# 1NC vs. Harrison JP

#### The topic assumes a common political sphere where all subjects can participate in projects that shape their lives. Buying into this understanding of the political is wrong and dangerous-- for blacks the medical complex is a death-making machine. Any analysis that does not start with the black femme body while wildly pushing them back towards the state cannot understand the way that Necropolitics structures the world.

**Threadcraft**, S. (20**17**). *North American Necropolitics and Gender: On #BlackLivesMatter and Black Femicide. South Atlantic Quarterly, 116(3), 553-579. doi:10.1215/00382876-3961483*

Feminists (Spelman 1982; Young 1990; Gatens 1996) have long concerned themselves with West-ern approaches to the body as well as the relation-ship between the body and politics and the impact of both on women. While these approaches and ways of thinking about the body are important and worthy of black feminist exploration**, I think the most important issue regarding the relation-ship between the body and politics today is the growing concern with how that body politic pro-duces its dead: that the body that we are thinking about, the body that receives the most attention in contemporary racial politics, is a deceased one**. **Contemporary racial politics is most focused on the politics of black death, on necropolitics**, and relatedly on the very important work of exposing the state’s efforts—often, as activists have fairly successfully pointed out, with considerable assis-tance from the mainstream press—to assure its citizens that it has produced the “right kind” of dead**. In practice this means that the body around which blacks can most easily rally members to the cause of racial justice in this moment, the body around which we can organize, is a dead one. It is crucial that those concerned with the status of black  women  in  society  reckon  with  how  we should respond to the centrality of necropolitics on the contemporary politi-cal stage, to this focus on the politics of death and the ensuing contests over the meaning of the bodies of the dead in the wake of the production of dead black bodies**. There are benefits and burdens, inclusions and exclusions, in centering the politics of death within black politics, in giving dead bodies pride of place in black politics, and even within that necropolitics to center-ing the slain body. A focus on the slain body privileges how cis men die, how young men die, how able-bodied blacks die, over all other black dead.In what follows I consider the ways that the Black Lives Matter move-ment and those sympathetic to its narrative regarding the production of the bodies of the black dead have brought strategies employed in an earlier US necropolitical struggle, the US antilynching campaign, together with tech-nological innovations. They have achieved considerable success in compari-son to a fairly recent necropolitical struggle, the struggle against femicide at the Mexico–United States border outlined by Melissa Wright, which pre-ceded the advent of those innovations the Black Lives Matter movement has used to great effect. However, while I recognize and celebrate these suc-cesses, I am deeply concerned that the movement may ultimately fail black women. **I would therefore like to reflect on how this necropolitical move-ment, if it is not properly intersectional, may do little to change the problem-atic ways that state power intersects with the black female body as well as the production of the bodies of black female dead.**As may now be clear, I have reservations about privileging the slain black body in politics. For one thing, blacks have more than the bodies of the slain around which to organize, even within a strictly necropolitical sense**. On this point, I have stated elsewhere (Threadcraft 2016b) that residential conditions in black neighborhoods are described as “pathogenic” in them-selves, producing “excess death.” Public health scholars (Williams and Col-lins 2001: 405) have acknowledged that “racial residential segregation is the cornerstone on which black-white disparities in health status have been built in the US.” They argue that “segregation is a fundamental cause of differ-ences in health status between African Americans and whites because it shapes socioeconomic conditions for blacks not only at the individual and household levels but also at the neighborhood and community levels”** (405).Consider, as well, the points Clint Smith (2016) makes in an essay titled “Racism, Stress, and Black Death”:According to a study by the American Psychology Association, “more than three in four black adults report experiencing day-to-day discrimination and two in five black men say that police have unfairly stopped, searched, ques-tioned, physically threatened or abused them.” **Living under the perpetual and pervasive threat of racism seems, for black men and black women, to quite liter-ally reduce lifespans.** Black people face social and economic challenges—often deriving from institutionalized racism—in the form of disparities in education, housing, food, medical care, and many other things**. But the act of interfacing with prejudice itself has profound psychological implications, resulting in the sorts of trauma that last long beyond the incidents themselves**.Perhaps just as important, according to research published this past December  in  the  journal  Psychoneuroendocrinology,  **simply  perceiving  or  anticipating discrimination contributes to chronic stress that can cause an increase  in  blood-pressure  problems,  coronary-artery  disease,  cognitive  impairment, and infant mortality. Black Americans do not have to directly experience police brutality to experience the negative health ramifications of its possibility. And that fear is not something grounded in paranoia.** As Presi-dent Obama noted in his speech after the deaths of [Alton] Sterling and [Phi-lando] Castile, these disparities in treatment at the hands of the police are well-documented**.There is a great deal to be said about the health effects of discrimination. First, blacks do not have to be physically injured by police to be brought closer to death. Second, blacks do not even have to encounter police to be harmed by their presence. Third, we must consider racism as part of the environmental conditions in black neighborhoods. The health data reveal a great deal about the operation of this form of power, how its impact extends beyond the discrete encounter to touch the bodies of all in the space**. Naa Oyo Kwate and I address this health threat in a separate piece (Threadcraft and Kwate, forthcoming). In what follows, however, I would like to return to a point I have also made before regarding gender and necropolitics.**Black women have been subject to a host of practices that have much more in common with Achille Mbembe’s necropolitics than with Michel Foucault’s biopower and normalization but are nonetheless not identical to the phenomenon Mbembe describes (Threadcraft 2016a). Black women are subjected to disproportionate sexual assault, community violence, and pub-lic sexual aggression.** **They are disproportionately targeted for long-acting contraceptives and child removal policies**. Power, specifically white power, intersects with the black female body to produce its preferred forms of racial-ized feminine embodiment—the assaulted and terrorized body, yes—but when held in comparison to how power intersects with the black male body, far more rarely does it produce a dead black female body. I would like to return to the topic of how power intersects with the black female body below as, given this and the extraordinary amount of attention given to the dead body in contemporary racial politics**, we must decide how black politics can/should be reformulated in light of the gendered distinctions in how power intersects with the black body.**

