#### Western man is coded as the Vitruvian Man – a white, hyper-able, male according to which difference is measured and exterminated. The fear of differential embodiment is co-constituitive with the colonial ascendance of the West, constructing black and indigenous populations as monstrous and uncivil.

#### Mitchell, Antebi, and Snyder 19 (David T. Mitchell – Professor of English at George Washington University. Susan Antebi – Associate Professor of Spanish and Portuguese at the University of Toronto. Sharon L. Snyder – adjunct professor at George Washington University. “Introduction” Chapter in *The Matter of Disability: Materiality, Biopolitics, and Crip Affect* pgs. 12-23. DOA: 11/15/19, kbb)

#### The colonized subject cannot experience her or his nonbeing outside the particular ideology of western Man as synonymous with human. (Weheliye 26)

#### To fashion the collective alternative methodological approaches that comprise this volume, posthumanist disability theory draws upon the insights of neomaterialism as a way to imagine materiality as enacting its own demands upon the social and discursively overdetermined world of poststructuralism. This is not to dispense with the semiotic slippage so central to post-Derridean analytical techniques, but rather to depriv-ilege the role of discursivity in relation to material agencies. As explained in the previous section, posthumanist methodologies foreground disability’s “strange agencies of natural-cultural processes” as offering multiple pathways for reimagining the alternative flows of dynamic embodiment (Alaimo, Exposed 107). This approach allows us to analyze what we refer to as the fundamental instability of the post-Enlightenment project of classical man. First, posthumanist disability theory positions the Western humanist project, classically represented in Leonardo da Vinci’s model “Vitruvian Man” (1487–90; see figure 2), as incommensurate with contemporary approaches to materiality and embodiment. In The Biopolitics of Disability, Mitchell and Snyder refigure classical man by offering an alternative disability vision of “Vitruvian Man with CP” on their book’s cover (see figure 3). This figuration further exposes the privileged contours of Leonardo’s classical ideal as one that is thoroughly racialized (white), gendered (male), sexualized (heteronormative), aesthetic (symmetrically proportioned), and capacitated (hyperable). The classical “Vitruvian Man” features standards of capacitation that distance him from other embodiments as they are hypermarked by difference and denigrated based on the absence of the unmarked qualities attributed to any historical period’s specific universalized concepts of normativity (Mitchell with Snyder, Biopolitics of Disability iii). Posthumanist disability theory, then, exposes the historically and socially particular constellation of embodied properties that have gone into the making of Western man as a culturally centric, time-bound, and now failing product of the post-Enlightenment. Its quantitative and qualitative proportions have accompanied the ongoing upsurge of territorial and cultural expansions informing the realization of a European world system of global imperialism over other(ed) bodies since the eruption of the “Age of Discovery.” For instance, in Christopher Columbus’s “Letter to the Sovereigns” of March 4, 1493, he describes his New World anthropological encounters through a series of embodied displacements of racialized, gendered fantasies onto the indigenous islanders of what is now mapped as the Caribbean Islands (Zamora 3). One island (Matenino) has a population of all women “without a single man” who “use military weapons and other masculine practices” (Zamora 8); another island (Caribo) is populated by “those who eat human flesh” and grow their “hair very full, like women” and are willing to copulate with Matenino women, while other men fear bodily mutilation from such encounters; there is an island (Jamaica) with all bald inhabitants; and an island (Cuba) of people “who are born with  tails” (Zamora 8). The description arrives despite the fact that Columbus explains he has had little commerce with the indigenous peoples because they run away when his Spanish caravels approach. In Carnal Inscriptions, Susan Antebi argues that Columbus’s lack of actual contact with indigenous people bearing the traits he describes allows for a European notion of monstrosity to function as a metaphor for indigenous alterity that is always projected and displaced. Corporeal otherness thus becomes a justification for exploitation and conquest, but also a site of absence—a flight from a more intra-agential encounter with the materiality of those encountered—that will continue to impact the network of material and discursive relations between imperial and colonial locales (26–28).8 In the same letter containing these demographic fantasies of nonnormatively embodied islanders, Columbus argues that the discovery holds particular promise for the Spanish king and queen who financed the endeavor because a militarized force could dominate such multiplicitous embodiments with its own superior regularity in a matter of weeks. Once colonized, the island resources and slave labor could be extracted and sent back to Spain to boost its coffers. Another key goal of this imperial project was to begin the expansion of a “world system” of colonialism that had the reconquest of Jerusalem from its Muslim inhabitants as the penultimate future objective (Zamora 7). As Aníbal Quijano argues, the colonization of the Americas produces the modern notion of racial difference and global capitalism as intertwined, mutually dependent processes. The resulting and ongoing “coloniality of power” is thus defined through labor exploitation as continuous with racialization, or differentiated and denigrated embodiment (536–40).9 Thus, colonialism, projected fantasies of nonnormative embodiment, Christian crusading, the rise of capitalism, and global conquest form the support pillars of European imperial fantasies from 1493 onward. The figure of classical man in relation to which this imperialist project is imagined situates Leonardo’s “Vitruvian Man” as the instantiation of a biologically superior basis for a justification of conquest. The project of Western man, as black materialist feminist theorists such as Alex Weheliye (2014) and Sylvia Wynter (2014) point out, is eroding in Ozymandias-like ways because of the slow historical decay of properties that have proven increasingly biased based on their emphasis on the deficiency of some bodies. Both Weheliye and Wynters argue that the articulation of the project of Western man can be nothing but incomplete, as it excludes the historical, cultural, and material particularity of people of color from its colorless presentation. In Weheliye’s terms, the principal goal of black studies is “to disrupt the governing conception of humanity as synonymous with Western Man” (5). Likewise, according to Katherine McKittrick, Sylvia Wynters notes that the “correlations in this image [“Vitruvian Man”] between the Human body and the universe hide the fact that the body depicted and the experience upon which Leonardo was relying was a Greco-Roman concept of the human figure” (109). Such a project proves inherently disqualifying for most, and for crip/queer/racialized people in particular as their radically