In this way, Afro-Pessimism adds new dimensions to already-existing work on the connections between anti-Blackness and political economy by recognizing that, while capitalism exploits all of the world’s populations, it does not dominate all of them in the same way. With regard to the question of space, anti-Blackness helps us understand how the afterlife of slavery (Hartman, 2007: 6) leads to Black populations being conceptually unable to legitimately create space, thereby leaving locations associated with Blackness open to the presumably “rational” agendas of dominant spatial actors. Black populations, then, serve as the guarantor of capitalism’s need to constantly find new spaces of accumulation. In this section, we offer an explanation of how capitalism relies on anti-Blackness by fore- grounding anti-Blackness as a phenomena with its own internal logics and concrete expressions. Capitalism is rooted in violent forms of captivity and murder unleashed on indigenous and Afro-descendant populations the world over (Ferreira da Silva, 2004; James, 1989; Rodney, 1972; Williams, 2014; Wynter, 1995). At its origin and in its contemporary man- ifestations, then, capitalism is systemically related to slavery and its various global permu- tations (Robinson, 2000: 313–314). The assumption that Black populations lack both humanity and “space, that is ethno- or politico-geography,” defines the treatment of enslaved Black peoples. Today, the assumed a-spatiality that defined conditions of chattel slavery continues to imprint the socio-spatial relations that reproduce global capital (Robinson, 2000: 81, 200). Black populations are deemed a-spatial as a result of the fact that modern notions of space and practices of spatial production are rooted in specific relations of power (Massey, 2005: 64, 100–101). These power relations are themselves organized around logics that have particular historical roots (Santos, 2008: 21). In the colonial epoch, chattel slavery—the social, legal, and political reduction of Africans to the status of nonhumans—produced the figure of the Black, which had a nullified spatial capacity (Wilderson, 2010: 279), was disavowed as a human being (Ferreira da Silva, 2015: 91), and was a priori structurally prevented from enacting “rational” spatial expressions (Santos, 2009: 24). Locations asso- ciated with Black populations became wholly “unhallowed” spaces, which would never receive recognition as legitimately occupied (Wynter, 1976: 81). This is not to suggest that Black peoples were or are understood as not physically present. Black bodies are certainly recognized as existing in exteriority (Raffestin, 2012: 129). Still, this recognition of physical presence does not signify that Black populations’ are understood as establishing legible space. Despite physical presence, Black populations nonetheless remain rendered “ungeographic” in dominant understandings of space (McKittrick, 2006: x). Hence, the geographic locations in which Black populations reside are treated as open to the varied agendas espoused by dominant spatial actors. Capitalism’s new rounds of accumulation require access to spaces that previously had different relations to capitalist practices. The assumed a-spatiality of Black populations often leads to purveyors of capitalism treating locations inhabited by Black people as avail- able for emerging modes of accumulation. Put another way, spaces that were once marginal or peripheral to the perpetuation of capital accumulation become sites of appropriation precisely because the (Black) populations occupying them receive no recognition as viable spatial actors. The spaces necessary for new forms of accumulation are thus conceptually open because of this assumed a-spatiality and subsequently physically opened via the spatial removal and dispersal of Black residents. This dispersal entails violent actions that are a priori legitimate because of the assumed lack of Black spatial agency. In other words, new spaces of “investment have been mapped onto previous racial and colonial (imperial) dis- courses and practices” evidencing an inextricable relationship between anti-Black notions of space, capitalism’s logic of perpetual expansion, and the acceptable subordination of Black physical presence (Chakravartty and Silva, 2012: 368). This is what Frank Wilderson terms the “deterritorialisation of Black space” (2003: 238) that is necessary for accumulating capital vis-a` -vis emerging political economic practices. Katherine McKittrick similarly notes that Black geographies are cast as “the lands of no one” and “emptied out of life” in order that “suitable capitalist life-support systems” be put into place and globally prop- agated (McKittrick, 2013: 7). A number of present-day practices demonstrate the reliance of capital on this notion of empty, lifeless, Blackened spaces, such as capital disinvestment, white flight, gentrification, urban renewal, incarceration, and policing. These spatial arrangements identify Black peo- ples as inhuman and locations associated with Black populations as lacking a legitimate form of occupation and usage. Such assumptions contribute to the subordination of Black populations and spaces to dominant notions of “appropriate” uses of space, while “illegitimate” spaces of Blackness remain under siege by purveyors of capital. As this occurs, new spaces of accumulation open in areas formerly peripheral to the capitalist agenda. At the same time that these new rounds of accumulation take place, sovereign expressions of power serve to forcibly remove Black people and ensure they remain sepa- rated from these new spaces of accumulation. Subsequently, Black people are routinely harassed for existing in the communal spaces in which they have resided for generations.1 Along with public policy shifts, policing, incarceration, and extrajudicial killings simul- taneously disqualify Black spatial agency and remove Black bodies from spaces deemed open for appropriation by capitalism’s purveyors, thereby simultaneously spatializing anti- Blackness and reproducing global capital. The systemic casting of Black spaces as lifeless and open to appropriation for the continuation of capital breathes new life into “civil society’s political economy: [the Black body] kick-starts. . .capital at its genesis and rescues it from its over-accumulation crisis at its end—black death is its condition of possibility” (Wilderson, 2003: 238). Put simply, the endless accumulation of capital and its legitimating sovereign practices are, in part, made possible through the continued societal insistence on Black inhumanity and a Black lack of cartography, which casts Black spaces as empty. Hence, there exists an unquestionable connection between the colonial logics inaugurated centuries ago and today’s capitalist agenda. The lack of recognition of Black humanity underpins both projects. Early capitalism flourished thanks to the relegation of enslaved Blacks to the ontological and legal condition of non-humans on the plantations, in the forests, and in the mines of the Americas, while slaveholders and early insurance companies made fortunes off their investments in the transatlantic slave trade. Similarly, real estate speculation (Harvey, 2010), urban renewal (Perry, 2013), the roll-back of social wages (Wacquant, 2009), and the explosion of prisons (Gilmore, 2007)—all of which have allowed present-day capitalism to continue its agenda of accumulation—are only possible via the understanding of spaces inhabited by Black populations as empty and naming and treating those same populations as abject, inhuman beings. In this way, the anti-Blackness and assumed lack of Black being that originated in and defined the colonial epoch remains present with us today, despite the new material practices and justifications it takes on. Anti-Blackness remains an ever-present condition, defining the modern world. Scholars can and should look to Black thinkers and activists to help make sense of the interrelated phenomena of anti-Blackness and global capital, as Black grassroots actors explicate the linkages between these phenomena (Burton, 2015).