#### The state’s power is dependent upon its ability to make live, let die, and justify death by assigning meaning to black bodies as thugs, dangerous, or otherwise unmanageable.

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It is thus not clear how the movement can respond to existing hierarchies and prejudices in the wider black community regarding the meaning of the living, which holds fast to bodies, even in death**.Mbembe (2003) examines the importance of the politics of death in the exercise of power in his article “Necropolitics” and notes that this power is particularly salient in the control and management of subject peoples and marginalized populations. He holds that “the ultimate expression of sover-eignty resides, to a large degree, in the power and the capacity to dictate who may live and who must die” (11). Mbembe goes on to say: “Hence, to kill or to allow to live constitute the limits of sovereignty, its fundamental attributes. To exercise sovereignty is to exercise control over mortality and to define life as the deployment and manifestation of power” (11–12).He asks readers, then, “What place is given to life, death, and the human  body  (in  particular  the  wounded  or  slain  body)?  How  are  they  inscribed in the order of power?” (12).** Mbembe’s impressive analysis of the politics of death considers how necropower intersects with a generic body and remains silent on how the phenomenon intersects with male and female bodies, respectively.Wright (2011), in her examination of the gendered necropolitics at the Mexico–United States border, grapples with Mbembe’s important question and argues, first**, that the politics of gender and the politics of death go hand in hand and, second, that states often play a decisive role in assigning mean-ing to the bodies of the dead in the successful operation of necropower**. States  engage  in  efforts  to  convince  those  within  their  borders  that  proper body for the subjects in question is, in fact, a deceased body. I whole-heartedly agree with Wright’s first point and see it as especially relevant in the US case**. Wright is also correct in drawing attention to the fact that the successful operation of necropower requires the work of assigning meaning to the bodies of the dead. The state expends effort, uses its resources, to define how the subject lived and therefore what the subject was, thereby labeling  a  given  subject  as  deserving  of  death,  a  subject  whose  proper  embodiment is, in fact, a deceased body.** In the Mexican case Wright probes, state officials did so both with the death the state itself produced and with the deaths it failed to stop, assigning subjects the labels of sex worker and narco and thereby legitimizing their deaths**. In the US context, the same was true of lynching, with efforts to affix the mark of the rapist to the body of the dead; with contemporary police slayings we also see concerted efforts to affix the mark of the thug to the black body.**In the incidents Wright examines, as dead bodies piled up, the ques-tion became this: Do the dead bodies in Ciudad Juárez demonstrate that the state is failing, as activists contend, or that the state is that much stronger, as government elites contend? With femicide and the male victims of narcovi-olence, the state asserted that the female dead were simply sex workers and the male dead were involved in the drug trade, respectively. In both circum-stances, the dead bodies were certainly no cause for alarm and were even cause for celebration—their deaths were, then, evidence of a strong state