diverse and evolving embodiments challenge the static vision of desirability that Vitruvian Man imposes. Alternatively, posthumanist disability theory positions the spastic, racially hybrid, polymorphously sexualized, androgynous, arms-and-legs-akimbo multiplicity of “Vitruvian Man with CP” in its place. Consequently, in the incomplete and now increasingly abandoned project of Western man, disability can claim some contribution to bringing about this “productive failure.” Halberstam points out in The Queer Art of Failure that what has been historically understood as queer people’s inability to achieve a heteronormative baseline of adulthood in fact represents the unfolding of their alternative cultural and material agencies (31). Such divergent expressions of adulthood are based in the productive eruptive potential of queerness itself. Likewise, Rosi Braidotti points out that “the allegedly abstract ideal of Man as a symbol of Classical Humanity is very much a male of the species; it is a he. Moreover, he is white, European, handsome, and able-bodied” (24). To counter monistic celebrations of Leonardo’s Vitruvian Man as the basis of the project of imagining Western Man, Braidotti offers up the image of “New Vitruvian Woman” (see figure 4) as an alternative to the representation of male embodiment. While whiteness and maleness have long dominated critiques of classical humanism, “handsomeness” and “able-bodiedness” arrive as a startling eruption in Braidotti’s philosophical formulation. This twining of aesthetic with able-bodiedness augments the racialized and engendered coordinates in the realization of Western man’s classical contours. We rarely think of masculine appearance and bodily capacity as qualities of Enlightenment embodiment; likewise, disability, both aesthetic and functional, rarely impresses itself as necessary to exclude so specifically. What is the meaning behind this inclusion of ability in the classical formula of “the human” that Braidotti so tellingly cites without further elaboration? Why might disability prove central to alternative formulations of “the posthuman”? First, in addition to heteronormative masculinity, the creature that Braidotti cites also comes with its class privileges intact. Her analysis borrows from Cary Wolfe’s description of the “Cartesian subject of the cogito” defined as the “subject as citizen, rights-holder, property holder and so on” (“Posthumanities”). As a product of the convergence of gendered, racialized, sexualized, and class characteristics, the classical body of humanism has grown necessarily endangered as a unit of common belonging for the human (and, Wolf would add, nonhuman) species. Braidotti’s calling out of the figure as a “he” brings attention to the fact that the Vitruvian is also excessively able-bodied in presentation. Seven and a half heads tall, four-limbed (if we allow for its display of range of motion that creates an appearance of eight limbs), a fully flexible range of motion in each appendage, sculptured musculature, symmetrically proportioned, and well balanced on one or two legs, the Vitruvian Man defies all specificity of corporeal variation. Such impossible coordination of parts conceals any apparent embodied idiosyncrasy, and thus proves a “pure product” of the kind of human exceptionalism that posthumanist disability theory critiques. Particularly as the world grows increasingly toxic, as medical science harbors the capacity to keep more kinds of bodies alive, and as disabled bodies expand their material presence as participatory subjects in exclusionary humanmade environments, posthumanist disability theory asks how variation might serve as the foundation for modes of reconfiguring, reimagining, and renavigating the world. Posthumanist disability theory thus attempts to reverse this Eurocentric foundational insight by joining in an outpouring of racial/gendered/trans/ classed/disability critiques of the classical humanistic concept of Western man as based on a form of domination over othered bodies that deviate from its zero-degree game of sameness. As Wynter’s philosophy explains, “Once the universality of the Human has been postulated—and we encounter this formulation in many official documents telling us that humans are ‘are all born equal’—hierarchies are needed and put into place to establish differences between all who were ‘born equal’” (McKittrick 109). Specifically for disability, the formula of Western man treats cognitive, physical, sensory, and psychiatric differences as faults localized in individual bodies rather than as revelatory of materiality’s defining multiplicity. Posthumanist philosophers commonly cite “human enhancement” as one cornerstone of this pursuit to seriously decenter the individual figure of Western man as self-contained and biologically intact. Much of this discussion is based on a contemporary technological fetishism of products (or potential products) that take disabled people as their test market in the hopes of moving adaptive devices out into the wider consumer market. As a formidable test market, disabled people are commonly considered to possess materiality in “obvious” need of supplementation, and thus, the direction of “human enhancement” takes on a “helping aura” formerly associated almost exclusively with the rehabilitation therapies (physical, occupational, speech, and others). Donna Haraway famously identifies “paraplegics and severely handicapped people” as having “the most intense experiences of complex hybridization with other communication devices” (“Cyborg Manifesto” 315–16). Many disabled individuals we know describe their relationship to their assistive devices (communication or otherwise) in terms that resonate with “complex hybridization,” but nevertheless Haraway’s definition suggests a relationship of human and machine that comes off as a bit too breezy. These interactions between material bodies and machines generally prove anything but comfort ridden and usually signal the degree to which one arrives, at best, in a détente with supplementary equipment.10 Vitruvian Man has no adaptive technology on his person, and, thus, any prosthetic encumbrance draws crip/queer figures outside the lines of the enfolding circle of symmetrical normalcy in which he finds himself buffered from harm. Like its new materialist predecessors, posthumanist disability theory certainly emerges from recognitions that the Anthropocene has engendered the agency of humanity to such a degree that the human now functions as akin to a geological force capable of affecting all life on the planet (Braidotti 5; Alaimo, Exposed 1). This force has marshaled significant destructive impact on what we know as the material world from the fifteenth century to the present day. Because the dominating figure of Western man has been key to the consolidation of this destructive and anthropocentric framework, posthumanist disability theory has to participate in collapsing the stability of fantasies of embodied normative power. A key challenge is to contest the imposition of a stable mode of desirability and functioning over forms of materiality that are devalued because of their excessive differentiation. The essays included in The Matter of Disability all participate in towing the chain that bends the figure of classical European normative masculinity at the ankles and drags it to the ground. Posthumanist