#### The K outweighs and turns the case – the forms of violence foregrounded by the 1AC are contingent aberrations that spur subjective vertigo for the Human because unlike blackness, they’re not ontologically condemned to the condition of objective vertigo, a life constituted by disorientation.

Wilderson 11 (Frank B. Wilderson III is American writer, dramatist, filmmaker and critic. He is a full professor of Drama and African American studies at the University of California, Irvine. He received his BA in government and philosophy from Dartmouth College, his MA in fine arts from Columbia University and his PhD in Rhetoric and Film Studies from the University of California, Berkeley), “THE VENGEANCE OF VERTIGO: APHASIA AND ABJECTION IN THE POLITICAL TRIALS OF BLACK INSURGENTS”, pg. 125-127. rc-KD

Subjective vertigo is vertigo of the event. But the sensation that one is not simply spinning in an otherwise stable environment, that one’s environment is perpetually unhinged stems from a relationship to violence that cannot be analogized. This is called **objective vertigo**, a life **constituted by disorientation rather than a life interrupted by disorientation**. This is structural as opposed to performative violence. Black subjectivity is a crossroads where vertigoes meet, the intersection of performative and structural violence. Elsewhere I have argued that the Black is a sentient being though not a Human being. The Black’s and the Human’s disparate relationship to violence is at the heart of this failure of incorporation and analogy. The Human suffers contingent violence, violence that kicks in when s/he resists (or is perceived to resist) the disciplinary discourse of capital and/or Oedipus. But Black peoples’ subsumption by violence is a paradigmatic necessity, not just a performative contingency. To be constituted by *and* disciplined by violence, to be gripped simultaneously by subjective and objective vertigo, is indicative of a political ontology which is radically different from the political ontology of a sentient being who is constituted by discourse and disciplined by violence when s/he breaks with the ruling discursive codes.6 When we begin to assess revolutionary armed struggle in this comparative context, we find that **Human revolutionaries** (workers, women, gays and lesbians, post-colonial subjects) **suffer subjective vertigo when they meet the state’s disciplinary violence with the revolutionary violence of the subaltern; but they are spared objective vertigo**. This is because the most disorienting aspects of their lives are induced by the struggles that arise from intra-Human conflicts over competing conceptual frameworks and disputed cognitive maps, such as the American Indian Movement’s demand for the return of Turtle Island vs. the U.S.’s desire to maintain territorial integrity, or the Fuerzas Armadas de Liberación Nacional’s (FALN) demand for Puerto Rican independence vs. the U.S.’s desire to maintain Puerto Rico as a territory. But for the Black, as for the slave, there are no cognitive maps, no conceptual frameworks of suffering and dispossession which are analogic with the myriad maps and frameworks which explain the dispossession of Human subalterns. The structural, or paradigmatic, violence that subsumes Black insurgents’ cognitive maps and conceptual frameworks, subsumes my scholarly efforts as well. As a Black scholar, I am tasked with making sense of this violence without being overwhelmed and disoriented by it. In other words, the writing must somehow be indexical of that which exceeds narration, while being ever mindful of the incomprehension the writing would foster, the failure, that is, of interpretation were the indices to actually escape the narrative. The stakes of this dilemma are almost as high for the Black scholar facing his/her reader as they are for the Black insurgent facing the police and the courts. For the scholarly act of embracing members of the Black Liberation Army as beings worthy of empathic critique is terrifying. One’s writing proceeds with fits and starts which have little to do with the problems of building the thesis or finding the methodology to make the case. As I write, I am more aware of the rage and anger of my reader-ideal (an angry mob as readers) than I am of my own interventions and strategies for assembling my argument. Vertigo seizes me with a rash of condemnations that emanate from within me and swirl around me. I am speaking to me but not *through* me, yet there seems to be no other way to speak. I am speaking through the voice and gaze of a mob of, let’s just say it, White Americans; and my efforts to marshal a mob of Black people, to conjure the Black Liberation Army smack of compensatory gestures. It is not that the BLA doesn’t come to my aid, that they don’t push back, but neither I nor my insurgent allies can make the case that we are worthy of our suffering and justified in our actions and not terrorists and apologists for terror who should be locked away forever. How can we be worthy of our suffering without being worthy of ourselves? I press on, even though the vertigo that seizes me is so overwhelming that its precise nature— subjective, stemming from within me, or objective, catalyzed by my context, the raging throng—cannot be determined. I have no reference points apart from the mob that gives no quarter. If I write “freedom fighter,” from within my ear they scream “terrorist”! If I say “prisoner of war,” they chant “cop killer”! Their denunciations are sustained only by assertion, but they ring truer than my painstaking exegesis. No firewall protects me from them; no liberated psychic zone offers me sanctuary. I want to stop and turn myself in.

**The alternative is an unflinching paradigmatic analysis that poses the question of whether civil society is ethical or not**

**Wilderson 10** (Frank B. III, “Red, White, & Black: Cinema and the Structure of U.S. Antagonisms, pg. ix-x) \*\*we reject author’s use of ableist language

STRANGE AS it might seem, this book project began in South Africa. During the last years of apartheid I worked for revolutionary change in both an underground and above-ground capacity, for the Charterist Movement in general and the ANC in particular. During this period, I began to see how **essential an unflinching paradigmatic analysis is to a movement dedicated to the complete overthrow of an existing order. The neoliberal compromises that the radical elements of the Chartist Movement made with the moderate elements were due, in large part, to our inability or unwillingness to hold the moderates' feet to the fire of a political agenda predicated on an unflinching paradigmatic analysis. Instead, we allowed our energies and points of attention to be displaced by and onto pragmatic considerations. Simply put, we abdicated the power to pose the question—and the power to pose the question is the greatest power of all.** Elsewhere, I have written about this unfortunate turn of events (Incognegro: A Memoir of Exile and Apartheid), so I'll not rehearse the details here. Suffice it to say, this book germinated in the many political and academic discussions and debates that I was fortunate enough to be a part of at a historic moment and in a place where the word revolution was spoken in earnest, free of qualifiers and irony. For their past and ongoing ideas and interventions, I extend solidarity and appreciation to comrades Amanda Alexander, Franco Barchiesi, Teresa Barnes, Patrick Bond, Ashwin Desai, Nigel Gibson, Steven Greenberg, Allan Horowitz, Bushy Kelebonye (deceased), Tefu Kelebonye, Ulrike Kistner, Kamogelo Lekubu, Andile Mngxitama, Prishani Naidoo, John Shai, and S'bu Zulu.