#### The medical industrial complex (MIC) strengthens colonial and antiblack power structures through the creation of “diseases” to be solved with western medicines

Durazo 16—Ana Clarissa Rojas Durazo [University of California, Davis, Chicana and Chicano Studies, Faculty Member], "Medical Violence Against People of Color and the Medicalization of Domestic Violence," *Color of Violence: The INCITE! Anthology, INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence*, 2016, 183-5. ND

Couched in a deceptive framework of benevolence, (western) medicine is a violent institution that has, in fact, been dangerous to the health and well-being of women of color and women in the Third World since its imposition. This is medicine’s double discourse of care: expressed interest in the provision of care, while making people of color sick. Historically, medicine has always worked for the colonial state; for example, institutional practices quelled indigenous resistance by drawing indigenous communities into colonial structures and relationships. Medicine arrived in the Americas, and throughout the world, as an integral arm of European colonial invasion: land grants were given to doctors who settle areas and develop medical institutions. And medical institutions served as sites where indigenous communities were actively subordinated, regulated, tracked, and counted of indigenous communities. As Fanon argues, medicine makes colonial interests palatable so that slowly, over time, we are "reduced to saying yes to the innovations of the occupier."14 This "provision of care" subjugates women of color and our communities by negating indigenous knowledges of the body, health, and healing and by super imposing western values and colonial racist epistemologies and figures (e.g., the all-knowing patriarchal doctor). Thus, the power of healing from women and indigenous communities is displaced.15 bell hooks reminds us, "conscious of race, sex, and class issues, I wondered how I would be treated in this white doctor's office. Through it all, he talked to me as if I were a child ... "16 Medical violence is deployed from etiology (diagnosis, naming of disease and establishment of cause), to prevention (or lack thereof), treatment ("care" potentially injurious or unavailable), and research (treating people of color as guinea pigs).17 And as discussed earlier, the MIC buttresses racist and colonial state needs by surveilling and reporting on communities, regulating human bodies, and by further dominating the colonized.18 The irony is that colonial invasion and war often create "needs" for medical intervention, as was the case with one of the most lethal forms of colonial violence throughout the Americas: the intentional spread of infectious diseases such as tuberculosis, measles and smallpox to indigenous communities.19 Once this need is bolstered, additional forms of medical violence-such as active exclusion and withholding of treatment-emerge, and become tools of social control; the MIC determines who is treated, who lives, who dies. Even if treatment is provided, violence persists as the delivery of medical "care" is still rife with racism, classism, and sexism, as well as state and colonial interests and structures.20 For example, historically the "sick role" has been assigned to marginalized communities in the US, as it implies "deviance" in need of medical intervention. Through medicine, colonial racist archetypes of the "diseased and uncivilized" other were legitimated, and the "other" was created.21 Medicine's professional and eurocentric shroud confirms and grants the authority to define sickness, name the sick, identify the "healthy," and prescribe what is biologically normal and what is not, thereby discerning between what should be called "natural," and what should be called "unnatural."22 "Drapetomania'' stands among the first medical diagnoses in the United States. Samuel Cartwright, a physician in New Orleans defined it as "the desire for a slave to run away."23 Among the causes listed were laziness and poor intellectual capabilities.24 Only slaves were able to contract this "disease," much like only slaves were able to violate the first criminal laws enacted in this country.25 In the New Orleans Medical and Surgical journal, Dr. Cartwright argued that the tendency of slaves to run away was a treatable medical disorder, believing that with "proper medical advice, strictly followed, the troublesome practice that many Negroes have of running away could almost entirely be prevented." Whipping was prescribed as the most effective treatment of the disorder and amputation of the toes was prescribed for cases that failed to respond to whipping.26 This is an early example of the violence of western medical thought and practice. First, an ideological marker of disease is inflicted on a resistant slave's plight to recapture his/her liberty and humanity; then, an ideological shift displaces consideration of an unjust social order, replacing it with a medical diagnosis present in an individual and curable under the jurisdiction of medical purview. Finally, as a result, slavery is legitimized and buttressed by medicine. Given this history, it’s not surprising that people of color—especially poor people of color—often have served as the guinea pigs of the Medical Industrial Complex, suffering poor health and death as consequences. Among the most flagrant historic examples of the MIC’s use of poor people of color as guinea pigs is the Tuskegee syphilis experiment. In 1932 government doctors began a study on the effects of the illness. Their project deemed "expendable" the bodies of southern Black sharecroppers by withholding treatment and lying about treatment; for example, excruciatingly painful spinal taps were performed under the guise of treatment. While the medical community failed to note any wrongdoing, the research project continued for many years.27 Well into World War II, the lead scientific investigators even secured government exceptions from military recruitment for the research subjects, because the military provided treatment for syphilis. As a result, nearly one hundred men died and many more lived with chronic and serious health complications. Indeed "the burden of scientific investigation has rested on those that are socially and therefore medically disenfranchised."28 In Puerto Rico in the 1960 's, birth control pills three to four times the hormone dosages of today's birth control pills were tested on women without their consent. Many were killed and injured while being used as guinea pigs. Eugenecist Margaret Sanger, the mother of the (western interventionist) birth control movement and founder of Planned Parenthood, went to Puerto Rico to support "administering physicians."

