## 1N

#### Forms of fragmented politics completely cedes the political to capitalism. Engagement in undercommon communication is too individualized and resists collective and concrete change. This constitutes enjoyment of melancholic pleasures of being distanced and accommodated to the real world, and as a result remains stuck in parasitic oppression without change – Dean 13:

“Communist Desire”, Jodi Dean, , 2013, LHP AM

An emphasis on the drive dimension of melancholia, on Freud's attention to the way sadism in melancholia is 'turned round upon the subject's own self', leads to an interpretation of the general contours shaping the left that differs from Brown's**. Instead of a left attached to an unaclmowledged orthodoxy,** **we have one that has given way on the desire for communism, betrayed its historical commitment to the proletariat, and sublimated revolutionary energies into restorationist practices that strengthen the hold of capitalism**. **This left has replaced commitments to the emancipatory, egalitarian struggles of working people against capitalism - commitments that were never fully orthodox, but always ruptured, conflicted and contested - with incessant activity** (not unlike the manic Freud also associates with melancholia), and so **now satisfies itself with criticism and interpretation, small projects and local actions, particular issues and legislative victories, art, technology, procedures, and process**. It sublimates revolutionary desire to democratic drive, to the repetitious practices offered up as democracy (whether representative, deliberative or radical). **Having already conceded to the inevitably of capitalism, it noticeably abandons 'any striking power against the big bourgeoisie',** to return to Benjamin's language. For such a left, **enjoyment comes from its withdrawal from responsibility, its sublimation of goals and responsibilities into the branching, fragmented practices of micro-politics, self-care, and issue awareness**. Perpetually slighted, harmed and undone**, this left remains stuck in repetition, unable to break out of the circuits of drive in which it is caught** - unable because it enjoys. **Might this not explain why such a left confuses discipline with domination, why it forfeits collectivity in the name of an illusory, individualist freedom that continuously seeks to fragment and disrupt any assertion of a collective or a common?** The watchwords of critique within this structure of left desire are moralism, dogmatism, authoritarianism and utopianism - watchwords enacting a perpetual self-surveillance: has an argument, position or view inadvertently rukeo one of these errors? Even some of its militants reject party and state, division and decision, securing in advance an inefficacy sure to guarantee it the nuggets of satisfaction drive provides. **If this left is rightly described as melancholic, and I agree with Brown that it is, then its melancholia derives from the real existing compromises and betrayals inextricable from its history - its accommodations with reality, whether of nationalist war, capitalist encirclement, or so-called market demands.** Lacan teaches that, like Kant's categorical imperative, the super-ego refuses to accept reality as an explanation for failure. Impossible is no excuse - desire is always impossible to satisfy. A wide spectrum of the contemporary left has either accommodated itself, in one or another, to an inevitable capitalism or taken the practical failures of Marxism-Leninism to require the abandonment of antagonism, class, and revolutionary commitment to overturning capitalist arrangements of property and production. **Melancholic fantasy (the communist Master, authoritarian and obscene) as well as sublimated, melancholic practices (there was no alternative) shield this left, shield Ltd, from confrontation with guilt over such betrayal as they capture us in activities that feel productive, important, radical.**

#### The use of experience as an unquestioned ground against objectivity reifies identities as ahistorical and static. All women’s identity are the same, they are all equitable, and all political advocacies derive just from the fact of identity. Scott1[[1]](#footnote-1)

**Scott**, Joan W. 1991. “The Evidence of Experience.” *Critical Inquiry* 17

Among feminist historians, for example, "**experience" has helped to legitimize a critique of the false claims to objectivity of traditional** historical **accounts**. **Part of the** **project** of some feminist history **has been to unmask all claims to objectivity** as an ideological cover for masculine bias by pointing out the shortcomings, incompleteness, and exclusiveness of mainstream history. **This has been achieved by providing documentation about women** in the past that calls into question existing interpretations made without consideration of gen- der. **But how do we authorize the new knowledge if the possibility of all** historical **objectivity has been questioned?** By **appealing to experience**, which in this usage connotes both reality and its subjective apprehen- sion-the experience of women in the past and of women historians who can recognize something of themselves in their foremothers. Judith Newton, a literary historian writing about the neglect of femi- nism by contemporary critical theorists, argues that women, too, arrived at the critique of objectivity usually associated with deconstruction or the new historicism. This feminist critique came "straight out of reflection on our own, that is, women's experience, out of the contradictions we felt between the different ways we were represented even to ourselves, out of the inequities we had long experienced in our situations."25Newton's appeal to experience seems to bypass the issue of objectivity (by not raising the question of whether feminist work can be objective) but it rests firmly on a foundational ground (experience). In her work the relationship between thought and experience is represented **as transparent** (the visual metaphor combines with the visceral) and so is directly accessible, as it is in historian Christine Stansell's insistence that "social practices," in all their "immediacy and entirety," constitute a domain of "sensuous experience" (a prediscursive reality directly felt, seen, and known) that cannot be sub- sumed by "language."26The effect of these kinds of statements, which **attribute an indisputable authenticity to women's experience, is to establish incontrovertibly women's identity as people with agency**. **It is also to universalize the identity of women** and thus to ground claims for the legit- imacy of women's history in the shared experience of historians of women and those women whose stories they tell. In addition, **it literally equates the personal with the political, for the lived experience of women is seen as leading directly to resistance to oppression, that is, to feminism**.2"

#### The alternative is the politics of the comrade – one that is oriented toward a shared communist horizon – only our methodology can fight capitalism, anything else allows it to take over co-opting any movement – Dean 19:

Dean, Jodi. Comrade: An essay on political belonging. Verso, 2019. // LHP BT + LHP PS