#### The 1AC and any perm forecloses the possibility of radical questioning about the ethicality of civil society by structurally adjusting the black body through the “political action” that ceases to be “inclusive” – the aff’s starting point places the black body upon a psychologically traumatic, dielectric state of abandonment that forecloses black liberation – if we win that their scholarship produces this structural violence that is an independent reason to vote negative

**Wilderson ‘10** (Frank B Wilderson III- Professor at UC irvine- Red, White and Black- p.  **8-10)**

I have little interest in assailing political conservatives. Nor is my ar- gument wedded to the disciplinary needs of political science, or even sociology, where injury must be established, first, as White supremacist event, from which one then embarks on a demonstration of intent, or racism; and, if one is lucky, or foolish, enough, a solution is proposed. If the position of the Black is, as I argue, a paradigmatic impossibility in the Western Hemisphere, indeed, in the world, in other words, if a Black is the very antithesis of a Human subject, as imagined by Marxism and psy- choanalysis, then his or her paradigmatic exile is not simply a function of repressive practices on the part of institutions (as political science and sociology would have it). This banishment from the Human fold is to be found most profoundly in the emancipatory meditations of Black people's staunchest "allies," and in some of the most "radical" films. Here—not in restrictive policy, unjust legislation, police brutality, or conservative scholarship—is where the Settler/Master's sinews are most resilient. The polemic animating this research stems from (1) my reading of Native and Black American meta-commentaries on Indian and Black subject positions written over the past twenty-three years and ( 2 ) a sense of how much that work appears out of joint with intellectual protocols and political ethics which underwrite political praxis and socially engaged popular cinema in this epoch of multiculturalism and globalization. The sense of abandonment I experience when I read the meta-commentaries on Red positionality (by theorists such as Leslie Silko, Ward Churchill, Taiaiake Alfred, Vine Deloria Jr., and Haunani-Kay Trask) and the meta-commentaries on Black positionality (by theorists such as David Marriott, Saidiya Hartman, Ronald Judy, Hortense Spillers, Orlando Patterson, and Achille Mbembe) against the deluge of multicultural positivity is overwhelming. One suddenly realizes that, though the semantic field on which subjec- tivity is imagined has expanded phenomenally through the protocols of multiculturalism and globalization theory, Blackness and an unflinching articulation of Redness are more unimaginable and illegible within this expanded semantic field than they were during the height of the F B I ' S repressive Counterintelligence Program ( C O I N T E L P R O ) . On the seman- tic field on which the new protocols are possible, Indigenism can indeed lO become partially legible through a programmatics of structural adjust- ment (as fits our globalized era). In other words, for the Indians' subject position to be legible, their positive registers of lost or threatened cultural identity must be foregrounded, when in point of fact the antagonistic register of dispossession that Indians "possess" is a position in relation to a socius structured by genocide. As Churchill points out, everyone from Armenians to Jews have been subjected to genocide, but the Indigenous position is one for which genocide is a constitutive element, not merely an historical event, without which Indians would not, paradoxically, "exist." 9 Regarding the Black position, some might ask why, after claims suc- cessfully made on the state by the Civil Rights Movement, do I insist on positing an operational analytic for cinema, film studies, and political theory that appears to be a dichotomous and essentialist pairing of Masters and Slaves? In other words, why should we think of today's Blacks in the United States as Slaves and everyone else (with the exception of Indians) as Masters? One could answer these questions by demonstrat- ing how nothing remotely approaching claims successfully made on the state has come to pass. In other words, the election of a Black president aside, police brutality, mass incarceration, segregated and substandard schools and housing, astronomical rates of H I V infection, and the threat of being turned away en masse at the polls still constitute the lived expe- rience of Black life. But such empirically based rejoinders would lead us in the wrong direction; we would find ourselves on "solid" ground, which would only mystify, rather than clarify, the question. We would be forced to appeal to "facts," the "historical record," and empirical markers of stasis and change, all of which could be turned on their head with more of the same. Underlying such a downward spiral into sociology, political sci- ence, history, and public policy debates would be the very rubric that I am calling into question: the grammar of suffering known as exploitation and alienation, the assumptive logic whereby subjective dispossession is arrived at in the calculations between those who sell labor power and those who acquire it. The Black qua the worker. Orlando Patterson has already dispelled this faulty ontological grammar in Slavery and Social Death, where he demonstrates how and why work, or forced labor, is not a constituent element of slavery. Once the "solid" plank of "work" is removed from slavery, then the conceptually coherent notion of "claims against the state"—the proposition that the state and civil society are elastic enough to even contemplate the possibility of an emancipatory project for the Black position—disintegrates into thin air. The imaginary of the state and civil society is parasitic on the Middle Passage. Put an- other way, No slave, no world. And, in addition, as Patterson argues, no slave is in the world. If, as an ontological position, that is, as a grammar of suffering, the Slave is not a laborer but an anti-Human, a position against which Hu- manity establishes, maintains, and renews its coherence, its corporeal in- tegrity; if the Slave is, to borrow from Patterson, generally dishonored, perpetually open to gratuitous violence, and void of kinship structure, that is, having no relations that need be recognized, a being outside of re- lationality, then our analysis cannot be approached through the rubric of gains or reversals in struggles with the state and civil society, not unless and until the interlocutor first explains how the Slave is of the world. The onus is not on one who posits the Master/Slave dichotomy but on the one who argues there is a distinction between Slaveness and Blackness. How, when, and where did such a split occur? The woman at the gates of Columbia University awaits an answer.

