# 1NC GBX Doubles

### 1

#### Our interpretation is that the topic should determine the division of affirmative and negative ground – the aff should defend that a just government ought to recognize an unconditional right of workers to strike neg should be able to win by disproving the truth of that statement.

#### Violation – they don’t

#### hold the line, CX and the 1AC prove there’s no I-meet – anything new in the 1AR is either extra-T since it includes the non-topical parts of the Aff or effects-T since it’s a future result of the advocacy which both link to our offense.

#### Recognition is defined as legal authority in the context of international law.

**Britannica N.D**, world- renowned encyclopedia//Aanya https://www.britannica.com/topic/recognition-international-law

Recognition is a process whereby certain facts are accepted and endowed with a certain legal status, such as statehood, sovereignty over newly acquired territory, or the international effects of the grant of nationality.

#### “Ought to be” indicates a state of affairs and obligates an actor with the ability to bring about that state of affairs.

Hage 01 Jaap [Maastricht University, Law, Faculty Member, chair of Jurisprudence (Legal Theory) at the University of Maastricht (Netherlands)] “Contrary to Duty Obligations: A Study in Legal Ontology” in Bart Verheij, Arno R. Lodder, Ronald P. Loui and Antoinette J. Muntjewerff (eds.), Legal Knowledge and Information Systems. Jurix 2001: The Fourteenth Annual Conference. Amsterdam: IOS Press, 2001, pp. 89-102. IB

On the other interpretation, ought-to-be norms prescribe to see to it that the obligatory state of affairs is achieved or maintained, depending on whether the ideal state in question already obtains. Briefly stated. the obligation is to see to it that the obligatory state of affairs obtains. On this interpretation, the ought to be norm is ‘really' an ought-to-do norm in disguise, it is an incomplete ought-to-do norm, because it leaves the actor unspecified. This deficiency can be remedied, however, by saying that the actors are those who are responsible for seeing to it that the obligatory state of affairs is achieved or maintained.

#### Just implies a legal interpretation. US Legal N.D.

Us Legal, Inc., "Just Law and Legal Definition,", <https://definitions.uslegal.com/j/just/> //Aanya

The literal meaning of the term 'just' is fair, impartial, evenhanded, candid, or reasonable. It can also mean right or fair according to law. The term can be defined in a wider sense to mean ethically, morally and legally correct or right; lawful. Depending upon conformity to or in opposition to law all human actions are either just or unjust. Anything just would be in perfect harmony with the rights of others.

#### Vote Negative –

#### [1] Limits – their interp explodes limits and allows affs to monopolize the moral high ground. The lack of a stable mechanism lets them radically re-contextualize their aff and erase neg ground via perms. Fairness is good and prior – [A] debate’s a game that requires effective competition and negation, which makes their offense inevitable. [b] Internal link Turn – a limited debate promotes engagement which is necessary to access all education. Cutting negs to every possible aff wrecks small schools, which has a disparate impact on under-resourced and minority debaters.

#### [2] Refinement – a well-defined allows the neg to refute the aff in an in-depth fashion. This process produces iterative testing which controls the internal link to education. Committees outweigh because they discuss the best topic for a stasis point – it is net better for a group to create a topic rather than an individual.

#### [3] TVA – defend a policy action like sabotoge that involves passing overspending bills that collapse the state from within defend the right to strike as a method of resisting antiblackness in work spaces. Solves their education offense. Our TVA is purposefully imperfect to ensure negative ground and force SSD.

#### [A] SSD – refusal to negate and affirm the resolution moots strategies through stepping in the shoes of the enemy can we equip ourselves with the tools to challenge the enemies’ view. [B] Defend the institution of a federal job guarantee as a method to map out networks in the political to rupture. [C] *Extra* T bad – allows the aff to defend anything outside the rez, go for pre-fiat method, or post fiat – which skews strat.

#### Vote Neg on T – They’ve destroyed the round from the beginning and topicality’s key to set the correct model of debate which means it comes first – it has to be a voting issue because it disproves the 1AC.

#### Competing interpretations – Topicality is question of models of debate which they should have to proactively justify and we’ll win reasonability links to our offense.

#### No silencing DA - T is j like a disad or critique we’ve said a certain practice the aff took was bad and it would’ve been better had they done it differently not that they are bad debaters –– impositions in some form are inevitable because the negative has the burden of rejoinder and needs link arguments.

#### No Impact Turns and RVIs – [A] Perfcon – if T’s bad and you vote for them on that arg, you’re voting on T. [B] Substance – if T’s bad then we should try debating on substance – impact turns force me to go for T since I need to defend my position. [C] Resolvability – It’s irresolvable since no 3n leaves the answer threshold up to the judge.

### 2

#### Their deployment of debate is an agential fantasy – the affirmative is an investment into subjectivity as a entity dependent on recognition to satisfy its goals – turns case.

Lundberg 12 (Dr. Christian Lundberg, 2012, “Lacan in Public: Psychoanalysis and the Science of Rhetoric,” The University of Alabama Press, Dr. Lundberg is an associate professor and co-director of the University Program in Cultural Studies at UNC, he has a B.A. from the University of Redlands, a Master of Divinity from Emory University, and a Ph.D. in Communication Studies from Northwestern University) SJBE [Recut by Lex CH]

“Ego,” then,names the economy of compensatory subjectivization driven by the repetition and refusal of demands. The nascent subject presents wants and needs in the form of the demand, but the role of the demand is not the simple fulfillment of these wants and needs. The demand and its refusal are the fulcrum on which the identity and insularity of the subject are produced: an unformed amalgam of needs and articulated demands is transformed into a subject that negotiates the vicissitudes of life with others. Put in the meta- phor of developmental psychology, an infant lodges the instinctual demands of the id on others but these demands cannot be, and for the sake of develop- ment, must not be fulfilled. Thus, pop psychology observations that the in- cessant demands of children for impermissible objects (“may i have a fourth helping of dessert”) or meanings that culminate in ungroundable authori- tative pronouncements (the game of asking never ending “whys”) are less about satisfaction of a request than the identity-producing effects of the pa- rental “no.” in “The Question of Lay Analysis,” freud argues that “if . . . demands meet with no satisfaction, intolerable conditions arise . . . [and] . . . the ego begins to function. . . . [T]he driving force that sets the vehicle in mo- tion is derived from the id, the ego . . . undertakes the steering. . . . The task of the ego [is] . . . to mediate between the claims of the id and the objections of the external world.”31 Later, in Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego, and Civilization and Its Discontents, freud relocates the site of the ego’s genesis beyond the parent/child relationship and in the broader social relationships that animate it. Life with others inevitably produces blockages in the individual’s attempts to fulfill certain desires, since some demands for the fulfill- ment of desires must be frustrated. This blockage produces feelings of guilt, which in turn are sublimated as a general social morality. The frustration of demand is both productive in that it authorizes social moral codes and, by ex- tension, civilization writ large, although it does so at the cost of imposing a contested relationship between desire and social mores.32 Confronted by student calls to join the movement of 1968 Lacan famously quipped: “as hysterics you demand a new master: you will get it!” under- standing the meaning of his response requires a treatment of Lacan’s theory of the demand and its relationship to hysteria as an enabling and constraining political subject position. Lacan’s theory of the demand picks up at freud’s movement outward from the paradigmatic relationships between the parent/ child and individual/civilization toward a more general account of the sub- ject, sociality, and signification. The infrastructure supporting this theoreti- cal movement transposes freud’s comparatively natural and genetic account of development to a set of metaphors for dealing with the subject’s entry into signification. As already noted, the Lacanian aphorism that “the signifier represents a subject for another signifier inverts the conventional wisdom that a pre-given subject uses language as an instrument to communicate its subjective inten- tions.”33 The paradoxical implication of this reversal is that the subject is si- multaneously produced and disfigured by its unavoidable insertion into the space of the Symbolic. An Es assumes an identity as a subject as a way of ac- commodating to the Symbolic’s demands and as a node for producing de- mands on its others or of being recognized as a subject.34 As I have already argued, the demand demonstrates that the enjoyment of one’s own subjectivity is useless surplus produced in the gap between the Es (or it) and the ideal I. As a result, there is excess jouissance that remains even after its reduction to hegemony. This remainder may even be logically prior to hegemony, in that it is a useless but ritually repeated retroactive act of naming the self that produces the subject and therefore conditions possibility for investment in an identitarian configuration. The site of this excess, where the subject negotiates the terms of a non- relationship with the Symbolic, is also the primary site differentiating need, demand, and desire. need approximates the position of the freudian id, in that it is a precursor to demand. Demand is the filtering of the need through signification, but as Sheridan notes, “there is no adequation between need and demand.”35 The same type of split that inheres in the freudian demand inheres in the Lacanian demand, although in Lacan’s case it is crucial to no- tice that the split does not derive from the empirical impossibility of ful- filling demands as much as it stems from the impossibility of articulating needs to or receiving a satisfactory response from the other. Thus, the specificity of the demand becomes less relevant than the structural fact that de- mand presupposes the ability of the addressee to fulfill the demand. This impossibility points to the paradoxical nature of demand: the demand is less a way of addressing need to the other than a call for love and recognition by it. “in this way,” writes Lacan, “demand annuls the particularity of everything that can be granted by transmuting it into a proof of love, and the very sat- isfactions that it obtains for need are reduced to the level of being no more than the crushing of the demand for love.”36 The other cannot, by definition, ever give this gift: the starting presupposition of the mirror stage is the constitutive impossibility of comfortably inhabiting the Symbolic. The struc- tural impossibility of fulfilling demands resonates with the freudian de- mand in that the frustration of demand produces the articulation of desire. Thus, Lacan argues that “desire is neither the appetite for satisfaction, nor the demand for love, but the difference that results from the subtraction of the first from the second.”37 This sentiment animates the crucial Lacanian claim for the impossibility of the other giving a gift that it does not have, namely the gift of love: “all demand implies . . . a request for love. . . . Desire begins to take shape in the margin in which demand becomes separated from need: this margin being that which is opened up by demand, the appeal of which can be unconditional only in regards to the other . . . having no universal satisfaction. . . . it is this whim that introduces the phantom of omnipotence, not of the subject, but of the other in which his demand is installed.”38 This framing of demand reverses the classically liberal presupposition regarding demand and agency. Contemporary and classical liberal democratic theories presume that the demand is a way of exerting agency and, further, that the more firmly the demand is lodged, the greater the production of an agential effect. The Lacanian framing of the demand sees the relationship as exactly the opposite: the more firmly one lodges a demand, the more desperately one clings to the legitimate ability of an institution to fulfill it. Hypothetically, demands ought reach a kind of breaking point where the inability of an in- stitution or order to proffer a response should produce a reevaluation of the economy of demand and desire. in analytic terms, this is the moment of sub- traction, where the manifest content of the demand is stripped away and the desire that underwrites it is laid bare. The result of this “subtraction” is that the subject is in a position to relate to its desire, not as a set of deferrals, avoid- ances, or transposition but rather as an owned political disposition. As Lacan frames it, demanding subjects are either learning to reassert the centrality of their demand or coming to terms with the impotence of the other as a satisfier of demands: “But it is in the dialectic of the demand for love and the test of desire that development is ordered. . . . [T]his test of the desire of the other is decisive not in the sense that the subject learns by it whether or not he has a phallus, but in the sense that he learns that the mother does not have it.”39 The point of this disposition is to bring the subject to a point where they might “recognize and name” their own desire and, as a re- sult, become a political subject in the sense of being able to truly argue for something without being dependent on the other as a support for or orga- nizing principle for political identity. Thus, desire has both a general status and a specific status for each subject. it is not just the mirror that produces the subject and its investments but the desire and sets of proxy objects that cover over this original gap. As Easthope puts it: “Lacan is sure that everyone’s de- sire is somehow different and their own—lack is nevertheless my lack. How can this be if each of us is just lost in language . . . passing through demand into desire, something from the Real, from the individual’s being before lan- guage, is retained as a trace enough to determine that i desire here and there, not anywhere and everywhere. Lacan terms this objet petit a . . . petit a is dif- ferent for everyone; and it can never be in substitutes for it in which i try to refind it.”40

#### The aff is a desire for recognition that resists the master of whiteness without resisting mastery, producing a perpetual quest for the Other’s jouissance that dooms the aff’s politics to endlessly perfecting the signifier.