disability theory elaborates on the specific modes of differentiated embodiment materialized and impacted through relations between human and nonhuman, organic and inorganic bodies and environments, and in particular through agricultural and military forms of toxicity that give rise to biopolitical notions of sacrificial subjects such as Mbembe’s “necropolitics” and Giorgio Agamben’s “bare life.” Both of these consciously pursued devaluation schemes are defined as the statesanctioned material destruction and intentional disablement of human bodies and populations deemed expendable (14, 6). Alexander Weheliye champions Mbembe’s approach and depreciates that of Agamben, based on the former’s inclusion of targeted colonized subjects and the latter’s emphasis on a universalized, abstracted concept of subjection to powerknowledge as in the Foucauldian tradition of European philosophy (63). Yet, to be fair, Agamben deals directly with disability populations in his analysis of Nazi eugenic formulations of “life unworthy of life,” while Mbembe and Weheliye leave disablement as a material imposition of violence on bodies. Posthumanist disability theory straddles each of these terrains, as it neither avoids a Marxist tradition of employing disability as proof of industrial capitalism’s destructive power nor eschews attention to materiality’s morphing corporeal rearrangements. Further, part of the reformulation of Western man involves a radical reassessment of the relationality between animal and human bodies (that which Wolfe refers to as “the animal turn” [What Is Posthumanism?]). Whereas humanism has aggressively promoted the controlled breeding of animal and plant bodies in order to increase yield, deny decay, and expand profits, such schemes of genetic direction have produced enormous disability-relevant alterations in human, nonhuman, organic, and inorganic environmental conditions. Pesticide development, for instance, not only alters the nature of what one ingests, but also threatens the migrant, lower-class bodies that clear, maintain, prune, and harvest the fields. In these agrarian locales capacitated labor power is extracted and worn into disabled bodies as a nearly inevitable outcome of the ways in which repetitious movements ultimately deny the very capacities on which they are initially valued. They are also those bodies that get “dusted” by pesticides sprayed across environments by “crop dusters” circling above (Rich 3). Thus, racialized, devalued embodiments become excessively open to exposures that presumably keep the post-Enlightenment body safe. Privilege operates as an ability to seal off one’s body from deleterious encounters with toxicity. Falsely buffered from his own carcinogenic products, Western man gradually ingests a productive portion of the “slow death” he sows and can only fantasize an escape hatch from such hazardous exposures (Berlant 754). His positioning at appropriate distances from the site of production for safekeeping does not prevent the animacies of such toxins from incorporation into his own bodily domain (Chen 218). Additionally, industrial farming has erased the presence of farmers and farmworkers across northern and southern hemispheres and, in moves reminiscent of the dust bowl 1930s, keep extended families adrift, and without access to the education, affiliation, health care, employment tenure, or organization requisite for empowering allies. To a significant extent, this inability to buffer the farmer’s or migrant worker’s exposure to materiality’s rewriting at the core of all being drifts from zones of agricultural production to necropolitical zones of conflict where expendable bodies are defined by forms of state-imposed immobility. The techno-military proliferation of microconflicts on a global scale has given way (largely via drone strikes and the arresting of refugee and immigrant movements) to new levels of administered violence. These new geographical displacements of populations result in a physical dislocation on the outskirts of a more bounded and desirable humanity. Mbembe refers to this placement across a long dureé in abjected physical space as a key characteristic of “the postcolony” (103). The material locations of such bodies position them as targets and thus their expendable peripherality coincides with their immobilizations in various fenced-off elsewheres. Aerial thanatic delivery systems merge artificial intelligence, cybernetic gaming, and human operators in a new formula of death with distance (Braidotti 44–45). As Jasbir Puar points out, the Gaza Strip can be recognized as a physical collection point that defines all bodies within it as expendable with respect to their peripheral location outside and within the borders of Israel (2). Their excessive exposure to death and disability are justified as a result of their immobilized, extreme localization in the occupied territories. While militarized militias use civilian populations as their cover and as governments consciously place those defined as expendable at a physical distance in temporal, makeshift detention camps for the excessively diasporic, those same peripheral citizenries find themselves increasingly subject to what Elaine Scarry describes as the two primary products of war: death and disability (12). Thus, posthumanist disability theory encompasses an extraordinarily complex nexus of mutating bodies, including semipermeable interactions between human, nonhuman, and inorganic animacies; environmental toxicities and the mutating bodies they produce; quantitative and qualitative measurements of capacities, functionalities, and aesthetics; pharmaceutical and cybernetic trafficking in ways of rewriting material subjectivities; a preponderance of blind vendors in a Mexico City subway as the engine of an embodied, affective informal economy; eugenic lineups that take cognitively, psychiatrically, sensorily, and physically disabled bodies to psychiatric killing centers; the advent of tactile poetry that expresses the visceral nature of schizophrenic mindsets; the economic unfoldings of profit where products cause disease and then the same corporate producers provide the therapies to treat the impaired bodies their runoffs produce; amputee fantasies of incapacitated bodies performed by able-bodied actors that retain all but the material specificity of the bodies in question; “tropological confusions” between nonhuman and human animals cross-referenced as mutually devalued and, therefore, euthanasia-worthy; militarized productions of maimed human and nonhuman bodies in fabulations of sexualized hypercapacity; forms of mobility and environmental sensitivity that preclude a more robust participation in “natural” landscapes; as well as the targeting of disabled racialized bodies as unarmed threats to an excessively militarized police force. All of these topics posit the “unique mattering” of posthumanist disability embodiments that reveal uncanny capacities where only unproductive incapacity was imagined to reign. All of these mutated locations can be found and plumbed in the essays that comprise this volume. There is no end to the exhaustive requirements placed upon developing posthumanist disability theory to engage more meaningful global encounters with the intra-active material-discursive agencies unleashed by such developments at the fall of the project of Western man.