The term ***comrade* indexes a political relation, a set of expectations for action toward a common goal**. **It highlights the sameness of those on the same side—no matter their differences, comrades stand together**. As Obama’s joke implies, when you share a politics, you don’t generally distance yourself from your comrades. **Comradeship binds action**, **and in** this binding, **this solidarity, it** collectivizes and **directs action in light of a shared vision for the future**. **For communists, this is the egalitarian future of a society emancipated from the determinations of private property and capitalism and reorganized according to the free association, common benefit, and collective decisions of the producers.** But the term comrade predates its use by communists and socialists. In romance languages, comrade first appears in the sixteenth century to designate one who shares a room with another. Juan A. Herrero Brasas cites a Spanish historical-linguistic dictionary’s definition of the term: “*Camarada* is someone who is so close to another man that he eats and sleeps in the same house with him.”[2](about:blank) In French, the term was originally feminine, *camarade*, and referred to a barracks or room shared by soldiers.[3](about:blank) Etymologically, comrade derives from *camera*, the Latin word for room, chamber, and vault. The technical connotation of *vault* indexes a generic function, the structure that produces a particular space and holds it open.[4](about:blank) A chamber or room is a repeatable structure that takes its form by producing an inside separate from an outside and providing a supported cover for those underneath it. Sharing a room, sharing a space, generates a closeness, an intensity of feeling and expectation of solidarity that differentiates those on one side from those on the other. Comradeship is a political relation of supported cover. Interested in comrade as a mode of address, carrier of expectations, and figure of belonging in the communist and socialist traditions, I emphasize **the comrade as a generic figure for the political relation between those on the same side of a political struggle. Comrades are those who  tie themselves together instrumentally, for a common purpose: *If we want to win—and we have to win—we must act together*.** As Angela Davis describes her decision to join the Communist Party:I wanted an anchor, a base, a mooring. I needed comrades with whom I could share a common ideology. I was tired of ephemeral ad-hoc groups that fell apart when faced with the slightest difficulty; tired of men who measured their sexual height by women’s intellectual genuflection. It wasn’t that I was fearless, but I knew that to win, we had to fight and the fight that would win was the one collectively waged by the masses of our people and working people in general. I knew that this fight had to be led by a group, a party with more permanence in its membership and structure and substance in its ideology.[5](about:blank) **Comrades are those you can count on. You share enough of a common ideology,** enough of a commitment to common principles and goals, **to do more than one-off actions. Together you can fight the long fight. As comrades, our actions are voluntary, but they are not always of our own choosing**. **Comrades have to be able to count on each other even when we don’t like each other and even when we disagree. We do what needs to be done because we owe it to our comrades.** In *The Romance of American Communism*, Vivian Gornick reports the words of a former member of the Communist Party USA, or CPUSA, who hated the daily grind of selling papers and canvassing expected of party cadre, but nevertheless, according to her, “I did it. I did it because if I didn’t do it, I couldn’t face my comrades the next day. And we all did it for the same reason: we were accountable to each other.”[6](about:blank) Put in psychoanalytic terms, the comrade functions as an ego ideal: the point from which party members assess themselves as doing important, meaningful work.[7](about:blank)Being accountable to another entails seeing your actions through their eyes. Are you letting them down or are you doing work that they respect and admire?In *Crowds and Party*, I present the good comrade as an ideal ego, that is to say, as how party members imagine themselves.[8](about:blank) They may imagine themselves as thrilling orators, brilliant polemicists, skilled organizers, or courageous militants. In contrast with my discussion there, in the current book, I draw out how **the comrade** **also functions as an ego ideal, the perspective that party members—and often fellow travelers—take toward themselves**. This perspective is the effect of belonging on the same side as it works back on those who have committed themselves to common struggle. The comrade is a symbolic as well as an imaginary figure and it is the symbolic dimension of ego ideal I focus on here. My thinking about the comrade as a generic figure for those on the same side flows out of my work on communism as the horizon of left politics and my work on the party as the political form necessary for this politics.[9](about:blank) **To see our political horizon as communist is to highlight the emancipatory egalitarian struggle of the proletarianized against capitalist exploitation—that is, against the determination of life by market forces; by value; by the division of labor (on the basis of sex and race); by imperialism (theorized by Lenin in terms of the dominance of monopoly and finance capital); and by neocolonialism (theorized by Nkrumah as the last stage of imperialism).** **Today we see this horizon in struggles such as those led by women of color against police violence, white supremacy, and the murder and incarceration of black, brown, and working-class people. We see it in the infrastructure battles around pipelines, climate justice, and barely habitable cities with undrinkable water and contaminated soil. We see it in the array of social reproduction struggles against debt, foreclosure, and privatization, and for free, quality public housing, childcare, education, transportation, healthcare, and other basic services. We see it in the ongoing fight of LGBTQ people against harassment, discrimination, and oppression.** It is readily apparent today that **the communist horizon is the horizon of political struggle** not for the nation but **for the world**; it is an international horizon. This is evident in the antagonism between the rights of immigrants and refugees and intensified nationalisms; in the necessity of a global response to planetary warming; and in anti-imperialist, decolonization, and peace movements. In these examples, **communism is a force of negativity, the negation of the global capitalist present.** **Communism is also the name for the positive alternative to capitalism’s permanent and expanding exploitation, crisis, and immiseration, the name of a system of production based on meeting social needs**—*from each according to ability to each according to need*, to paraphrase Marx’s famous slogan—in a way that is collectively determined and carried out by the producers. This positive dimension of communism attends to social relations, to how people treat each other, animals, things, and the world around them**. Building communism entails more than resistance and riot. It requires the emancipated egalitarian organization of collective life.** With respect to the party, intellectuals on the contemporary left tend to extract the party from the aspirations and accomplishments it enabled. Communist philosophers who disagree on a slew of theoretical questions, such as Antonio Negri and Alain Badiou, converge on the organizational question—no party! **The party has been rejected as authoritarian**, as outmoded, as ill-fitting a society of networks. **Every other mode of political association may be revised, renewed, rethought, or reimagined except for the party of communists**. **This rejection of the party** as a form for left politics is a mistake. It **ignores the effects of association on those engaged in common struggle.** **It fails to learn from the everyday experiences of generations of activists**, organizers, and revolutionaries. **It relies on a narrow, fantasied notion of the party as a totalitarian machine.