Rogers 15 (Juliet Brough Rogers, professor of political science at the University of Melbourne (Australia), “A Stranger Politics: Resistance in Psychoanalytic Thought and Praxis” in Jacques Lacan: Between Psychoanalysis and Politics, Routledge, 2015: 186)

The conundrum of change in psychoanalysis (and beyond) highlights the first of two particular problems of, and with, resistance that appear when the subject attempts such a change of rules. First, change rarely (if ever) involves the creation of what Douzinas (2013: 141) calls ‘a new political subject’. That is, subjects are always already subjected – let us say occupied – a priori and thus all imaginations of resistance are framed in a priori discourse. As such, the subjects’ imaginations, including their imaginations of the results of revolution – or of a new mode of being – are always colonized with what is available to them. This is why – for Žižek (2007) and for Lacan (2007) – in post-revolutionary states, what the subject will get is more of the same. The second problematic that haunts acts of resistance, and of more specific concern to psychoanalytic practice, is that any employment of violence as a means to an end, and particularly as an effort toward a violent unsettling of the regime, can only be understood as the effort to capture a definitive answer to the insistent and formative question to the Other, expressed by Lacan (2006) as,‘che vuoi Autre?’ – ‘what do you want from me?’ In some cases this may be a violent effort toward capture, exercised to the point of a defiance of the existence of the question. What this means is that one acts, violently, in order to produce a known future, as the answer. The two problematics of resistance overlap because the answer is always imagined in the terms/signifiers available from the past. That is, the answer appears in the frame of the categories which produce the subject, and thus recruits the first problematic: ‘you are (always) already subjected’. I’ll tackle these problematics in turn. First, ‘you are already subjected’. If we even partially accept Judith Butler’s (1997: 6) treatise on the formation of subjectivity as a series of ‘passionate attachments’ to ‘subjection’,10 then it is difficult to understand how the subject might be what Douzinas (2014) described as ‘re- or de-subjectivised’ in the first site of becoming a resisting subject.11 For the political subject of democracy, recognition is, as Claude Lefort (1989) has told us well, the condition of being a subject. This means recognition within the signifiers – let us call them biopolitical categories – allocated to the identity of the subject of democracy. The stage of political recognition is populated by signifiers which broker little dissent – by others and even by the self. In Butler’s terms, we are ‘passionately attached’ to our gender, imaginations of health, rights, and, in Lacan’s terms, the ‘goods’ – as objects and as ideas – which offer us the imagination of recognition. We are occupied as subjects through our own occupation with a recognizable identity before democracy, with the qualities (objects) that reflect that identity. This occupation allows for little, if any, dissent as to the naturalness, goodness, and reality of the signifiers that produce the subject – as signifiers which adhere fundamentally to economies of desires: as desires for recognition of identity and rights, as desires for capital. That is, the subject is occupied a priori with these categories and recognizes (and demands recognition) via these categories. If we accept the premises of subjection framed above then the argument follows that the resisting subject is still a subject, but one who looks for recognition beyond the common political forms. That is, we can say that the resisting subject is still ‘passionately attached’ to the ideas and objects which offer recognition, but these may be recognition by an alternative political party, a Cause or, in Lacanian psy- choanalysis, we would say s/he attaches to (another) Master’s discourse. They may resist one Master, but they chose another Master. They do not resist mastery. And here we have the basic difficulty with theories and actions of resistance. These difficulties are that somehow, in some way, any acts of resistance always become modes of, in Lacan’s terms, the desire for (another) Master (2007). Resistance, understood this way, is a state of being that is always already subjectivized within the parameters of its own claims, or within the parameters of the subject’s imagination of its goals. This is the obvious reference made by Lacan in his comments to the students who participated in the ‘resistances’ of 1968 in France (and elsewhere). As he says, ‘What you aspire to as revolutionaries is a Master. You will get one’ (Lacan 2007: 207).14 The provocative comment to the students – some of whom have come to listen to him and some who have come to (apparently) resist him – is a comment on their acting out the discourse of the Master that they imagine they can overcome, through listening (or even objecting) to another Master, namely, Lacan. In this attempt at resistance which falls prey to its own conditions of subjection, we can say that the subjectivity of the resisting subject – the student – is preoccupied with the signifiers available to resist, where the best they can hope for is to be re-occupied by the imagination of securing (another) truth. This hope, at least for the students in France at this time – understood through Lacan (and his discussions in 1969) – is the hope for the Other’s knowledge. A knowledge which the subject presumes the Other has. A knowledge which is imagined to be able to be accessed and had. A knowledge which is presented as the answer to the question ‘che vois Autre?’ And here appears the second psychoanalytic concern with resistance: resistance as a belief in an access to an answer, or, in its most extreme or crude terms, resistance as psychosis. Resistance, understood as a desire for a Master, becomes a performance of what the subject imagines is the answer. The answer as a closed course of action with a fixed teleological imagination, such that the resisting subject might say: ‘If I do this I will be this’, or ‘if I do this then the final result will be this’, or, in its psychotic form, ‘if I do this the world will be this’. It is important to stress, however, that this may not follow for all acts of resistance – which I will postulate later – but when Lacan says of the students in France that what they want is a Master, this form of psychotic achievement of an answer is precisely what he is referring to. Theirs is the desire for a discourse that holds within it the knowledge that the subject imagines is required (and can be acquired/obtained/had) to achieve a perfection of the signifier, an imagination that the subject can acquire, what Lacan (2007: 14–15) describes as the ‘Other’s jouissance’. The students, in Lacan’s suggestion, want to resist in order to obtain the answer when it is the existence of an answer at all they are supposedly resisting.

#### The affirmative’s celebration of racial identity establishes racism as a political object but effaces the concept of race. This annihilates difference in the name of racial sameness

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I am suggesting two things: first, the order of racial difference attempts to compensate for sex’s failure in language; second, we must not therefore analogize race and sex on the sexual model of linguistic excess or contradiction. The signifier Whiteness tries to fill the constitutive lack of the sexed subject. It promises a totality, an overcoming of difference itself. For the subject of race, Whiteness represents complete mastery, self-sufficiency, and the jouissance of Oneness. This is why the order of racial difference must be distinguished from, but read in relation to, sexual difference. If sex is characterized by a missing signifier, race, on the contrary, is not and cannot be organized around such an absence— a missing signifier— that escapes or confounds language and inter-subjectivity. Race has an all-too-present master signifier— Whiteness— which offers the illegal enjoyment of absolute wholeness. Race, therefore, does not bear on the paradigm of failure or success of inter-subjectivity on the model of the sexual relation. The rationale of racial difference and its organization can be understood as a Hobbesian one. It is a social contract among potential adversaries secured to perpetuate singular claims to power and dominance, even as it seeks to contain the consequences of such singular interests. The shared insecurity of claiming absolute humanness, which is what race as a system manages, induces the social and legal validation of race as a discourse of neutral differences. In other words, race identity can have only one function— it establishes differential relations among the races in order to constitute the logic of domination. Groups must be differentiated and related in order to make possible the claim to power and domination. Race identity is about the sense of one’s exclusiveness, exceptionality and uniqueness. Put very simply, it is an identity that, if it is working at all, can only be about pride, being better, being the best. Race is inextricably caught up in a Hobbesian discourse of social contract, where personal (or particular) interest masquerades as public good. Sexual difference, on the other hand, cannot be founded upon such a logic. The values attached to male and female are historically contingent as feminists have long suggested, but power cannot be the ultimate cause of sexual difference. Racial difference, on the other hand, has no other reason to be but power, and yet it is not power in the sense of material and discursive agency that can be reduced to historical mappings. If such were the case, as many have assumed, then a historicist genealogy of the discursive construction of race would be in order: Foucault not Lacan, discourse analysis not psychoanalysis. But race organizes difference and elicits investment in its subjects because it promises access to being itself. It offers the prestige of being better and superior; it is the promise of being more human, more full, less lacking. The possibility of this enjoyment is at the core of “race.” But enjoyment or jouissance is, we may recall, pure unpleasure. The possibility of enjoyment held out by Whiteness is also horrific as it implies the annihilation of difference. The subject of race therefore typically resists race as mere “social construction,” even as it holds on to a notion of visible, phenotypal difference. Visible difference in race has a contradictory function. If it protects against a lethal sameness, it also facilitates the possibility of that sameness through the fantasy of wholeness. Insofar as Whiteness dissimulates the object of desire, 10 any encounter with the historicity, the purely symbolic origin of the signifier, inevitably produces anxiety. It is necessary for race to seem more than its historical and cultural origin in order to aim at being. Race must therefore disavow or deny knowledge of its own historicity, or risk surrendering to the discourse of exceptionality, the possibility of wholeness and supremacy. Thus race secures itself through visibility. Psychoanalytically, we can perceive the object cause of racial anxiety as racial visibility, the so-called pre-discursive marks on the body (hair, skin, bone), which serve as the desiderata of race. In other words, the bodily mark, which (like sex) seems to be more than symbolic, serves as a powerful prophylactic against the anxiety of race as a discursive construction. We seem to need such a refuge in order to preserve the investment we make in the signifier of Whiteness. Thus race should not be reduced to racial visibility, which is the mistake made by some well-meaning and not-so-wellmeaning advocates of a color blind society. Racial visibility should be understood as that which secures the much deeper investment we have made in the racial categorization of human beings. It is a lock-and-key relation, and throwing away the key of visibility because it happens to open and close is not going to make the lock inoperable. By interrogating visibility we can ask what the lock is preserving, and why. The capacity of visibility to secure an investment in identity also distinguishes race from other systems of difference such as caste, class, ethnicity, etc. These latter forms of group identity, insofar as they cannot be essentialized through bodily marks, can be easily historicized and textualized. Nothing prevents their deconstruction, whereas in the case of race, visibility maintains a bulwark against the historicity and historicization of race. (In fact, Brennan suggests that the “ego’s era” is characterized by a resistance to history.) It is this function of visibility that renders cases of racial passing fraught and anxious. My contention that the category of race is inherently a discourse of supremacy may seem inattentive to the advances that our legal systems and liberal social ideologies have made precisely in relation to “racism” and “racist” practices. Modern civil society refuses to permit its subjects the enjoyment of supremacist rhetoric, the rhetoric of exceptionality, by distinguishing between race and racism. It draws this distinction between a supposed ontology (the study of physical or cultural differences) and an epistemology (discriminatory logic) in the name of preserving a semblance of inter-subjectivity. Race, it suggests, is a neutral description of human difference; racism, it suggests, is the misappropriation of such difference. The liberal consensus is that we must do away with such ideological misappropriation, but that we must “celebrate difference.” It is understood as a “baby and the bath water” syndrome, in which the dirty water of racism must be eliminated, to reveal the cleansed and beloved “fact” of racial identity. This rather myopic perspective refuses to address the peculiar resiliency of “race,” the subjective investment in racial difference**,** and the hyper-valorization of appearance. It dismisses these issues or trivializes them because race seems a historical inevitability. The logic is that people have been constituted for material and other reasons as black and white and that this has had powerful historical consequences for peoples thus constituted. Whether race exists or not, whether race and racism are artificial distinctions or not, racialization is a hard historical fact and a concrete instance of social reality. We have no choice, according to this reasoning, but to inhabit our assigned racial positions. Not to do so is a form of idealism, and a groundless belief that power can be wished away. In making this ostensibly “pragmatic” move, such social theorists effectively reify “race.” Lukács, who elaborated Marx’s notion of reification in relation to the commodity form in History and Class Consciousness, is worth recalling here: Its basis is that a relation between people takes on the character of a thing, and thus acquires a ‘phantom objectivity,’ an autonomy that seems so strictly rational and all-embracing as to conceal every trace of its fundamental nature: the relation between people. (1923:89) To arrest analysis of race at the point where one discerns and marks its historical effects is to reproduce those very relations of power that one intends to oppose. It is to render race so objective that it is impossible to conceive human difference or inter-subjectivity anew. Modern civil society engages in such reification because ultimately its desire is to keep the dialectic between races alive. It must thus prohibit what it terms “racism” in order to prevent the annihilation not so much of the “inferior” races but of the system of race itself. This is how the system of “desiring Whiteness” perpetuates itself, even in the discourses that are most pragmatically aimed against racism. The resilience and endurability of race as a structure can thus be attributed to its denials and disavowals. On the one hand, it is never in the place that one expects it to be: it disavows its own historicity in order to hold out the promise of being to the subject— the something more than symbolic— a sense of wholeness, of exceptionality. On the other hand, as a social law, it must disavow this object in order to keep the system viable and to perpetuate the dialectic: the race for Whiteness. Exploring the structure of race requires a toleration of paradox, an appreciation of the fact that it is an inherently contradictory discourse, and a willingness to see beyond relations of power in order to mine the depth of subjective investment in it.