#### Thus, the 1AC’s response to the topic, your respectability politics, your insistence that the black non-citizen choose it’s master, and debate’s crowding out of black women’s political discourse is Black rage.

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**After witnessing their son’s body lying in the blistering August heat, handling his transition, burial, and an unimaginable level of grief, Brown’s mother, Lezley McSpadden, and stepfather, Louis Head, had to hear not only that there would be no indictment but, possibly more troubling, that St. Louis County prosecutor Robert McCulloch had purposefully undermined any possibility of an indictment**. **Their range of emotions came together in a moment of grief, anger, and rage when McSpadden, in tears and atop a car, addressed a crowd gathered outside the Ferguson courthouse.** McSpadden made it clear that after having endured the loss of her son, she felt that the grand jury’s decision demonstrated a complete lack of care. “They ain’t never gonna care. I been here my whole life, I ain’t never had to go through noth-ing like this,” she told the crowd “**. As McSpadden began to break down in tears, cries of “**fuck **the police” were mixed in with a young woman yelling, We love you, Ms. Lezley,” a uniquely Southern black form of address for an honored community member, especially a mother** (McDonald 2014**).McSpadden’s justifiable anger and indignation helps us bring into view the central paradox of turning to the state as the agent offering repair for the actions of the state.** When CNN reporter Sunny Hostin asked McSpad-den why she addressed the crowd, she explained, “We heard this and it was just like, like I had been shot. Like you shoot me now” (quoted in Ford and Levs 2014). **McSpadden refused to consider police officer Wilson, county prosecutor McCulloch, and the grand jury as separate from one another or apart from the state. Police killings are not, in such a formulation, the action of individual police officers who represent the state but do not constitute the state as such. Rather, they are considered parts of a whole.** When McSpadden says, “Like you shoot me now,” she brings McCulloch’s handling of the grand jury into the same frame as Wilson, where she identifies both as the “you” who shot her son and her. The “you” here works to capture the state as the party causing injury. To confront such a scenario, one has to ask how a private “citizen” might reconcile the incongruity of turning to the state to carry out repair of an injury that the state caused.**It was in this vortex of emotion that Head climbed onto the car to comfort his wife and then screamed out, “Burn this** bitch **down,” delivering it at a pitch that many would all too easily explain away as an “excited utter-ance.” Yet Head repeated his incendiary plea eleven times, which, while unintentional, echoed Garner’s plea, also uttered eleven times, “I can’t breathe.” The resonance of Head’s “excited utterance” with Garner’s pleas is that it resists the disciplining impulse to render it as thoughtless anger.** Indeed, Head acted somewhat deliberately. An Al Jazeera America camera recorded him saying moments before he climbed onto the car, “If I get up there, I’m gonna start a riot. Burn this bitch down” (quoted in America Tonight Digital Team 2014). **As Head would later describe his “outburst,” “I screamed words that I shouldn’t have screamed in the heat of the moment” (quoted in Alcindor and Bacon 2014), an apparent apology born of the necessities of our political present, where the legitimacy of one’s grief and anger, one’s claim to injury, especially if one is black, depends on one’s expression of that grief on the terms sanctioned by the social order.** **Central to such a demand is that people design their expression of grief so as to cause minimal disruption to that order**. Head, McSpadden, and their advisers certainly understood this in having Head issue an apology, particularly given the efforts to charge him with inciting a riot**. The response from black political elites revealed the con-tinued sway of a civil rights approach that seeks to maintain a moral ground by putting forth the unimpeachable citizen exemplar of sacrifice.