** It neglects the courage, enthusiasm, and achievements of millions of party members for over a century. **Rejection of the party form has been left dogmatism** for the last thirty years **and has gotten us nowhere**. Fortunately, the movements of the squares in Greece and Spain, as well as lessons from the successes and limits of the Occupy movement, have pushed against this left dogmatism. They have reenergized interest in the party as a political form that can scale; a form that is flexible, adaptive, and expansive enough to endure beyond the joyous and disruptive moments of crowds in the streets. A theory of the comrade contributes to this renewal by drawing out the ways that shared commitment to a common struggle generates new strengths and new capacities. Over and against the reduction of party relations to the relations between the leaders and the led, comrade attends to the effects of political belonging on those on the same side of a political struggle. **As we fight together for a world free of exploitation, oppression, and bigotry, we have to be able to trust and count on each other. Comrade names this relation. The comrade relation remakes the place from which one sees, what it is possible to see, and what possibilities can appear**. It enables the revaluation of work and time, what one does, and for whom one does it. Is one’s work done for the people or for the bosses? Is it voluntary or done because one has to work? Does one work for personal provisions or for a collective good? We should recall Marx’s lyrical description of communism in which work becomes “life’s prime want.” We get a glimpse of that in comradeship: **one *wants* to do political work**. **You don’t want to let down your comrades**; you see the value of your work through their eyes, your new collective eyes. **Work, determined not by markets but by shared commitments, becomes fulfilling**. French communist philosopher and militant Bernard Aspe discusses the problem of contemporary capitalism as a loss of “common time”; that is, the loss of an experience of time generated and enjoyed through our collective being-together.[10](about:blank) From holidays, to meals, to breaks, whatever common time we have is synchronized and enclosed in forms for capitalist appropriation. Communicative capitalism’s apps and trackers amplify this process such that the time of consumption can be measured in much the same way that Taylorism measured the time of production: How long did a viewer spend on a particular web page? Did a person watch a whole ad or click off of it after five seconds? In contrast, the common action that is the actuality of communist movement induces a collective change in capacities. Breaking from capitalism’s 24-7 injunctions to produce and consume for the bosses and owners, the discipline of common struggle expands possibilities for action and intensifies the sense of its necessity. The comrade is a figure for the relation through which this transformation of work and time occurs. **How do we imagine political work? Under conditions where political change seems completely out of reach, we might imagine political work as self-transformation**. At the very least, we can work on ourselves. In the intensely mediated networks of communicative capitalism, we might see our social media engagements as a kind of activism where Twitter and Facebook function as important sites of struggle. Perhaps we understand writing as important political work and hammer out opinion pieces, letters to the editors, and manifestoes. When we imagine political work, we often take electoral politics as our frame of reference, focusing on voting, lawn signs, bumper stickers, and campaign buttons. Or we think of activists as those who arrange phone banks, canvass door-to-door, and set up rallies. In yet another political imaginary, we might envision political work as study, whether done alone or with others. We might imagine political work as cultural production, the building of new communities, spaces, and ways of seeing. Our imaginary might have a militant, or even militarist, inflection: political work is carried out through marches, occupations, strikes, and blockades; through civil disobedience, direct action, and covert operations. Even with the recognition of the wide array of political activities, the ways people use them to respond to specific situations and capacities, and how they combine to enhance each other, we might still imagine radical political work as punching a Nazi in the face.Throughout these various actions and activities, how are the relations among those fighting on the same side imagined? How do the activists and organizers, militants and revolutionaries relate to one another? During the weeks and months when the Occupy movement was at its peak, relations with others were often infused with a joyous sense of being together, with an enthusiasm for the collective co-creation of new patterns of action and ways of living.[11](about:blank) But the feeling didn’t last. **The pressures of organizing diverse people and politics under conditions of police repression and real material need wore down even the most committed activists.** Since then, on social media and across the broader left, **relations among the politically engaged have again become tense and conflicted, often along lines of race and gender. Dispersed and disorganized, we’re uncertain of whom to trust and what to expect. We encounter contradictory injunctions to self-care and call out. Suspicion undermines support. Exhaustion displaces enthusiasm**. **Attention to comradeship, to the ways that shared expectations make political work not just possible but also gratifying, may help redirect our energies back to our common struggle.** As former CPUSA member David Ross explained to Gornick:I knew that I could never feel passionately about the new movements as I had about the old, I realized that the CP has provided me with a sense of comradeship I would never have again, and that without that comradeship I could *never* be political.[12](about:blank)For Ross, the Communist Party is what made Marxism. The party gave Marxism life, political purpose. This life-giving capacity came from comradeship. Ross continues: “The idea of politics as simply a diffused consciousness linked only to personal integrity was—*is*—anathema to me.” His description of politics as “a diffused consciousness linked only to personal integrity” fits today’s left milieus. Perhaps, then, his remedy—comradeship—will as well. Various people have told me their stories of feeling a rush of warmth when they were first welcomed into their party as a comrade. I’ve had this feeling myself. In his memoir *Incognegro: A Memoir of Exile and Apartheid*, the theorist Frank Wilderson, a former member of uMkhonto weSizwe, or MK, the armed wing of the African National Congress (ANC), describes his first meeting with Chris Hani, the leader of the South African Communist Party and the chief of staff of MK. Wilderson writes, “I beamed like a schoolboy when he called me ‘comrade.’”[13](about:blank) Wilderson chides himself for what he calls a “childish need for recognition.”[14](about:blank) Perhaps because he still puts Hani on a pedestal, he feels exposed in his enjoyment of the egalitarian disruption of comradeship. Wilderson hasn’t yet internalized the idea that he and Hani are political equals. “Comrade” **holds out an equalizing promise, and when that promise is fulfilled, we confront our own continuing** yet **unwanted attachments to hierarchy, prestige, inadequacy. Accepting equality takes courage.** Wilderson’s joy in hearing Hani call him “comrade” contrasts sharply with another instance Wilderson recounts where comrade was the term of address**. In 1994, shortly before Wilderson was forced to leave South Africa, he encountered Nelson Mandela** at an event hosted by *Tribute*magazine. **After Mandela’s public remarks, Wilderson asked a question in which he addressed Mandela as “comrade.”** “Not Mr. Mandela. Not sir, like the fawning advertising mogul who asked the first question. **Comrade Mandela. It stitched him back into the militant garb he’d shed since the day he left prison.”**[15](about:blank) **Wilderson’s recollection shows how comrade’s equalizing insistence can be aggressive, an imposition of discipline. This is part of its power. Addressing another as “comrade” reminds them that something is expected of them. Discipline and joy are two sides of the same coin**, two aspects of comradeship as a mode of political belonging. As a form of address, figure of political relation, and carrier of expectations, comrade **disrupts capitalist society’s hierarchical identifications of sex, race, and class.** It **insists on** the **equalizing sameness of those on the same side of a political struggle** and **renders that** equalizing sameness **productive of new modes of work and belonging. In this respect, comrade is a carrier of utopian longings** in the sense theorized by Kathi Weeks. Weeks presents **the utopian form** as **carrying out two functions**: “One function is to alter our connection to the present, while the other is to shift our relationship to the future; one is productive of estrangement, the other of hope.”[16](about:blank) **The first function mobilizes the negativity of disidentification and disinvestment**. **Present relations** **become** strange, **less binding on our sense of possibility**. The second function **redirects “our attention and energies toward an open future** … providing a vision or glimmer of a better world.”[17](about:blank) **The power of comrade is in how it negates old relations and promises new ones—the promise itself ushers them in,** welcoming the new comrade into relations irreducible to their broader setting.