#### The affirmative destroys the possibility for finding ethical truths, politics, and value to life – turns the case as it causes an endless repetition reading of the 1AC which sustains these fantasies of social transformation that requires an affective attachment to the space.

Ruti 14 (Mari, English, Toronto, Psychoanalysis, Culture & Society (2014) 19, 297–314) Harvard BoSu

On the other hand, Lacan – again like Marcuse – recognizes that the symbolic order is repressive beyond the demands of subject formation, that it includes forms of violence that exceed the ubiquitous violence of the signifier. Indeed, even the violence of the signifier is not equally distributed, so that some of us are much more vulnerable to its injurious effects than others (consider, for instance, hate speech). Lacan does not necessarily talk about the unequal distribution of resources in the manner Marcuse does, but there is no doubt that his analysis of symbolic law as the Law of the Father elucidates a historically specific, deeply heteropatriarchal and hierarchical organization of social life. In point of fact, one reason I have taken a detour through Marcuse is to illustrate the obvious ways in which Lacan’s portraiture of the symbolic mirrors that of Marcuse’s explicitly historical account: what Marcuse calls “the performance principle,” Lacan calls the “service of goods.” Both thinkers identify the underpinnings of a social order dominated by the ideal of productivity – an ideal that is, moreover, placed in direct opposition to the pleasure principle. Both emphasize that the dominant morality of this symbolic – what Lacan calls “the morality of the master” – measures the merit of lives based on largely pragmatic criteria. And both acknowledge that the model citizen of this symbolic is a subject who shows up at work reliably every morning, performs its duties with a degree of diligence, does not let its desires get the better of its productivity, and seeks satisfaction (“enjoys”) in moderate, socially sanctioned ways. “Part of the world has resolutely turned in the directions of the service of goods,” Lacan writes, “thereby rejecting everything that has to do with the relationship of man to desire” (318). This, he adds, “is what is known as the postrevolutionary perspective” (318). In other words, the service of goods reflects the mindset of the levelheaded utilitarian subject who has deemed revolutionary change to be unrealistic. Lacan is here referring to the kind of depoliticization that is arguably the hallmark of Western subjectivity under capitalism. Lacan’s point is by no means, as critics such as Butler have suggested, that a different kind of symbolic is intrinsically impossible but rather that the configuration of subjectivity that Western modernity has produced – a subjectivity that has been subjected to a particular form of surplus-repression (the performance principle, the service of goods) – makes it virtually impossible for us to entertain the idea that the symbolic could be organized differently, that it could be centered around a different version of the reality principle. As Marcuse remarks, one reason the performance principle is so powerful is that it has managed to convince us that all alternatives to it are either utopian or otherwise unpalatable. Yet, for Marcuse, the fact that this principle has been so successful also points to the possibility of transcending it. As he states, “The very progress of civilization under the performance principle has attained a level of productivity at which the social demands upon instinctual energy to be spent in alienated labor could be considerably reduced. Consequently, the continued repressive organization of the instincts seems to be necessitated less by the ‘struggle for existence’ than by the interest in prolonging this struggle – by the interest in domination” (pp. 129–130). This is to say that there is really nothing besides social power that keeps us invested in the notion that our welfare demands relentless toil. The performance principle has outlived its usefulness in the sense that our collective productivity these days surpasses what is necessary for the provision of food, clothing, housing, and other basic amenities. The fact that these amenities have not yet reached all corners of the world, or even all corners of our own society (the homeless, innercity dwellers, etc.), is a function of domination (the unequal distribution of resources) rather than of any deficiencies of productivity. As a result, in Marcuse’s view, all we would need to do to bring about a more “non-repressive civilization” (p. 134) would be to refuse the parameters of the current symbolic; even something as simple as reducing the length of the working day would immediately realign our priorities, perhaps even impacting the very organization of our psychic lives. Our standard of living might drop somewhat, but we might also learn to assess the value of our lives according to other, less performance-oriented, measurements. Psychoanalysis, particularly Lacanian analysis, does not have a normative goal; it does not seek to tell us how we should desire but merely to explore the idiosyncratic contours of our desire. But this does not change the fact that Lacan, at least as a theorist, was exasperated by people’s inability to make their way out of the maze of the master’s morality, including its performance principle; he was frustrated by individuals who were so out of touch with the truth of their desire that they were willing to sacrifice this desire for the sake of social conformity and that they were, furthermore, willing to do so to the point of self-betrayal. As he explains, “What I call ‘giving ground relative to one’s desire’ is always accompanied in the destiny of the subject by some betrayal – you will observe it in every case and should note its importance. Either the subject betrays his own way, betrays himself, and the result is significant for him, or, more simply, he tolerates the fact that someone with whom he has more or less vowed to do something betrays his hope and doesn’t do for him what their pact entailed” (p. 321). Such a betrayal invariably results in the reassertion of the status quo, sending the subject back to the service of goods, what Lacan in this context calls “the common path” (p. 321). And given that desire, for Lacan, is “the metonymy of our being” (p. 321), betraying it in this way leads to the kind of psychic death that extinguishes the subject’s sense of agency. To use Lacan’s wording, “Doing things in the name of the good, and even more in the name of the good of the other, is something that is far from protecting us not only from guilt but also from all kinds of inner catastrophes” (p. 319). It is precisely such inner catastrophes that Lacanian clinical practice was designed to counter, though it may be Julia Kristeva – rather than Lacan himself – who has most clearly developed this interpretation of analytic work. Kristeva depicts psychoanalysis as a means of restoring the subject’s psychic aliveness, as an explicit revolt against the numbing impact of what she calls “the society of the spectacle” (2002, p. 4). This society of the spectacle – of technology, image, and speed – shares many parallels with Adorno’s “culture industry”: a flattened surface of the life world, a constriction of psychic space, a death of critical thought, the worship of efficiency over intellectual curiosity, and the incapacity to revolt. Against this backdrop, psychoanalysis – along with art, writing, and some forms of religious experience – offers, for Kristeva, a gateway to revolt, a way of resurrecting “the life of the mind” (a phrase Kristeva borrows from Hannah Arendt) through ongoing questioning, interrogation, and psychic recreation. “Freud founded psychoanalysis as an invitation to anamnesis in the goal of a rebirth, that is, a psychical restructuring,” Kristeva writes: “Through a narrative of free association and in the regenerative revolt against the old law (familial taboos, superego, ideals, oedipal or narcissistic limits, etc.) comes the singular autonomy of each, as well as a renewed link with the other” (2002, p. 8). In the context of my overall argument in this essay, it is worth stressing that it is “the desire of the subject” that, in Kristeva’s view, reserves a place “for initiative, autonomy” (2002, p. 11). This is in part because the “Freudian journey into the night of desire was followed by attention to the capacity to think: never one without the other” (2010, p. 41). In other words, the exploration of desire, in psychoanalysis, is akin to the critical (or at least curious) movement of thought – the very movement that Arendt also saw as vital to the life of the mind. This is why psychoanalysis has, Kristeva asserts, “the (unique?) privilege today of accompanying the emergence of new capacities of thinking/representing/thinking, beyond the frequent and increasingly noticeable disasters of psychosomatic space – capacities that are so many new bodies and new lives” (2010, pp. 41–42). Kristeva therefore draws the same link between desire and autonomy (in this instance, the capacity for critical thought) as Lacan does. Furthermore, to translate Kristeva’s point into Marcuse’s terminology, one might say that psychoanalysis, at least the kind of analysis that refuses to uphold social adaptation as a therapeutic goal, presents the possibility of sidestepping, or at the very least diminishing, the effects of surplus-repression. This, in turn, creates space for the truth of the subject’s desire in the Lacanian sense. This does not mean that repression as such is defeated. Quite the contrary, as we will see shortly, the truth of the subject’s desire is inextricable from the primary (constitutive) repression that accompanies subject formation. But as I have already suggested, the lifting of surplus-repression renders the imprint of primary repression more clearly discernable, for when surplus-repression is removed, what remains are the always highly singular outlines of primary repression. And if Lacan – like Marcuse – sought to remove surplus-repression, it was because he understood that it was on the level of primary repression (fundamental fantasies) that one could find the most basic building blocks of the subject’s psychic destiny; primary repression was the layer of psychic life that expressed something essential about the distinctive ways in which the pleasure principle, in the subject’s life, had become bound up with the repetition compulsion. This is why Lacan states, “If analysis has a meaning, desire is nothing other than that which supports an unconscious theme, the very articulation of that which roots us in a particular destiny, and that destiny demands insistently that the debt be paid, and desire keeps coming back, keeps returning, and situates us once again in a given track, the track of something that is specifically our business” (p. 319).According to Lacan, analysis aims to enable us to understand something about the eccentric specificity (or truth) of our most fundamental desire as well as about the track of destiny that this desire carves out for us (and that is therefore “specifically our business”). If it is indeed the case, as I have conceded, that most of us tend to be alienated from our desire, Lacanian analysis strives to undo this alienation by familiarizing us with the truth of this desire. This process entails, among other things, recognizing that the destiny we owe to this desire can never be definitively overcome, that the debt of desire can never be fully redeemed (for how are we to compensate the signifier for having brought us into being as subjects of desire?). Our destiny – which might initially coincide quite seamlessly with our repetition compulsion – consists of recurring efforts to pay off this debt, which is why it keeps ushering us to the same track of desire, the same nexus of psychic conundrums, our unconscious hope being that if we wear out the track of our desire by incessant reiteration, one day we might be able to absolve ourselves of our debt. But since we cannot, the only thing to be done is to “own” our destiny even as we might seek to mitigate its more painful dimensions. That is, the only way to arrive at the kind of psychic rebirth Kristeva is talking about is to take full responsibility for our (unconsciously generated) destiny. In the ethical act, our impulse is to embrace this destiny wholesale regardless of consequences (this is one way to understand what it means to plunge into the jouissance of the real). In analysis, the exploration of our destiny is more gradual, more self-reflexive. But in both cases, the point is not to obliterate our foundational destiny (or fundamental fantasies) but merely to elaborate it in more satisfying directions, away from the incapacitating effects of the repetition compulsion and toward the rewards of subjective autonomy. And, if we are to achieve this goal, nothing is more important than staying faithful to the truth of desire that, on the most elementary level, determines our destiny.