** Such an approach  requires  a  disavowal  of  Head’s  “outburst”  as  a  mistake,  mere  thoughtless anger.Rather than attempt to explain away Head’s anger, I want to suggest that we can see in his shouting “burn this bitch down” an adequate response to his slain son and to Eric Garner’s pleas; his is an anger that, as if speaking to Frantz Fanon’s observation, “we revolt simply because, for many reasons, we can no longer breathe,” expressed a desire for the total destruction of the racial state. Doing so enables us to dwell on the possibilities that his defiant call holds for thinking through a mode of black politics that refuses the pre-vailing protocols and logics governing public demands for reparative justice. My interest is not to explain Head’s or any other seemingly “extreme” expres-sion of anger as a departure from black politics. **What we find in such expres-sions, which include the uprisings in Ferguson and Baltimore, is a critique that exceeds the sensibilities of liberal black political discourse precisely in their suggestion of the incompatibility, or possibly the constitutive exclusion, of the black as noncitizen, the paradigmatic other**.By taking Head as engaged in political discourse, I want to see in his apology more than an attempt to negotiate the protocols of legitimate or acceptable speech. Given the social function of apology—admission of a vio-lation and an agreement or promise to avoid any such future violation—those apologizing recognize their transgression of a social or political norm and locate guilt for that violation in their own actions or words.2 This was certainly part of what Head intended when he said, “I humbly apologize to all of those who read my pain and anger as a true desire for what I want for our community.” Still, we might better view his statement as an apologia—a defense or justification of his “outburst.”3 Head went on: “But to place blame solely on me for the conditions of our community, and country, after the grand jury decision, goes way too far and is as wrong as the decision itself. To declare a state of emergency and send a message of war, and not peace, before a grand jury decision was announced is also wrong” (quoted in Alcin-dor and Bacon 2014).I want to consider Head’s apologia as centering on a critique of the racial state through his identification of Governor Nixon’s November 17, 2014, state of emergency order as the context in which he expressed his pain and anger. **The fundamental injury in this instance becomes the actions of the state itself,** though not simply because the grand jury refused to indict Wilson, or even because county prosecutor McCulloch worked to ensure that the grand jury would not return an indictment. Whereas Agamben might consider Nixon’s two state of emergency orders the moment an exception appeared, Head invites us to bring into view a longer-running exception already in place. **As such, his original “outburst” brings to mind not so much a desire to destroy property or “our community” but the institutional order-ings of the local municipality in which black people experienced a perpetual exception**. Head’s invective thus reflects a knowledge born from experienc-ing Ferguson as a rég ime d’exception. Unlike in Mbembe’s (2001) framing, where the departure from common law occurs when privileged individuals and companies constitute for themselves a “form of sovereignty,” in Fergu-son there was no departure as such, as the posture that the municipality of Ferguson assumed toward its black residents was that of a sovereign toward its subjects who existed outside the compact of consensual governance.The Department of Justice’s (DOJ) report onFergusonoffers insight into how the city’s revenue-generating strategy allowed local police and courts to elaborate an exception. As the report outlines, generating revenue through policing black residents “fostered practices in the two central parts of Ferguson’s law enforcement system—policing and the courts—that are themselves unconstitutional or that contribute to constitutional violations” (DOJ  2015:  27).

#### Therefore, the Role of the Ballot is to vote for the debater who provides the best survival strategy for the oppressed.

#### The intersectionality of the black female body must be our starting point-- it exposes us to unique violences in a necropolitical democracy.

