# 1NC

## 1

#### Interpretation: Topical affirmatives must specify the purpose of the strike

Chicktay 12, Mohamed Alli Chicktay BProc LLB LLM PhD Senior Lecturer in Law University of the Witwatersrand, “DEFINING THE RIGHT TO STRIKE: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION STANDARDS AND SOUTH AFRICAN LAW”, Published Online:1 Jan 2012, <https://hdl.handle.net/10520/EJC128566>, Accessed 11/4/21, sb

2 1 The purpose of the strike All strikes must have a purpose.5 A mere stoppage of work would not amount to a strike.6 The stoppage must be for a particular reason or demand.7 In Floraline v SASTU8 and FAWU v Rainbow Chicken Farms9 the Labour Court held that there was no strike, since, although there was a stoppage of work, there was no purpose or demand. This is both a requirement for the ILO and the LRA. Both recognize that strikes could exist for three different types of purposes. These include employment interests, protest action and secondary strikes.

#### Violation – affirmative doesn’t specify the purpose of the strike

#### Ground – we lose PICs out of different types of strikes – 3 types of different strikes – key to education, learn more about strikes which is key to the topic because “a just government” doesn’t exist

#### Presumption – if aff didn’t specify a purpose, it by definition isn’t a strike and gets struck down by courts and circumvented – evidence proves – Vote Neg on Presumption

#### Drop the Debater on fairness and education

## 2

#### State recognition of the right to strike only reinscribes the racial capitalist state – it allows the state to modulate the potential and violence of the strike so that racial capitalism can never be effectively challenged

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In other words, nothing would endanger the law more than the possibility of its authority being contested by a violence over which it has no control. The function of the law would therefore be, first and foremost, to contain violence within its own boundaries. It is in this context that, to demonstrate this surprising hypothesis, Benjamin invokes two examples: the right to strike guaranteed by the state and the law of war. Let us return to the place that the right to strike occupies within class struggle. To begin with, the very idea of such a struggle implies certain forms of violence. The strike could then be understood as one of the recognizable forms that this violence can take. However, this analytical framework is undermined as soon as this form of violence becomes regulated by a “right to strike,” such as the one recognized by law in France in 1864. What this recognition engages is, in fact, the will of the state to control the possible “violence” of the strike. Thus, the “right” of the right to strike appears as the best, if not the only, way for the state to circumscribe within (and via) the law the relative violence of class struggles. We might consider this to be the perfect illustration of the aforementioned hypothesis. Yet, there are two lines of questioning that destabilize this hypothesis that we would do well to consider First, is it legitimate to present the strike as a form of violence? Who has a vested interest in such a representation? In other words, how can we trace a clear and unequivocal demarcation between violence and nonviolence? Are we not always bound to find residues of violence, even in those actions that we would be tempted to consider nonviolent? The second line of questioning is just as important and is rooted in the distinction established by Georges Sorel, in his Reflections on Violence, between the “political strike” and the “proletarian general strike,” to which Benjamin dedicates a set of complementary analyses in §13 of his essay. Here, again, we are faced with a question of limits. What is at stake is the possibility for a certain type of strike (the proletarian general strike) to exceed the limits of the right to strike— turning, in other words, the right to strike against the law itself. The phenomenon is that of an autoimmune process, in which the right to strike that is meant to protect the law against the possible violence of class struggles is transformed into a means for the destruction of the law. The difference between the two types of strikes is nevertheless introduced with a condition: “The validity of this statement, however, is not unrestricted because it is not unconditional,” notes Benjamin in §7. We would be mistaken in believing that the right to strike is granted and guaranteed unconditionally. Rather, it is structurally subjected to a conflict of interpretations, those of the workers, on the one hand, and of the state on the other. From the point of view of the state, the partial strike cannot under any circumstance be understood as a right to exercise violence, but rather as the right to extract oneself from a preexisting (and verifiable) violence: that of the employer. In this sense, the partial strike should be considered a nonviolent action, what Benjamin named a “pure means.” The interpretations diverge on two main points. The first clearly depends on the alleged “violence of the employer,” a predicate that begs the question: Who might have the authority to recognize such violence? Evidently it is not the employer. The danger is that the state would similarly lack the incentive to make such a judgment call. It is nearly impossible, in fact, to find a single instance of a strike in which this recognition of violence was not subject to considerable controversy. The political game is thus the following: the state legislated the right to strike in order to contain class struggles, with the condition that workers must have “good reason” to strike. However, it is unlikely that a state systematically allied with (and accomplice to) employers will ever recognize reasons as good, and, as a consequence, it will deem any invocation of the right to strike as illegitimate. Workers will therefore be seen as abusing a right granted by the state, and in so doing transforming it into a violent means. On this point, Benjamin’s analyses remain extremely pertinent and profoundly contemporary. They unveil the enduring strategy of governments confronted with a strike (in education, transportation, or healthcare, for example) who, after claiming to understand the reasons for the protest and the grievances of the workers, deny that the arguments constitute sufficient reason for a strike that will likely paralyze this or that sector of the economy. They deny, in other words, that the conditions denounced by the workers display an intrinsic violence that justifies the strike. Let us note here a point that Benjamin does not mention, but that is part of Sorel’s reflections: this denial inevitably contaminates the (socialist) left once it gains power. What might previously have seemed a good reason to strike when it was the opposition is deemed an insufficient one once it is the ruling party. In the face of popular protest, it always invokes a lack of sufficient rationale, allowing it to avoid recognizing the intrinsic violence of a given social or economic situation, or of a new policy. And it is because it refuses to see this violence and to take responsibility for it that the left regularly loses workers’ support. The second conflict of interpretation concerns what is at stake in the strike. For the state, the strike implies a withdrawal or act of defiance vis-à-vis the employer, while for the workers it is a means of pressuring, if not of blackmail or even of “hostage taking.” The diference is thus between an act of suspension (which can be considered nonviolent) and one of extortion (which includes violence). Does this mean that “pure means” are not free of ambiguity, and that there can be no nonviolent action that does not include a residue of violence? It is not clear that Benjamin’s text allows us to go this far. Nevertheless, the problem of pure means, approached through the notion of the right to strike, raises the following question: Could it be that the text “Zur Kritik der Gewalt,” which we are accustomed to reading as a text on violence, deals in fact with the possibility and ambiguity of nonviolence? The opposition between the aforementioned conflicts of interpretation manifests itself in Benjamin’s excursus on the revolutionary strike, and specifically in the opposition between the political strike and the proletarian general strike, and in the meaning we should attribute to the latter. As previously discussed, the state will never admit that the right to strike is a right to violence. Its interpretative strategy consists in denying, as much as possible, the effective exercise of the right that it theoretically grants. Under these conditions, the function of the revolutionary strike is to return the strike to its true meaning; in other words, to return it to its own violence. In this context, the imperative is to move beyond idle words: a call to strike is a call to violence. This is the reason why such a call is regularly met with a violent reaction from the state, because trade unions force the state to recognize what it is trying to ignore, what it pretends to have solved by recognizing the right to strike: the irreducible violence of class struggles. This means that the previously discussed alternative between “suspension” and “extortion” is valid only for the political strike—in other words, for a strike whose primary vocation is not, contrary to that of the proletarian general strike, to revolt against the law itself. Essentially, the idea of a proletarian general strike, its myth (to borrow Sorel’s words), is to escape from this dichotomous alternative that inevitably reproduces and perpetuates the violence of domination.

#### Normative universalist conceptions of the “worker” exclude racialized incarcerated populations and cannot create movements to challenge the white supremacist carceral system

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In what follows, I argue that a Black abolitionist politic—a set of beliefs and practices formed in opposition to the white supremacist state; struggles for life and death initiated by and for those inhabiting the social position of chattel property—must both be definitively against “work” and against defining ourselves as “workers.” As a number of Black Studies scholars write, there are fundamental differences between the political category of the “worker” and that of the “slave.” Rendered civilly dead by U.S. law, I am to the State as the slave was to the plantation Master. The same relation of coercive racist violence applies: my Black body is always vulnerable, open to an enveloping State terror. As property of the State, I exist in direct confrontation with the punitive core of capitalist relations of force. Every movement I make carries with it the possibility of authority’s lash. I am the bodily raw material that gives the prison industrial complex purpose and social meaning. Beyond recognizing the structure of violence that I inhabit, it should also be noted how the very act of naming myself—a slave held captive by the State—as “worker” enables various tactics of seduction which operate to displace the gravity of the situation. Because job assignments are seen as a relative privilege behind these walls, we are lured into conformity and compliance to work, often merely out of a need to survive. While I discuss this latter dilemma for the majority of this essay, I would first like to begin by unpacking the former, clarifying the structural position of the (prison) slave. There are two essential dilemmas that prisoners face when organizing as the worker-on-strike instead of the slave-in-revolt. One is that a prison strike must be organized differently, its operations conducted differently, and requires a level of active solidarity (from others not in our position, non-imprisoned people) far greater than any other united workplace action. Many on the outside need to take up more of the risk. For example, there are numerous ways that free-world people can participate in a prison strike that does not mistake symbolic action for direct, disruptive tactics. We need mass civil disobedience, not more civic performance. If our goal is to clog the arteries of the prison regime from within, it might be more effective to choose methods that interrupt the prison’s reproduction from without. While we are staging sit-ins, boycotts, stoppages, and refusing trays inside, free-world activists could occupy the offices of a Department of Corrections, stage protests at a prison warden’s private house, or stage sit-ins in the buildings of government institutions and corporations that benefit from the smooth functioning of the prisoncrat’s political-industrial machine. As an outside comrade once pointed out, “phone zaps” are effective in certain historical situations, but disrupting this fascist regime requires a whole lot more. As Frank B. Wilderson argues, the worker is exploited at best, yet only shot, brutalized, or imprisoned because they engage in sabotage or forceful strike. The slave however is rendered the object of gratuitous violence as a perpetual structural constant. By missing this point and defining ourselves as imprisoned “workers,” we open ourselves up to the public’s misrecognition of the levels of risk involved with organizing on the inside. The universalist category of the worker also fails to grasp the centrality of our captivity to the making of U.S. society’s sense of (racial) freedom and (white) civilizational ascendency over the wretched of the earth. This, in fact, brings me to my second point, a thing much more complex to explain. That is, the fact that our enslavement by the State holds a culturally specific purpose for the society that appears driven to physically disappear us.