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#### The frame of humanism locks in violent structures of anti-blackness and ableism, rejecting regimes compulsory vitality requires the formulation of post-human relations that reject simplistic narratives of personhood and agency and embrace emancipatory forms of becoming.

#### Knadler 2019 (Stephen[Assistant professor of English at Spelman College] “Vitality Politics Health, Debility, and the Limits of Black Emancipation”)//TB

#### In Vitality Politics: Health, Debility, and the Limits of Black Emancipation I bring together critical disability studies, the medical humanities, Black Studies, and African American literary history to trace out how a long history of postemancipation racial governance has operated through a slow antiblack violence of debilitation and distress that has been critical to the fitting (and disposing) of Black lives within the modern U.S. neo/ liberal racial capitalist state. Taking its cue from the women of Atlanta's Neighborhood Union, Vitality Politics: Health, Debility, and the Limits of Black Emancipation specifically seeks to recover and theorize a twinned history of debility and antiblackness (key terms that I will clarify shortly). My intent is to broaden our understanding of racial violence to include the gradual, toxic, and everyday assaults against African Americans that occurred through unsanitary housing, polluted drinking water, unequal segregated health care, the absence of sewage lines, unsafe food, or traumatic environmental stress, to take only a few examples, and to argue we need to pay as much attention to a biopolitics of debilitation and medicalization as criminalization, police violence, or surveillance if we are going to better understand how Black lives are made not to matter in our supposedly race-neutral multicultural democracy. Since post-Reconstruction, racial politics has often involved creating perpetual cycles of crisis and recovery around Black health and “vitality” that functioned to regulate or exclude African Americans from the modern liberal meritocratic state and racial capitalist economic order. A focus on this physical debilitation and mental distress can tell us a lot about the way power operates—and is felt, sensed, heard (or not), in short, gets in the bones, gut, blood, and neurons—amid historic racial hierarchies that continue to naturalize and accept African Americans' exclusion behind a language of equal opportunity, personal accountability, and character.

#### There is, however, also another side to this early twentieth-century vitality politics: the role these practices of debilitation and recovery played in what is often referred to in African American cultural histories as “racial uplift” or “respectability politics,” or by both names. In Vitality Pol itics: Health, Debility, and the Limits of Black Emancipation, I trace out in the second half of my study how early twentieth-century African American community leaders developed a complicated disciplinary and emancipatory rehabilitative method of their own around questions of African American disability, health, and mental pain that turned the so-called New Negro into a “citizen-patient” in order to manage gender, class, sexual, and other cultural shifts during the Great Migration.” The African American community, however, was often divided over the tactics and ends of this rehabilitation. There were also African American leaders and community activists, particularly women involved in the National Asso ciation of Colored Women's Clubs, like Lugenia Hope, who were trying less to cure, fix, or remake the disabled and distressed as normal assimilated citizens than to create new ecologies for giving people what they needed and to cultivate well-being. In the chapters that follow I show how early twentieth-century Black cultural production also gestures toward an alternative futurity beyond a logic of cure and rehabilitation to develop a posthuman (or as I prefer, beyond humanist) ecological understanding of personhood and agency that affords us new paradigms for imagining Black freedom struggles beyond liberal narratives of “color-blind” opportunity and gradual progress.”

#### Vitality Politics: Health, Debility, and the Limits of Black Emancipation, thus, builds on the work of scholars within an emerging field of Black disability studies. As Sami Schalk and Theri Pickens both contend in mapping out a new methodology for Black disability studies, ableism and antiblackness “operate in parallel and overlapping ways” as the debilitation of Black bodies and the invoking of Black distress has been a key part of antiblack violence. As a result, the common starting distinction between impairment and the extraordinary body/mind within disability studies cannot be so easily maintained within African American history." In using the term “vitality,” I am drawing on the critical disability studies work by Jasbir Puar, Robert McRuer, and Nirmala Erevelles, who have sought to complicate identity-based models of disability to recognize that the “debility” or targeted “maiming” and distress of Black populations has often been a key, yet not fully acknowledged, strategy securing the inequalities and injustices of the racialized state." Throughout my book I do not argue simply for an additive intersectional analysis that appends disability to the categories of difference or oppression shaping Black identity and consciousness. To theorize a history of disability and antiblackness, we need new models for talking about how human differences celebrated within disability scholar ship intersect with oppression, vulnerability, and risks disproportionately affecting racial minorities, and to do so in such a way that does not under mine affirmative models of disability. I focus in depth on the post Reconstruction period of the early twentieth century precisely because during this era, when the dynamic of this vitality politics was first being crystallized, we see improvisations, innovations, and fragments in Black cultural production that do not just anticipate our current cultural moment, but represent a “future past” that directs us toward imagined alternatives to a liberal language focusing on medical bias and its impact on access to care and treatment.” As Lucas Crawford notes, a key question for critical dis ability studies is how to recognize a history of racial violence and the debilitation of minority life, yet also refuse the return of Western medical mod ls of “normal,” “healthy,” “able” bodies that might become part of a revisionary history of disability and racial oppression that “hurts.” In the ongoing tension within early twentieth-century Black cultural production between disability as a sign and outcome of racial violence and as a site for resisting normative and racialized models of physical health and sanity, we can detect new “methods” for a “more complete ill-defined emancipation”— one operating along a different temporality to conceptualize the becoming and unbecoming of Black well-being. Such a new emancipatory method will recognize that Black disability is more than a fixed, static, and predictive category that needs to be accommodated or healed to ensure rights of access and equal opportunity.