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**A few words on femicide. It refers to the murder of women because they are women.** Diana E. H. Russell heard the term as early as 1974, used it publicly at the First International Tribunal on Crimes Against Women in 1976, and originally defined it as the hate killing of women by men. Russell eventually settled on the killing of females because they are female. In her testimony she stated: “From the burning of witches in the past, to the more recent widespread custom of female infanticide in many societies, to the kill-ing of women for so-called honor, we realize that femicide has been going on a long time” (Russell 2011).It has indeed.**Mexican activists concerned about the female dead challenged the state’s claims that all dead women were sex workers, but, in this, they con-fronted the very strong association between working women and “working” women, between female workers and sex workers.** **Because of these associa-tions, of the tendency to see a woman in public as a “public woman,” state officials could readily explain the women’s deaths as a kind of public cleans-ing that rid the body politic of their contamination, their deaths helping restore the moral and political balance of** society. The logic, drawing heavily on the gendered divisions between public and private and a notion that pub-lic space is properly male space, operated this way: a woman who was dead must have been in public, out of her proper place in private, for a woman in public is a public woman, a sex worker, and **thus now properly embodied in the dead body she possessed, deserving her death,** possessing a dead body indicted the subject as a sex worker—death was all the proof one needed of her transgressions into public space and sex work, and her death should not trouble women who are not sex workers, women who did not transgress, should not trouble properly private women. Officials also asserted that keep-ing women at home would keep them safe—and here ceded any role for the state itself in protecting them, since women were by definition safe at home. The activists countered that the subjects, the women, were not sex workers—not that there was anything wrong with that—but were good daughters, working in factories to support their families, and therefore lethal violence against them was evidence of a severely weakened, if not failed, state. The activists, however, mounted this challenge largely without the benefit of social media and smartphones.In the US context, it appears that the #BlackLivesMatter campaign has gained considerable ground in one aspect of a long-standing necropo-litical struggle: it has gained ground not in stopping the production of dead bodies, as that continues apace and may yet increase, but in the extremely important contest over the meaning of the bodies of the black dead. It has gained ground, and now a growing number of people ask, “Is the proper body for the subject who finds himself in the grip of state power a deceased one?” In comparison to struggles between the state and activists over mean-ing around femicide and narcoviolence, the #BlackLivesMatter campaign has been more successful in challenging the state’s preferred meaning regarding the bodies of the dead. It has also gotten many who once opposed it to make at least verbal concessions to the Black Lives Matter cause. It has been able to do this in part due to technological innovations, such as smart-phones and social media, but in particular because of the rise of black Twit-ter. But while technology has been important, I see the movement’s suc-cesses as a result of its ability to blend old and new, new technology with strategies deployed in an older US necropolitical campaign, the antilynch-ing campaign, specifically; it has, whether consciously or not, brought together many of the strategies employed by the United States’ most iconic necropolitical warrior, one Ida B. Wells, along with the aforementioned technological innovations. From the Antilynching Campaign to #BlackLivesMatterWells’s  pioneering  necropolitical  activism  lives  on  in  the  contemporary  #BlackLivesMatter movement in three very important ways. First, in chal-lenging the meaning assigned to the bodies of the black dead in her time, Wells ([1892] 1991) outlined the consecutive excuses white supremacists offered for why they murdered blacks, and by doing this alone she managed to trouble the meaning assigned to the bodies of the dead. She asked her readers to recall **that white supremacists asserted that the lynched black dead were race rioters. When that was proved false she reminded her audience that white supremacists then claimed that the dead were “negro domina-tors,” attempting to subordinate whites politically. This excuse also did not hold. Finally, she pointed out, the murderers and their apologists hit on rape, and this meaning stuck. With “rapist” attached to the dead black body, the subject’s status as dead was legitimized, and those who slay the subject were shielded from criticism. In death, the subject, the rapist, was now appropri-ately embodied.** Second, Wells ([1892] 1991) not only pointed out the suspect nature of this moving-meaning target—as obviously the murderers and their supporters were simply justifying what they had done after the fact and attempting to see what excuse worked—she also called out “the malicious and untruthful white press” for its role in perpetuating lynching by circulat-ing false stereotypes of black people. Third, she documented the actual cir-cumstances of lynching to present a story far different from the narrative those in power circulated. The murders were much harder to justify once she documented and compiled evidence of blacks lynched for infractions such as stealing chickens and “sassing” whites**.The Black Lives Matter campaign and those sympathetic to its cause have made use of all these strategies. They have challenged white attempts to attach the meaning “thug” to the body of the black slain, understanding the work that this word was doing and how it functioned to justify police kill-ings, much as Wells challenged the meaning “rapist.” They have also chal-lenged the state’s assertion that thug should mark the line between he who lives and he who must die**, here going a step further than femicide activists who have simply argued that the deceased female subjects were hardwork-ing women not working girls. They have called out the mainstream press for aiding and abetting the state’s efforts to affix this meaning to the bodies of the dead. And they have documented the circumstances of blacks’ deaths at the hands of police, in a context in which the state has long refused to do so.