#### Capitalist accumulation and expropriation occurs through racial domination – racialized bodies are assigned economic values and marked as vulnerable to repression

Wang 18, Jackie, black studies scholar, poet, multimedia artist, and PhD candidate in the Department of African and African American Studies at Harvard, “Carceral Capitalism”, <http://criticaltheoryindex.org/assets/CarceralCapitalism---Wang-Jackie.pdf>, Accessed 10/30/21 VD

Racial Capitalism and Settler Colonialism Given the dual character of capitalist accumulation identified by both Rosa Luxemburg and David Harvey, what new understanding of capitalism would be generated by focusing on dispossession and expropriation over .work and production? Contemporary political theorists as well as critical ethnic studies, black studies, and Native studies scholars and activists analyze how racial slavery and seeder colonialism provide the material and territorial foundation for U.S. and Canadian sovereignty. Rather than casting slavery and Native genocide as temporally circumscribed events chat inaugurated the birth of capitalism in the New World ("primitive accumulation"), they show how the racial logics produced by these processes persist to this day: In order to recuperate the frame of political economy, a focus on the dialectic of racial slavery and settler colonialism leads to important revisions of Karl Marx's theory of primitive accumulation. In particular, Marx designates the transition from feudal to capitalist social relations as a violent process of primitive accumulation whereby "conquest, enslavement, robbery, murder, in short, force, play the greatest part." For Marx, chis results in the expropriation of the worker, the proletariat, who becomes the privileged subject of capitalist revolution. [f we consider primitive accumulation 35 a persistent structure rather than event, both Afro-pessimism and settler colonial studies destabilize normative conceptions of capitalism through the conceptual displacements of the proletariat. As Coulthard demonstrates, in considering Indigenous peoples in relation to primitive accumulation, "it appears that the history and experience of dispossession, not proletarianization, has been the dominant background structure shaping the character of the historical relationship between Indigenous peoples and the Canadian state." It is thus dispossession of land through genocidal elimination, relocation, and theft that animates Indigenous resistance and anticapitalism and "less around our emergent status 35 'rightless proletarians.'" If we extend the frame of primitive accumulation to the question of slavery, it is the dispossession of the slave's body rather than the proletarianization of labor that both precedes and exceeds the frame of settler colonial and global modernity. 13 As lyko Day notes, Native dispossession occurs through the expropriation of land, while black dispossession is characterized by enslavement and bodily dispossession. Although both racial logics buttress white accumulation and are defined by a "genocidal limit concept" that constitutes these subjects as disposable, Day notes that "the racial content of Indigenous peoples is the mirror opposite of blackness. From the beginning, an eliminatory project was driven to reduce Native populations through genocidal wars and later through statistical elimination through blood quantum and assimilationist policies. For slaves, an opposite logic of exclusion was driven to increase, not eliminate, the population of slaves."14 A debate has ensued in critical ethnic studies about which axis of dispossession is capitalism's condition of possibility: the expropriation of Native land or chattel slavery? Was the U.S. made possible primarily by unbridled access to black labor, or through territorial conquest? Is the global racial order defined-as Day writes-primarily by the indigenous-settler binary or the black-nonblack binary? At stake in this debate is the question of which axis of dispossession is the "base" from which the "superstructures" of economy, national sovereignty, or even subjectivity itself emerge. Those who argue that settler colonialism is central have sometimes made the claim that even black Americans participate in settler colonialism and indigenous displacement by continuing to live on stolen land, while those who center slavery and antiblackness have sometimes viewed Native Americans as perpetrators of anriblackness insofar as some uibes have historically owned slaves and seek state recognition by making land-based claims to sovereignty-a claim that relies on a political grammar that black Americans do not have access to, as slaves were rem from their native lands when they were transported co the Americas (see Jared Sexton's "The Vel of Slavery"). Although weighing in on this debate is beyond rhe scope of this essay, I generally agree with Day's assertion that to treat this set of issues as a zero-sum game obfuscates the complexity of these processes. With that said, it is important to note that this book deals primarily with the antiblack dimensions of prisons, police, and racial capitalism, though I acknowledge that analyses of settler colonialism are equally vital to understanding the operations of racial capitalism and how race is produced through multiple expropriative logics. Gendered Expropriation Though this book focuses primarily on black racialization in a contemporary context, it is worth noting that expropriation reproduces multiple categories of difference--including the man-woman gender binary. Although categories of difference were not invented by capitalism, expropriative processes assign particular meanings to categories of difference. "Woman" is reproduced as inferior through the unwaged theft of her labor, while the esteem of the category of "man" is propped up by the valorization of his labor. Even when women are in the professional workforce, they are still vulnerable to expropriation when they are given or take on work beyond their formal duties-whether it's washing the dishes at the office, mentoring students, or doing thankless administrative work while male colleagues gee the "dysfunctional genius" pass. But above all, gendered expropriation occurs through the extraction of care labor, emotional labor, as well as domestic and reproductive labor all of which is enabled by the enforcement of a rigid gender binary. This system is propped up by gender socialization, which compels women to psychologically internalize a feeling of responsibility for others. Although, at a glance, ic might seem that the expropriation of women's labor happens primarily through housewifeitization, the marriage contract, and the assignment of child-care duties to women, in the current epoch-characterized by an aging baby boomer population and a shortage of geriatric health-care workers-women are increasingly filling this void by taking care of sick parents, family members, and loved ones. It is hardly surprising that two-thirds of those who care for chose with Alzheimer's disease are women, even as women are the primary victims of this disease. Given thac women's lives are often interrupted by both childcare duties and caring for ailing family members, it's also hardly surprising that women accumulate many fewer assets and arc more likely to retire into poverty than their male counterparts. A recent report found that the European Union gender pension gap was 40 percent, which far exceeds the gender pay gap of 16 percent. Overall, gender is a material relation that, among other things, bilks women of their futures. The aged woman who has toiled by caring for others is left with little by the end of her life. Though gender distinctions are maintained through expropriative processes, they also have consequences beyond the economic and material realm. While it could be said that disposability is the logic that corresponds to racialized expropriation, gendered subjectivation has as its corollary rapeability. It also goes without saying that these expropriative logics are not mutually exclusive, as nonwhite women and gender-nonconforming people may be subject to a different set of expropriative logics than white women. Racalized Expropriation Although I do not claim that expropriation should be defined exclusively as racialization (again, because different expropriative logics reproduce multiple categories of difference), this book deals primarily with the antiblack racial order that is produced by late-capitalist accumulation. Michael C. Dawson and Nancy Fraser are two contemporary political theorists who have defined expropriation as a racializing process in capitalist societies. In "Hidden in Plain Sight," Dawson takes Fraser to task for not acknowledging racialized expropriation as one of the "background domains" of capitalist society. Understanding the logic of expropriation, in his view, is necessary for understanding which modes of resistance are needed at this historical juncture. His article begins with a meditation on the question: Should activists and movements such as Black Lives Matter focus on racialized state violence (police shootings, mass incarceration, and so forth), or should they focus on racialized inequality cawed by expropriation and exploitation? What is the relationship between the first logic-characterized by disposability-and the second logic-characterized by exploitability and expropriability? Rather than describing these logics as distinct forms of antiblack racism, he analyzes them as two dimensions of a dynamic process whereby capitalist expropriation generates the racial order by fracturing the population into superior and inferior humans: Understanding the foundation of capitalism requires a consideration of "the hidden abode of race": the ontological distinction between superior and inferior humans-codified as race-that was necessary for slavery, colonialism, the theft of lands in the Americas, and genocide. This racial separation is manifested in the division between full humans who possess the right to sell their labor and compete within markets, and chose that are disposable, discriminated against, and ultimately either eliminated or superexploited.15 Black racialization, then, is the mark that renders subjects as suitable for-on the one hand-hyperexploitation and expropriation, and, on the other hand, annihilation. Before the neoliberal era, the racial order was propped up by the state, and racial distinctions were enforced through legal codification, Jim Crow segregation, and other formal arrangements. In a contemporary context, though the legal regime undergirding the racial order has been dismantled, race has maintained its dual character, which consists of "not only a probabilistic assignment of relative economic value but also an index of differential vulnerability to state violence." 16 In other words, vulnerability to hyperexploitation and expropriation in the economic domain and vulnerability to premature death in the political and social domains. My essay on the Ferguson Police Department and the city's program of municipal plunder is an attempt to make visible the hidden backdrop of Mike Brown's execution: the widespread racialized expropriation of black residents carried out by the criminal justice arm of the state. It is not just that Mike Brown's murder happened alongside the looting of residents at the behest of the police and the city's financial manager, but that racial legacies that have marked black residents as lootable are intimately tied to police officers' treatment of black people as killable. The two logics reinforce and are bound up with each other. In her response co Dawson's analysis of racialization as expropriation, Fraser develops Dawson's claims by looking at the interplay between economic expropriation and "politically enforced status distinctions." 17 Not only does accumulation in a capitalist society occur along the two axes of exploitation and expropriation, but one makes the other possible in that the "racialized subjection of those whom capital expropriates is a condition of possibility for the freedom of those whom it exploits." 18 In other words, the "front story" of free workers who are contracted by capitalists to sell their labor-power for a wage is enabled by, and depends on, expropriation that takes place outside this contractual arrangement. Fraser further extends Dawson's analysis by offering a historical account of the various regimes of racialization. In her analysis of the "proletarianization" of black Americans as they migrated from the South to industrial centers in the North and Midwest during the first half of the twentieth century, she points out that even in the context of industrial "exploitation," the segmented labor market was organized such that a "confiscatory premium was placed on black labor." Black industrial workers were paid less than their white counterparts. In some sense, the racialized gap in earnings can be thought of as the portion that was expropriated from black workers. It is not as though the black laborers who joined the ranks of the industrial proletariat were newly subjected to exploitation rather than expropriation, but that these two methods of accumulation were operating in tandem. In the "present regime of racialized accumulation"- which she refers to as "financialized capitalism"-Fraser notes that there has been a loosening of the binary that has historically separated who should be subjected to expropriation from who should be subjected to exploitation, and that during the present period, debt is regularly deployed as a method of dispossession: Much large-scale industrial exploitation now occurs outside the historic core, in the BRICS countries of the semi-periphery. And expropriation has become ubiquitous, afflicting not only its traditional subjects but also those who were previously shielded by their status as citizenworkers. In these developments, debt plays a major role, as global financial institutions pressure states to collude with investors in extracting value from defenseless populations. 19 While I agree with Fraser's claim that the "sharp divide" berween "expropriab le subjects and exploitable citizen-workers" has been replaced by a "contin uum" (albeit a continuum chat remains racialized), I would add that the existence of poor whites who have fallen out of the middle class or have been affected by the opiate crisis at the present juncture represents not racial progress for black Americans, but the generalization of expropriability as a condition in the face of an accumulation crisis. In other words, immiseration for all rather than a growing respect for black Americans. Fraser rightly points out that "expropriation becomes tempting in periods of crisis."20 Sometimes the methods of accumulation that were once reserved exclusively for racialized subjects bleed over and are used on those with privileged status markings. If expropriation and exploitation now occur on a continuum, then it has been made possible, in part, by late capitalism's current modus operandi: the probabilistic ranking of subjects according to risk, sometimes indexed by a person's credit score. As I will demonstrate in the coming sections, this method is not a race-neutral way of gleaning information about a subject's personal integrity, credibility, or financial responsibility. It is merely an index of already-existing inequality and a way to distinguish between which people should be expropriated from and which should be merely exploited.