#### The term “vitality politics” in the chapters to follow, thus, identifies a post-Reconstruction politicization of biological health as an instrument for insisting on a racial state of exception in which African Americans' own unhealthy habits and disease susceptibility justified their legitimate suspension from full rights to social justice, economic opportunity, political equality, and freedom. I use the term “vitality” deliberately because of its layered meanings: first to invoke the language widely cited in early twentieth-century discussions about racial destiny that debated the private bodily practices and life processes of African Americans to determine (allegedly on an objective scientific basis) the developmental tendencies of freedmen and women and to medicalize economic, social, and political discriminations (see chapter 1). But, second, vitality politics also registers the focus of African American reformers on hygienic behaviors and envi ronments to rehabilitate African Americans into “vital” citizens practicing self-care and private risk management promoted within modern liberal (and now neoliberal) multicultural racial capitalism.” Vitality Politics synhesizes multiple strands within the broad field of what is collectively identified as biopolitics, including theories of vulnerability, medicalization, disability studies, slow death, necropolitics, mad studies, and vital materialism to get at the complicated, and not always consistent, ways that both the literal physical and mental health—the matter of Black lives— and the semiotic meanings and larger discursive narratives attached to them functioned as key tactics shaping and controlling African Ameri cans' place as part of the shift toward modern liberal governmentality. These practices of vitality politics, as a consequence, require an attention to a complex notion of Black personhood, one which necessitates us as literary and cultural critics to avoid privileging representations over phys icality or culture over biology, and to acknowledge how post-Recon struction material Black personhood and its representation were being mutually transformed.”

#### To trace out this story of a post-Reconstruction U.S. ill-defined emanci pation for freedmen and women, I need also to be particularly clear about one more key term in my study: antiblackness and its critique of racial liberalism. In bringing together questions of postemancipation Blackness, citizenship, and a biopolitics of debility and health, I do not intend simply to add on to the story of medical racism, or the African American com munity's countervailing activism: one that has been deftly told by scholars such as Harriet Washington, Vanessa Gamble, Alondra Nelson, Keith Wailoo, Todd Savitt, and Anne Pollock, among others.” In connecting antiblackness and its role in regulating, on both a material and discursive level, access to U.S. citizenship, I want to complicate and reappraise what Jodi Melamed has identified as official liberal antiracisms that often under cut our capacity to challenge and transform inequalities and injustices because they do not address underlying structural racisms, material and economic inequalities, and institutional systems such as racial capitalism. Although not a singular school of political thought in U.S. history, liberal ism has traditionally focused on race as a problem of attitudes or preju dices, which, once removed or altered through greater empathy and under standing, will supposedly give way—gradually—to greater tolerance and inclusion around a logic of race-neutral opportunity and merit." Drawing on theories of antiblackness, however, Vitality Politics argues that racism, or more accurately white supremacism in the United States, was not an aberration from the nation's liberal social contract, but inherent and essential to its original formulations of individual rights, economic self determination, and full political and legal citizenship.”

#### Vitality Politics contends that there is more to the story of Black debility than the question of “disparities” (a descriptive term) in health status, access to care, and quality of treatment, which are often viewed merely as additional sites of Jim Crow racism. As Black Studies scholars Jared Sex ton, Alexander Weheliye, and Frank Wilderson assert, antiblackness encompasses more than racial bias, discrimination, white privilege, and even violence. Antiblackness refers to a foundational structuring differentiation and devaluation of Black lives embodied in slavery, but that continues in its afterlife. Drawing on ideas of social death, for example, Sexton argues that slavery was—despite popular conceptions—not only about forced and bounded labor, but about a distinctive disposability toward Black life that involved specific vulnerabilities and a stateless rightless ness.” To speak of antiblackness, therefore, is not only to note how “white ness” or a white identity politics invoked Black otherness as a self identifying racial difference, and never more so than in our own historical moment,” but also how U.S. notions of personhood, citizenship, agency, and even basic human value in the early twentieth-century racial capitalist order were grounded on structured vulnerabilities and a resulting oppositional Black disposability, debilitation, and worthlessness.

#### The chapters that follow, therefore, expand on ideas of antiblackness by synthesizing them with recent theories of vulnerability and risk. Although vulnerabilities have often been associated with private personal bodily suffering, weakness, or infirmities, critics such as Judith Butler and Martha Fineman have recentered vulnerabilities within political and legal theory as not an inevitable part of the human condition, but as often sociopolitically created outcomes that are unjust, unequally distributed, and preventable, despite notions of a universal shared human fate.” This imbrication between antiblackness and calculated African American vul nerabilities was clearly expressed in 1933 by early African American health care advocate Midian Othello Bousfield in his speech before the American Public Health Association. After enumerating all the challenges facing the public health worker addressing African American health risks, from crowded unsanitary housing, segregated hospitals, to unsafe water and rotten food supplies, Bousfield summarized by insisting, in short, “There is nearly always a prevalence of influences which tend to destroy” For Bousfield the question of Black health had to be placed back within a net work of unrecognized everyday racist “influences” “destroying” or debili tating Black life, and enabled by municipal, state, and—until 1932 when the U.S. Public Health Service established the Office of Negro Health Work—federal indifference.” As the current Black Lives Matter move ment has emphasized, antiblackness is about an utter indifference to Black suffering and denial of Black people's right to exist, and not just racial prejudices, discriminations, and surveillance. Just as the slave was always a commodity under the risk of sickness, disablement, and death, historical forms of postemancipation antiblackness similarly ensured that being Black in an antiblack world meant, to modify Christina Sharpe's telling metaphor, living in the “wake,” or in close proximity to death, debilitation, and distress.”