#### The role of the ballot is fidelity to the truth – dedication to a shared horizon is liberatory, Dean 19:

Dean, Jodi. Comrade: An essay on political belonging. Verso, 2019. // LHP BT + LHP PS

The idea that comrades are those who belong to the same side of a political struggle leads to the fourth thesis: **The** relation between comrades is mediated by **fidelity to a** truth**;** practices **of comradeship** materialize **this** fidelity**. The “same side” points to the truth comrades are faithful to—the political truth that unites them**—**and the fidelity with which they work to realize this truth in the world.** “Belonging” invites attention to the expectations, practices, and affects that being on the same side generates. The notions of truth and fidelity at work here come from Alain Badiou. In brief, **Badiou rejects the idea of truth as a proposition or judgment, arguing instead that** truth is a process**. The process begins with the eruption of something new, an event.** **Because an event changes the situation, breaks the confines of the given, it is undecidable in terms of the given; it is something entirely new**. Badiou argues that this undecidability “induces the appearance of a *subject* of the event.”[60](about:blank) **This subject isn’t the cause of the event. It’s an effect of or response to the event,** “the decision to *say* that the event has taken place.” Grammar might seduce us into rendering this subject as “I.” **We should** avoid this temptation and **recognize the subject** **as** designating an inflection point, **a response that extends the event.** **The decision that a truth has appeared, that an event has occurred, incites a process of verification**, the “infinite procedure of verification of the true,” **in** **what Badiou calls an “exercise of fidelity**.”[61](about:blank) **Fidelity is a working out and working through of the truth, an engagement with truth that extends out into and changes the world. We should recognize here the unavoidably collective dimension of fidelity: in the political field, verification is a struggle of the many.** Peter Hallward draws out some implications of Badiou’s conception of truth. First, it is subjective. Those faithful to an evental truth involve themselves in working it out, exploring its consequences.[62](about:blank) Second, fidelity is not blind faith; it is rigorous engagement unconcerned with individual personality and incorporated into the body of truth that it generates. Hallward writes:Fidelity is, by definition, ex-centric, directed outward, beyond the limits of a merely personal integrity. To be faithful to an evental implication always means to abandon oneself, rigorously, to the unfolding of its consequences. **Fidelity implies that, if there is truth, it can be only cruelly indifferent to the private as such.** **Every truth involves a kind of anti-privatization, a subjective collectivization. In truth, “I” matter only insofar as I am subsumed by the impersonal vector of truth—say, the political organization, or the scientific research program.**[**63**](about:blank) **The truth process builds a new body**. This body of truth is a collective formed to “work for the consequences of the new” and this work, this collective, disciplines and subsumes the faithful.[64](about:blank)Third, collectivity does not imply uniformity. The infinite procedure of verification incorporates multiple experiments, enactments, and effects.Badiou writes, “An organization lies at the intersection between an Idea and an event. However, this intersection only exists as process, whose immediate subject is the political militant.”[65](about:blank) We should amend this statement by replacing *militant* with *comrade*. Comrade highlights the “discipline of the event,” the way that political fidelity cannot be exercised by a solitary individual—hence, the Marxist-Leninist emphasis on the unity of theory and practice, the barren incapacity of each alone. Comrade also affirms the self-abandonment accompanying fidelity to a truth: its vector, its unfolding, is indifferent to my personal experiences and inclinations. For communists, the process of truth has a body and that body is the party, in both its historical and formal sense. Already in *Theory of the Subject*, Badiou recognizes the necessity of a political body, the party as the “subject-support of all politics.”[66](about:blank) He writes:The party is the body of politics, in the strict sense. The fact that there is a body by no means guarantees that there is a subject … But for there to be a subject, for a subject to be found, there must be the support of a body.[67](about:blank) **As a figure of political belonging, the comrade is a faithful response to the evental rupture of crowds and movements, to the egalitarian discharge that erupts from the force of the many where they don’t belong, to the movement of the people as the subject of politics.**[**68**](about:blank) **Comrades demonstrate fidelity through political work; through concerted, disciplined engagement. Their practical political work extends the truth of the emancipatory egalitarian struggle of the oppressed into the world.** Amending Badiou (by drawing from his earlier work), we can say that the comrade is not a faithful subject but a political relation faithful to the divided people as the subject of emancipatory egalitarian politics.[69](about:blank) **For us to see the revolutionary people as the subject in the struggles of the oppressed, for their subject to be found, we must be comrades.** In *Ninotchka*, Nina Ivanova Yakushova can’t tell who her comrades are by looking at them. The party has told her who to look for, but she has to ask. After Iranoff identifies himself, Yakushova tells him her name and the name and position of the party comrade who authorized her visit. Iranoff introduces Buljanoff and Kopalski. Yakushova addresses each as comrade. But it’s not the address that makes them all comrades. They are comrades because they are members of the same party. **The party is the organized body of truth that mediates their relationship. This mediation makes clear what is expected of comrades—disciplined, faithful work.** Iranoff, Buljanoff, and Kopalski have not been doing the work expected of comrades, which is why Moscow sent Yakushova to oversee them in Paris. That Kopalski says they would have greeted her with flowers demonstrates their *embourgeoisment*, the degeneration of their sense of comradeship. But they are all there for work. Gendered identity and hierarchy don’t mediate relations between comrades. The practices of fidelity to a political truth, the work done toward building that truth in the world, do. The solidarity of comrades in political struggle arises out of the intertwining of truth, practice, and party. It’s not reducible to any of these alone. **Comrades are not simply those who believe in the same truth—as in, for example, the idea of communism. Their fidelity to a certain truth is manifested in practical work.** Work for the realization of a political truth brings people into comradely relation. **But carrying out similar tasks in fidelity to the same truth isn’t sufficient for comradeship. The work must be in common; no one is a comrade on their own. Practices of comradeship are coordinated, organized. The party is the organization out of which comradeship emerges and that comrade relations produce. It concentrates comradeship even as comradeship exceeds it.**