#### The alternative is a “NO” to the affirmative. Only this intervention can crack open the symbolic coordinates that allow the aff to name and claim what it wants without calling on an inaccessible symbolic other.

Lundberg 12 (Christian, Associate Prof. of Rhetoric @ UNC Chapel Hill, “On Being Bound to Equivalental Chains,” *Cultural Studies*, Volume 26, Issue 2-3, 2012)

The point of this disposition is to bring the subject to a point where they might ‘recognize and name’ their own desire, and as a result to become a political subject in the sense of being able to truly argue for something without being dependent on the other as a support for or organizing principle for political identity. This naming is not about discovering a latently held but hidden interiority, rather it is about naming a practice of political subjectivization that is not solely oriented towards or determined by the locus of the demand, determined by the contingent sets of coping strategies that orient a subject towards others and a political order**.** As Lacan argues, this is the point where a subject becomes a kind of new presence, or in the register of this essay, a new political possibility: ‘That the subject should come to recognize and to name his desire; that is the efficacious action of analysis. But it isn’t a question of recognizing something which would be entirely given . . .. In naming it, the subject creates, brings forth, a new presence in the world’ (Lacan 1988, pp. 228 229). Alternatively, subjects can stay fixated on the demand, but in doing so they forfeit the possibility of desire, or as Fink argues: ‘later, however, Lacan comes to see that an analysis ... that ... does not go far enough in constituting the subject as desire leaves him or her stranded at the level of demand . . . unable to truly desire’ (Fink 1996, p. 90). What does this have to do with hysteria? A politics defined by and exhausted in demands is definitionally a hysterical politics. The hysteric is defined by incessant demands on the other at the expense of ever articulating a desire which is theirs. In the Seminar on the Ethics of Psychoanalysis, for example, Lacan argues that the hysteric’s demand that the Other produce an object is the support of an aversion towards one’s desire: ‘the behavior of the hysteric, for example, has as its aim to recreate a state centred on the object, in so far as this object, das Ding, is, as Freud wrote somewhere, the support of an aversion’ (Lacan 1997, p. 53). This economy of aversion explains the ambivalent relationship between hysterics and their demands. On one hand, the hysteric asserts their agency, even authority over the Other. Yet, what appears as unfettered agency from the perspective of a discourse of authority is also simultaneously a surrender of desire by enjoying the act of figuring the other as the one with the exclusive capability to satisfy the demand. Thus the logic of ‘as hysterics you demand a new master: you will get it!’ At the register of manifest content, demands are claims for action and seemingly powerful, but at the level of the rhetorical form of the demand or in the register of enjoyment, demand is a kind of surrender. As a relation of address hysterical demand is more a demand for recognition and love from an ostensibly repressive order than a claim for change. The limitation of the students’ call on Lacan does not lie in the end they sought, but in the fact that the hysterical address never quite breaks free from its framing of the master. Here the fundamental problem of democracy is not in articulating resistance over and against hegemony, but rather the practices of enjoyment that sustain an addiction to mastery and a deferral of desire.

#### Vote neg to traverse the fantasy of unity—only by grounding racial politics in other identifications can we confront whiteness

Seshadri-Crooks 2K—Kalpana Seshadri-Crooks is a professor at Boston College (Desiring Whiteness: A Lacanian Analysis of Race, pg. 158-160, HSA)

We must develop a new adversarial aesthetics that will throw racial signification into disarray. Given that race discourse was produced in a thoroughly visual culture, it is necessary that the visual itself be used against the scopic regime of race. I have laid the basis for such an aesthetics in Chapters 4 and 5, where the relation of the bodily mark to the signifier is thrown into perplexity. In Suture, we as spectators are asked to give up our investment in Whiteness, the signifier that promises access to absolute humanness. The film puts pressure on the purely symbolic origins of race by unraveling the relation between racial gestalt and one’s identity. Clay is Vincent if he takes up his place in the signifying chain. Similitude is established not on the basis of the body’s gestalt, but the part object— ears, eyes, etc. In Toni Morrison’s “Recitatif,” it is racial reference that is called into question. As with Suture, the relation between visibility and the signifier is refused, but for another purpose. By emptying the racial signifier of its properties, so that white and black have no connotations, Morrison renders meaningless the relations among the signifier, the body, and identity. For Morrison, it is such emptiness that makes love approachable. I am proposing an adversarial aesthetics that will destabilize racial looking so that racial identity will always be uncertain and unstable. The point of such a practice would be to confront the symbolic constitution of race and of racial looking as the investment we make in difference for sameness. The confrontation has to entail more than an exploration of the fantasy, which process I detailed in Chapter 2 on “The secret sharer.” There we took measure of the fantasy of wholeness as the obliteration of difference that Whiteness holds out to the subject of race. A simple rejection of this fantasy of selfinflation on a political or ethical basis, such as the repugnance we see exhibited by Orwell, in Chapter 3, cannot be adequate. In Orwell’s case, his liberal rejection of mastery can only lead to the reproduction of the system of race. For it is not enough to be aware of the affect of anxiety that race invariably generates. One must traverse the fundamental fantasy of singular humanity upon which racial identity is founded. It is a question of resituating oneself in relation to the raced signifier. Such a practice would not aim so much at a cross-identification, such as ticking the “wrong” box on a questionnaire, or passing for another race. It would confound racial signification by stressing the continuity, the point of doubt among the so-called races, to the extent that each and every one of us must mistrust the knowledge of our racial belonging. The idea would be to void racial knowledge by releasing the racial signifier from its historical mooring in a signified. Such practices can only be, and must be representational, as what they necessitate is a radical intervention into language and signification. This entails the reinvention of culture as organized by differences based on other kinds of “reasonings” than race. Every medium of representation can and must be harnessed for such a practice. In addition to those I have cited earlier such as film, painting and literature, we must consider the possibilities presented by that other mode of representation, namely representation by proxy. The possibility of unsettling political representation, for instance, or procedures of verification based on race such as the passport, the visa and the driver’s license may renew and refresh questions of identity—what is worth preserving, what is not. The idea is not to erase identity, even if such a preposterous act were possible. Rather, we must rethink identity in tension with our usual habits of visual categorization of individuals. Ideally, the practice that I am advocating will deploy the visual against the visual. Such redefinition is thinkable only as a collective and normalizing project; it should be aimed at infiltrating normative bourgeois self-definition. The practice of “discoloration” will be more effective if it is not restricted to particular intellectual groups or artists. Gramsci suggests that a philosophical movement, even as it elaborates a form of thought superior to “common sense” and coherent on a scientific plane…. never forgets to remain in contact with the “simple” and indeed finds in this contact the source of the problems it sets out to study and to resolve. (Gramsci 1971:330) In other words, we cannot voluntarily abandon the quotidian logic of race. To do so would be a form of vanguardism that will only reinforce the system as the necessary point of differentiation. Rather, it is to the common sense of race that we must appeal. Otherwise, we will fail to address social contradiction in its specificity. Thus producing a sub-culture of “discolorationists” or encouraging subjects voluntarily to refuse racial identity (as advocated for “white” people by the journal Race Traitor) possibly will not be effective. An anti-race praxis must aim at a fundamental transformation of social and political logic. It cannot be a mere “phenomenon of individuals” which, as Gramsci reminds us, only marks the “‘high points’ of the progress made by common sense” (1971:331). As a praxis, psychoanalysis is the most appropriate discourse for the examination of why we or certain groups may resist such an adversarial aesthetics. Working through our fantasies will involve the risk of desubjectification that many of us dread. Such dread, such an encounter with our own limit, is the only means of articulating the possibility of an ethics beyond the specious enjoyment promised by Whiteness.

## Case

#### (1) No solvency and turn – debate as a communicative act may be violent, but they’re authors don’t differentiate it from the rest of the world it’s just an institution inside the anti-black world. They misread their authors the 1AC is a “band-aid” solution their authors don’t treat debate nihilistically in isolation BUT the world and eradicating debate doesn’t change the master-slave dialectic that recreates violence in different forms – proves it’s not endurance. ALL they actually do is generate cruel optimism that links to 1AC Gillespie since it creates a feel good solution that places blackness in a not yet but maybe to come social order where black infiltration of tournaments occurs. Even when Rutgers unites the crown, the NDT stream contains anti-black rhetoric. Even when Mcdonogh and North Broward win the TOC people tell race teams to get out. Their attempt to reform the content of debate through examining the way war goes down in the community is complicit in an anti-black world that consumes their project as false energy as a tool to trick blacks.

#### (2) Allies da - using debate as a mode of advocacy ensures the failure of their radical project – competition means debaters ally themselves with individuals who vote for them and alienate those who are positioned with the burden of rejoinder and forced to negate – at worst you vote negative on presumption because they don’t use debate as a stepping stone for their advocacy outside the space and don’t have a net benefit to affirming the 1ac.

#### (3) Ballot turn – tying ballots to survivability or the aff is violent as it forces the judge to determine whether their method of survival was “good enough” to get the ballot, which causes self hatred given loses

#### A positive orientation towards history and the ideals of radical humanist freedom are key to global liberationist struggles. Only this can avert every major existential crisis of our times.

Karenga 6 (Professor and Chair Department of Africa Studies at Cal State University and a major figure in the Black Power movement [Maulana, *Philosophy in the African Tradition of Resistance: Issues or Human Freedom and Human Flourishing in Not Only The Master’s Tools*, 2006, p. 242-5]