#### Thus, the ROB is to vote for the debater who best methodologically challenges anti-blackness.

## Case

### Top Level Solvency –

#### 1] Post the aff, companies like SpaceX don’t cease to exist and will still engage in predatory working conditions, exploiting developing countries, and reifying systems of capitalism – only grant the aff solvency for as much capitalism as they solve.

#### 2] The aff assumes the state is not complicit in the regime of capitalism, which is a huge solvency deficit because it means that public space agencies by the US, China and Russia will not stop attempting to colonize the celestial bodies.

### Advantages

#### WHITENESS AND THE PSYCHOLOGICAL YEARNING FOR IT DESTROYS ANY POSSIBLITY OF REAL ALLIANCE BETWEEN THE “WHITE WORKER” and the “BLACK WORKER” the white-working class wants to be white more than the want to be economically secure or free

**LAWS & ENARD 2K20** TERRI & KIMBERLY; Assistant Professor of African and African American Studies @ U of Michigan Dearborn *and* Assistant Professor of Health Management and Policy @ Saint Louis University ““I AM that I AM”: The Religion of White Rage, Great Migration Detroit, and the Ford Motor Company” published in The Religion of White Rage White Workers, Religious Fervor, and the Myth of Black Racial Progress Edited by STEPHEN C. FINLEY BIKO MANDELA GRAY LORI LATRICE MARTIN

**Henry Ford** was born into an Irish immigrant family in a rural township near Dearborn, Michigan, which borders Detroit.26 Critical **interpreters of Ford, the industrialist, have detailed his obsessive penchant for continuous improvement and order and control.**27 Ford, as a famous man of his historical era, is well known for having held anti-Semitic views, including his executive committee membership of the America First Committee.28 Ford has not been so easily identified as an anti-black racist. He revered Tuskegee scientist George Washington Carver,29 and by 1930, Detroit’s black population and black employment in the auto industry had exploded, in no small part based on the hiring of black men at the Ford Motor Company.30 There are various theories about **Ford’s willingness to hire black men, including his belief that they were less inclined than other workers to organize themselves into labor unions.**31 A multitude of reasons is possible. **What cannot be overlooked is Ford’s paternalistic reach into** Detroit’s **black community.** His involvement in **black civic organizations and, notably, black churches,** led contemporaneous black columnist Horace Cayton, Jr. to name Ford **the “great white father** of Dearborn,”32 **in reference to his relationship** **with** Detroit’s **black elites** **and the inhibitive effects of these alliances on the autonomy of black workers during the** **volatile years of the burgeoning collective labor movement.** A confluence of events resulted in the environment that made it possible for Ford Motor Company to become the largest employer of black workers in the auto industry: the simplification of the Ford Motor Company manufacturing process, **immigration policy changes** that **created worker shortages,** and the availability of black men to be hired. **Henry Ford’s** habit of tinkering helped him, and his company developed the **Model T as a mass market car that contributed to major social and economic changes in American life.** Ford is credited as the innovator who implemented the manufacturing assembly line.33 With this improvement, Ford employees stood in one place efficiently and repetitively adding their assigned component onto a moving autobody until it could be driven off the assembly line.34 This assembly process made it possible for lower-skilled and unskilled workers to be hired to produce Ford Motor Company cars;35 previously cars had been built by skilled craftsmen, mostly natives or descendants from Germany and England.36 By 1914 more than 70 percent of the Ford workforce was foreign born, increasingly from eastern and southern Europe and the Arab world.37 The beginning of World War I38 and new U.S. immigration policy restrictions passed in 1921 and 1924 severely limited the flow of immigrant labor. **These changes created additional opportunities for previously agrarian black Southerners. The jobs pulled black people northward. Economic concerns and the constant threat of anti-black oppression and violence also pushed blacks to risk all and leave their homes. Black migrants to the urban North brought with them expectations of independence, economic security, and property ownership, all of which had been systematically thwarted in the post-emancipation South . . . Sharecropping, debt-peonage, and systematic violence bound many Southern blacks to the enforced dependence of landlessness and labor for landowning whites.**39 The Ford Motor Company was not the first of the Northern automobile manufacturers to hire black men, but by 1919, Ford’s company quickly became among the most prominent.40 **One additional factor set the stage for display of the religion of white rage: black men, alongside other Ford Motor Company workers, were eligible to earn Ford’s** 1914 **wage innovation:** five dollars a day pay. Ford’s famous earnings scheme was a business innovation intended to slow the 10 percent per day absenteeism that came from the boring repetitiveness built into achieving his coveted efficiency.41 When instituted, the five dollars were divided into a wage for labor and a bit more than half for profit sharing to reach the famous earnings calculation.42 It was unparalleled; the work day of the time was generally nine hours and the best workers might earn 32 cents an hour.43 **But the extraordinary earnings, like other Ford kindnesses, came** with **requirements** to retain the profit-sharing portion. The Ford Motor Company’s Sociological Department conducted **intrusive home visits** **to ensure that workers and their families lived in decent housing; maintained clean homes; had savings and responsibly managed their household money; and were teetotalers.44 These were all values that Ford believed to be important. In** Detroit’s **black community,** **Ford’s reach did not end at the threshold of their homes; he held sway in their institutions, including black churches.** Many industrialists worked through Detroit civic organizations, such as the National Urban League and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), to act as employment agents screening prospective black laborers. But Henry **Ford also developed** a network of African American pastors who provided character references for congregants seeking employment at his plants.45 Second Baptist, founded in 1836, continues as one of the oldest black congregations in the state of Michigan; it was an Underground Railroad station. It was also **a “Ford church.”**46 According to August Meier and Elliot Rudwick, among other issues in **his plant**, there were (frequent) . . . **bloody fights within the plant between black and white workers,** and among the blacks themselves, Ford personally outlined to [Rev. Robert L.] Bradby [the pastor of Second Baptist] his desire to recruit carefully selected Negro workmen [emphasis added]. The preacher agreed both to recommend “very high type fellows” for jobs at Ford and to help the company resolve its internal personnel problems, promising “to acquaint the colored workers with the responsibilities of employment . . . telling them that they should be ‘steady workers’ so as to prove the worthiness of colored industrial workers.”47 Arguably, at least in the short term, Bradby’s willingness to engage with **Ford** as an employment agent was beneficial to those who worshiped with his congregation; black Southern migrants quickly learned that Second Baptist was a church with a coveted connection.48 The affiliation between Ford and black pastors has generated scholarship that examines the impact on the independence of pastors such as Bradby as well as Ford’s view of black employees. John Brueggemann, following Lloyd Bailer, notes that “Ford offered special opportunities and resources to blacks.”49 Beth Tompkins Bates critiques scholarship that interprets blacks as uncritically allied with Ford as inadequately complex.50 Then there was the previously mentioned Horace Cayton, Jr., who was unconflicted about Ford’s interests and his efforts to influence black Detroit’s “upper class”; although they eventually advised against Ford’s anti-union stance and supported labor organizing. However, into the early 1940s, many black leaders stood with **the “great white father** of Dearborn.”51 Cayton’s moniker for Ford is at once **a term of spiritual as well as socioeconomic and political effect.** It recalls Hopkins’s interpretation (above) of **white slave master theology** that **severely** **tainted the American Christianity presented to enslaved Africans, making it into a white supremacist ideology which essentially casts white men as having divine authority to control daily black life as well as their slaves’ access to an afterlife. It also indicts the choices that those who interacted with Ford made on their own behalf.** Identifying **Ford as the “great white father** of Dearborn” serves one more conspicuous function within a context in which nearly half of blacks in the auto industry were working at the Ford Motor Company, the majority of them at one site, the River Rouge plant near Dearborn: it **suggests the need for a close examination of whether there was equality between “all God’s children,” that is, between Ford’s “black children” and his “white children,” and the effect of “intrafamilial relationship.” Finally, Ford used his power as a white man and as an industrialist religiously,** under the definitions set out by both Long and Tillich. For Ford, his orientation was to whatever was his perspective. His way should always be seen as best. His ultimate concern was his view, his way of being, and his way of doing. Labor and economy historians understand Ford to have been not just controlling but paternalistic with impacts on his entire workforce, black, white, and immigrant. A paternalistic perspective marries the Latin roots of the term with a 1950s television title to provide a vivid picture: **“father knows best”—and, in this case, “father Ford” demands his way.** Brueggemann argues that **Ford’s paternalism maintained the status quo for each worker group.**52 Ford hired black men through black churches and civic organizations, and **although black rank-and-file workers had access to** the five-dollar day **earnings, there were limits to their ability to climb beyond the unskilled labor in which 75 percent of them worked.** Additionally, the sheer number of black men who worked at Ford suggests that **black workers had fewer options for employment.53 Ford’s dominance as an employer and his and the other industrialists’ paternalism came with a cost:** Bonacich (1976:42) explains that employers’ attempts to displace dominant white labor with cheaper labor, were “sometimes accompanied by efforts to gain the loyalty of black work forces, thereby forestalling the development of unions among them and maintaining the ‘cheap labor’ status . . . On a larger scale, **employers would make overtures to black workers and community leaders, giving money and urging workers to come to the employer for aid. Leaders in the black community would, in turn, urge black workers to be a docile and loyal workforce, keeping faith with the employer.”**54 Within the frames of religion in this chapter, the divine properties powerful white men assumed for themselves through the nation’s mythic narrative continued in the twentieth century in the form of socioeconomic effects. Henry Ford offered **black workers eligibility for unprecedented wages but limited** **their opportunity for individual advancement and collective equality. This was a costly concession.** Across industrial Detroit, **employers and white workers practiced various forms of whiteness as discrimination** **against** black employment applicants and **black workers.** In plentiful times, white applicants, qualified or not, could be hired on sight where black applicants would be told that there were no openings.55 **As white workers began to organize into collective bargaining units,** they **supported practices such as seniority, knowing that their longevity would protect them from job loss** during downturns in the cyclical auto industry.56 Members of skilled trade unions were typically white; blacks were locked out of those professions that came with higher wages.57 **Whether the issue was housing or jobs, white workers balked when it appeared that black workers might gain a semblance of equality. When discrimination made economic sense, in terms of white workers’** competitive advantage (building trades), or internal labor market decisions (auto industry), or pandering to customers’ racism (retail), **it was practiced widely. It** often **provided** what David Roediger has called **a ‘psychological wage,’ that reinforced white identity. . .58 White identity made white men superior,** at least it did in their ideal ideology**. In a religious sense, everything needed to be oriented to this ideal, including the political, legal, economic, and social policies and practices. But the ultimate power lay with a rich white man—**as it had in other historical periods in the U.S. Power and identity were oriented to men like Henry Ford. **It was up to less powerful men to attempt to wrest the power of whiteness from them for themselves, in reality or by proxy.**