### Method DAs

#### No perm – identity politics forecloses the possibility of a political relation based on action-guiding horizons rather than identity-based experience, Dean 19:

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**Comrade designates a relation, not an individual identity.** A 1925 obituary in *Pravda* eulogizes the deceased: “Comrade Nesterenko had no personal biography and no personal needs.”[43](about:blank) The film *Ninotchka* shows that an issue should not be made of the comrade’s womanhood; all have work to do. On the left, comrade is a term of address that attaches to proper names—Comrade Yakushova. **The proper name carries the individual identity; the term of address asserts a sameness.** Following a large, daylong demonstration against white supremacists, a comrade of mine joyfully noted, “We don’t even need to know each other’s names—we’re comrades.” “Comrade” takes the place of “Sir,” “Madam,” and “Citizen.” It negates the specificity of a determined title, a title that inscribes differentiation and hierarchy, and replaces it with a positive insistence on an equalizing sameness. At the same time, comrade requires a decision and inscribes a cut. Because not everyone is a comrade, calling someone a comrade marks a divide: Are you with us or not? Oxana Timofeeva emphasizes that **in comradeship identity vanishes**.[44](about:blank) She gives the example of the masquerade used by Bolsheviks undercover. Anyone could be under that mustache. Schrecker provides a further example, a statement from General Herbert Brownell, attorney general under President Dwight D. Eisenhower. Brownell’s suspicions of Communists were heightened because, in his words, it was “almost impossible to ‘spot’ them since they no longer use membership cards or other written documents which will identify them for what they are.”[45](about:blank)In these examples, it’s the generic comrade who appears, masking an individual person, yet one of many; it could be anyone. Schrecker quotes Herbert Philbrick, an undercover informer: “Anyone can be a Communist. Anyone can suddenly appear as a Communist Party member—close friend, brother, employee or even employer, leading citizen, trusted public servant.”[46](about:blank)Bertolt Brecht’s cantata *The Measures Taken* (*Die Massnahme*) similarly explores the antithetical relation between individual identity and the comrade. Four agitators are on trial before a party central committee (the Control Chorus) for the murder of their young comrade. The agitators describe how they went undercover in order to reach Chinese workers they are trying to organize. Each agitator had to efface their identity, to be “nameless and without a past, empty pages on which the revolution may write its instructions.”[47](about:blank) Each agitator, including the young comrade, agreed to fight for communism and be themselves no longer. They all put on Chinese masks, appearing to be Chinese rather than German and Russian. Instead of following instructions and carrying out the plan, however, the young comrade repeatedly substituted his judgment for that of the party, encouraging action before the time was right. He could see with his own two eyes that “misery cannot wait,” so he tore up the party writings. He tore off and up his mask. He sought to hasten the revolution and his impetuosity set the movement back. Forced to flee from the Chinese authorities, the agitators and the young comrade raced to escape the city. The agitators realized that since the young comrade had become identifiable, they had to kill him. The young comrade agreed. The four agitators shot him, threw him into a lime pit that would burn away all traces of him, and returned to their work.**Comrades are multiple, replaceable, fungible. They are elements in collectives, even collections.** As I mention in [chapter one](about:blank), in several Romance languages *comrade* originated as a term for those who share a room or travel together. **To be a comrade is to share a sameness with another with respect to where you are both going. Incidentally, these elements of sameness and collectivity point to the difference between the comrade and the militant.** The militant is a single figure fighting for a cause. **That one is a militant tells us nothing about that one’s relation to others. The militant expresses political intensity, not political relationality.**In the transition to capitalism that took place in Russia post- 1991, the term comrade started to become discredited. Alla Ivanchikova tells me that this was a political struggle, fought through etymology. New etymologies sought to depoliticize and mock the term. They highlighted its origin in the word *tovar*, or commodity, a good for sale.[48](about:blank) Ivanchikova explained that “this clearly serves the purpose of showing that underneath all talk of ‘comradery’ there are monetary and market relations that rule the day. Any comrade (*tovarish*) is a commodity (*tovar*), if you pay the right price.”[49](about:blank) Counter-etymologies insist that the word *tovar* is much older than its reference to a commodity or good produced for sale. *Tovar* derives from an ancient word for military camp, *tovarŭ*.[50](about:blank) Soldiers called themselves comrades. Underlying this etymological warfare is an assumption of sameness. **Interchangeability, whether between soldiers, commodities, schoolchildren, travelers, or party members, characterizes the comrade**. As with puppets, cogs, and robots, **commonality arises not out of identity, not out of who one is, but out of what is being done—fighting, circulating, studying, traveling, or being part of the same apparatus**. **Political comrades are those on the same side.** Communist comrades are those struggling to emancipate society from capitalism and create new egalitarian modes of free association and collective decision making for common benefit. For anticommunists, the instrumentalism of comrade relations appears horrifying**. Combined with the machinic impersonality and fungibility of comrades, the fact that relations between comrades are produced for an exterior purpose, that they are means rather than ends in themselves, seems morally objectionable. This objection fails to acknowledge the specificity of comradeship as a political relation, as being on the same side of struggle. It omits the way political work focuses on ends beyond the individual and so necessarily requires collective coordination. It presumes a totalizing politics that subsumes all relations rather than recognizing an abstract politics liberated or alienated from specific social relations. And it contracts the space of meaning into self-relations, as if abstracted generic relations among those faithful to a political truth could only be the result of manipulation**. In an interview with Vivian Gornick, a former member of CPUSA described his life of meetings, actions, May Day parades, selling the *Daily Worker*, and endlessly discussing Marx and Lenin as “beyond good or bad,” as “sweeping, powerful,” and “intense, absorbing, filled with a kind of comradeship I never again expect to know.”[51](about:blank) He saw himself as useful, living in the service of a struggle of world historical significance. His actions were not individual; they were moments in collective struggle, instances through which the collective power of the party could appear.[52](about:blank) Precisely because he was engaged with others in a common purpose, the comrade experienced deep political meaning. **We have to reject the bourgeois fiction that intimacy depends on personal disclosure, individual experience, or the way a singular person feels about people and events. There are other intimacies of common work and shared purpose: preparing the newspaper, making the banners, planning an action, knocking on doors.**