Surely, we are at a moment of history fraught with new and old fOnTIS of anxiety, alienation, and antagonism; deepening poverty in the midst of increasing wealth; proposals and practices of ethnic cleansing and genocide; pandemic diseases; increased plunder; pollution and depletion of the environment; constant conflicts, large and small; and world-threatening delusions on the part of a superpower aspiring to a return to empire, with spurious claims of the right to preemptive aggression, to openly attack and overthrow nonfavored and fragile governments openly, and to seize the lands and resources of vulnerable peoples and establish "democracy" through military dictatorship abroad, all the while suppressing political dissent at home (Chang 2002; Cole et at. 2002). These anxieties are undergirded by racist and religious chauvinism, by the self-righteous and veiled references of these rulers to themselves as a kind of terrible and terrorizing hand of God, appointed to rid the world of evil (Ahmad 2002; Arnin 2001; Blum1995). At the same time, in this context of turmoil and terror and the use and threatened use of catastrophic weapons, there is the irrational and arrogant expectation that the oppressed will acquiesce, abandon resistance, and accept the disruptive and devastating consequences of globalization, along with the global hegemony it implies (Martin and Schumann 1997). There is great alarm among the white-supremicist rulers of these globalizing nations, given the metical resistance rising up against them, even as globalization’s technological, organizational, and economic capacity continues to expand (Barber 1996; Karenga 2002e, 2003a; Lusane 1997). There is great alarm when people who should "know" when they are defeated ridicule the assessment, refuse to be defeated or dispirited, and, on the contrary, intensify and diversify their struggles (Zepezauer 2002). Certainly the battlefields of Palestine, Venezuela, long suffering Haiti, and Chiapas, Mexico, along with other continuing emancipatory struggles everywhere, reaffirm the indomitable character of the human spirit and the durability and adaptive vitality of a people determined to be free, regardless of the odds and assessments against them. Indeed, they remind us that the motive force of history is struggle, informed by the ongoing quest for freedom, justice, power of the masses, and peace in the world. Despite "end of history" claims and single-super- power resolve and resolutions, these struggles continue. For still the oppressed want freedom, the wronged and injured want justice, the people want power over their destiny and daily lives, and the world wants peace. And all over the world-especially in this U.S. citadel of aging capitalism with its archaic dreams of empire-clarity in the analysis of issues, and in the critical determination of tasks and prospects, requires the deep and disciplined reflection characteristic of the personal and social practice we call philosophy. But this sense of added urgency for effective intervention is prompted not only by the critical juncture at which we stand but also by an awareness of our long history of resistance as a people, because in our collective strivings and social struggles we seek a new future for our people, our descendants, and the world. Joined also to these conditions and considerations is the compelling character of our self-understanding as a people, as a moral vanguard in this country and the world. For we have launched, fought, and won with our allies struggles that not only have expanded the realm of freedom in this country and the world but also have served as an ongoing inspiration and a model of liberation struggles for other marginalized and oppressed peoples and groups throughout the world. Indeed, they have borrowed from and built on our moral vocabulary and moral vision, sung our songs of freedom, and held up our struggle for liberation as a model to emulate. Now, self-understanding and self-assertion are dialectically linked. In other words, how we understand ourselves in the world determines how we assert ourselves in the world. Thus, an expansive concept of ourselves as Africans-continental and diasporan-and as Africana philosophers forms an essential component of our sense of mission and the urgency with which we approach it. It is important to note that I have conceived and written this chapter within the framework of Kausaida philosophy (Karenga 1978, 1980, 1997) Kawaida is a philosophic initiative that was forged in the crucible of ideological and practical struggles around issues of freedom, justice, equalitys, self-determination, conullunal power, self-defense, pan~African- ism, coalition and alliance, Black Studies, intellectual emancipation, and cultural recovery and reconstlouction. It continued to develop in the midst of these ongoing struggies within the life of the mind and stmggles iottbtn the life of the people, as well as within the context of the conditions of the world. Kawaida is defined as an ongoing synthesis of the best of xAfrican thought and practice in constant exchange tuttb tl3e 'U)()ltd. It characterizes culture as a unique, instructive and valuable way of being human in the world-as a foundation and framework for self-understanding and self-assertion. As a philosophy of culture and struggle, Kawaida maintains that our intellectual and social practice as Nricana activist scholars must be undergirded and informed by ongoing efforts to (1) ground our- selves in our own culture; (2) constantly recover, reconstruct, .and bring forth from our culture the best of what it means to be African and human in the fullest sense; (3) speak this special cultural truth to the world and (4) use our culture to constantly make our own unique contribution to the reconception and reconstruction of this country, and to the forward flow of human history.

#### Complete rejection of civil society breeds resentment as it prevents black folk from getting what they materially need to survive

**Barlow 16** (Michael A Barlow, graduated in 2016 with a Bachelors degree in Sociology from United States Military Academy at West Point in West Point, NY, “Addressing Shortcomings in Afro-Pessimism”, <http://www.inquiriesjournal.com/articles/1435/2/addressing-shortcomings-in-afro-pessimism>, 2016) CJun

The question remains of how to create consistency in ontological and intra-ontological resistance. Is it materially possible to both call for a disruption of civil society while finding points of productivity in society? The answer is yes, at the margins. It is here that this paper makes another substantive departure from conventional pessimistic theorization, and again, it is useful to refer to Wilderson’s work. His theorization of the Black’s antagonistic relationship with the world concludes that the world is parasitic on Black life. Thus, he forwards the end of the world as the only ethical alternative. Afro-Pessimists are often criticized for their highly theoretical abstraction with this concept. Though there are no explicit specifications of what the end of the world is or how Black resistance movements are to specifically get there, it is widely accepted that the position is more of an epistemic orientation rather than one that forwards literal destruction. In addition, Wilderson calls for Black refusal to engage in civil society in an unflinching paradigmatic analysis meaning that any form of engagement with civil society would require Black abjection. This is the point of friction that this paper seeks to address. Even though Black bodies stand in an antagonistic relationship to the world, there needs to be a distinction made. The notion that any level of stability within civil society affirms Black Death has two major problems. First, it produces the exact same pattern of ressentiment which reproduces the internalization of self-hate which only sets the stage for communal violence in an attempt to cleanse. If the standard for measuring the effectiveness of Black movements is the destruction of every part of society, then failure is the only appropriate descriptor for every Black resistance strategy in history. If this is the case, the internalization of Black slaveness becomes all but inevitable by reinforcing psychological, mental, and emotional chains of depression on all those who seek to resistance. The second problem is that Black bodies have no means of creating instability at the state or societal level. Society is a manifestation of hundreds of years of economic and political accumulation that has yielded countless weapons against the oppressed. Simply expecting the dominant order to forgo the use of those weapons is a fantasy. The scope of orienting towards the end of the world in terms of instability is far too large. The end of the world is not possible. Afro-Pessimism is far too separated from the material practice of resistance in this regard. If the justification for detaching from state involvement is that it requires a sacrificing of Black flesh, then resistance strategies must consider the effect of a complete embrace of political refusal. Calls for absolute Black pessimism is also an abjection of Black flesh in the same manner Wilderson bases the need for the end of the world because an open refusal and rejection to at least seemingly conform to degrees of social norms will have deadly consequences for Black bodies. For pessimists to call for Blacks to openly embrace physical death in pursuit of theory is irresponsible and unethical. Wilderson uses the question of flinching as a misnomer. The term seems to suggest that any participation in or any implicit affirmation of society is an insufficient Black politic. The problem is that at its core the very nature of Black life is one that requires a series of strategic and tactical flinches. This means that in different situations and settings, Black bodies take different forms. If confronted on the street by a racist police officer, asking for one to unconditionally refuse to recognize the position of the officer is in turn asking for Black suicidal politics. As posited above, there is something inherently valuable within Black intra-ontological arrangements, and as such, suicide is a non-starter. Not only is this a strategy for sustaining intra-ontological freedom, but it is also a strategy for pursuing the disorganization of civil society. It problematizes society’s ability to easily script the nature of Black life and Black resistance. Tactical flinches allow Blackness to become a thousand different villains disguised as citizens. It is a protective mechanism for those who seek to fight against tyranny without inciting the wrath of the tyrannical. This is not to say that Black resistance should ever flinch in its orientation to civil society at a fundamental level. It is to say that in order for Black life to exist in a world that wishes its death, it is necessary to disguise that orientation and strategically present it in certain settings. Some will be highly critical of this notion because it will be perceived as a call to sacrifice expressions of authentic self in an appeasement of the dominant order. Instead, this is a call to reassess the very understanding of political orientation. Black resistance should embody refusal at the core level; that should be internalized, and it is the very process of mystifying that core refusal in acts of fugitive transgressions against civil society that renders its violence inoperable. This is not a sacrifice of the authentic self, but the mystification and protection of authentic Blackness in an act of rebellion against societal production of anti-Black violence. This is an effective means of navigating Black ontological questions. Again, Black liberation cannot be measured in terms of the absence of white violence, but it must be measured using different rubrics. In terms of Black ontological resistance as an ensemble, this resistance is a question is the maintenance of Black communities through the inoperability of violence by complicating perceptions of Black criminality. Since the slave has no capacity to orchestrate the manifestation of the end of the world, then Black orientation to the end of the world must begin with one of constructing the illegality of the body. This is the means in which Black movements must employ fleshly politics in modern resistance strategies. The end of the world should not be understood through the instability of civil society or the state, but rather, it should be understood through the ability of Black communities to render themselves self-sufficient which should very well include a strategic and criminal relationship with civil society.

#### Prefer contingency - the signifier of blackness may be descriptively negative BUT isn’t intrinsically such – structures of signification are constantly in flux.