#### Counterhegemonic struggles signify work, progress, production and control which the black subject position scandalizes beyond coherence.

**Wilderson 10**

Frank Wilderson III (2010- republished online, 2003-original release) Gramsci's Black Marx: Whither the Slave in Civil Society?, Social Identities, 9:2, 225-240, DOI: [10.1080/1350463032000101579](https://doi.org/10.1080/1350463032000101579)

A Decisive Antagonism Any serious consideration of the question of antagonistic identity formation — a formation, the mass mobilisation of which can precipitate a crisis in the institutions and assumptive logic which undergird the United States of America — must come to grips with the limitations of marxist discourse in the face of the black subject. This is because the United States is constructed at the intersection of both a capitalist and white supremacist matrix. And the privileged subject of marxist discourse is a subaltern who is approached by variable capital—awage. In other words, marxism assumes a subaltern structured by capital, not by white supremacy. In this scenario, racism is read off the base, as it were, as being derivative of political economy. This is not an adequate subalternity from which to think the elaboration of antagonistic identity formation; not if we are truly committed to elaborating a theory of crisis — crisis at the crux of America’s institutional and discursive strategies. **The scandal with which the black subject position threatens Gramscian discourse is manifest in the subject’s ontological disarticulation of Gramscian categories: work, progress, production, exploitation, hegemony, and historical self-awareness.** By examining the strategy and structure of the black subject’s absence in Antonio Gramsci’s Prison Notebooks and by contemplating the black subject’s incommensurability with the key categories of Gramscian theory, we come face to face with three unsettling consequences. Firstly, the black American subject imposes a radical incoherence upon the assumptive logic of Gramscian discourse. In other words, s/he implies a scandal. Secondly, the black subject reveals marxism’s inability to think white supremacy as the base and, in so doing, calls into question marxism’s claim to elaborate a comprehensive, or in the words of Antonio Gramsci, ‘decisive’ antagonism. Stated another way: **Gramscian marxism is able to imagine the subject which transforms her/himself into a mass of antagonistic identity formations, formations which can precipitate a crisis in wage slavery, exploitation, and/or hegemony, but it is asleep at the wheel when asked to provide enabling antagonisms toward unwaged slavery, despotism, and/or terror**. 1350-4630 Print/1363-0296 On-line/03/020225-16  2003 Taylor & Francis Ltd DOI: 10.1080/1350463032000101579 226 Frank Wilderson, III Finally, we begin to see how marxism suffers from a kind of conceptual anxiety: a desire for socialism on the other side of crisis—asociety which does away not with the category of worker, but with the imposition workers suffer under the approach of variable capital: in other words, the mark of its conceptual anxiety is in its desire to democratise work and thus help keep in place, ensure the coherence of, the Reformation and Enlightenment ‘foundational’ values of productivity and progress. This is a crowding-out scenario for other post-revolutionary possibilities, i.e. idleness. Why interrogate Gramsci with the political predicament and desire of the black(ened) subject position in the Western Hemisphere? Because the Prison Notebooks’ intentionality, and general reception, lay claim to universal applicability. **Neither Gramsci nor his spiritual progenitors in the form of scholars or activists say that the Gramscian project sows the seeds of freedom for whites only. Instead, they claim that deep within the organicity of the organic intellectual is the organic black intellectual, the organic Chinese intellectual, the organic South American intellectual and so on; that though there are historical and cultural variances, there is a structural consistency which elaborates all organic intellectuals and undergirds all resistance.** Through what strategies does the black subject destabilise — emerge as the unthought, and thus the scandal of — historical materialism? How does the black subject distort and expand marxist categories in ways that create, in the words of Hortense Spillers, ‘a distended organisational calculus’? (Spillers 1996, p.82). **We could put the question another way: How does the black subject function within the American desiring machine differently than the quintessential Gramscian subaltern, the worker?** Before going more deeply into how the black subject position destabilises or disarticulates the categories foundational to the assumptive logic of marixsm, it’s important to allow ourselves a digression that attempts to schematise the Gramscian project on its own terms. The Gramscian Dream Students of struggle return, doggedly, to the Prison Notebooks for insights regarding how to bring about a revolution in a society in which state/capital formations are in some way protected by the ‘trenches’ of civil society. It is this outer perimeter, this discursive ‘trench’, constructed by an ensemble of private initiatives, activities, and an ensemble of pose-able questions (hegemony), which must be reconﬁgured before a revolution can take the form of a frontal assault. But this trench called civil society is not, for Gramsci, in and of itself the bane of the working class. Instead it represents a terrain to be occupied, assumed, and appropriated in a pedagogic project of transforming ‘common sense’ into ‘good sense’. This notion of ‘destruction-construction’ is a War of Position which involves agitating within civil society in a ‘revolutionary movement’ that builds ‘qualitatively new social relationships’ (Sassoon, 1987, p.15): [A War of Position] is a struggle that engages on a wide range of fronts in which the state as normally deﬁned…is only one aspect. [For Gramsci’s Black Marx: Whither the Slave in Civil Society? 227 Gramsci a War of Position is the most ‘decisive’ form of engagement] because it is the form in which bourgeois power is exercised [and victory on] these fronts makes possible or conclusive a frontal attack or War of Movement. (Sassoon, 1987, pp.15–17) In other words, for revolution to be feasible the proletariat must be ‘hailed’, in the Althusserian sense of the word, to a revolutionary position. And, for Gramsci, it is within this ‘trench’ between the economic structure and the state (with its legislation and its coercion), within civil society, that this hailing must take place. Again, for that to happen the trench, civil society, must be transformed. A War of Position can be summed up as a process by which workers struggling against capital and the state forge organs of working class civil society which in turn elaborate organic intellectuals capable of assimilating certain traditional intellectuals, and throughout the whole process all the struggle’s personnel, if you will, fashion a discourse on all of civil society’s fronts through which they eventually become hegemonic. In this way the ‘common sense’, the ‘spontaneous’ consent of the ruled toward the ideology of the rulers, ﬁnds its ‘good sense’, fragments of antagonistic sentiment transformed into an ensemble of questions which, prior to this process, could not be posed (i.e., What is to be done?). Common sense, by way of contrast, is an effect of ‘the prevailing forma mentis’. It involves the notion that the social order can be perfected through ‘fair and open’ competition…[and it] seeks to remedy problems and injustices through reforms fought for and negotiated among competing groups within the existing overall structure…thus leaving the juridical-administrative apparatus of the state more or less intact…It…makes the revolutionary idea of eliminating competitiveness (i.e., greed) as the primary motivating force in society seem unreasonable, unrealistic, or even dangerous. (Buttigieg. 