#### Neoliberal capitalism will produce extinction – the system reproduces crises that depoliticize the left, undermine futural thought, and postpone its demise – the impacts are environmental collapse, endless war, and the rise of fascism

Shaviro 15, (Steven Shaviro is an American academic, philosopher and cultural critic whose areas of interest include film theory, time, science fiction, panpsychism, capitalism, affect and subjectivity. He earned a PhD from Yale in 1981. “No Speed Limit: Three Essays on Accelerationism” <https://track5.mixtape.moe/qdkkdt.pdf> rvs)

The problem may be summarized as follows. Capitalism has indeed created the conditions for general prosperity and therefore for its own supersession. But it has also blocked, and continues to block, any hope of realizing this transformation. We cannot wait for capitalism to transform on its own, but we also cannot hope to progress by appealing to some radical Outside or by fashioning ourselves as militants faithful to some “event” that (as Badiou has it) would mark a radical and complete break with the given “situation” of capitalism. Accelerationism rather demands a movement against and outside capitalism—but on the basis of tendencies and technologies that are intrinsic to capitalism. Audre Lord famously argued that “the master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house.” But what if the master’s tools are the only ones available? Accelerationism grapples with this dilemma. What is the appeal of accelerationism today? It can be understood as a response to the particular social and political situation in which we currently seem to be trapped: that of a long-term, slow-motion catastrophe. Global warming, and environmental pollution and degradation, threaten to undermine our whole mode of life. And this mode of life is itself increasingly stressful and precarious, due to the depredations of neoliberal capitalism. As Fredric Jameson puts it, the world today is characterized by “heightened polarization, increasing unemployment, [and] the ever more desperate search for new investments and new markets.” These are all general features of capitalism identified by Marx, but in neoliberal society we encounter them in a particularly pure and virulent form. I want to be as specific as possible in my use of the term “neoliberalism” in order to describe this situation. I define neoliberalism as a specific mode of capitalist production (Marx), and form of governmentality (Foucault), that is characterized by the following specific factors: 1. The dominating influence of financial institutions, which facilitate transfers of wealth from everybody else to the already extremely wealthy (the “One Percent” or even the top one hundredth of one percent). 2. The privatization and commodification of what used to be common or public goods (resources like water and green space, as well as public services like education, communication, sewage and garbage disposal, and transportation). 3. The extraction, by banks and other large corporations, of a surplus from all social activities: not only from production (as in the classical Marxist model of capitalism) but from circulation and consumption as well. Capital accumulation proceeds not only by direct exploitation but also by rent-seeking, by debt collection, and by outright expropriation (“primitive accumulation”). 4. The subjection of all aspects of life to the so-called discipline of the market. This is equivalent, in more traditional Marxist terms, to the “real subsumption” by capital of all aspects of life: leisure as well as labor. Even our sleep is now organized in accordance with the imperatives of production and capital accumulation. 5. The redefinition of human beings as private owners of their own “human capital.” Each person is thereby, as Michel Foucault puts it, forced to become “an entrepreneur of himself.” In such circumstances, we are continually obliged to market ourselves, to “brand” ourselves, to maximize the return on our “investment” in ourselves. There is never enough: like the Red Queen, we always need to keep running, just to stay in the same place. Precarity is the fundamental condition of our lives. All of these processes work on a global scale; they extend far beyond the level of immediate individual experience. My life is precarious, at every moment, but I cannot apprehend the forces that make it so. I know how little money is left from my last paycheck, but I cannot grasp, in concrete terms, how “the economy” works. I directly experience the daily weather, but I do not directly experience the climate. Global warming and worldwide financial networks are examples of what the ecological theorist Timothy Morton calls hyperobjects. They are phenomena that actually exist but that “stretch our ideas of time and space, since they far outlast most human time scales, or they’re massively distributed in terrestrial space and so are unavailable to immediate experience.” Hyperobjects affect everything that we do, but we cannot point to them in specific instances. The chains of causality are far too complicated and intermeshed for us to follow. In order to make sense of our condition, we are forced to deal with difficult abstractions. We have to rely upon data that are gathered in massive quantities by scientific instruments and then collated through mathematical and statistical formulas but that are not directly accessible to our senses. We find ourselves, as Mark Hansen puts it, entangled “within networks of media technologies that operate predominantly, if not almost entirely, outside the scope of human modes of awareness (consciousness, attention, sense perception, etc.).” We cannot imagine such circumstances in any direct or naturalistic way, but only through the extrapolating lens of science fiction. Subject to these conditions, we live under relentless environmental and financial assault. We continually find ourselves in what might well be called a state of crisis. However, this involves a paradox. A crisis—whether economic, ecological, or political—is a turning point, a sudden rupture, a sharp and immediate moment of reckoning. But for us today, crisis has become a chronic and seemingly permanent condition. We live, oxymoronically, in a state of perpetual, but never resolved, convulsion and contradiction. Crises never come to a culmination; instead, they are endlessly and indefinitely deferred. For instance, after the economic collapse of 2008, the big banks were bailed out by the United States government. This allowed them to resume the very practices—the creation of arcane financial instruments, in order to enable relentless rent-seeking—that led to the breakdown of the economic system in the first place. The functioning of the system is restored, but only in such a way as to guarantee the renewal of the same crisis, on a greater scale, further down the road. Marx rightly noted that crises are endemic to capitalism. But far from threatening the system as Marx hoped, today these crises actually help it to renew itself. As David Harvey puts it, it is precisely “through the destruction of the achievements of preceding eras by way of war, the devaluation of assets, the degradation of productive capacity, abandonment and other forms of ‘creative destruction’” that capitalism creates “a new basis for profit-making and surplus absorption.” What lurks behind this analysis is the frustrating sense of an impasse. Among its other accomplishments, neoliberal capitalism has also robbed us of the future. For it turns everything into an eternal present. The highest values of our society—as preached in the business schools—are novelty, innovation, and creativity. And yet these always only result in more of the same. How often have we been told that a minor software update “changes everything”? Our society seems to function, as Ernst Bloch once put it, in a state of “sheer aimless infinity and incessant changeability; where everything ought to be constantly new, everything remains just as it was.” This is because, in our current state of affairs, the future exists only in order to be colonized and made into an investment opportunity. John Maynard Keynes sought to distinguish between risk and genuine uncertainty. Risk is calculable in terms of probability, but genuine uncertainty is not. Uncertain events are irreducible to probabilistic analysis, because “there is no scientific basis on which to form any calculable probability whatever.” Keynes’s discussion of uncertainty has strong affinities with Quentin Meillassoux’s account of hyperchaos. For Meillassoux, there is no “totality of cases,” no closed set of all possible states of the universe. Therefore, there is no way to assign fixed probabilities to these states. This is not just an empirical matter of insufficient information; uncertainty exists in principle. For Meillassoux and Keynes alike, there comes a point where “we simply do not know.” But today, Keynes’s distinction is entirely ignored. The Black-Scholes Formula and the Efficient Market Hypothesis both conceive the future entirely in probabilistic terms. In these theories, as in the actual financial trading that is guided by them (or at least rationalized by them), the genuine unknowability of the future is transformed into a matter of calculable, manageable risk. True novelty is excluded, because all possible outcomes have already been calculated and paid for in terms of the present. While this belief in the calculability of the future is delusional, it nonetheless determines the way that financial markets actually work. We might therefore say that speculative finance is the inverse—and the complement—of the “affirmative speculation” that takes place in science fiction. Financial speculation seeks to capture, and shut down, the very same extreme potentialities that science fiction explores. Science fiction is the narration of open, unaccountable futures; derivatives trading claims to have accounted for, and discounted, all these futures already. The “market”—nearly deified in neoliberal doctrine—thus works preemptively, as a global practice of what Richard Grusin calls premediation. It seeks to deplete the future in advance. Its relentless functioning makes it nearly impossible for us to conceive of any alternative to the global capitalist world order. Such is the condition that Mark Fisher calls capitalist realism. As Fisher puts it, channeling both Jameson and Žižek, “it’s easier to imagine the end of the world than the end of capitalism.”