#### Ally link

Dean, Jodi. Comrade: An essay on political belonging. Verso, 2019.

**That identities are sites of struggle rather than grounds of struggle is clear when we consider allyship**. Despite its association with sovereign nations involved in wartime alliances, the term *ally* has become influential in US left activist circles. For at least five years, there has been intense discussion on social media and university campuses as well as among community organizers about what it means to be an ally and who can be an ally. **Generally, allies are privileged people who want to do something about oppression. They may not consider themselves survivors or victims, but they want to help**. So allies can be straight people who stand up for LGBTQ people, white people who support black and brown people, men who defend women, and so on. I have yet to see the term used for rich people involved in working-class struggle. Allies don’t want to imagine themselves as homophobic, racist, or sexist. They see themselves as the good guys, part of the solution. As is frequently emphasized in debates around allyship, claiming to be an ally does not make one an ally. **Allyship is a process requiring time and effort.** People have to work at it. It is not an identity. **Much of the written and video work on allyship is thus didactic and instructional**. It takes the form of a how-to guide or list of pointers—how to be an ally, the dos and don’ts of allyship, and so on. **Like eliminate-the-clutter books or tips for clean eating, the instructions for being a good ally are mini lifestyle manuals**, techniques for navigating the neoliberal environment of privilege and oppression. Individuals can learn what not to say and what not to do. **They can feel engaged, changing their feelings if not the world without taking power, without any organized political struggle at all.** **The “politics” in these allyship how-tos consists of interpersonal interactions, individuated feelings, and mediated affects.** The pieces on how to be a good ally that circulate online (as blog posts, videos, editorials, and handouts for courses or campuses) address the viewer or reader as an individual with a privileged identity who wants to operate in solidarity with the marginalized and oppressed. As I detail below, **this potential ally is positioned as wanting to know what they can do right now, on their own, and in their everyday lives to combat racism, sexism, homophobia, and other forms of oppression.** The ally’s field of operation is often imagined as social media (in knowing the right way to respond to racist or homophobic remarks on Twitter, for example); as charitable contribution (in donating to and setting up GoFundMe campaigns); as professional interaction (in hiring the marginalized and promoting the oppressed); as conversations at one’s school or university (in knowing what not to say); and, sometimes, as street-level protests (in not dominating someone else’s event). Even more often, **the ally’s own individual disposition, attitude, and behavior constitute the presumed operational field. The how-to guide instructs allies on how to feel, think, and act if they want to consider themselves as people who are on the side of the oppressed.** Their awareness is what needs to change. For example, as the open-source “Guide to Allyship,” created in 2016 by Amelie Lamont, a self-identified cisgendered black woman who experienced the betrayal of a white ally who failed to support her in a confrontation with a racist, explains: To be an ally is to: Take on the struggle as your own. Stand up, even when you feel scared. Transfer the benefits of your privilege to those who lack it. Acknowledge that while you, too, feel pain, the conversation is not about you.[29](about:blank)Here **allyship is a matter of the self**, **of what the self acknowledges, of the individual who stands alone, and of this single individual taking on a struggle that properly belongs to another. It’s as if struggles were possessions—artifacts that individuals take on, over, and into themselves—all while being urged to see these acquisitions as something to which they, as the ally, have no right. At the same time, exactly what the struggle is, what the politics is, remains opaque, unstated, and a matter of the individual’s feeling, attitude, or comfort level.** Here’s another example from a BuzzFeed post titled “How to Be a Better Ally: An Open Letter to White Folks.” The text is from a letter sent by a producer of the BuzzFeed video series, “Another Round,” in reply to a question from a white person about being an ally.Have you ever had a conversation with a feminist man come grinding to a halt because he starts to complain about how feminists use language that excludes men, even the feminist men? (“Not all men …”) I have! Being a good ally often means not being included in the conversation, because the conversation isn’t about you. It’s good to listen. If you feel uncomfortable and excluded because you’re white, you should own those feelings.[30](about:blank)Again, **allyship is a disposition, a confrontation not with state or capitalist power but with one’s own discomfort**. To be an ally is to work to cultivate in oneself habits of proper listening, to decenter oneself, to step aside and become aware of the lives and experiences of others. Karolina Szczur’s essay “Fundamentals of Effective Allyship,” originally delivered as a talk at Tech Inclusion Melbourne, configures allyship in terms of the intensity of the ally’s feelings and whether the ally is willing and able to undertake the necessary self-work: It’s our responsibility to recognize, identify and act on the privilege we have. One of the ways of doing so is committing to an ongoing act of introspection, reflection and learning. You will find yourself challenged, uncomfortable, even defensive, but the more intense these feelings are, the more likely it is you’re on the right track.[31](about:blank)**Acting on privilege appears here as an interior act, an act of the self on the self. One’s politics may be entirely in one’s head. The ally is imaginary, not symbolic**; an ideal ego or idealized version of who we want to be rather than an ego ideal or perspective from which we evaluate ourselves. **In this respect, allyship reflects the shrinking or decline of the political.** **The space for politics has decreased yet the ally feels the need to act, desperately, intensely, and now. They act in and on what is available—social media, and themselves**. **The process of becoming aware reiterates a key injunction of communicative capitalism: Educate yourself. Google it. Don’t ask or burden the oppressed**. The online magazine *Everyday Feminism* provides a list of ten things allies need to know. Number five on the list is: “Allies Educate Themselves Constantly.” It explains: One of the most important types of education is listening … but there are endless resources (books, blogs, media outlets, speakers, YouTube videos, etc.) to help you learn. *What you should not do, though, is expect those with whom you want to ally yourself to teach you*. That is not their responsibility. Sure, listen to them when they decide to drop some knowledge or perspective, but do not go to them and expect them to explain their oppression for you.