#### In what follows I return to the “demonic grounds” where Blackness begins in a mundane violence,” but also highlight how Black cultural pro duction in the early twentieth century sought to intervene in the rise of a modernity created with, as, and through an antiblackness materially and figuratively embodied in Black debility. Post-Reconstruction Black “social death,” to borrow Orlando Patterson's influential phrase, was and is not only some static state of alienated life or structural relationality that has no social claims or rights. AsPatterson himself noted, there was always a sec ondary “exclusive” justification of social death operating along a different temporality and whereby the “insider” was marked as having fallen, or lost his status, and thus deserving to be “excluded out of" or expelled from civic and political participation.” Among those included in this group, Patterson lists people accused of capital offenses and the destitute, but Vitality Politics contends that we need to add the biopolitical delinquent, the unsanitary (non)citizen, the incorrigible and contagious sick and defective, who through a calculated health vulnerability was first left to sicken, if not die, and then excluded for lacking—and ultimately being incapable of a modern scientific understanding of proper health and hygiene.” Just as Black criminality—and actuarial projections and social science studies of Black crime—emerged in the post-Reconstruction United States as part of a national debate over freedmen and women's fit ness for modern life,” similarly the barring of nonwhite subjects from the category of the human and from full citizenship in post-Reconstruction America operated through a quotidian, attritional violence that sought to dis-able (and not simply discriminate against) Black people and render unsustainable the material environments that they lived in. Since Black people served as the surplus life within this modern industrialization, Black health alternately became a matter of disciplined uplift and calculated neglect (and often both at once).

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#### Thus the alternative embraces the habeas viscus – a definition of humanity based on the flesh rather than constructs of the subject defined in relation to the law, whiteness and ablebodniess. Weheliye14

#### Alexander Weheliye; Habeas Viscus: Racializing Assemblages, Biopolitics, and Black Feminist Theories of the Human; 2014

#### The poetics and politics that I have been discussing under the heading of habeas viscus or the flesh are concerned not with inclusion in reigning precincts of the status quo but, in Cedric Robinson's apt phrasing, “the continuing development of a collective consciousness informed by the historical struggles for liberation and motivated by the shared sense of obligation to preserve [and I would add also to reimagine] the collective being, the ontological totality.”31 Though the laws of Man place the flesh outside the ferocious and ravenous perimeters of the legal body, habeas viscus defies domestication both on the basis of particularized personhood as a result of suffering, as in human rights discourse, and on the grounds of the universalized version of western Man. Rather, habeas viscus points to the terrain of humanity as a relational assemblage exterior to the jurisdiction of law given that the law can bequeath or rescind ownership of the body so that it becomes the property of proper persons but does not possess the authority to nullify the politics and poetics of the flesh found in the traditions of the oppressed. As a way of conceptualizing politics, then, habeas viscus diverges from the discourses and institutions that yoke the flesh to political violence in the modus of deviance. Instead, it translates the hieroglyphics of the flesh into a potentiality in any and all things, an originating leap in the imagining of future anterior freedoms and new genres of humanity. To envisage habeas viscus as a forceful assemblage of humanity entails leaving behind the world of Man and some of its attendant humanist pieties. As opposed to depositing the flesh outside politics, the normal, the human, and so on, we need a better understanding of its varied workings in order to disrobe the cloak of Man, which gives the human a long-overdue extreme makeover; or, in the words of Sylvia Wynter, “the struggle of our new millennium will be one between the ongoing imperative of securing the well-being of our present ethnoclass (i.e. western bourgeois) conception of the human, Man, which overrepresents itself as if it were the human itself, and that of securing the well-being, and therefore the full cognitive and behavioral autonomy of the human species itself/ourselves.”32 Claiming and dwelling in the monstrosity of the flesh present some of the weapons in the guerrilla warfare to “secure the full cognitive and behavioral autonomy of the human species,” since these liberate from captivity assemblages of life, thought, and politics from the tradition of the oppressed and, as a result, disfigure the centrality of Man as the sign for the human. As an assemblage of humanity, habeas viscus animates the elsewheres of Man and emancipates the true potentiality that rests in those subjects who live behind the veil of the permanent state of exception: freedom; assemblages of freedom that sway to the temporality of new syncopated beginnings for the human beyond the world and continent of Man.

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#### The role of the ballot to vote for the debater who best challenges Antiblackness and ableism.

Bailey et al, Moya, & Mobley, Izetta Autumn. (2019). Dr. Moya Bailey is an associate professor in the Department of Communication Studies at Northwestern University. Her work focuses on Black women’s use of digital media to promote social justice as acts of self-affirmation and health promotion. [Izetta Autumn Mobley](mailto:izetta.mobley@austin.utexas.edu) completed her doctoral studies at the [University of Maryland](https://www.umd.edu/), College Park in American Studies. Her research focuses on race, disability, slavery, public history, digital humanities, and material and visual culture. [Work in the Intersections: A Black Feminist Disability Framework. *Gender & society*, *33*(1), 19–40. Los Angeles, CA: SAGE Publications.]KPOO-CJK

