# NC

## Part 1: The Court

#### **[Guinier & Torres] RACISM IS RAMPANT, AND DEBATE’S A PLACE TO CHALLENGE IT –** rounds are practice for real world engagement of political problems.

Guinier & Torres: Guinier, Lani [Bennett Boskey Professor of Law, Harvard Law School] and Gerald Torres [Professor of Environmental Justice at the Yale School of the Environment]. “The Miner’s Canary, Enlisting Race, Resisting Power, Transforming Democracy.” Harvard University Press,2002. https://www.hup.harvard.edu/catalog.php?isbn=9780674010840 CV/CH

An individual in isolation cannot constitute or define the meaning of a political space. Only when individuals freely join together to resist and transform the forces of conventional power which named them as part of¶ a group in the first place can the possibilities emerge for generating new¶ forms of collective and democratic struggle. Those intermediate spaces defined by this reconceptualization of post-postmodern power offer the¶ opportunity for individuals to share their stories and construct relationships that reinforce a more systemic and critical social understanding. The effort to expand our readings of race and power beyond strictly win/lose outcomes is not explanatory as much as it is motivational. It describes, from the inside out, what it feels like to experience the joy of human solidarity when mobilized to generate new and unexpected outcomes. Thus, political race builds from inside the lived experience of a marginalized community and uses that experience as an imperfect but valuable lens through which to view and possibly enhance an individual’s political status. The lens on that experience can be stretched and even reshaped when human beings join together to engage in diagnosing and organizing through the multi-step process that we imagine. When and if it is¶ acknowledged, groups may move from this vantage point to join with others in free spaces of participatory democracy that resist authority and challenge the status quo. As we illustrate in Chapters 5 and 6, these free spaces are usually outside the formal public sphere of legislative decision-making; they are also¶ not the same as the public sphere of communitarian literature. They are instead intermediate or in-between places in which a marginalized group can share their experiences without interference from the dominant¶ group.6 The interstices are practice fields or training sessions for an eventual engagement with various hierarchical sources of power. They are laboratories¶ as well as launching pads.

#### [ROJ] Thus, the Role of the Judge is to Promote Anti-Racist Education in the Debate Space, meaning they must make this a place to confront that issue.

#### [Torres] And anti-racist education is uniquely key now – it’s the only way to address the problem.

Torres: Torres, Christina. [8th grade English teacher in Honolulu, Hawaii] “All Students Need Anti-Racism Education.” Tolerance.org, July 30, 2020. <https://www.learningforjustice.org/magazine/all-students-need-antiracism-education> CH

As more and more teachers, administrators, schools and organizations are questioning their practices and looking at the racist history of their institutions, many are finally asking, “How we can listen to and support Black students, teachers and communities who have been systemically silenced for too long?” This question is essential, and examining anti-Blackness in our practice is something we all must be looking at. Looking at anti-Blackness or inequities brought about by systems rooted in white supremacy and racism is something all students should be doing. While more institutions, including primarily or historically white ones, are committing to this work, white teachers with primarily white students can feel hesitant to discuss these issues since they may not feel it affects them. This idea is a fundamental misunderstanding of what anti-racist work actually is. Anti-racist work means acknowledging that racist beliefs and structures are pervasive in all aspects of our lives—from education to housing to climate change—and then actively doing work to tear down those beliefs and structures. Those beliefs and structures don’t just exist in primarily white/and or privileged institutions—they thrive there. Schools that house mostly students and teachers who have benefited from white privilege can lack the perspective to push back on institutional malpractice or racist mindsets that may be present. In addition, it is difficult to convince those with power and privilege to give those privileges up without clear education and work to understand why doing so is a necessity for true justice in our society. Doing the work in spaces of privilege may look different, but educators cannot pretend that anti-racist work doesn’t exist simply because their student body isn’t directly harmed by racism. There are clear aims that primarily white and otherwise privileged institutions must work toward in the fight against racism. Teachers must re-evaluate their curriculum. When teaching standards and core curricula have been developed for your students, it’s easy to simply follow along. However, it’s important to remember that our education system has been founded on historically racist practices, including silencing those from disenfranchised communities. It’s not just BIPOC who need to see themselves in the literature or history they study. White students need to hear those perspectives as well, just as straight and cisgender students need to read LGBTQ+ stories. This is because students need not just mirrors but also windows into other cultures, as Dr. Rudine Sims Bishop notes in her essay “Mirrors, Windows and Sliding Glass Doors.” Students from communities with white privilege need to hear voices from other perspectives in order to grow their own thinking. Those perspectives need to be diverse and empowering as well—only showing Black suffering or slavery does not begin to break down problematic beliefs about Black people. Instead, students coming from positions of power need to see and understand the power and agency of those who have been historically disenfranchised, particularly since society frequently tells them otherwise. This will allow white students and teachers to have a more accurate and nuanced understanding of our history, while also ensuring they can center BIPOC voices and be allies and accomplices instead of “saviors.” Students need to understand privilege and rethink power. Students from privileged communities can struggle to understand privilege since they may feel that they have had to work hard or struggle at times in their lives. Teachers must help students understand how privilege works at a systemic level that may have given students an edge that, while it may be one they didn’t ask for, is still very real. The work does not stop there, though. It can be easy in teaching privilege to fall into the trap of “white guilt” or “privilege guilt” (or even “survivor guilt” for BIPOC who have moved up socioeconomically and have internalized the belief that their communities were something to be “survived”). While guilt can be an important emotion to notice and process, educators should help students move through it to a place of action. Beyond “feeling bad” about generations of oppression, how can they use this knowledge to advocate for change and begin breaking down their own racist beliefs? How can they also reframe their understandings of privilege so that they stop prioritizing hegemonic ideas of success and worth? Some of that will mean teaching students to analyze and reframe how they see values and stories from other cultures. Most of us were taught to praise white-dominant cultural ideas: financial success, rugged individualism, paternalism. Because of this, cultures with different priorities may not be seen as “successful” or “valuable” in our eyes and in the eyes of our students. We need to teach students with privilege not to be “saviors” for historically disenfranchised communities, but rather to listen to, value and stand in kinship with them so we can work together toward justice. Schools must interrogate their practices and how they gained institutional privilege to begin with.