[32](about:blank)**The process of educating oneself is isolating, individuating. Learning is modeled as consuming information, not as discussion; coming to a common understanding; or studying the texts and documents of a political tradition**. Educating oneself is disconnected from a collective critical practice, detached from political positions or goals. Criteria according to which one might evaluate books, blogs, speakers, and videos are absent. It’s up to the individual ally to figure it out on their own. **In effect, there is punishment without discipline.** The would-be ally can be scolded  and shamed, even as the scolder is relieved of any responsibility to provide concrete guidance and training (let’s be clear, just telling someone to “Google it” is an empty gesture). Once we recall that “ally” is not a term of address—it doesn’t replace “Mr.,” “Ms.,” “Dr.,” or “Professor”; **the term ally appears more to designate a limit, suggesting that you will never be one of us, than it does to enable solidarity.** The relation between allies and those they are allies for, or to, is between those with separate interests, experiences, and practices. The eighth item on the list of things allies need to know is: “Allies Focus on Those Who Share Their Identity.” “Beyond listening, *arguably the most important thing that I can do to act in solidarity is to engage those who share my identity*.”[33](about:blank) **Identities appear clear and fixed, unambiguous and unchanging. Individuals are like little sovereign states, defending their territory, and only joining together under the most cautious and self-interested terms. Those taken to share an identity are presumed to share a politics, as if the identity were obvious and the politics didn’t need to be built. Those willing to forward a politics other than one anchored in what can easily be ascribed to their identity are treated with suspicion, mistrusted for their presumed privilege, and criticized in advance for the array of wrongs that preserve that privilege. The very terms of allyship reinforce the mistrust that the how-to-be-better guides purport to address: it makes sense to mistrust people who view politics as immediate gratification, as an individualized quick fix to long histories of structural oppression. Because allies join together under self-interested terms, they can easily withdraw, drop out, let us down. We can’t be sure of their commitment because it hinges on their individual feelings and comfort**. Item eight in the article (“Allies Focus on Those Who Share Their Identity”) tells us why allyship has such a hold in progressive circles: Mistrust of other identities becomes functional and gratifying in the name of a politics that maintains and polices identity, our own special and vulnerable thing, shoring up its weak and porous boundaries. “**Ally” keeps attention away from the fearsome challenge of choosing a side, from accepting the discipline that comes from collective work, and from organizing for the abolition of racial patriarchal capitalism and the state designed to secure it**. So rather than bridging political identities or articulating a politics that moves beyond identity, **allyship is a symptom of the displacement of politics into the individualist self-help techniques and social media moralism of communicative capitalism. The underlying vision is of self-oriented individuals, politics as possession, transformation reduced to attitudinal change, and a fixed, naturalized sphere of privilege and oppression. Anchored in a view of identity as the primary vector of politics, the emphasis on allies displaces attention away from strategic organizational and tactical questions and onto prior attitudinal litmus tests, from the start precluding the collectivity necessary for revolutionary left politics**. Of course, those on the left need allies. Sometimes it is necessary to forge temporary alliances in order to advance. A struggle with communism as its horizon will involve an array of tactical alliances among different classes, sectors, and tendencies. But provisional allies focused on their own interests are not the same as comrades—although they might become comrades. My critique of the ally as the symptom and limit of contemporary identity politics should thus not be taken as a rejection of practices of alliance in the course of political struggle. That would be absurd. I am rejecting allyship as the form and model for struggles against oppression, immiseration, dispossession, and exploitation. **Communicative capitalism enjoins uniqueness. We are commanded to be ourselves, express ourselves, do it ourselves**. Conforming, copying, and letting another speak for us are widely thought to be somehow bad, indicative of weakness, ignorance, or unfreedom. The impossibility of an individual politics, the fact that political change is always and only collective, is suppressed, displaced into the inchoate conviction that we are determined by systems and forces completely outside our capacity to affect them. Climate changes. Not us. **If we recognize that the attachment to individual identity is the form of our political incapacity, we can acquire new capacities for action, the collective capacities of those on the same side of a struggle. We can become more than allies who are concerned with defending our own individual identity and lecturing others on what they must do to aid us in this defense. We can become comrades struggling together to change the world**. I thus agree with Mark Fisher’s crucial reminder: “We need to learn, or re-learn, how to build comradeship and solidarity instead of doing capital’s work for it by condemning and abusing each other.”[34](about:blank)**Where the ally is hierarchical, specific, and acquiescent, the comrade is egalitarian, generic, and utopian.** The egalitarian and generic dimensions of comrade are what make it utopian, what enable the relation between comrades to cut through the determinations of the everyday (which is another way of saying capitalist social relations).

#### [2] Appeals to rage against people who already are oppressive isn’t going to help you out – it does the opposite – the ability to only use rage as a way of social change is a product of privilege

#### [3] Debate’s not just bad for women – the aff asks us to make this round oppression olympics since other people’s problems – not only. When I tried to get mad that they put TOC at the same time as Ramadan, a bunch of white women called me a terrorist and said I don’t understand Islam.

#### [4] Rage can be misdirected – if we affirm rage categorically, those who rage first and loudest get the ability to decide who lives and dies. White women’s rage can lead to people’s deaths – raging to the cops about black people.

[5] Rage only works if you know people won’t be violent in response

#### Black WOMEN are excluded from fem rage because they are consistently told that it is a sign of powerlessness and that they have no place

Hooks 95 hooks, bell. 1995. *Killing Rage: Militant Resistance*. New York: Henry Holt and Co.