#### Neoliberalism strips language of its critical possibility and produces race neutrality – this reifies whiteness and lets white people think they are free of responsibility – thus the ROTB is to challenge racial capitalism

**Giroux 03,** Henry, American and Canadian scholar and cultural critic, Communication Education, “Spectacles of Race and Pedagogies of Denial: Anti-Black Racist Pedagogy Under the Reign of Neoliberalism”, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0363452032000156190?journalCode=rced20>, Accessed 6/28/21 VD

Under the reign of neoliberalism in the United States, society is largely defined through the privileging of market relations, deregulation, privatization, and consumerism. Central to neoliberalism is the assumption that profit making be construed as the essence of democracy, thus providing a rationale for a handful of private interests to control as much of social life as possible to maximize their financial investments. Strictly aligning freedom with a narrow notion of individual interest, neoliberalism works hard to privatize all aspects of the public good and simultaneously narrow the role of the state as both a gatekeeper for capital and a policing force for maintaining social order and racial control. Unrestricted by social legislation or government regulation, market relations as they define the economy are viewed as a paradigm for democracy itself. Central to neoliberal philosophy is the claim that the development of all aspects of society should be left to the wisdom of the market. Similarly, neoliberal warriors argue that democratic values be subordinated to economic considerations, social issues be translated as private dilemmas, part-time labor replace full-time work, trade unions be weakened, and everybody be treated as a customer. Within this market-driven perspective, the exchange of capital takes precedence over social justice, the making of socially responsible citizens, and the building of democratic communities. There is no language here for recognizing antidemocratic forms of power, developing nonmarket values, or fighting against substantive injustices in a society founded on deep inequalities, particularly those based on race and class. Hence, it is not surprising that under neoliberalism, language is often stripped of its critical and social possibilities as it becomes increasingly difficult to imagine a social order in which all problems are not personal, social issues provide the conditions for understanding private considerations, critical reflection becomes the essence of politics, and matters of equity and justice become crucial to developing a democratic society. It is under the reign of neoliberalism that the changing vocabulary about race and racial justice has to be understood and engaged. As freedom is increasingly abstracted from the power of individuals and groups to participate actively in shaping society, it is reduced to the right of the individual to be free from social constraints. In this view, freedom is no longer linked to a collective effort on the part of individuals to create a democratic society. Instead, freedom becomes an exercise in self-development rather than social responsibility, reducing politics to either the celebration of consumerism or a privileging of a market-based notion of agency and choice that appear quite indifferent to how power, equity, and justice offer the enabling conditions for real individual and collective choices to be both made and acted upon. Under such circumstances, neoliberalism undermines those public spaces where noncommercial values and crucial social issues can be discussed, debated, and engaged. As public space is privatized, power is disconnected from social obligations, and it becomes more difficult for isolated individuals living in consumption-oriented spaces to construct an ethically engaged and power-sensitive language capable of accommodating the principles of ethics and racial justice as a common good rather than as a private affair. According to Bauman (1998), the elimination of public space and the subordination of democratic values to commercial interests narrow the discursive possibilities for supporting notions of the public good and create the conditions for “the suspicion against others, the intolerance of difference, the resentment of strangers, and the demands to separate and banish them, as well as the hysterical, paranoiac concern with ‘law and order”’ (p. 47). Positioned within the emergence of neoliberalism as the dominant economic and political philosophy of our times, neoracism can be understood as part of a broader attack against not only difference but also the value of public memory, public goods, and democracy itself. The new racism both represents a shift in how race is defined and is symptomatic of the breakdown of a political culture in which individual freedom and solidarity maintain an uneasy equilibrium in the service of racial, social, and economic justice. Individual freedom is now disconnected from any sense of civic responsibility or justice, focusing instead on investor profits, consumer confidence, the downsizing of governments to police precincts, and a deregulated social order in which the winner takes all. Freedom is no longer about either making the powerful responsible for their actions or providing the essential political, economic, and social conditions for everyday people to intervene in and shape their future. Under the reign of neoliberalism, freedom is less about the act of intervention than it is about the process of withdrawing from the social and enacting one’s sense of agency as an almost exclusively private endeavor. Freedom now cancels out civic courage and social responsibility while it simultaneously translates public issues and collective problems into tales of failed character, bad luck, or simply indifference. As Amy Elizabeth Ansell (1997) points out: The disproportionate failure of people of color to achieve social mobility speaks nothing of the justice of present social arrangements, according to the New Right worldview, but rather reflects the lack of merit or ability of people of color themselves. In this way, attention is deflected away from the reality of institutional racism and towards, for example, the “culture of poverty”, the “drug culture”, or the lack of black self-development. (p. 111) Appeals to freedom, operating under the sway of market forces, offer no signposts theoretically or politically for engaging racism, an ethical and political issue that undermines the very basis of a substantive democracy. Freedom in this discourse collapses into self-interest and as such is more inclined to organize any sense of community around shared fears, insecurities, and an intolerance of those “others” who are marginalized by class and color. But freedom reduced to the ethos of self-preservation and brutal self-interests makes it difficult for individuals to recognize the forms that racism often take when draped in either the language of denial, freedom or individual rights. In what follows, I want to explore two prominent forms of the new racism, color blindness and neoliberal racism and their connection to the New Right, corporate power, and neoliberal ideologies. Unlike the old racism, which defined racial differences in terms of fixed biological categories organized hierarchically, the new racism operates in various guises proclaiming among other things race neutrality, asserting culture as a marker of racial difference, or marking race as a private matter. Unlike the crude racism with its biological referents and pseudoscientific legitimations, buttressing its appeal to white racial superiority, the new racism cynically recodes itself within the vocabulary of the civil rights movement, invoking the language of Martin Luther King, Jr. to argue that individuals should be judged by the “content of their character” and not by the color of their skin. Amy Elizabeth Ansell (1997), a keen commentator on the new racism, notes both the recent shifts in racialized discourse away from more rabid and overt forms of racism and its appropriation particularly by the New Right in the United States and Britain: The new racism actively disavows racist intent and is cleansed of extremist intolerance, thus reinforcing the New Right’s attempt to distance itself from racist organizations such as the John Birch Society in the United States and the National Front in Britain. It is a form of racism that utilizes themes related to culture and nation as a replacement for the now discredited biological referents of the old racism. It is concerned less with notions of racial superiority in the narrow sense than with the alleged “threat” people of color pose—either because of their mere presence or because of their demand for “special privileges”—to economic, socio-political, and cultural vitality of the dominant (white) society. It is, in short, a new form of racism that operates with the category of “race”. It is a new form of exclusionary politics that operates indirectly and in stealth via the rhetorical inclusion of people of color and the sanitized nature of its racist appeal. (pp. 20––21) What is crucial about the new racism is that it demands an updated analysis of how racist practices work through the changing nature of language and other modes of representation. One of the most sanitized and yet pervasive forms of the new racism is evident in the language of color-blindness. Within this approach, it is argued that racial conflict and discrimination is a thing of the past and that race has no bearing on an individual’s or group’s location or standing in contemporary American society. Color blindness does not deny the existence of race but denies the claim that race is responsible for alleged injustices that reproduce group inequalities, privilege Whites, and negatively impacts on economic mobility, the possession of social resources, and the acquisition of political power. Put differently, inherent in the logic of color blindness is the central assumption that race has no valence as a marker of identity or power when factored into the social vocabulary of everyday life and the capacity for exercising individual and social agency. As Charles Gallagher (2003) observes, “Within the color-blind perspective it is not race per se which determines upward mobility but how much an individual chooses to pay attention to race that determines one’s fate. Within this perspective race is only as important as you allow it to be” (Gallagher, 2003, p. 12). As Jeff, one of Gallagher’s interviewees, puts it, race is simply another choice: “you know, there’s music, rap music is no longer, it’s not a black thing anymore … when it first came out it was black music, but now it’s just music. It’s another choice, just like country music can be considered like white hick music, you know it’s just a choice” (Gallagher, 2003, p. 11). Hence, in an era “free” of racism, race becomes a matter of taste, lifestyle, or heritage but has nothing to do with politics, legal rights, educational access, or economic opportunities. Veiled by a denial of how racial histories accrue political, economic, and cultural weight to the social power of whiteness, color blindness deletes the relationship between racial differences and power, and in doing so reinforces whiteness as the arbiter of value for judging difference against a normative notion of homogeneity (Goldberg, 2002, takes up this issue brilliantly, especially in pp. 200––238). For advocates of color blindness, race as a political signifier is conveniently denied or seen as something to be overcome, allowing Whites to ignore racism as a corrosive force for expanding the dynamics of ideological and structural inequality throughout society (Marable, 1998, p. 29). Color blindness is a convenient ideology for enabling Whites to ignore the degree to which race is tangled up with asymmetrical relations of power, functioning as a potent force for patterns of exclusion and discrimination, including, but not limited to, housing, mortgage loans, health care, schools, and the criminal justice system. If one effect of color blindness’s functions is to deny racial hierarchies, another consequence is that it offers Whites the belief not only that America is now a level playing field, but that the success that Whites enjoy relative to minorities of color is largely due to individual determination, a strong work ethic, high moral values, and a sound investment in education. Not only does color blindness offer up a highly racialized (though paraded as race-transcendent) notion of agency, but it also provides an ideological space free of guilt, self-reflection, and political responsibility, despite the fact that Blacks have a disadvantage in almost all areas of social life: housing, jobs, education, income levels, mortgage lending, and basic everyday services (see Bonilla-Silva, 2001, for specific figures in all areas of life, especially the chapter “White Supremacy in the Post-Civil Rights Era”). In a society marked by profound racial and class inequalities, it is difficult to believe that character and merit—as color blindness advocates would have us believe—are the prime determinants for social and economic mobility and a decent standard of living. The relegation of racism and its effects in the larger society to the realm of private beliefs, values, and behavior do little to explain a range of overwhelming realities, such as soaring black unemployment, decaying cities, and segregated schools. Paul Street (2002) puts the issue forcibly in a series of questions that register the primacy of, and interconnections among, politics, social issues, and race.