Issues of rhetoric and language as they relate to Black vernacular and disability are another site of interrogation for a Black feminist disability framework. Black people are often singled out and **critiqued for the use of ableist language**. A national firestorm erupted when the musical group Black Eyed Peas released a song initially titled, “Let’s Get Retarded.” The ableist anthem was quickly swatted down and the lyrics and title were changed to, “Let’s Get It Started” (Bailey 2011). This swift correction was a missed opportunity to discuss why the word shouldn’t be used, beyond the hurt it causes certain communities. What often is missing from conversations that attempt to address problematic language are the origins and impact of those words in creating and maintaining a climate of ableism. It is not enough to get people to stop saying certain words if the **underlying ableism remains unchallenged**. Furthermore, like the “n-word,” Black cultural production is often rearranging the original meaning and use of words for specific anti-racist purposes. Black feminists discuss the nuances of “bitch” as a multivalent word that can signal misogynoir or familiarity, depending on context and speaker. Nowhere is this conversation more fraught than with the use of 31 the word “crazy.” Disability scholars and advocates have lamented the ubiquity of the term in modern speech, identifying crazy as a term that further **stigmatizes people with psychiatric disabilities**. Across cultures and generations, people use the word to mean many things, the least of which is a person with an actual psychiatric disability. For many Black people, the phrase “white people are crazy” is a common exclamation that expresses the incredulity of racist and other seemingly unexplainable behavior by white people. Given the violent unprovoked racism that whites enact towards Blacks, the adage seems not far from true. The unreasonableness of racism further complicates the murkiness of whether crazy is an apt description for white racist behavior. And what of the mental anguish of racism? In Toni Morrison’s Beloved (1987), Sethe, the protagonist, is forced to make an impossible choice because of the racist violence she has endured. This act haunts her life, eventually making her go “crazy.” Is there a way to reclaim crazy, or at least acknowledge the ways that anti-Black racism is crazy-making for both white and Black people alike? Madness studies—and Black scholars within that field like La Marr Bruce (2012, 2017)—ask us to consider the implications of Black madness in racist systems. Crazy has also been weaponized against Black women in ways that Black feminists are beginning to unpack. In a March 30, 2015, webinar about state violence against Black women and girls, speaker Barbara Arnwine talked about the police killings of Tanisha Anderson and Michelle Cusseaux, both Black women in the midst of mental health episodes that were used to justify their deaths. Arnwine aligned the “crazy Black woman” trope with the “rebellious black b[itch]” myth from slavery, showing the slippery nature of racism and its continued impact on our lives (#HerDreamDeferred 2015). The conversation did not, however, illuminate the ways that Black people with psychiatric or physical disabilities are disproportionately harmed by police violence (Perry 2017). **With a Black feminist disability framework, we can think critically** about the way that crazy is deployed for mass murderers, and their whiteness and maleness often goes unacknowledged. We can begin to actualize theoretical interventions that challenge mainstream news narratives that erase race and gender and forestall the ableism used to explain away white violence. It is through praxis that we can start to create a new scholarship that is informed not just by our critical inquiries but also by our resulting actions and processes that shift previous paradigms of understanding. Disability rights activists frequently cite that **disabled people are the largest minority group in the United States**. This statistic is used to 32 substantiate calls for disabled unity and collective action. However, this statement misses the very nuances within the largest minority that prevent the types of collective action that is envisioned. How does one compare the drunk-driving-induced paralyses of a white high school quarterback to the job-acquired carpal tunnel of immigrant women assembly line workers? Or the intentional lead poisoning of the Black children in Flint, Michigan, with congenital disabilities that are the result of chance? The age of onset of these disabilities, the manner in which they were acquired, along with gender, class, and race all shape the way that people are treated, interpellated, have access to resources, or move through society. In their study, Amani M. Nuru-Jeter, Roland H. Thorpe Jr., and Esme Fuller-Thomson (2011) noted that “Black people experienced higher odds of disability across the adult lifespan compared with white people” (834). Their study examined disability across the life span of Black people and found stark disparities between white and Black people regarding disability. They noted that despite the higher prevalence of disability within Black and other communities of color, the disability rights movement and Disability Studies remain white in leadership and in stated objectives and outcomes. The racial and gender disparities do not end there. Women provide most of the care for disabled people globally. More specifically, women of color disproportionately care for disabled people (Family Caregiver Alliance 2016). Black Studies and Disability Studies need to consider that Black women and other women of color do most of the labor in the service of disability despite the impact on their ability to care for themselves or their families. Caregivers are often engaged in debilitating work for disabled people and become disabled themselves (Moore 2015). The Family Caregiver Alliance notes that 40 to 70 percent of caregivers have symptoms of clinical depression, and caregivers also report worsening physical health as a result of the demands of caregiving on the body (Family Caregiver Alliance 2016). A Black feminist disability framework would ensure that **race, age of onset, method of acquirement, gender, sexuality, and other important aspects of the way disability is multiply inflected are brought to bear in our analysis**. According to a 2014 U.S. Department of Labor study, Black people are more likely to be disabled than whites, Latinxs, and Asian Americans. Black people have worked and continue to work debilitating jobs (U.S. Department of Labor 2015). The United States Social Security Administration (SSA) found that “Black workers in every age group shown are more likely to die or become eligible for Social Security 33 disability benefits” (2000, 1). Moreover, because social security benefits are often based on previous wage labor, Black people—and Black women specifically—drawing social security are drawing from a lower overall rate of pay than their white predecessors, thus impacting how much support they are eligible for from the SSA (Parekh 2008). In an article for Business Insider, author Laura Friedman reported that while the average life expectancy in the United States is 79 years there is at least a four-year gap between the life expectancy for Black and white Americans (2014). The median age of death for Black men in the District of Columbia is 66 years. The Centers for Disease Control—steeped in the medical model— lists 15 major categories under which Black men succumb, including work conditions, heart disease, diabetes, police violence, homicide, and perinatal conditions that are more likely to go untreated. White men with at least 16 years of education live a full 14 years longer than Black men— on average (CDC 2015). Despite the reluctance of some Black scholars to engage Disability Studies, Black Studies research has much to teach the field of Disability Studies. Black people, particularly Black women, are more likely to care for disabled relatives and keep them connected to their communities. Black and other people of color have higher rates of disability than their white counterparts. Black Studies research suggests that Black people are employing a different model, one of collectivity and potential interdependence that eschews the individualist model of a disability rights framework. Black Studies and Disability Studies scholars could call for strategies that not only facilitate the independence of disabled people to do what able-bodied people do and go where able-bodied people go, but also critique the assumption that independence is inherently valuable given the demographics of caregivers and those cared for. Black feminism becomes an essential interlocutor for these questions. Disability Studies questions how jobs are structured, the impossibility of a five-day work week for everyone, and the demand that everyone work. Not only are some jobs debilitating, some people are unable to work. How might we reimagine our labor organizing if we do not assume that everyone should work to get their needs met? How might we restructure society itself if we could meet our needs without working jobs, however dignified and humane they might become? A **Black feminist disability framework reconceptualizes our ideas about work and labor**. While Black Studies has successfully critiqued U.S. labor practices, it has not gone so far as to critique work itself. “Jobs with dignity” still assumes that people are able to work a job and that the structure 34 of the 9-to-5 workday makes sense. The racist discrimination against people with Black sounding names is now well documented, and while we need strategies to address prejudicial hiring practices we must also question the conditions under which we are expected to work. All too often people ask what is a respectable job, rather than offering a critique of a service economy or the globalizing socioeconomic system that demands more and more labor for less and less pay. A critique of wages has yet to fully take on the fact that Black women make less than Black men and white women, in addition to performing the second shift at home (Patten 2016). A Black feminist disability framework **demands a recalibration of labor expectations for those who are also primary caretakers.**