In these times most folks associate black rage with the underclass, with desperate and despairing black youth who in their hopelessness feel no need to silence unwanted passions. Those of us black folks who have “made it” have for the most art become skilled at repressing our rage. We do what Ann Petry’s heroine tells us we must in that prophetic forties novel about black female rage The Street. It is Lutie Johnson who exposes the rage underneath the calm persona. She declares: “Everyday we are choking down that rage.” In the nineties it is not just white folks who let black folks know they do not want to hear our rage, it is also the voices of cautious upperclass black academic gatekeepers who assure us that our rage has no place. Even though black psychiatrists William Grier and Price Cobbs could write an entire book called Black Rage, they used their Freudian standpoint to convince readers that rage was merely a sign of powerlessness. They named it pathological, explained it away. They did not urge the larger culture to see black rage as something other than sickness, to see it as a potentially healthy, potentially healing response to oppression and exploitation.

#### The affirmative is pro-women while being Anti-black women as this discourse furthers the criminality of black women in the United States

**Rakia 2014** [The Criminalization of the Black Woman May 28, 2014—Raven Rakia <http://www.ebony.com/news-views/the-criminalization-of-the-black-woman-032#axzz3O6dFAIki>] DDI 15///

On March 20, Shanesha Taylor was arrested and charged with child abuse after leaving her two children in the car during a job interview. The homeless Black mother stated that se “had nowhere else to take her children." Austerity measures in Arizona cut child care subsidies from thousands of parents since 2009 — subsidies that would give parents, who cannot afford it, money for child care while they work (currently 6,000 children are on the waiting list for the subsidies and the number of children receiving these subsidies have been reduced by 70 percent since 2009). Now, Taylor is facing felony charges of up to eight years in prison. The county attorney, Bill Montgomery, declared he will proceed with prosecuting despite receiving an online petition with 12,000 signatures asking him to rethink the charges (since then, petition has reached over 55,000 signatures). Taylor's story rests on the assumptions that poor Black women are careless, unfit mothers and a threat to their own kids. With no nuance in the infliction they face on a daily basis trying to survive in poverty, the state is allowed to strip them of their resources then blame and jail them for their hardships.

This is the similar narrative as Monica Jones’ story but the criminal justice system isn’t saving Shanesha Taylor from the 'ills of sex work,' but instead, saving her children from their own mother. Under a guise of caring for and saving children, the state does just the opposite. The incarceration of black women for being ‘bad’ parents does not help the child but disenfranchises them. As Dorothy E. Roberts says in Prison, Foster Care and The Systematic Punisment of Black Mothers: “Mass incarceration deprives thousands of children of important economic and social support from their parents, placing extra economic and emotional burdens on remaining family members…Separation from imprisoned parents has serious psychological consequences for children, including depression, anxiety, feelings of rejection, shame, anger, guilty and problems in school.”

Bill Montgomery is not interested in the wellbeing of Taylor's two children. If he and the system were, they would not be incarcerating their mother, rather, they would provide the family with a home and resources to not just survive, but to live. The idea that one must save Black children from their own mothers is a popular social sentiment dating back to the beginning of the War on Drugs. While the much hyped 'welfare queen' stereotype garnered support for the end of public assistance, the mythological 'crack baby' helped perpetuate the idea of the irresponsible, undeserving Black woman---often a poor mother who was dangerous to her very own kids. Using White supremacy as a pedestal, the result of both of these government campaigns was a continued depletion of resources from poor and Black communities, as well as the systematic surveillance and mass incarceration of Black people.

It took thirty years to debunk the crack baby fable, as researchers declared they “couldn’t find any devastating effects from cocaine exposure in the womb” and University of Pennsilvania neonatologist Hallam Hurt’s study concluded that poverty is more dangerous than prenatal exposure to cocaine. The initial studies declaring the dangers of the crack baby in the 1980’s were scientifically flawed (small sample sizes and not enough control groups). The pervasive notions in our society that both assumed the worst of Black people as a whole and made Black women dangerous to the lives of their children, allowed for the flawed studies to go unquestioned and be broadly accepted as truth. **The result was thousands of women with stories similar to Shekelia Ward or Regina McKnight, who were** **criminalized for being drug addicted during their pregnancies, as opposed to being treated as addicts in need of rehabilitation.**

#### Black female suffering is essentialized through a discussion of *female trauma* but the language that initiated Black Female violence becomes invisible

**James 13**(Joy James The Black Scholar Volume 43 Number 4 Winter 2013Page 125-126 James is is the F. C. Oakley Third Century Chair, Professor in Humanities and of political science at Williams College)DDI 15///

Historically, captive females were violently forced to labor alongside captive males. This seeming erasure of gendered differences masculinized black suffering. Under patriarchy, violence against the female form is often denied or deflected through language that renders female trauma invisible, inconsequential, or self-inflicted. The “uncut bond” of black exploitation and trauma under white supremacy meant a folding of black female trauma into the black male frame, from which it receded from common view, typically emerging as spectacle only and not as spectrum. **Thus common perceptions of black suffering became embodied in and represented by male trauma—emanating from the lash, shackle, the brand, convict lease, lynch mob, death row, mass imprisonment, and “stop-n-frisk.”** With the norm and apex of black suffering centered on violence in the public realm and the public spaces of the private realm (cloistered plantations and prisons), racial rape became subsumed under racial capital. The official chronology of and narratives about violence and terror that constitute US democracy’s borders—chattel slavery, the convict prison lease system,9 Jim Crow segregation, mass incarceration, “stop-n-frisk”— crowd out the black matrix, displacing it from philosophical inquiries into subjugation. The interiority of this trauma zone has paltry public record and memory. Racial rape, the dominant threat, appears in black women’s writings, memoirs, fiction, and art, but in these forms may be categorized as emotive performance, mere illustrations for rather than inherently forms of critical philosophy.

#### Specifically in the context of debate – when Black women rage they are perceived as aggressive and rude etc.

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1. Scott, Joan W. 1991. “The Evidence of Experience.” *Critical Inquiry* 17 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)