#### The alternative is to engage in a Black feminist poethical reading of the Zapatistas’ Dead – this recognizes that capital is built on the bodies and labor of the slave and the Native to form concrete movements against racial capitalism

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How to apprehend the world anew, without separability, determinacy, and sequentiality presumed in the very categories and concepts—that is, the forms of the subject—which are still our critical tools and raw materials? Abstraction or reflection has to go. This is a job for intuition. I am thinking with Hortense Spillers’s articulation of the flesh as the ethical ground from which to critically consider conquest and slavery—namely, the wounded flesh exposes total violence as a means that ensures profit and its accumulation through the appropriation of total value, that is, that global capital consists in nothing more than the expropriated productive capacity of slave bodies and Native lands. For the flesh and soil expose the limits of spacetime, that is of the (social) scientific and historical accounts of colonial and racial subjugation, which cannot but reproduce what elsewhere I call the racial dialectic. For flesh is no more and no less than what has been (which nourishes us as animal, vegetable, or mineral) and of what has yet to become, that which returns to the soil to be broken down into the nano elements, the particles that emerged at the beginning and remain in the composition of everything that happens and exists in the universe. The Dead’s words have ethical force: everything for everyone. For if the flesh holds, as a mark/ sign, colonial violence, the Dead’s rotting flesh returns this marking to the soil, and the Dead then remain in the very compositions of anything, yes, as matter, raw material, that nourishes the instruments of production, labor, and capital itself. That is how the dead slave/Native lives in/ as capital. What I am proposing then is an approach to reading, as a materialist practice, one that includes imaging of what happens and has happened as well as what has existed, exists, and will exist otherwise—all and at once. From without the subject and its form, the World, becomes the stage of indeterminacy, that is, of The Thing or matter released from the grips of the forms of the understanding. Beyond Kant’s forms and laws (and rules), Hegel’s Spirit (whose materiality is also that of phenomena), and the concepts and categories of historical materialism (but as a constituent of Karl Marx’s raw material), all that exists and happens refers to the Thing or prime matter. I’ll conclude with a comment on the kind of onto-epistemological departure that reading history from the horizon of death demands. What is it about modern grammar that renders the Zapatista Dead’s words without political (in the strict meaning of addressing the state) significance (both as meaning and value), transforming them into expressions of beliefs that refer to a time before exposure to Europeans, their reason, and the tools and modalities of violence it justifies? When I turn to the original presentation of the historical materialist text, I find how the pillars of modern thought that sustain reason’s ruling render the Dead’s words incomprehensible.11 This is not loss because that incomprehensibility also exposes how transcendental reason has not been able to comprehend everything, the Thing, or matter. Post-Enlightenment Reason comprehends what it engulfs, which is only what separability, determinacy, and sequentiality can work with, and which is always already translated as form, more precisely as temporal (historical or social) ones that, in the historical materialist text, for instance, are figured as juridical devices, such as title and contract. For example, here is how it appears when, deploying a Black feminist reading device, which I call blacklight, I try to find an answer for an obvious question in Marx’s presentation of the theory of value in Capital, volume 1, chapter 7.12 The question: How is it that slavery and conquest are only relevant as moments of primitive accumulation (violent preconditions) and not as crucial to the ongoing accumulation of (industrial and financial) capital in the late eighteenth and throughout the nineteenth century and beyond? If there is something upon which Marxists do not disagree it is that labor time materialized in a commodity accounts for its exchange value. What most do not question is what happens to the materialized labor in the commodities that enter as raw material (cotton) and instrument of production (the iron used in the spindle). What happens to these materializations of slave labor in Virginia and Minas Gerais working on conquered (Indigenous) lands (cotton) and extracted (gold) from conquered lands? My point with these questions is that if one accepts determinacy, as it operates in the attribution of productivity to human activity—that is, that social labor time determines value—why is the claim not taken seriously that accumulated (exchange) value that constitutes global capital includes both the surplus value appropriated from the wage (contract) labor and the total value yielded by slave (title) labor on colonized lands. The answer is because exchange value is measured “by the quantity of labour expended on and materialized in [a commodity], by the working-time necessary, under given social conditions, for its production.”13 Unfortunately, my claim is incomprehensible—much like the Zapatistas’ Dead—because it refuses determinacy (and sequentiality) in the differentiation (separation) of social conditions. Let me explain how determinacy operates in both moments. First, it appears in Marx’s statements on the production of value in his consideration of the “labour process independent of the particular form it takes under given social conditions.”14 I am not refusing this deployment of determinacy here for the sake of this argument because doing so would break with the basic tenet of historical materialism. This would defeat the purpose of this chapter, which is to challenge the disavowal of slave labor as productive of exchange value. In any event, determinacy operates here in two distinctions: (a) when considering the “labor process” in general, between labor and its objects (means of production or instruments of production): land, raw materials, and so forth; that is, in Marx’s statement that living labor is the sole subject, the productive force: “the soil (and this economically speaking, includes water) . . . is the universal subject [meaning object] of labour,”15 and (b) in Marx’s argument, when considering labor as a “value-creating activity,” that the labor expended in creating raw materials—such as cotton and iron or gold—is also mere object: “The raw material serves now merely as an absorbent of a definite quantity of labour,” it is changed in the process of spinning (by the labor time in it) into the yarn, which as the product is “nothing more than a measure of the labour absorbed by the cotton.”16 Under capitalist social conditions of production, the social labor time expended in the production of cotton disappears in the process of production of the yarn; it is used by the spinner. Though it enters in the price the capitalist paid for the cotton and the spindle, it has no significance (explanatory value) to the exchange value of the commodity, the yarn. In this distinction between the labor process in general and (surplus) value-creating labor, the productive capacity (that is, their capacity to work) of Native lands and enslaved bodies vanishes into/as raw material. They have no part in surplus value, because what counts is living labor time. Second, the key statement in the explanation of the law of value is the phrase “under certain social conditions.” For Capital is also a piece of sociological theorizing, and its main concern is to provide a clear and distinct description of capitalist social conditions, according to the formalizing trust of classical knowledge and the temporal trust of Hegel’s account of history. More important, what distinguishes capital accumulation is the particular historical stage, in which freedom has an economic and juridical shape. It requires “free laborers, in the double sense that neither they themselves form part and parcel of the means of production, as in the case of slaves, bondsmen, &c., nor do the means of production belong to them, as in the case of peasant-proprietors; they are, therefore, free from, unencumbered by, any means of production of their own.” Hence, the enslaved laborer picking cotton on the plantations in Virginia or mining in the mountains of Minas Gerais does so under social (economic and juridic) conditions of unfreedom, as “part and parcel of the means of production.”17 For Marx, they do not enter in the reproduction (accumulation of) capital because the land where the cotton grows and the bodies of those who tend the land and pick the cotton are instruments of production, not dead labor, but raw material. That is, slave labor does not count as dead/past labor. However, because the raw material (cotton and gold) would not exist without it, it enters the calculation of the value of the yarn as an underdetermined element in the conditions of production. At the same time, as such, as raw material, slave labor also differs from the cotton it creates for the production of the yarn. For, as noted above, the cotton is a raw material whose exchange value disappears once living labor transforms it into an elementary component of the yarn—that is, when it realizes it use value. But the price of the slave’s labor is already surplus value and his/her labor is extracted, rather than willfully applied to its subjects. More important, the slave is presented as a raw material given by nature, like the soil (land and water), and not one that is in itself use value (that is the product of past labor).18 “In slave-labor,” Marx argues, “even that part of the working-day in which the slave is only replacing the value of his own means of existence, in which, therefore, in fact, he works for himself alone, appears as labor for his master. All the slave’s labor appears as unpaid labor. In wage-labor, on the contrary, even surplus labor, or unpaid labor, appears as paid. There the property relation conceals the labor of the slave for himself; here the money-relation conceals the unrequited labor of the wage-laborer.”19 Evidently, if one accepts this second operation of determinacy, in the differentiation of social conditions of production, my claim that the accumulated surplus value that constitutes capital contains the total value yielded by slaves laboring on Native lands is absolute nonsense. But it is nonsense, it seems, precisely because the settler slave owner did expropriate the total value. Though necessity guides the original presentation of historical materialism, its formulation of labor rests on the concept of freedom (as a descriptor of social conditions)—in the two senses Marx highlights above, from land (and other means of production) and to enter into a contract. The juridical forms of title and contract, respectively, account for the determination of two kinds of labor: slave labor, which as raw material, an object, as an instrument of production does not produce exchange value, and wage labor, which, even if dispossessed, remains a subject, free and equal. This is what renders my case nonsense, not the statement that slave owners expropriated the total value produced by slave labor in Native lands. What to do? To move to dissolve the categories of historical materialism. If we are to apprehend the words of the Dead (the Native and the slave), our political imagination must learn how to do without separability, sequentiality, and determinacy. Now listen!! What are the Zapatistas’ Dead saying? What is in the demand that does distinguish a subject (everyone is us) and an object (everything or nothing), or I and Other: “For everyone, everything,” say our dead. “Until it is so, there will be nothing for us.” Heed the call from the Zapatistas’ Dead, who speak history in the voice of the earth, their flesh and blood nurturing the mountains and rivers of the Mexican southeast, demanding everything to everyone or nothing, the return of the total value yielded by Native lands and slave labor; calling for the end of the rule of state-capital; because global capital is postcolonial capital, that is, it lives off the value yielded by the productive capacity of Native lands and slave bodies, so that the end of the anticolonial struggles, decolonization, will only be accomplished if the line separating the colonial present from the colonial past is erased because this is the only way to seize the colonial future. What is it that the Dead call for? Listening to the Dead requires seizing the spatiality and temporality that constitute Hegelian and Marxian formulations of the dialectical. Heeding the call of these insurgencies against state-capital, I am convinced, requires a materialist perspective that can answer to the Zapatistas’ Dead call for decolonization, or as I prefer, the end of the world as we know it. Emphasis on know! For what the Dead’s words and the Zapatistas’ reply presumes is an in/distinction between Thing, One, Us—thus violating the basic rules of modern grammar, namely separability, determinacy, and sequentiality.20 For the Dead (speaking in the mountains and forests) there is no distinction between everything, everyone, and us, no separability (extension and its related attributes, such as solidity), that is. No separation between the Dead and us and everything (what is happened and what is happening), no sequentiality, that is. These functions of our political grammar are presupposed in descriptions of the state and its legal borders and common history and social subjects. A Black feminist poethical reading is a kind of radical imaging; it is a compositional method that attends to matter not toward comprehending it in the fixed forms of the understanding or subsuming it to the idea(l)s of Reason. While a tool for critique, Black feminist poethical reading consists in a confrontational method that erases the distinction between the actual and the virtual, as it presupposes that, beyond space-time, all that happens and exists is deeply implicated. As a mode of critical intervention, it is creative in that it images the World as having always already been otherwise than its modern picturing. That is, its deployment of the figural (against the formal) unsettles the onto-epistemological pillars that sustain critical projects derived from the Kantian program. Reading the Dead is imaging, with an intention, a manner of composing and recomposing what is given (global capital) so as to expose fissures through which possibilities can be contemplated and with what is not necessarily followed by what is supposed to come.