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The first is that ‘‘an antiblack world’’ is not identical with ‘‘the world is antiblack.’’ My argument is that such a world is an antiblack racist project. It is not the historical achievement of such. Its limitations emerge from a basic fact. Black people and other opponents of such a project fought, and continue to fight against it. The same argument applies to the argument about social death. Such an achievement would have rendered even those authors’ and the reflections I am offering here stillborn. The basic premises of the antiblack world and social death arguments, are, then locked in performative contradictions. Yet, they have rhetorical force. This is evident through the continued growth of its proponents, literature, and forums devoted to it, in which all lay claim to stillborn status. In Bad Faith and Antiblack Racism, I argued that there are forms of antiblack racism that are also offered under the guise of love. I was writing about whites who exoticize blacks while offering themselves as white sources of black salvation. It was a response to those who regard racism exclusively as acts of demonization. There are also racist forms of valorization. Analyzed in terms of bad faith, where one lies to oneself in an attempt to flee displeasing truths for pleasing falsehoods, exoticists romanticize blacks while affirming white normativity and themselves as principals of reality. These ironic, performative contradictions are features of all forms of racism, where one group is elevated to godlike status and another is pushed below that of human despite both claiming to be human. Antiblack racism offers whites self-other relations (necessary for ethics) with each other but not so for groups forced in a ‘‘zone of nonbeing’’ below them. Although to be outside is not necessarily to be below, it is so in a system of hierarchy in which above is also interpreted as being within. There is asymmetry where whites and any designated racially superior group stand as others who look downward to those who are not their others or their analogs. Antiblack racism is thus not a problem of blacks being ‘‘others.’’ It’s a problem of their not-being-analogical-selves-and-not-even being-others. Fanon, in Black Skin, White Masks (1952), reminds us that Blacks among each other live in a world of selves and others. It is in attempted relations with whites under circumstances where whites control the conditions that these problems of dehumanization and subordination occur. Reason in such contexts, as he observes, has a bad habit of walking out when Blacks enter. What are Blacks to do? As reason cannot be forced to recognize Blacks because that would be “violence,” they must ironically reason reasonably with such forms of unreasonable reason. Contradictions loom. Racism is, given these arguments, a project of imposing non-relations as the model of dealing with people designated ‘‘black.’’ In The Damend of the Earth, Fanon goes further and argues that colonialism is an attempt to impose a Manichean structure of contraries instead of a dialectical one of ongoing, human negotiation of contradictions. The former segregates the groups; the latter is produced from interaction. The police, he observes, is the primary mediator between the two models, as their role is the use of force/violence to maintain contraries instead of the human, discursive one of politics and civility requiring the elimination of separation through the interactive, ultimately intimate, dynamics of communication. Such societies draw legitimacy from Black non-existence or invisibility. Black appearance, in other words, would be a violation of those systems. Think of the continued blight of police, extra-judicial killings of blacks and Blacks in those countries. The ongoing model of fascist white rule as the daily condition of blacks is to prevent the emergency of Blacks. An immediate observation of many postcolonies is that antiblack attitudes, practices, and institutions are not exclusively white. Black antiblack dispositions make this clear. In addition to black antiblackness taking the form of white hatred of black people, there is also the adoption of black exoticism. Where this exists, blacks simultaneously receive black love alongside black rejection of agency. Many problems follow. The absence of agency bars maturation, which would reinforce the racial logic of Blacks as in effect wards of whites. Without agency, ethics, liberation, maturation, politics, and responsibility could not be possible. This is because blacks would not actually be able to do anything outside of the sphere of white approbation and commands. Afropessimism endorses the previous set of observations, but this agreement is supported by a hidden premise of white agency versus black and Black incapacity. They make much of Fanon’s remark that “the Black has no ontological resistance in the eyes of the white.” Fanon’s rhetorical flare led many unfortunate souls to misread this remark. As he had already argued that racism is a socially produced phenomenon, his point was that those who produced it take it to be ontological. In other words, such people – in this case whites – do not take seriously that blacks have any ontological resistance to white points of view. Fanon was not arguing that blacks are ontologically beings, or even nonbeings, of that kind. If this were so, he would not have pointed out, in numerous sections of that book, black and Black experiences with each other. The whole point of the chapter in which that remark is made, “The Lived-Experience of the Black,” is to explore blacks’ and Blacks’ points of view. This is a patent rejection of ontological status while pointing to the presumed ontological status of a skewed perspective. Proponents of Afropessimism might respond that their position on white agency and black incapacity comes from Fanon’s famous remark that though whites created le Negre – the French term for, depending on the context, “negro,” “nigger,” and “black” – it was les Negres who created Negritude. Whites clearly did not create Afropessimism, which Black liberationists should, in agreement celebrate. We should avoid the fallacy, however, of confusing source with outcome. History is not short of bad ideas from good or well-intentioned people. If intrinsically good, each person of African descent would become ethically and epistemologically a switching of the Manichean contraries, which means only changing players instead of the racist game. We come, then, to the crux of the matter. If the goal of Afropessimism is Afropessimism, its achievement would be attitudinal and, in the language of old, stoic – in short, a symptom of antiblack society. At this point, there are several observations that follow. The first is a diagnosis of the implications of Afropessimism as symptom. The second examines the epistemological implications of Afropessimism. The third is whether a disposition counts as a political act and, if so, is it sufficient for its avowed aims. There are more, but for the sake of brevity, I’ll simply focus on these. An ironic dimension of pessimism is that it is the other side of optimism. Oddly enough, both are connected to nihilism, which is, as Nietzsche showed, a decline of values during periods of social decay. It emerges when people no longer want to be responsible for their actions. The same problem surfaces in movements. When one such as the Black Liberation movement is suffering from decay, nihilism is symptomatic. Familiar tropes follow. Optimists expect intervention from beyond. Pessimists declare relief is not forthcoming. Neither takes responsibility for what is valued. The valuing is what leads to the second, epistemic point. The presumption that what is at stake is what can be known to determine what can be done is the problem. If such knowledge were possible, the debate would be about who is reading the evidence correctly. Such judgment would be a priori – that is, prior to events actually unfolding. The future, unlike transcendental conditions such as language, signs, and reality, is ex post facto; ot is yet to come. Facing the future, the question isn’t what will be or how do we know what will be but instead the realization that whatever is done will be that on which the future will depend. Rejecting optimism and pessimism, there is a supervening alternative, as we have seen throughout the reflections offered throughout this book – namely, political commitment. The appeal to political commitment is not only in stream with what French existentialists call l’intellectuel engage´ (committed intellectual) but also reaches back through the history and existential situation of enslaved, racialized ancestors. Many were, in truth, an existential paradox: commitment to action without guarantees. The slave revolts, micro and macro acts of resistance, escapes, and returns help others do the same, the cultivated instability of plantations and other forms of enslavement, and countless other actions, were waged against a gauntlet of forces designed to eliminate any hope of success. The claim of colonialists and enslavers was that the future belonged to them, not to the enslaved and the indigenous. Such people were, in colonial eyes, incapable of ontological resistance. A result of more than 500 years of conquest and 300 years of enslavement was also a (white) rewriting of history in which African and First Nations’ agency was, at least at the level of scholarship, practically erased. Yet there was resistance even in that realm, as Africana and First Nation intellectual history and scholarship attest; what, after all, are Africana, Black, and Indigenous Studies? What, after all, are those many sites of intellectual production and activism outside of hegemonic academies? Such actions set the course for different kinds of struggle today. Such reflections occasion meditations on the concept of failure. Afropessimism, the existential critique suggests, suffers from a failure to in their analysis of failure. Consider Fanon’s notion of constructive failure, where what doesn’t initially work transforms conditions for something new to emerge. To understand this argument, one must rethink the philosophical anthropology at the heart of a specific line of Euromodern thought on what it means to be human. Atomistic and individual-substance-based, this model, articulated by Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, John Stuart Mill, and many others, is of a non-relational being that thinks, acts, and moves along a course in which continued movement depends on not colliding with others. Under that model, the human being is a thing that enters a system that facilitates or obstructs its movement. Under this model, the human being is actually a being. An alternative model, shared by many groups across southern Africa, Asia, South America, and even parts of Continental Europe, is a relational version of the human being as part of a larger system of meaning. Actions, from that perspective, are not about whether ‘‘I’’ succeed but instead about ‘‘our’’ unending story across time. Under this model, no human being is a being simpliciter or being-in-her-or-himself-or-themselves. As relational, it means that each human being is a constant negotiation of ongoing efforts to build relationships with others, which means no one actually enters a situation without establishing new situations of action and meaning. Instead of entering a game, their participation requires a different kind of project – especially where the ‘‘game’’ was premised on their exclusion. Thus, where the system or game repels initial participation, such repulsion is a shift in the grammar of how the system functions, especially its dependence on obsequious subjects. Shifted and shifting energy affords emergence of alternatives. Participation, understood in these terms, is never in games but acts of changing them. Abstract as this sounds, it has much historical support. For example, Evelyn Simien, in her insightful political study Historic Firsts, examines the new set of relations established by Shirley Chisholm’s and Jesse Jackson’s presidential campaigns. There would have been no President Barack Obama without such important predecessors affecting the demographics of voter participation. Simien intentionally focused on the most mainstream example of political life to illustrate this point. Although no exemplar of radicalism, Obama’s ‘‘success’’ emerged from Chisholm and Jackson’s (and many others’) so-called ‘‘failure.” Despite the appalling reactionary response of a right-wing majority in the 114th Congress during the second term of Obama’s presidency and the election of Donald Trump, whose obsession with erasing Obama’s legacy exemplified a form of psychoanalytical little man’s trauma, the historic fact remains that Obama took the helm of a mismanaged executive branch and gave it a level of dignity and intelligence matched by few of its white exemplars. His successors claim for a restored greatness only reveals the joke that is, in fact, any project on which the term “supremacy” is built: the naked racism and mediocrity that followed – there is an amusing photograph of a Klansman holding up a sign declaring his race’s “superior jeans!” – reveal the folly and terror of white megalomania. Beyond presidential electoral politics, there are numerous examples of how prior, radical so-called ‘‘failures’’ transformed relationships that facilitated other kinds of outcome. The trail goes back to the Haitian Revolution, which offered a vision of Black sovereignty that garnered the full force of Euromodern colonial racial alliances to stall, and back to every act of resistance from Nat Turner’s Rebellion in the USA, Sharpe’s in Jamaica, or Tula’s in Curacao and so many other efforts for social transformation to come. In existential terms, then, many ancestors of the African diaspora embodied what Søren Kierkegaard (1983) calls an existential paradox. All the evidence around them suggested failure and the futility of hope. They first had to make a movement of infinite resignation – that is, resigning themselves to their situation. Yet they must simultaneously act against that situation. Kierkegaard, as we have seen called this seemingly contradictory phenomenon ‘‘faith,’’ but that concept relates more to a relationship with a transcendent, absolute being, which could only be established by a ‘‘leap,’’ as there are no mediations or bridge to the Absolute whose distant is, as Kierkegaard put it, absolutely absolute. Ironically, if the Afropessimist’s argument rejects transcendental intervention and focused on committed political action, of taking responsibility for a future that offers no guarantees, then the movement from infinite resignation becomes existential political action. At this point, the crucial meditation would be on politics and political action. An attitude of infinite resignation to the world without the leap of committed action would simply be pessimistic or nihilistic. Similarly, an attitude of hope or optimism about the future would lack infinite resignation. We see here the underlying failure of the two approaches. Yet ironically, there is a form of failure at failing in the pessimistic turn versus the optimistic one, since if focused exclusively on resignation as the goal, then the ‘‘act’’ of resignation would have been achieved, which, paradoxically, would be a success; it would be a successful failing of failure. For politics to emerge, however, there are two missing elements in inward pessimistic resignation to consider. The first is that politics is a social phenomenon, which means it requires the expanding options of a social world. It must transcend the self. Turning away from the social world, though a statement about politics, is not, however, in and of itself political. As we have seen, The ancients from whom much western political theory or philosophy claimed affinity had a disparaging term for individuals who resigned themselves from political life: idiotes, a private person, one not concerned with public affairs, in a word – an idiot. I mention western political theory because that is the hegemonic intellectual context of Afropessimism; I have not come across Afropessimistic writings on thought outside of that framework. We do not have to end our etymological journey in ancient Greek. Recall that extending our linguistic archaeology back a few thousand years we could examine the Middle Kingdom Egyptian word idi (deaf). The presumption, later taken on by the ancient Athenians and other Greek-speaking peoples, was that a lack of hearing entailed isolation, at least in terms of audio speech. The contemporary inward resignation of seeking a form of purity from the loathsome historical reality of racial oppression, in this reading, retreats ultimately into a form of moralism (private, normative satisfaction) instead of public responsibility born of and borne by action. The nonbeing to which Afropessimist refer is also a form of inaudibility. The second is the importance of power. Politics makes no sense without it. As we have sene throughout our earlier reflections of power, Eurocentric etymology points to the Latin word potis as its source, from which came the word ‘‘potent’’ as in an omnipotent god. If we again look back further, we will notice the Middle Kingdom (2000 BCE–1700 BCE) KMT/ Egyptian word pHty, which refers to godlike strength. Yet for those ancient Northeast Africans, even the gods’ abilities came from a source: In the Coffin Texts, HqAw or heka activates the ka (sometimes translated as soul, spirit, or, in a word ‘‘magic’’), which makes reality. All this amounts to a straightforward thesis on power as the ability with the means to make things happen. There is an alchemical quality to power. The human world, premised on symbolic communication, brings many forms of meaning into being, and those new meanings afford relationships that build institutions through a world of culture, a phenomenon that Freud (1989) rightly described as ‘‘a prosthetic god.’’ It is godlike because it addresses what humanity historically sought from the gods – protection from the elements, physical maledictions, and social forms of misery. Such power clearly can be abused. It is where those enabling capacities (empowerment) are pushed to the wayside in the hording of social resources into propping up some people as gods that the legitimating practices of cultural cum political institutions decline and stimulate pessimism and nihilism. The institutions in Abya Yala and in Northern countries, such as the United States and Canada, very rarely attempt to establish positive relations to blacks, and Blacks the subtext of Afropessimism and this entire meditation.

#### The libidinal economy is NOT logical, think of it’s application in debate if the OVERALL psyche claim was true then how do they get non black ballots. But, think of ontology through Pascals wager if they’re right nothing happens but if they’re wrong they cement generations of black death and alienation from life.