1995, p.13) The pedagogical implications are self-evident. For Gramsci this is a process through which various strata of the class struggling for dominance achieve ‘historical self-awareness’ (Gramsci, 1971, pp.333–35). And for this reason civil society itself is not the bane of workers because its constituent elements (as opposed to the way those elements are combined) are not anti-worker.1 Therefore: [Gramsci’s] purpose is not to repress civil society or to restrict its space but rather to develop a revolutionary strategy (a ‘war of position’) that would be employed precisely in the arena of civil society, with the aim of disabling the coercive apparatus of the state, gaining access to political power, and creating the conditions that could give rise to a consensual society wherein no individual or group is reduced to a subaltern. (Buttigieg, 1995, p.7) At this moment (the end of subalternity by way of the destruction of the ruling class) the State becomes ‘ethical’. Gramsci writes: Every State is ethical in as much as one of its most important functions 228 Frank Wilderson, III is to raise the great mass of the population to a particular cultural and moral level, a level (or type) which corresponds to the needs of the productive forces for development, and hence to the interests of the ruling classes. (1971, p.258) He suggests that schools and courts perform this function for the State, before describing the ‘so-called private initiatives and activities’ which form the hegemonic apparatuses of the ruling class. But these private initiatives (i.e., newspapers, cinema, guild associations) are not ‘ethical’ precisely because of their ability to exist in tandem with the State and/or due to their function as its outright handmaidens (i.e., lobbyists, PACs). [Therefore] only the social group [his code word for ‘class’, in an attempt to secure the Notebooks’ safe passage past Mussolini’s prison censors] that poses the end of the State and its own end as the target to be achieved can create an ethical State — i.e. one which tends to put an end to the internal divisions of the ruled…and to create a technically and morally unitary social organism. (p.259) In other words, ‘civil society can only be the site of universal freedom when it extends to the point of becoming the state, that is, when the need for political society is obviated’ (Buttigieg, 1995, p.30). ‘[T]he phenomenon of ‘subordination’…occurs without coercion; it is an instance of power that is exercised and extended in civil society, resulting in the hegemony of one class over others who, for their part, acquiesce to it willingly or, as Gramsci puts it, ‘spontaneously’. (Buttigieg, 1995, p.22) What appears to be spontaneous is a product of consent manufactured by intellectuals of the ruling class. Again, not only is consent manufactured but it is backed up by coercion-in-reserve, what Gramsci calls political society: the courts, the army, the police, and, for the past 57 years, the atomic bomb. It is true that Gramsci acknowledges no organic division between political society and civil society. He makes the division for methodological purposes. There is one organism, ‘the modern bourgeois-liberal state’ (Buttigieg, 1995, p.28), but there are two qualitatively different kinds of apparatuses: on the one hand, the ensemble of so-called private associations and ideological invitations to participate in a wide and varied play of consensus-making strategies (civil society), and on the other hand, a set of enforcement structures which kick in when that ensemble is regressive or can no longer lead (political society). But Gramsci would have us believe not that white positionality emerges and is elaborated on the terrain of civil society and encounters coercion when civil society is not expansive enough to embrace the idea of freedom for all, but that all positionalities emerge and are elaborated on the terrain of civil society. Gramsci does not racialise this birth, elaboration, and stunting, or re-emergence, of human subjectivity — because civil society, supposedly, elaborates all subjectivity and so there is no need for such speciﬁcity. **Anglo-American Gramscians, like Buttigieg and Sassoon, and US activists in** Gramsci’s Black Marx: Whither the Slave in Civil Society? 229 **the anti-globalisation movement whose unspoken grammar is predicated on Gramsci’s assumptive logic, continue this tradition of unraced positionality which allows them to posit the valency of Wars of Position for blacks and whites alike. They assume that all subjects are positioned in such a way as to have their consent solicited and to be able to extend their consent ‘spontaneously’.** This is profoundly problematic if only — leaving revolution aside for the moment — at the level of analysis; for it assumes that hegemony with its three constituent elements (inﬂuence, leadership, consent) is the modality which must be either inculcated or breached, if one is to either avoid or incur, respectively, the violence of the state. However, one of the primary claims of this essay is that, whereas the consent of black people may seem to be called upon, its withdrawal does not precipitate a ‘crisis in authority’. Put another way, the transformation of black people’s acquiescent ‘common sense’ into revolutionary ‘good sense’ is an extenuating circumstance, but not the catalyst, of State violence against black people. State violence against the black body, as Martinot and Sexton suggest in their introduction, is not contingent, it is structural and, above all, gratuitous. Therefore, Gramscian wisdom cannot imagine the emergence, elaboration, and stunting of a subject by way, not of the contingency of violence resulting in a ‘crisis of authority’, but by way of direct relations of force. This is remarkable, and unfortunate, given the fact that the emergence of the slave, the subjecteffect of an ensemble of direct relations of force, marks the emergence of capitalism itself. Let us put a ﬁner point on it: violence towards the black body is the precondition for the existence of Gramsci’s single entity ‘the modern bourgeois-state’ with its divided apparatus, political society and civil society. This is to say violence against black people is ontological and gratuitous as opposed to merely ideological and contingent.2 Furthermore, no magical moment (i.e., 1865) transformed paradigmatically the black body’s relation to this entity.3 In this regard, the hegemonic advances within civil society by the Left hold out no more possibility for black life than the coercive backlash of political society. What many political theorists have either missed or ignored is that a crisis of authority that might take place by way of a Left expansion of civil society, further instantiates, rather than dismantles, the authority of whiteness. Black death is the modern bourgeois-state’s recreational pastime, but the hunting season is not conﬁned to the time (and place) of political society; blacks are fair game as a result of a progressively expanding civil society as well. Civil Death in Civil Society Capital was kick-started by the rape of the African continent. This phenomenon is central to neither Gramsci nor Marx. The theoretical importance of emphasising