## 3

#### Counterplan Text: Workers ought to unconditionally strike in the member nations of the European Union

#### Acts of recognition by the colonizer block the future potentialities for change and reifies colonial oppression – the aff is an act of fixity, a colonial mimicry where the Other is only valuable once their desire to be recognized by the colonizer has been assured and fulfilled

LaRue, 2011

Robert LaRue, “MOVING BEYOND THIS MOMENT: EMPLOYING DELEUZE AND GUATARRI‟S RHIZOME IN POSTCOLONIALISM”, Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of The University of Texas at Arlington in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of MASTER OF ARTS IN ENGLISH THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON August 2011, <https://rc.library.uta.edu/uta-ir/bitstream/handle/10106/6148/LaRue_uta_2502M_11318.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>, accessed 11/1/21, sb

Throughout his work as a psychiatrist, Fanon‟s attempts to delineate the path(s) of colonial oppression and find a way to help colonized individuals move beyond the problems of colonization always returned to the idea that “the last shall be first” (Wretched 2). Although presented in various forms, Fanon‟s desire to replace the first with the last only creates a loop because, instead of opening new pathways, it seeks to “substitute” one “thing” for another (Wretched 1). Even though, for Fanon, it seemed that ontology did “not [to] permit us to understand the being of the black man” (Black Skin 110) it seemed so because the ontology of the colonized was viewed as starting in, and around colonization. Since the rhizome refuses points, instead preferring continuous connections and fluid motions, understanding ontology as effect serves no purpose. This reliance on a point-based experience, if Cartesian humanism holds that existence is to be understood as a series disconnected instances of “I‟s,” becomes most clearly evidenced in the language of colonization each time the colonizer, or even Fanon himself, articulates that it is the colonizer who “fabricated and continues to fabricate the colonized subject” (Wretched 2). Fanon seems to look at Sartre‟s existentialism as a way to connect the dots. However, as discussed in chapter 1, in joining the “I‟s” into one system, Sartre presents Fanon with a new set of challenges. Fanon‟s insistence on the colonizer being the “point” of the colonized, and postcolonial, existence fixes postcoloniality. The rhizome, in its “lineness,” soothes the tensions between these points. While it must be acknowledged that it was the colonizer who created circumstances that brought the “colonized” into a state of colonization, the existence of colonized individuals should not be understood as fixed at the point of interaction. Instead, the existence of the colonized extends beyond—both before and after—this “moment” of interaction. An understanding of this extension is precisely what the rhizome promotes. In soothing the series of disjointed points into multiple lines, Fanon‟s attempt to escape the fixity of his colonized body can be more easily realized because there can be an understanding that the stereotype (which becomes the linguistic model to signify the colonized) does not, and cannot exist. Fixity blocks the history—and futures—of bodies by turning them into singular sites that begin at the present moment(s) of “recognition,” or, as Homi Bhabha so aptly states it, fixity “facilitates colonial relations, and sets up a discursive form of racial and cultural opposition in terms of which colonial power is exercised” (112; emphasis in original). Through colonial linguistics, the body becomes expressly felt, “overdetermin[ing the colonized] from without” (Black Skin 116). At each interaction with the white world, the colonized are “assailed at various points” while “the[ir] corporeal schema crumble[s], its place taken by a racial epidermal schema” (112) so that the only understanding of their body is that which is handed to them by the colonizer. The body no longer becomes just the experiences of the individual, it becomes layered with the images that the colonizer has of the black man‟s experience. If Fanon s interested in having “those who have kept [the colonized] in slavery” so that they can “help rehabilitate man, and ensure his triumph everywhere, once and for all” (Wretched 61; my emphasis) there can be no freedom from this fixed body because the signifying colonized will always carry “traces” (as Derrida would put it) of its previous image/utterance relationship. Fanon‟s insistence that postcolonials can finally be “elevated” and given recognition as “humans” seems contradictory because, within the colonizer‟s mind, the separation of “Us” and “Them” is needed in order to assure the colonizer of his/her place. Therefore, Fanon‟s desire to “take [the] place” of the colonizer (Wretched 23) belies the truth that the postcolonial individual will never have a place within the colonist‟s system of power. By demanding a substitution of roles, Fanon seems to have ignored—either intentionally or unintentionally—his own recognition that “in the white world the man of color encounters difficulties in the development of bodily schema” and any “consciousness of the body” comes as “a third-person consciousness” (Black Skin 110-11). In other words, within the “white world” of colonization, there is no room for “man of color” to be anything other than what the white man sees him as. The fixed categories of “the Other” always remain because the without them, the colonizer‟s own identity becomes jeporadized since there would no longer be an understanding of “me” based on what “I am not.” By introducing Deleuze and Guattari‟s rhizome into this understanding of experience as reality, the reading of the body expands so that the body, instead of remaining fixed, becomes a state of constant motion. Through an understanding of the rhizome, the postcolonial body no longer becomes a single unit (a monolith), instead, it becomes lifted from its binary relationship as a signifier (it is lifted from its status as a monolithic corporeal schema) and is able to be “read” as fluid and as a system of possibilities. As the language of colonization turned the existence of colonized individuals into one of fixed categories (i.e. savage, cannibalistic, uncivilized, etc.), the rhizome‟s multiplicities offer a chance to, as Ingram argues, move beyond a state of representation—where the body has its meaning(s) inscribed on it from outside sources, such as the perceptions of others—and towards a state of signification—where the body is no longer tied to fixed categories of meaning (3). By moving beyond the reliance on representation—which can never fully grasp the entirety of the thing it attempts to represent— and moving towards signification, postcolonial individuals gain the perspective that they have “meaning, but not one that is fixed or predetermined” (18). The European humanism, from which Fanon draws his claims, depends on these representations. It is because of this dependence that there can never be a new understanding of the postcolonial individual within the system of European humanism. The rhizome seeks to “think outside of the form/matter binary” (9) and allow all of its lines to create their own meanings—meanings that are not created by the Other, but created with an understanding of the Other as part of, not apart from, each line. This may seem problematic since it seems to corrode any knowledge of the “Self,” but, in fact, the body is freed from an understanding of the “Self” that relies on a point-based system of “mirroring” (Lacan) which holds the system of oppression in place. This psychology is based on a single fixed point: the “dictatorial conception of the unconscious (Deleuze and Guattari 17). The unconscious, in the system of mirroring, becomes the point of origin for the Self. This once again brings about the searching for an origin, for the point of beginning for the individual. And, since much—if not all—of psychoanalysis grounds itself in Western concepts/ideals, any attempt to excavate the postcolonial individual‟s origin from a psychological (or more appropriately psychoanalytical) means only leads back to a troubled system of power. Instead of looking to “uncover” or “reduce the unconscious or to interpret it or to make it signify according to a tree model,” a rhizome “is precisely th[e] production of the unconscious” because it disengages itself from the “leader/follower” framework (17-18). It is not safe to say that the rhizome is a social body, since it does not require agreements the way that language does (rhizomes do not require the approval of its member to validate its existence). It simply is. Each line in the rhizome exists with or without recognition. Saying that existence relies upon mutual recognition insinuates that neither party exists prior to their mutual interaction. Insinuations such as these once again seek to fix the location of individuals, turning them into subjects in a game of power. Lacan is correct when he discusses the mirror‟s role in the construction of the self, showing how it creates new movements and new recognitions within the individual (2); however, this admission is near-sighted because he fails to note the effects that the individual has upon the mirror. On their own, the two bodies exist independently of one another. When they meet, not only is the individual altered by the mirror‟s reflection, but the mirror is altered by the individual. Each wave of the individual‟s arm deterritorializes the mirror and reterritorializes it, giving it new properties and new motions. Each new reflection creates a new mirror, just as it creates a new understanding in the mirrored. And each understanding shifts in accordance with different mirrors. There no longer remains a singular “source,” a singular “point” from which the individual can take its recognition. It is by understanding these multilateral effects and assemblages (the ways in which each line of interaction) cast effects on one another that the rhizome comes to “produce” the unconscious. Instead, rhizomes should be seen as natural connections of bodies based, with a large emphasis, on motion. In addition to this, rhizomes require reconstitutions of all “bodies” involved, removing the unilateral shifts that are typically assumed to occur in colonization. In other words, as explained by Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak, among others, postcoloniality can no longer be seen as the sole existence of the once colonized “Others.” As a rhizome, then, the postcolonial body (not only how it physically connects with the microbes, viruses, and other life forms in its environment, but the psychological understanding of it as well) exists in a constant state of flux and as a constant source of deterritorializations and reterritorializations. In the postcolonial context, this is a powerful shift in focus because it allows Fanon‟s theory of the body to free itself from the singlesided transmissions of colonial knowledge(s). While Bhabha‟s discussion on mimicry makes a similar move of shifting colonial knowledge from a monologue to a dialogue (as he argues that mimicry highlights the “performance” of the colonist‟s existence), it too rests on performance which is problematic because the system of ascension remains intact since “colonial mimicry is the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other”8 (122). And, it is this upward movement that threatens to impede the progress of postcoloniality. Even as colonized individuals disrupt the security (or the certainty) of the colonists‟ knowledge of their (the colonists‟) own place, the postcolonial‟s desire to “prove” themselves only serves to validate the colonizer‟s superiority. Deleuze and Guattari‟s rhizome, however, moves beyond mimicry, as “[mimicry] relies on binary logic to describe phenomena” (11), insisting on understanding reality as a something like a giant ocean where each instance of contact sends forth ripples, and as each ripple moves outward, which alter the dynamic of the surrounding waters. As the rhizome highlights the interconnectivity of beings (of bodies), the hierarchical structure of mimicry is laid horizontal, placing all subjects equal to one another. Rhizomes “are flat, in the sense that they fill or occupy all of their dimensions” existing on a single plane (9). Rhizomes can never contain “a dualism or a dichotomy, even in the form of the good and the bad” because there is no end. Every seeming “rupture” always “tie back to one another” (9), and this ability to self-heal and avoid dualisms or dichotomies speaks directly to the systems through which postcolonial individuals must work. An understanding of the postcolonial Self can be, then, understood as a line in a multiplicity of lines which can never be separated because they are one another.