#### Communicability and value is possible – white hyperreality is a spectrum, not an antagonism.

King Watts, 15—Associate Professor, Media and Technology Studies, UNC Chapel Hill (Eric, “Critical Cosmopolitanism, Antagonism, and Social Suffering”, Quarterly Journal of Speech Volume 101, Issue 1, 2015, dml)

I have been asked by more than one graduate student at more than one university how I hope to reconcile the claims of Afro-Pessimism with my insistence that voice is a fundamental human capacity. I maintain, more or less consistently, that voice is a public occurrence animated by the acknowledgment of the ethical and affective dimensions of speech.16 The repetition of the inquiry is energized by the fact and mode of Afro-Pessimism being taken up in debate and argument organizations, programs, and competitions. I am not going to attempt to complete this reconciliation in this space, in part because I have not quite accomplished it. But I do have to briefly sketch out the terms of the challenge in order to try to evaluate the strengths and limits of critical cosmopolitanism as an academic practice that would ask “why and how” Communication Studies might interact with the Afro-Pessimistic enclave in Black Studies. While criticizing the work of Black film theory, Frank Wilderson embarks upon an ambitious and provocative campaign meant to foster an understanding of the conditions of impossibility for Black subjectivity within the contemporary ontological paradigm. The term “Afro-Pessimism” signals the work of scholars who are “theorists of structural positionality.”17 As such, Blackness and Whiteness18 are interrogated as emerging through a conjuncture with brutal modern technologies of organization and domination, and the birth of the very idea of race. Put simply, it took the modern invention of slavery and colonialism to bring about the racial ideologies that make Blackness and Whiteness intelligible. The Slave/Black, then, should not be considered exploited labor or simply oppressed. “Rather, the gratuitous violence of the Black's first ontological instance, the Middle Passage, ‘wiped out [his or her] metaphysics … his or her customs and sources on which they are based.’”19 The Black occupies a coordinate that marks a fundamental structural antagonism with the West, with Whiteness and, indeed, with the Human. It is quite easy to see why the term “Pessimism” is apt. The Black names the condition of state violence, a flesh-object brought into the world for “accumulation and fungibility.”20 The Black is essential to the production of Western subjectivity and to notions of what it means to be human. “In short, White (Human) capacity, in advance of the event of discrimination or oppression, is parasitic on Black incapacity: Without the Negro, capacity itself is incoherent, uncertain at best.” Not only is the Black incapacitated as a structural determinate, the Black is “a structural position of noncommunicability.”21 But there is a form of communication here nevertheless because the Black paradoxically signifies the “outside” that allows for the articulation of “anti-Black solidarity.”22 There is theoretical and historical support for such an analysis. For example, the early twentieth-century Americanization projects used Blackness as an exclusionary trope meant to help spur non-White immigrants from Europe and Asia toward Whiteness.23 And here is where the term “Pessimism” seems inadequate. As a structurally overdetermined body-image in the Western imaginary and symbolic field, Blackness registers near-nothingness: In perceiving Black folk as being alive, or at least having the potential to live in the world, the same potential that any subaltern might have, the politics of Black film theorists' aesthetic methodology and desire disavowed the fact that “[Black folk] are always already dead wherever you find them.”24 Given this dire diagnosis, why and how might we interact with Afro-Pessimism? Speaking from the point of view of a Black rhetorical scholar (and a scholar of Blackness), the answer to why is virtually self-evident: thinking through Blackness as a condition of possibility for rhetorical action and social justice is a life-long pursuit that, given the tragic killing of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri in August 2014, feels especially burning.25 Given the affective intensity of the charge of Black noncommunicability, a failure to meaningfully interact would engender a different kind of “violence”; in this case a structural injunction sponsored by a lingering and recurring anxiety regarding the authority of Communication Studies. And so how might we interact? If I take up the orientation of critical cosmopolitanism, I need to recognize immediately that my efforts can be dismissed by the Afro-Pessimist as colonial; that is, as a reiteration of the sort of practices that presume that one's epistemologies can translate other's bodies of knowledge into comprehensible and useful concepts and constructs. And yet, we must begin where we are, not where we hope to be. Hence, I want to make two modest and one not-so-modest suggestions for how Communication Studies in general and Rhetorical Studies in particular might interact: first, Wilderson calls for “a new language of abstraction” to elaborate “Blackness's grammar of suffering.”26 But in my reading, Afro-Pessimism is already too reliant on a language of abstraction. Lois McNay, in The Misguided Search for the Political, recently contends that theories of political power are overwrought owing to a social weightlessness brought about through high abstraction. She recommends the reinvigoration of the concept of “social suffering”—not as an entrenched category of victimage but, rather, as the habitus of lived experience that must be articulated to analyses of structural positionality.27 Second, I agree with McNay (who says nothing about Afro-Pessimism, by the way) that structural antagonisms are not static, but are movable and moving configurations. The Afro-Pessimist in Wilderson's account must agree that when a non-Black person is thrust toward the horrible condition approximating (but not identical to) the Black's structural position, that adjustment can rightfully be called a “Blackening.”

#### Nihilism doesn’t preclude policymaking AND understanding antiblack racism as a metaphysical truism incorrectly gives more power to the system of domination---they foreclose action-oriented ethics that solve contingent violence.

Devon **Johnson 14**. Philosophy PhD @ Temple University. 2014. “A Philisophical Analysis of Nihilism and Antiblack Racism.” http://digital.library.temple.edu/cdm/ref/collection/p245801coll10/id/242733

Bell concocts several creative public policy scenarios demonstrating creatively pessimistic policy approaches to the permanency of racism in America. Each scenario optimizes black struggles for human dignity while acknowledging the permanence of racism. The “Racial Preference Licensing Act,” for instance, attempts to balance reparations for past injustices against blacks against the antiblack racist preference to interact only with whites.341 Social establishments would need a Racial Preference license, which is expensive to acquire, to practice their antiblack racist preference. Proceeds from the License would support a fund where, ultimately, antiblack racist dollars are used to create better living conditions for black Americans, i.e., no-interest mortgage loans and college scholarships. Also, licensed establishments and their employees would pay an additional income tax. The point of Bell’s scenario is to demonstrate the kind of radical thinking necessary to make black life meaningful in spite of pessimistic knowledge of racism’s permanence. Bell argued that pessimism must investigate “every racial policy, including those that seem most hostile to blacks, and determine whether there is unintended potential African Americans can exploit.”342 Bell’s pessimism encourages creative ways of exploiting the permanence of antiblack racism to make black life meaningful. However, it must be asked whether Bell’s pessimism involves nihilistically viewing antiblack racist values as metaphysical necessities. If Bell is correct, it is a matter of social, political, and legal history that dominant American society has never been committed to opposing antiblack racism. American socio-political institutions have a perfect historical record in failing to seriously criticize the nihilistic status of its white normative ideals. Bell’s philosophy demonstrates deep-rooted American commitments to the ideals of whiteness. However, his pessimism also suggests living in relation to antiblack racism as if it were a metaphysical reality. In existential Pessimism, one faces overpowering obstacles impeding one’s ability to construct meaningful and significant values for human life. It is not that one cannot value human life in pessimism, but rather that one faces the project of valuing against an immutable anti-valuing force. Be it Schopenhauer’s metaphysical cosmos or the sociopolitical constellations of racism, the instability of the human valuing project is constantly revealed through pessimism. Thus, pessimism is linked to the experience of having the project of valuing exposed as useless and ineffective in providing existential sustenance. Bell’s response to antiblack racism is pessimistic; it involves a determination that certain values, for instance, valuing a complete devaluation of antiblack racist values, are useless against the immutability of antiblack racist values, which Bell claimed, leads to “discouragement and defeat.” But, antiblack racism depends on a weak nihilistic structuring of white-normative values as metaphysically true; thus, to respond to antiblack racism by treating it as a metaphysical value reinforces its weak nihilism. Bell’s pessimism is opposed to West’s optimistic rendering of black struggles against antiblack racism. He did not assert the universal inevitability of black liberation, but rather, the inevitability of black oppression. He demonstrated a form of resignation similar to Schopenhauer’s by deferring to an immutable anti-valuing force. Schopenhauer argued that human values ought to adapt to the immutability of the universe’s usurping power of them; Bell’s pessimism suggests the same response to antiblack racism and white-normative values. To be clear, Bell does not suggest the complete resignation of black will, as Schopenhauer suggested for phenomenal will; but Bell does limit black phenomenal will to valuing a form of limited imagination in order to struggle against antiblack racism. Devaluing existential freedom in deference to that which usurps the value of phenomenal will is resentment.343 Nietzsche might have read Bell’s pessimism as demonstrating resentment against antiblack racism. Bell’s pessimism involves a moralistic judgment against antiblack racism because it involves valuing that which one cannot defeat as “bad,” making impotence “good,” in order to hide from responsibility for weakness, which Nietzsche also called, “bad conscience.” According to Nietzsche, moral judgments necessarily demonstrate weakness. For instance, Nietzsche wrote: [B]ad conscience is nothing other than the instinct of freedom forced to become latent, driven underground, and forced to vent its energy upon itself. The bad conscience of moral judgments is a sign of weakness; it reflects incapacity to pursue the instinct of phenomenal freedom. On Bell’s picture, black phenomenal freedom is necessarily given a pre-determined human reality against which to understand its existential being, despite his claim that valuing black life entails perpetual struggle against that reality. Bell’s pessimism resentfully valorizes the value of struggle in defeat. He suggests that black life can be made valuable by primordially accepting the permanence of antiblack racism. In an ironic and unintended way, however, Bell continues the tradition of relating to white-normative European values as universal truths. The primary problem with Bell’s pessimism is that its counsel carries with it commitments to metaphysical treatments of white-normative values. Bell’s thought exposed inherent absurdities within contemporary American socio-political discourse on race and racism, specifically addressing nihilism and not optimism as a sign of intelligent response. However, Bell’s pessimism remains unacceptable for humans already under the fallacious existential weight of metaphysical renderings of truth and reality. Antiblack racism already demands that black people experience whiteness as if it were metaphysically immutable in the way that one cannot overpower the sun and can only seek the limited triumph of shade. There is weak (white) nihilism inherent in antiblack racism, and there are weak nihilistic ways of responding to it, which could be called, “weak black nihilism.” Perhaps all forms of weak black nihilism, i.e., metaphysically conceived ideals in the struggle against antiblack racism, must be rejected if future generations of black people are to develop healthy notions of existential freedom. West’s optimism and Bell’s pessimism are examples of weak black nihilism; one must look for strong black nihilistic responses to antiblack racism. Frantz Fanon’s nihilism is a prime candidate.

#### Surrendering to blackness is the worst form of white pandering

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Many on the Left have taken a deferential posture toward Black Lives Matter. Some have celebrated this upsurge of activism as the return of black left militancy after decades of movement implosion and stagnancy. Even where they might disagree, many white leftists and some established black figures are clearly uncomfortable airing their ideological and strategic disagreements with millennial black activists for fear of being portrayed as insensitive or unsympathetic. Those who assert that liberal anti-racism is a necessary phase en route to a more viable working-class left politics either suffer from bad faith or are engaging in the worst form of pandering — namely, supporting black-led political tendencies uncritically as a means of demonstrating one’s anti-racist commitments. Those who trade in such patronizing behavior either have not taken the time to study the history of black political life since the sixties or are simply willing to ignore the class contradictions that black communities share with the wider population. Those who cling to liberal anti-racism and defer to essentialist arguments about black interests fail to see that a politics that builds broad solidarity around commonly felt needs and interests is a form of anti-racism, one that we desperately need right now if we are to have any chance of ending the policing crisis and creating a more civilized society. The hegemony of identitarianism has reshaped the terms of left political debate and action in at least three detrimental ways. First, it has engendered popular confusion about political life, leading many to falsely equate social identity with political interests. Second, it has distorted how we understand the work of building alliances not on identity as such, but on shared values and demonstrated commitment. Third, the practice of relying on racial or other identities as a means of authorizing speakers has had a corrupting effect on left political struggles. The result is a degraded public sphere where all manner of landmines prohibit honest discussion and impose limits on political constituency and left imagination, such as notions of “epistemic deference,” “mansplaining,” arbitrary stipulations about “being an ally,” and so forth.

#### Hope is necessary to sustain black politics and visions, give meaning to struggles for justice, and is worthwhile even if it fails to achieve all of its intentions – totalizing ideologies are bad.