#### [ROB] The Role of the Ballot is to Endorse the Best Anti-Racist Resistance Strategy. That means we weigh the round based on whose advocacy better combats racism.

## A. Links

#### 1. [Case] First, the aff puts endless faith in democracy as a solution – they see it as the answer to their impacts.

## B. Impacts

#### [Saucier & Woods] ENDORSING RACISM – racism is inherent to democracy as a system – it’s there *by design*.

Saucier & Woods: Saucier, P. Khalil [Chair and Associate Professor of Africana Studies, Bucknell University], and Tryon P. Woods [Assistant Professor of Crime and Justice Studies, University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth] “Introduction: Racial Optimism and the Drag of Thymotics.” *Conceptual Aphasia in Black: Displacing Racial Formation*. New York: Lexington Books, 2016. CH

We are not interested in wrestling with Omi and Winant, or any other racial optimists for that matter, over proprietary claims to “democracy.” They can have it. It is not our position that racial formation theory has corrupted the concept or whittled away its essential meaning. Instead, we see in “democracy” the same intrinsic fatal flaw that we find in “emancipation,” “sovereignty,” “inclusion,” “rights,” “justice,” or any of the rest of modern society’s nomenclature. While Omi and Winant understand democracy as “the heart of the racial formation process,” we follow black radical thought in viewing legal abstractions like “democracy” in relation to material political practices (Winant 1994, 147). As such, democracy proves to be embedded within enslavement, rooted in captivity, and a leitmotif for social parasitism. Democracy first emerges as a political value only among the Western European societies that were already deeply invested in the slave trade, and struggles internal to these societies for democratic inclusion were premised upon the concomitant expansion of slaveholding (Cesaire 2000; Du Bois 2013; Eltis 2000; Wells 2014). In North America specifically, the “slave democracy” or “democratic slave state” went to war with itself—not once, but twice—to preserve both slavery and democracy’s basis in black captivity (DuBois 2013; Horne 2014; James 2005). Having had emancipation forced upon it by the self-determination of black people, the slave democracy renovated itself for a new era. It is popularly understood by now that the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution did not actually abolish the institution of slavery, but instead relocated it into the purview of the criminal justice system. What remains under appreciated, however, is that the Thirteenth Amendment is not the provincialization of slavery, a discrete winnowing of the scope of enslavement to criminal convicts. On the contrary: since criminalization is first and foremost a political-symbolic tool, it harkens not to individual behavior but rather to the social itself, to an onto-epistemic framework structuring social relations (Saucier and Woods 2014; Woods 2013). As such, the Thirteenth Amendment oversees the reiteration of democracy’s basis in social captivity. We cannot ignore or retreat from the analysis of democracy that these insights present. Karl Marx asserted that we can only construct a new world through “the ruthless criticism of everything existing,” that is, criticism of the very ideas and realities that constitute the present. “Criticism,” Marx argued, “must not be afraid of its own conclusions, nor of conflict with the powers that be” (1978, 13). To be ruthless in these two ways is to link “our criticism with real struggles” (14). We agree with Marx on this score, and when he declares, “Our motto must therefore be: reform of consciousness not through dogmas, but through analyzing the mystical consciousness, the consciousness which is unclear to itself” (15, emphasis added). To be ruthlessly critical directs us to the social fact that blackness enables democracy, mass incarceration is the prerequisite for democracy, and democracy