#### The impact is racism - the desire for recognition reproduces whiteness and hierarchies

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Many of these same preservice teachers either come from rural communities or now live in the white suburban enclaves that form a perimeter around the cities in which they work and/or go to school. They have lived most of their lives in a white world where race has not been part of their own identification of self and where, if race was spoken of in reference to others, was an uncomfortable topic to be avoided. The pervasiveness of whiteness as normative and as visibly present (especially when not named) ‘classifies, [and] categorizes…on the basis of what is considered to be a natural and neutral epistemology’ (Seshadri-Crooks, 2000, p. 56). While we may acknowledge race as a social and discursive construction, it is the racial visibility that Seshadri-Crooks argues secures the ‘resilience and endurability of race’ as secure from deconstruction in ways that caste, class and ethnicity are not. I would further argue that the presence of a natural and neutral epistemology preserves whiteness in an acceptability of not naming. Jackson (2009), discussing Judith Butler, argues ‘desire for recognition is in actuality a site of power where who gets to be recognized, and by whom, is governed by social norms’ (p. 171). Because whiteness has historically gone unnamed and unnoticed as the hegemonic norm, a failure to voice whiteness, or put differently, the choice to articulate one’s white identity by not doing so, is another strategy for maintaining power through a move to maintain the normative (and unspoken) presence of whiteness, hence, ‘desiring silence’. While I worked with preservice teachers at this institution over a period of 10 years teaching a variety of courses and supervising field experiences, the majority of the data that I consider for this paper were generated from my teaching of a required course ‘Diversity and the Learner’ for students at the university preparing to teach in grades P–8.2 The stated aim of the course is to ‘enable students to acquire knowledge, skills, attitudes and values germane to an understanding of human growth and development with an emphasis on multicultural, psychological, and sociological factors…to analyze the cultural frames of reference and begin to develop a “multicultural” perspective.’ The data discussed for this article are drawn primarily from a semester in which of the 24 students enrolled in the class, 23 were white, non-Hispanic and one was black. It is also important to note that in addition to a lack of diversity in this class in regard to race and ethnicity, there was also a lack of diversity in regard to gender (2 males in a class of 24).3 For this paper I rely on my notes from classroom interactions as I attempted to understand and engage the silences that presented themselves in the classroom, my research log and, with the permission of students, their reflective journals and classroom assignments. The desire on the part of these students with whom I worked is to be (for the most part) good teachers, good girls and to carry on with the white identity and desires they have known and trusted. I am not suggesting that because they are ‘forced’ into interactions with the Other, and in many cases have their opinions that have been formed out of ignorance challenged, that they can or do automatically leave their bias behind. No, instead I am suggesting that their desire to carry on as before produces a form of regulation and resistance that I will discuss later in the paper, further informed by their positioning as females. There is no impetus to notice the sameness that surrounds them in their classmates, teacher educators or neighbours. It is and has been the Other that marks difference that permits whiteness and its attendant privileges to go, if not unnoticed, then at least unnamed. ‘Race establishes and preserves difference for the ultimate goal of sameness, in order to reproduce the desire for Whiteness’ (Seshadri-Crooks, 2000, p. 56). In a previous analysis of data from two teacher education courses comprised predominately of white female preservice teachers, I identified pedagogical silences and strategies that teacher educators might employ to both acknowledge and break the silences (Mazzei, 2008). What I attributed the silences to then was fear; fear of offending, fear of being wrong, fear of appearing stupid and fear of being marginalized by peers. The article ends with a discussion of how these students might be recognizing the potential loss they would encounter should they acknowledge and voice these fears. What I am proposing now is that perhaps there is less a resistance to fear that is producing the silences and, instead, recognition of their need to maintain privilege, identity and comfort that is producing a ‘desiring silence’. To begin to think, then, of the consequences of desire, I go to Alecia Jackson (2007, 2009) who discusses how desire, power and voice coalesce. It is this not said, this silent and desirous voice, that is produced by a longing for maintaining a normative and unchallenged (even unrecognized) whiteness (i.e., privilege) that is important here. Working within ‘a problematic of silence’ (Mazzei, 2007) coupled with this view toward the silences as ‘producing’ something may lead us not just to turn whiteness on its head, but silence as well, in a way that forces us to bring ‘production into desire on the one hand and desire into production on the other’ (Deleuze, 1990, pp. 17–18). In framing whiteness in the context of this paper, I am interested in how a lack of cognition regarding one’s racial identity/position as white serves to explain away and in many cases perpetuate the existence of racial barriers to social mobility (Sleeter, 2004). Since whiteness as a descriptor for whites often goes unnamed, unnoticed and unspoken, the silence or absence (that which is not spoken) of this racial identity continues to provide a framework for the analysis of the conversations I have with white teachers at both the preservice and inservice levels. If white teachers continue to effectively deny or fail to see their whiteness as raced then they will continue to see students of colour as ‘Other’ and respond to them from that perception—i.e., they are raced, I am not. Such an orientation perpetuates a racially inhabited silence that limits, if not negates, an open dialogue regarding race and culture. In such an environment stereotypes are furthered rather than confronted and perceptions of self and Other are allowed to remain circumscribed in a protective caul. In short, education as a means of transformation or change is subverted and silence as a means of control and protection of privilege is accepted. If we think silence is an enactment of a desire to be recognized as governed by social norms, then we acknowledge that the desire on the part of these white preservice teachers is a desire to be recognized ‘within the constraints of normativity’ (Jackson, 2009, p. 171). If they are recognized within such constraints, then their mark as white teacher remains intact. Privilege remains unchallenged and is thus exercised as a desiring silence that maintains an invisible mask of whiteness. In other words, these white preservice teachers do not speak of whiteness, or more specifically their own race, therefore whiteness is reinscribed as that which need not be named, thereby reproducing what Seshadri-Crooks refers to as a ‘neutral epistemology’. Instead of asking, ‘What is desire?’ the impetus is instead to ask, ‘What does desire ask of these students?’ Not what does it mean, but what does it do? Deleuze draws on Nietzsche for his theory of desire. For Nietzsche, the notion of desire has to do with drive. ‘What we call ‘thinking’, ‘feeling’, reason’ is nothing more than a competing of the passions or drives’ (Smith, 2007). Deleuze rejects desire as a lack, gap or what is missing and, instead, puts forth an immanent concept of desire. As such, desire is primary, positive and not left wanting but, instead, producing something. What matters for Deleuze is not what desire means; instead, he wants to know ‘whether it works, and how it works, and who it works for’ (Deleuze, 1990, p. 22). Through an engagement with Deleuzian desire, I focus on what is producing the silence and/or what the silence produces, in other words, a desiring silence. Not as in ‘to desire’ silence, but silences that are produced and that produce an effect, emerging from a ‘production of production’ (O’Sullivan & Zepke, 2008, p. 1, emphasis in original). Such silences may be produced by resistance or the attempt to maintain power that resists the ‘gravity of the circle of recognition and its representations’ (p. 1). What is desire? If desire does not begin from lack, in other words, desiring what we do not have, then where does it begin or, put differently, what spawns desire? Discussing Deleuzian desire, Claire Colebrook (2002) writes, ‘life strives to preserve and enhance itself and does so by connecting with other desires’ (p. 91). This preserving and enhancing of desire coalesces with power, not in a ‘repression of desire but the expansion of desire’ (p. 91). The task of Deleuze’s own method is to ‘explain how interests—such as humanism, individualism, capitalism or communism—are produced from desires: the concrete and specific connection of bodies’ (p. 92), in this case the bodies of white preservice teachers. The charge then becomes not to define desire, but to understand the interests that produce desire and the interests that desire seeks to produce and/or protect. In the case of white preservice teachers, the visibleness of white as a marker of their bodies has previously been deemed invisible because of its normative presence. This failure to have previously named whiteness thereby produces a desire to protect the invisibleness and hence a maintenance of whiteness as an unchallenged norm. ‘Desire itself is power, a power to become and produce images’ (Colebrook, 2002, p. 94, emphasis in original). A powerful white presence is an unnamed and silent image that continues to be masked in the power of that which will not be named. Desiring silence then re-produces an unspoken white presence. How does desire function to promote/produce regulation and resistance in teacher education? In her ethnographic study with those learning to teach, Deborah Britzman (2003) asserts ‘Much about the experience of learning to teach is negative: learning what to avoid, what not to do, and what not to become even as one finds oneself performing these disclaimed actions’ (p. 4). In my research, these teachers voice their reasons for being silent as a way of avoidance and perceived becoming. When asked why they were silent in my class, they spoke of not wanting to offend, not wanting to be challenged, not having the ‘right’ answer or not being respected by classmates (both white and non-white) who may hold different views. In other words, if they remain silent, they can avoid a loss of power and control that is maintained in a hegemonic and normative silence. Their desire therefore to regulate themselves and to resist being wrenched from their comfort zone produces a silence that attempts to reinscribe privilege, power and identity. Their silent voice coalesces with power to maintain whiteness.