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We must ﬁnally ask whether African Americans can rely on a totalizing ideology to shape our visions of black justice and our future in America. My answer is no. I believe we need a more ﬂexible approach than ideologies such as black Marxism, black nationalism, and at least the Cold War version of liberalism have allowed. We need a black critical theory that draws on and combines liberalism’s concern with individual rights and autonomy, republican concerns with community, socialist concern with an egalitarian society and economic justice for all, feminist traditions such as resistance to suppressing intragroup differences in the name of a false and oppressive unity, and blends these with recognition of the need for autonomous organization and cultural pride. No single world view or ideology comfortably accommodates all of these. But a critical theory can—and such a theory must be *political*. We’ve had a black aesthetic, black power, and a plethora of black public policy pronouncements. But a black political theory has to embody a theory of the state, power, human nature, and the good life. And such a theory must be based on the hope for and potential of the improvement of human nature while recognizing the wickedness of the world. Kantian pronouncements about systems that can be governed by devils have led us to a world where ethnic strife and nuclear and other horrors proliferate. We must strive for something better, something democratic, something cosmopolitan, not in the elite sense but in the sense that, since homogeneity is a thing of the past, even within states, we must fall back on our basic humanness. It is no coincidence that within American political thought this perspective appears most often in the black traditions and in black political thought, at least in the contemporary period—most often in the black feminist tradition. Thus the best legacy of black political ideologies for America is a tough, activist, inclusive democracy willing to challenge privileges of power and resources in the name of a grander vision which asserts that we are more than the mere aggregation of our individual preferences. Its morality, while democratic, would not be based on the latest consumer fad nor use the return to stockholders as the ﬁnal arbiter of the public good. That we often fail in living up to our standards of justice within black activism as well as within America—that we are imperfect as individuals and as communities—does not mean, as King so eloquently demonstrated, that the vision itself is not a worthy goal. What black critical theory and each black ideology have demonstrated is that the doable, the mundane, incremental reform of the workings of American society is not enough; only the full promise of America has the potential to be truly liberating. Any other solution is not only unsatisfactory—it is likely to provoke the kind of deadly conﬂict most clearly seen in the Civil War but also seen today in the rapid upward spiral of political and personal violence which results as people measure their circumstances against what they see as the lies that fester at the center of the American Dream. A new, black, critical theory needs to retain one aspect of black ideological visions. At the heart of all of the black visions is a sense of pragmatic optimism combined with a steadfast determination to gain black justice. Both the optimism and the determination are needed now as ever to sustain the political projects and new visions of African Americans.

#### Channeling activist energy toward policy change is vital.

**Syedullah 17** (Jasmine Syedullah 17, Assistant Professor of Africana Studies @ Vassar, BA, Brown University; PhD, University of California, Santa Cruz, “‘When I Fall:’ A Reparation of Despair”, in “Critical Exchange on Afro pessimism”, 2o17, Contemporary Political Theory Vol. 17, 1, 105–137) //hh

Prophetic despair, such as that which Baldwin expresses in an often quoted interview between James Baldwin Dr. Kenneth Clark in May of 1963, presses on the material cohesion of our moral infrastructure. In the interview Baldwin professes to remaining pessimistic with regard to his own life when he says, ‘‘It doesn’t matter any longer what you do to me; you can put me in jail, you can kill me. By the time I was 17, you’d done everything that you could do to me. The problem now is, how are you going to save yourselves?’’ He goes on a bit later to refuse, in no uncertain term, pessimism as a politics of the future. When Clark asks, ‘‘Jim, what do you see deep in the recesses of your own mind as the future of our nation, … I think that the future of the Negro and the future of the nation are linked … What do you see?,’’ Baldwin replies, ‘‘I can’t be a pessimist because I’m alive. To be a pessimist means that you have agreed that human life is an academic matter, so I’m forced to be an optimist. I’m forced to believe that we can survive whatever we must survive. But the future of the Negro in this country is precisely as bright or as dark as the future of the country (Clark et al., 1963). I want to savor the tensions of Baldwin’s response. I want to hold them, not resolve them, and observe how they situate pedestrian personal pessimism outside the movement for black life, while calling out the limits of a political process propelled and legitimated by white supremacy. Even insofar as pessimism is a social expression of the affective limits of social death, a feeling that brings us back to life, out of isolation, and into conversation with each other the promise of pessimism is clearly far more than an academic matter. The antithesis of pessimism in this instance is not optimism but apathy, willful passive acceptance of the untenable conditions of a people systemically and forcibly made to understand that there are some whose existence is at best immaterial and at worst a clear and present danger, and then there are those lives that do matter. What we have been witnessing in the activist and academic movements for black life is the implosion of identity politics and the failure of its possessive claims to liberal demands for rights and protection. The abolition of whiteness demands a kind of justice the state may not yet know how to sanction. As Patrisse Cullors (2015), one of three original founders of #BLM, argues, ‘‘I believe we can’t wait on the State to take care of our Black lives. We have to show up now to build the world we want to see.’’ Thinking the purchase of the pessimistic prophetically then, as a residual, inevitable, yet generative practice of the black prophetic tradition with reparative properties that precede and exceed Afro-pessimism’s formal incorporation into scholarly journals and conferences, I find myself constantly reminding my students that while we can take the analysis of power Afro-pessimism offers and run with it, academic enunciations of pessimism run the risk of remaining loyal to the limits of legibility and respectability of politics as usual. As Nick Mitchell (forthcoming, p. 10) writes: ‘‘When the intellectual becomes interchangeable with the slave, it is perhaps too easy … to smooth over the fact that black intellectuals have interests as intellectuals that can and do diverge from those of the people for whom they might want justice. Without an acknowledgement (not a confession) of this divergence … the project of race theorization risks deploying the generalizing force of theory and the moralizing tendency of critique to generalize a class perspective.’’ What we are dealing with here is more than occidental anxiety of ontological uncertainty. It is an ethical imperative to engage in a struggle to change the meaning of rights and protection from the ground up (or suffer senselessly at the altar of the state’s right to defend itself by any means necessary). As Baldwin (in Clark et al., 1963) suggested in the interview with Kenneth Clark, the pessimism of antiblack racism is not just a black problem, it presses on the condition of whites and upon the country as a whole: ‘‘These people have deluded themselves for so long, that they really don’t think I’m human. I base this on their conduct, not on what they say, and this means that they have become, in themselves, moral monsters.’’ The predicament of the pessimist is not a personal problem that is easily self contained. It presses upon the body, moving it to unrest, unleashing a rage that cannot stand to be at home in moral monstrosity. It just wants to burn it all down. ‘‘Now, we are talking about human beings, there’s not such a thing as a monolithic wall or some abstraction called the Negro problem, these are Negro boys and girls, who at 16 and 17 don’t believe the country means anything that it says and don’t feel they have any place here, on the basis of the performance of the entire country.’’ The question Afro-pessimism poses as a practice of prophetic desire then, turns away from a politics of recognition and respectability toward an abolitionist praxis of fugitive reparation to ask, ‘‘Will you run with me?’’ Does my pessimism press on your sense of superiority, exception, perfection enough for you to forfeit your status and help us move the country, force the nation to believe there is freedom beyond this world, a more prophetic imagination of difference, identity, and inclusion? ‘‘What white people have to do,’’ Baldwin (in Clark et al., 1963) reminds us, ‘‘is try and find out in their own hearts why it was necessary to have a nigger in the first place, because I’m not a nigger, I’m a man, but if you think I’m a nigger, it means you need it.’’ In the present moment Black Lives Matter (BLM) is advancing the cause for the abolition of white supremacy in local ways in chapters throughout the world. They call us to account for the material consequences of the unfinished work of antislavery abolition and reconstruction. They are part of an underground lineage of fugitive communities that emerged from the marshes, swamps, and hiding spaces of the plantation South. Their message is decentralized. It is not uniform. It does not reproduce old antagonisms. It does not pit moral suasion against direct confrontation. It does not ask that we choose to remain either optimistic or pessimistic. It exercises a practice of the political that harnesses both. In this last section then I turn to a speech against apathy by Patrisse Cullors, a beacon in a leader-full movement who has been animating pessimism as a protocol of self-care and prophetic political organizing powerful enough to propel activist and intellectual movements from isolated places of loss into collective liberation, out of abstractions into objections, subjecting the logics of antiblack racism to the collective force of intersecting fugitive communities of abolitionist movement against nihilism and toward an affirmation of life. At age 25 on 19 April 2015 Freddie Gray died from injuries sustained while shackled by his feet in a Baltimore Police Department van where he was being held in custody following his arrest. Baltimore stood up, rose up, died in, and rolled out. We all bore witness. His death was deemed a murder by the medical examiner a few weeks later. That Sunday morning, May 3, 2015, I, a Buddhist, found my way to church, to All Saints in Pasadena, CA, into the strikingly upper-class congregation of post-service attendees who piled in along with an unlikely mix of young greater Los Angeles activists-of-color and their white hipster allies. It would be my first time hearing our speaker in person. The whole room stood and cheered as she entered – the woman who helped coin the hashtag, the longtime activist organizer, Patrisse Cullors greeted us like family, all knowing eyes, bright smiles, and then began a talk she called ‘‘Abolition Theology.’’ Her voice was clear and certain, free of the cross-bearing affect of black suffering that often accompanies talk of state-sponsored antiblack violence in predominately white spaces. Cullors gave us a speech that touched us, that moved us – mourning, rage and all – into a mood for collective action. She impressed upon us the fact that the movement for black lives was a call to action for all black life, not just the names we could recite, not just cisgendered young men, not just ‘‘innocent’’ ‘‘children,’’ not just Americans. She let us know there had been recent formations of #Black Lives Matter chapters beyond U.S. borders. There were Afro-Latino chapters, chapters forming in Haiti, and in Ghana. She reminded us that the concept of blackness that **resonates across the globe** called on us to broaden the scope of our movements and to **build alliances**, to build with Latino communities in particular. It was a call for #BLM without borders. We were being enlisted in a movement that began, she reminded us, with the movement to abolish the institution of slavery. We were being reeducated as she drew connection between the hard-won efforts of formerly fugitive abolitionists to build resilient communities out of the so-called contraband during and following the Civil War through to the present-day ‘‘leader-full’’ movement of #BLM. ‘‘Isn’t this a great time to be alive?’’ Cullors asked in closing. Is she joking I wondered? I found not one drop of cynicism in her question. Without missing a beat, she proceeded to relay the names, the facts, the numbers, the bodies felled by police, by gun, by force. As she listed the lives taken a wave of loss flooded the room and we were still, breathless. ‘‘Protest is about disrupting apathy,’’ she continued. She left us eager to join her in this twenty-first century revival of reconstruction, in a fight for food, for access to housing, for access to education, and for a kind of justice for black lives that will not come without our willingness to show up, stand up, and throw down. In the streets, **in** solidarity**,** we will find the power to change people, she said, to change policy. She echoed the words of civil rights organizer Ella Baker, ‘‘the system under which we now exist has to be radically changed… It means facing a system that does not lend itself to your needs and devising means by which you change that system.’’ For Cullors that ‘‘means’’ came by way of waves grief, rage, despair, the loss of family, the loss of hope, bearing witness, heartbreak, and the will to return to face it all again. She closed us out with the rallying chant of the movement for black lives, the recitation of a prayer by Twentieth century fugitive slave Assata Shakur, ‘‘It is our duty to fight for our freedom. It is our duty to win. We must love each other and protect each other. We have nothing to lose but our chains.’’ The congregation’s joy burst through the siren of her words and bound us toward another way of sitting with the litany of loss. What Baldwin and Cullors make clear is that pessimism is **most powerful** as an unrelenting political process of coming back to life, beginning to feel **one another’s** humanity. What my students who are taking up the work of Afro-pessimism are in most need of are new ways to put their pessimism to work, to come together and collectively counteract the mind-numbing soul-crushing isolation centuries of antiblack racism have waged on our humanity. We need not fear falling short. The more we ‘‘fail,’’ the stronger we rise to try again armed with the alchemy of despair. What we need are stories and speeches, and spaces that moves us from abjection toward that fertile ground of self-transformation one **can only find in the witness of another**. What might we give up in a move from critique to healing and reparation, generative of the choice to be fearless in the face of the impossibilities of freedom? What might the audacity to ‘‘lean on each other,’’ as Jasmine Abdullah Richards says in the epigraph, and imagine a future for black life otherwise, add to the pursuits of the pessimist?