is therefore the internal limit to the black freedom struggle. Consequently, racial theory’s apprehension of “democracy” is something of a litmus test for conceptual aphasia. Joao Costa Vargas and Joy James (2012) ask the questions that are unanswerable within the racial formation framework: What happens when, instead of becoming enraged and shocked every time a black person is killed in the United States, we recognize black death as a predictable and constitutive aspect of this democracy? What will happen then if instead of demanding justice we recognize (or at least consider) that the very notion of justice—indeed the gamut of political and cognitive elements that constitute formal, multiracial democratic practices and institutions—produces or requires black exclusion and death as normative? (193) Democracy as the normative terrain for black death explodes the conceptual aphasia characterizing Omi and Winant’s insistence on “racial democracy” as a viable category of analysis. James has referred to the conceptual aphasia we are identifying in this volume as the “conceptual dead zone”: the graveyard where discussions of black genocide and the ongoing relations of slavery as constitutive to contemporary democracy lie buried as impermissible knowledge (James 2009). James explains that “the dead zone has a gravitational pull that slows down radical critique” (2009, 461). Mainstream analysis, however, finds sustenance from the dead zone. What exactly is happening to blackness in order to give life to vampiric racial optimism like racial formation theory? The notion of racial democracy necessarily eclipses the reality of gratuitous violence gripping the black body. Gratuitous violence turns the black body into flesh and destroys the possibility of ontology, so the only way that blackness can appear to participate in the world alongside the subjects of humanity, the denizens of the democratic polity, is by way of a structural adjustment wherein blacks are perceived to act as if they possess ontological capacity (Spillers 1987). The price of this ticket is that social analysis must remain within the agreed upon limits of knowledge and ethics. Sexton terms it the “borrowed institutionality” of blackness.15 Take for instance the emergence of #BlackLivesMatter. In recent years, the meme has become a political Rorschach producing a cornucopia of identitarian hashtags from #alllivesmatter to #copslivesmatter that, at the end of the day, effortlessly obscures or subsumes blackness’s grammar of suffering. This identity boosterism imagines, through liberalism’s lingua franca of rights and reform, an “existential commons” in which black people enjoy a shared human capacity for generating recognition, honor, and bodily integrity alongside non-blacks (Wilderson 2010, 20). The dieins, marches, and political theater of disrupting presidential candidates’ stump speeches, all in the name of Black Lives Matter (not to mention “Hands Up, Don’t Shoot,” “I Can’t Breathe,” #RealeasetheTapes, and so on), are statements and events of outrage. The fury states the obvious and regulates itself: the demand for justice sequesters black collective existence through its suggestion that black lives would matter if only the police were prosecuted when they kill black people, if politicians would apologize for mass incarceration, or if a university president would resign. #BlackLivesMatter reveals a historical and ethical negligence when it replaces black liberation with the performance of democracy.

## Thus, C. Alt:

#### **[Whitfield] We should reject democracy and embrace Liberated Zones – intentional communities that operate independent of the state – key to Black conceptions of freedom. No perms – this requires MOVING AWAY FROM THE STATE, not increasing state power.**

Whitfield: Whitfield, Ed. [Black social critic, writer, and community activist] “What must we do to be free? On the building of Liberated Zones.” *Prabuddha: Journal of Social Equality*, Vol. 2, 2018. CH