## Case

### Util

#### Antiblackness > extinction –

#### [1] The impacts of racial cap are happening right now meaning we o/w on probability and timeframe – probability x timeframe > magnitude because it’s a question of what impacts are worth taking action on in the first place

#### [2] Suffering beyond suffering – racial cap pushes black people beyond suffering through prison labor and racial dispossession

#### [3] Education – the university sustains antiblackness and the PIC through its contradictions – that means we have an epistemological obligation to reject antiblackness

#### Util is racist –

#### [1] Extinction is all lives matter – you’ve basically said you won’t care about black people when it’s only about black people but now that white people’s lives are threatened, you’ll care about black people

#### [2] Death count DA – black casualties in crises and wars are never counted– the US invaded Libya and killed a bunch of black people but didn’t report any of those deaths which shows that black people are viewed as fungible and the benefits of util will never apply to black folks in the context of the government

#### [3] Utilitarian justifications are simultaneously self-justifying and self-defeating – the moralistic call to stave off proximate impacts result in endless imperial aggression and mass atrocities, all of which only make global destruction more likely

**Pasquinelli 18** (Sydney Pasquinelli, Faculty in the Department of Communication at the University of Pittsburgh, 2018, *The Lesser-Evils Paradigm for Imagining Islam: U.S. Executive Branch (Re)framing of Islam in the Early Cold War Era of Racialized Empire-Building*, PhD Dissertation, <http://d-scholarship.pitt.edu/33906/1/Pasquinelli%20-%20Dissertation.pdf>, pp 156-161) gz

Lesser-evil reasoning is used in “practical conflict-situations where a greater evil can only be avoided when a lesser evil is caused or permitted.” 30 The basic logic behind any lesser-evil justification is the same: if we are required to choose between two evils, we ought to choose the lesser-evil.31 Lesser-evil reasoning plays an important role in liberal democracy: frequently employed by political philosophers and scientists, politicians, and lawyers, its application influences outcomes of democratic processes like criminal trials, domestic policies, and foreign policies including wartime allowances.32 In *The Lesser Evil: Political Ethics in an Age of Terror*, Michael Ignatieff encapsulates one of the oldest questions in republican politics: “What lesser evils may a society commit **when it believes it faces the greater evil of its own destruction?**”33 To answer this question, governments and their constituents must employ utilitarian logic to calculate aggregate risks and rewards. An exemplary lesser-evil justification was provided by the US military under **Truman**, in it**s decision to drop two atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki**. It reasoned that the lives saved by the bombing, and its subsequent cessation of the war, outnumbered the deaths it caused. The decision was therefore justified because it thwarted a greater-evil.34 **While lesser-evil reasoning emerged as a predominant feature of liberalism, it has roots in Christian theology**.35 Some ethico-political traditions are guided by moral absolutes, or “absolutely exceptionless moral norms whose violation is intrinsically evil.”36 In an absolutist framework, lesser-evils (like nuclear war) cannot be rationalized; an act that is evil is wrong without qualification and must never be performed.37 But even theologians understand that moral universals place significant limitations on leaders, especially in times of warfare.38 In *Doing Evil to Achieve Good: Moral Choice in Conflict Situations*, Richard McCormick and Paul Ramsey explain that whether a theological system permits lesser-evil acts depends on “the moral relevance and decisiveness of the distinction between what is *directly intended* and what is only *indirectly intended* or actively *permitted*.”39 Those sympathetic to lesser-evil reasoning find the distinction significant: an act of evil which is directly intended can never be justified; but an act of evil which is indirectly intended, or permitted because of circumstance, is qualitatively different and thus possible to excuse on moral terms. McCormick summarizes centuries of Catholic moral thought as tolerating evil only when “a proportionately grave reason for allowing evil to occur” exists. In such cases, “the resultant evil [is] referred to as an ‘unintended byproduct’ of the action, only indirectly voluntary and justified by the presence of a proportionately grave reason.”40 *Jus ad bellum*, or just war theory, notarized by a community of scholars wherein theologians played a significant role, is premised upon the principle of proportionality: that the total benefits of war must outweigh the total harms.41 The post-colonial condition demanded **rhetorical calculations of proportionality to justify imperial meddling in the politics of the post-colonies**. In *The Least of All Possible Evils: Humanitarian Violence from Arendt to Gaza*, Eyal Weizman shows that **in the context of benevolent hegemonic leadership**, application of lesser-evil reasoning requires a **constant policing of the world in order to measure and determine the relativity of evils**.42 Liberal state apparatuses partake in a form of governmentality, in which they **presume the inevitability and necessity of militarized presence in the post-colonies** and then pursue the path of engagement they have calculated to produce “the best of all possible worlds,” or the optimum permutation of good and evil. 43 In a 1978 lecture at the Collège de France, Michel Foucault firstly defines governmentality as: “The ensemble formed by the institutions, procedures, analyses, and reflections… that allow the exercise of… [a] form of power, which has as its target population, as its principal form of knowledge political economy, and as its essential technical means apparatuses of security.”44 The divine law and order which had undergirded colonial power was substituted by a **marketplace of good and evil**, in which **ethics were determined by a “vulgar pragmatism”—what works must be right!** 45 In *Covering Islam*, Said confirms the supply-and-demand-based production of dominant US discourse, revealing how images of Islam are used by the government and media to forward the US agenda. Within this framework, Islam “is not an interlocutor but in a sense a commodity.”46 **Covert and overt moves to distinguish the good or legitimate Muslims from the bad or inauthentic confirm the endurance of the colonial presumption of the *manageability* of Muslim populations**. The image of Western management, however, had transformed from a natural right into a liberal responsibility. To recruit Muslim allies, the US executive branch and its network of intelligence agents assumed the mantle of ***interpretive authority* over Islam**.47 Foucault distinguishes sovereign authority from governmentality in noting the latter is practiced primarily by “employing tactics rather than laws, and even of using laws themselves as tactics— to arrange things in a way that… such-and-such ends may be achieved.”48 Whereas colonial powers impose laws upon colonies, post-colonial governments enact a series of tactical measures upon post-colonial allies and enemies.49 Interpretive authority combined with military and economic prowess gave inescapable force **unilateral US executive branch tactics**. These measures included **economic and political manipulation, “psychological warfare,” and military basing or intervention**.50 Pertaining to the outcomes of lesser-evil governmentality, Ignatieff asks: **“Is there no moral limit to what a republic can do when its existence is threatened?”**51 When a society feels vulnerable to a great force (X), the logic of lesser-evils may permit that society to take **any unethical action short of (X).** **If (X) is extinction, great injustices (like nuclear warfare) may be vindicated in the name of winning a war or saving humanity**. 52 While Ignatieff remains confident in the checks and balances of liberal democracies, which he claims are “all guided by a constitutional commitment to minimize the use of dubious means—violence, force, coercion, and deception—in the government of its citizens,” many scholars are less faithful. 53 In *The Just War Myth: The Moral Illusions of War*, Andrew Fiala criticizes the US government for **exaggerating threats in order to skew utilitarian risk-calculus** and justify its violations of *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello*.54 For example, the “existential” threat conjured by the Bush administration in its War on Terror **made the 2003 preemptive invasion of Iraq, as well as the use of illegal surveillance and interrogation tactics, more palatable to the American people and to US Congress**.55 Gordon R. Mitchell and Robert P. Newman interpret the War on Terror as a revival of Cold War logic; in both cases, **the construction of a singular and existential threat to Western humanity justified an extended period of heightened US military presence and police powers**.56 **Threat construction, lesser-evil reasoning, and hegemonic aspirations combine** in postcolonial US discourse to produce a “state of exception,” **whereby a sovereign power (usually the executive branch) is granted authority to suspend the laws and moral norms that dictate liberal (geo)politicking** *only* to confront an emergency.57 But when the crisis spans decades, **the “state of exception” becomes the norm**, often solidifying itself institutionally.58 Some scholars disapprove of the lowering of moral standards facilitated by lesser-evil reasoning. Mamdani blames the rise of Islamist terrorism in the twenty first century on US promotion of low-intensity conflicts and guerilla warfare, or “terrorism by another name,” in the late Cold War era.59 Hannah Arendt foreshadowed the blowback of the Cold War in her 1950 essay “The Eggs Speak Up,” where she condemned the US strategy to prop up (friendly) tyrannies and dictatorships as part of a broader strategy of defeating totalitarianism. Arendt advocates a “radical negation of the whole concept of the lesser-evil in politics, because far from protecting us against the greater ones, the lesser-evils have invariably led us into them.”60 **Lesser-evil reasoning gives policymakers a convenient method to gain legitimacy for foreign and domestic policies that constituents would normally (under non-emergency conditions) object to on moral and/or legal grounds**