this in the early twenty-ﬁrst century is two-fold: ﬁrst, ‘the socio-political order of the New World’ (Spillers, 1987, p.67) was kick-started by approaching a particular body (a black body) with direct relations of force, not by approaching a white body with variable capital. Thus, one could say that slavery — the ‘accumulation’ of black bodies regardless of their utility as labourers (Hartman; 230 Frank Wilderson, III Johnson) through an idiom of despotic power (Patterson) — is closer to capital’s primal desire than is waged oppression — the ‘exploitation’ of unraced bodies (Marx, Lenin, Gramsci) that labour through an idiom of rational/symbolic (the wage) power: A relation of terror as opposed to a relation of hegemony.4 Secondly, today, late capital is imposing a renaissance of this original desire, direct relations of force (the prison industrial complex), the despotism of the unwaged relation: and this Renaissance of slavery has, once again, as its structuring image in libidinal economy, and its primary target in political economy, the black body. The value of reintroducing the unthought category of the slave, by way of noting the absence of the black subject, lies in the black subject’s potential for extending the demand placed on state/capital formations because its re-introduction into the discourse expands the intensity of the antagonism. In other words, the slave makes a demand, which is in excess of the demand made by the worker. The worker demands that productivity be fair and democratic (Gramsci’s new hegemony, Lenin’s dictatorship of the proletariat), the slave, on the other hand, demands that production stop; stop without recourse to its ultimate democratisation. Work is not an organic principle for the slave. The absence of black subjectivity from the crux of marxist discourse is symptomatic of the discourse’s inability to cope with the possibility that the generative subject of capitalism, the black body of the ﬁfteenth and sixteenth centuries, and the generative subject that resolves late-capital’s over-accumulation crisis, the black (incarcerated) body of the twentieth and twenty-ﬁrst centuries, do not reify the basic categories which structure marxist conﬂict: the categories of work, production, exploitation, historical self-awareness and, above all, hegemony. If, by way of the black subject, we consider the underlying grammar of the question ‘What does it mean to be free?’ that grammar being the question ‘What does it mean to suffer?’ then we come up against a grammar of suffering not only in excess of any semiotics of exploitation, but a grammar of suffering beyond signiﬁcation itself, a suffering that cannot be spoken because the gratuitous terror of white supremacy is as much contingent upon the irrationality of white fantasies and shared pleasures as it is upon a logic — the logic of capital. It extends beyond texualisation. When talking about this terror, Cornel West uses the term ‘black invisibility and namelessness’ to designate, at the level of ontology, what we are calling a scandal at the level of discourse. He writes: [America’s] unrelenting assault on black humanity produced the fundamental condition of black culture — that of black invisibility and namelessness. On the crucial existential level relating to black invisibility and namelessness, the ﬁrst difﬁcult challenge and demanding discipline is to ward off madness and discredit suicide as a desirable option. A central preoccupation of black culture is that of confronting candidly the ontological wounds, psychic scars, and existential bruises of black people while fending off insanity and self-annihilation. This is why the ‘ur-text’ of black culture is neither a word nor a book, not an architec Gramsci’s Black Marx: Whither the Slave in Civil Society? 231 tural monument or a legal brief. Instead, it is a guttural cry and a wrenching moan—acry not so much for help as for home, a moan less out of complaint than for recognition. (1996, pp.80–81). Thus, the black subject position in America is an antagonism, a demand that can not be satisﬁed through a transfer of ownership/organisation of existing rubrics; whereas the Gramscian subject, the worker, represents a demand that can indeed be satisﬁed by way of a successful War of Position, which brings about the end of exploitation. The worker calls into question the legitimacy of productive practices, the slave calls into question the legitimacy of productivity itself. From the positionality of the worker the question, ‘What does it mean to be free?’ is raised. But the question hides the process by which the discourse assumes a hidden grammar which has already posed and answered the question, ‘What does it mean to suffer?’ And that grammar is organised around the categories of exploitation (unfair labour relations or wage slavery). Thus, exploitation (wage slavery) is the only category of oppression which concerns Gramsci: society, Western society, thrives on the exploitation of the Gramscian subject. Full stop. Again, this is inadequate, because it would call white supremacy ‘racism’ and articulate it as a derivative phenomenon of the capitalist matrix, rather than incorporating white supremacy as a matrix constituent to the base, if not the base itself. What I am saying is that the insatiability of the slave demand upon existing structures means that it cannot ﬁnd its articulation within the modality of hegemony (inﬂuence, leadership, consent) — the black body cannot give its consent because ‘generalised trust’, the precondition for the solicitation of consent, ‘equals racialised whiteness’ (Barrett). **Furthermore, as Patterson points out, slavery is natal alienation by way of social death, which is to say that a slave has no symbolic currency or material labour power to exchange: a slave does not enter into a transaction of value (however asymmetrical) but is subsumed by direct relations of force, which is to say that a slave is an articulation of a despotic irrationality whereas the worker is an articulation of a symbolic rationality. White supremacy’s despotic irrationality is as foundational to American institutionality as capitalism’s symbolic rationality because, as West writes, it dictates the limits of the operation of American democracy — with black folk the indispensable sacriﬁcial lamb vital to its sustenance.** Hence black subordination constitutes the necessary condition for the ﬂourishing of American democracy, the tragic prerequisite for America itself. This is, in part, what Richard Wright meant when he noted, ‘The Negro is America’s metaphor’. (1996, p.72) And it is well known that a metaphor comes into being through a violence that kills, rather than merely exploits, the object so that the concept might live. **West’s interventions help us see how marxism can only come to grips with America’s structuring rationality — what it calls capitalism, or political economy; but cannot come to grips with America’s structuring irrationality: the libidinal economy of white supremacy, and its hyper-discursive violence that** 232 Frank Wilderson, III **kills the black subject so that the concept, civil society, may live. In other words, from the incoherence of black death, America generates the coherence of white life. This is important when considering the Gramscian paradigm (and its progenitors in the world of US social movements today) which is so dependent on the empirical status of hegemony and civil society: struggles over hegemony are seldom, if ever, as signifying — at some point they require coherence, they require categories for the record — which means they contain the seeds of anti-blackness.**