Life in a liberated zone entails: •Sustainably making and/or finding food •Sustainably making and developing people as the carriers and creators of productivity, culture, wisdom and technology •Making meaning: evolving life beyond birth, survival, and death •Collectively and determinedly defending what we have made The Limitations of The So-called Democracy of an Oppressive System There was a time when you could buy a car of any color, as long as it was black. There wasn’t much choice. These days, we are encouraged to vote in elections where we can support candidates from either of the two-capitalist war-mongering parties. Independent candidates who actually support social transformation are described as wasted votes or not allowed to get very far in the political vetting process. It brings to mind an option that might have been offered to the enslaved to vote on which plantation to be enslaved on, or to choose their overseer based on their position on what would be the maximum number of lashes in a beating, or the best way to punish low production or talking back. I’d like to think that I am a descendent from the slave who would have stood on the back row of such a slave voting campaign gathering, constantly looking up into the sky. When asked what they were looking for and why, they would whisper, “Y’all go ahead and vote on one of them or the other, but I’m looking for the north star in the dipping gourd. ‘Cause first chance I get, I’m outta here.” In the USA, we won’t vote ourselves to freedom in spite of the rhetoric of what claims to be the more progressive of the two oppressive exploitative parties. We will have to build freedom. And on leaving the plantation, we may want to burn down the big house. Not because burning it will feed us, but rather because it just seems like the right thing to do. The Devastating Nature of the Present It should be clear to us that we don't all share equitably in the benefits from modern world. We live in a world of the domination of capital. In it the owner class accumulates the surplus created by those who produce value. Those in the owning class then use their control over the socially created value to dominate virtually every aspect of social life for the singular purpose of being able to extract and accumulate even more value. This power that comes as a benefit of the ownership of means of life is used to threaten death by starvation to all who resist obeying the needs of capital expansion. There is no limit to the greed of the capitalist system. The unlimited expansion of capital is the singular logic of this world system. But infinite expansion is not possible on a finite planet, and we see the effect of careless exploitation of natural resources and human activity on the planet’s ability to support human life with its needs for clean water and clean air in addition to controlling the potential for climate disasters that are caused by human activity.

He adds:

There are already existing communities that are very much like the liberated zones I describe here. There are intentional communities that combine collective living arrangements with productive opportunities, often including or even centered around food production. Some of them are arranged as egalitarian communities where everything is shared, and intense democratic processes draw all of the community members into collective decision making on all of the community’s affairs, including how the necessary tasks for the community are shared. There is a long history of such communities and they have likely had little impact on the larger societies outside of them, even though they possess many transformative elements. Some of these communities are insular in nature and mainly represent a way to get away from what is painful, irrational, or at the very least, undesirable in the mainstream communities. Many of these communities are also known for leading a rustic, some might even say primitive existence. That is partly a reflection of the distance between these communities and the consumerism that surrounds them. I would offer that for the type of liberated zones that I think will make more of a difference to be viable, they would have to be able to create an intense loyalty among those who live in them, and a strong base of support for those on the outside, who, for one reason or the other do not. It would never be sufficient to offer that these communities are capable, or even interested in replicating the lifestyles that have been created in the dominant society. There would need to be some conscious breaking away from societal norms. But I contend that it becomes easier as the existing structures prove themselves increasingly incapable of keeping their promises of a comfortable life for the many. But we still have to ask, “Is it enough stuff?” You know we are addicted to bigger and bigger piles of stuff, despite the ecological price that we pay and the fact that for whatever we accumulate there is someone somewhere trying to sell us more. There are still those who will not be satisfied unless they are able to buy the things that are being marketed to them. Many young people will not remember, but once a 19-inch TV was considered a big screen. Nowadays, folks with limited income will buy 52” and 80” screens on time terms, claiming that these are household needs. While I am no one to object to other people’s desires, I don’t think the liberated zones that I envision would be producing large screen TV units in the near term. There would likely be live theatre, and live concerts, and live music, art and poetry shows on the regular. This is what I mean when I talk about the need to make meaning. We are capable of leading good lives without the consumer debt peonage that many of us have become accustomed to as a means of fulfilling the dreams not of our families and communities, but rather the dreams of the marketers who derive their privilege from compensation they get from getting us to buy things that we don’t need, and quite honestly might not have even thought of, had the marketers not told us that we just had to have them. It is sad that we are called upon to measure ourselves, not by what we know, not by what we can do, not by what we are, but rather by what we buy at high prices because of celebrity endorsements. It is sad to hear “I just want to get paid.” As the highest aspiration of some young folks. And when someone points out to them the unfairness of a system that makes many more losers than winners and points out that we deserve a society that is fair and creates opportunities for all, it is so sad to hear, “I'll take my chance. I’d rather take a chance at being rich than to have certainty of a less glamorous existence.” We need to remember that we are addicted. But more and more people are coming to realize that the deck is stacked. You get to cut the cards but the jokers, the aces and kings have all been taken out of the deck. There is very little left to win. This isn’t really gambling, because we have no chance.