#### Perm can’t solve – the 1AC’s discussions of other types of oppression and crowds out discussions of a Black grammar of suffering and precludes radical movements.

**Wilderson 20** [Frank B. Wilderson is a professor of Drama and African American studies at the University of California, Irvine] “Afropessissm”, Liveright Publishing Corporation, April 7, 2020. NT

An Asian-Danish woman asked me, “If the violence of White supremacy and capitalist, patriarchal violence is what I, as an Asian woman, suffer, and if you’re suggesting White supremacy and anti-Blackness are not the same—in fact, I hear you saying that the people who suffer White supremacy are also the people who, along with Whites, perpetrate anti-Blackness—then my question is what does that mean . . . what does that do . . . maybe what I want to say is, how do we forge solidarity in multiracial coalitions such as Marronage?” (I’d be asked the same question in two days’ time, in Berlin; but the tone and intent would be hostile, and I would say, “I don’t give a rat’s ass about solidarity.” Which wasn’t true; but the way I cared about solidarity wasn’t the way the mob that had packed its bags to meet me in Berlin cared about it.) “What we’re doing in this workshop is a form of solidarity,” I replied. “The important things **we need to understand are the ways non-Black people of color can crowd out discussions of a Black grammar of suffering by insisting that the coalition needs to focus on what we all have in common**. It is true that we all suffer from police aggression; that we all suffer from capitalist domination. But we **should use the space opened up by political organizing which is geared toward reformist objectives—like stopping police brutality and ending racist immigration policies—as an opportunity to explore problems for which there are no coherent solutions. Anti-Black violence is a paradigm of oppression for which there is no coherent form of redress**, other than Frantz Fanon’s ‘the end of the world.’ Solidarity means not crowding out discussions of Black social death just because there is no coherent form of redress on the horizon. I think that’s what we’ve done today. Your participation in this workshop with the Black people in Marronage is an act of solidarity.