### Advocacy

**I affirm that the member nations of the World Trade Organization ought to abolish intellectual property protections for medicines.**

**It’s topical – Merriam Webster’s dictionary defines reduce as “to diminish in size, amount, extent, or number,” and 0 protections is less than some protections.**

**And, PICs don’t negate because an exception to a moral statement doesn’t disprove it, just as penguins don’t disprove that birds fly.**

### Offense

#### Intellectual property law no matter if its for medicine or culture is rooted in determining one’s legal right to property and by extension their legal personhood. Either marginalized groups ask for intellectual protections and have their culture commodified or they reduce protections and have their culture stolen no matter what the legal system of intellectual property rights is bankrupt and engaging in reform will only reinforce the rest of the system.

#### Sunder 04 “property in personhood” MADHAVI SUNDER, august 2004, School of law university of California

Despite the cogence of this analysis, current trends in academic thinking do not bode well for these new claims for property in personhood. Traditional commodification scholars would bemoan the propertization of indigenous culture, arguing that culture should be common property accessible to all. More significantly, early commodification theory warns that because of current inequalities, the commodification of indigenous culture is more likely to lead to alienation, rather than preservation, of indigenous culture.28 Recent developments in anthropology also might render one skeptical of indigenous intellectual property. Scholars in this discipline argue that property rights threaten to make dynamic cultures static.29 Still other scholars view these claims as the first step on a slippery slope toward slavery.30 Finally, there are the critiques from intellectual property. As we witness what scholars have labeled “the new enclosure movement”31 and lament what appears to be an inexorable march toward the intellectual propertization of “every thing, every word, and every idea,”32 more and more intellectual property scholars are warning that our common cultural heritage and the free circulation of ideas are massively threatened.33 Indeed, protecting the public domain of ideas and information has quickly shot up to the top of intellectual property scholars’ agenda. I am sympathetic to these projects.34 But I am also concerned that these progressive, ideal theories elide non-ideal constraints and important new claims for justice being made through the language of intellectual property rights. Critiquing each and every new claim for property rights may support current power relations by legitimating the current distribution of intellectual property rights. Revealing the relationship between intellectual property and progressive, ideal theories about commodification, culture, and the public domain helps us understand how, despite the best of intentions, the postmodern lawyer, collaborating with the postmodern anthropologist, might inadvertently leave minority cultures at the mercy of the forces of commerce and neocolonialism.35 To be sure, there are many reasons for concern about these new claims for property. But at the heart of the claims lies a challenge to current intellectual property definitions, theoretical justifications, and distributions. These challenges cannot be dismissed easily. They require us to carefully consider how these new property claims are already transforming intellectual property law and how law ought to respond to shifts in global social relations. Articulating who is seeking greater property rights and why they seek them is a complex task. Far from being a simple story of intellectual property rights expanding into the public domain, the new claims for property rights are struggles over the right to create one’s identity and to control cultural meanings. Indigenous and other subordinated peoples who have historically not owned property — to the contrary, under traditional property law, their cultural products have been characterized as a commons and thus free for the taking for others to create property from their resources — are challenging this traditional relationship. They are asserting their right to be the subjects, not the objects, of property. As the concept of identity undergoes such a profound change, it is not surprising that the property concept is morphing with it. Assertions of power over one’s own identity necessarily lead to assertions of property ownership. As Radin has taught us, property is an essential part of what it means to be fully human.36 Property enables us to have control over our external surroundings. Seen in this light, it is not enough to see all claims for more property simply as intrusions into the public domain and violations of free speech. Instead, we may begin to see them as assertions of personhood.

### UDV

1. **Racial others need subjectivity before we can form normative ethics. If I win that legal notions of personhood force people into either whiteness or non-humanity, then destroying those legal notions of personhood is a prerequisite to ethics.**
   1. **Ethics presupposes subjectivity – people must be considered human before they have moral obligations**
   2. **Their framework is inherently violent if it can’t consider everyone human – solving in-round violence comes before any ethical justification**
   3. **Knowledge cannot be reliable if it only comes from a white perspective – diverse viewpoints are key to sound epistemology**
   4. **Rule following – Only implications of social norms can determine how we ought to follow moral principles since there is nothing inherent about rules that definitionally tell you how to follow them.**

# Accessible formatting

### Framework

#### Western man is coded as the Vitruvian Man – a white, hyper-able, male according to which difference is measured and exterminated. The fear of differential embodiment is co-constituitive with the colonial ascendance of the West, constructing black and indigenous populations as monstrous and uncivil.

#### Mitchell, Antebi, and Snyder 19

the Western humanist project represented in da Vinci’s Vitruvian Man is thoroughly racialized sexualized and (hyperable). The Vitruvian Man features standards of capacitation that distance him from hypermarked difference historically and socially particular embodied properties have gone into the making of Western man Its proportions accompanied the upsurge of territorial and cultural expansions informing the realization of a European world system since the “Age of Discovery.” in Columbus’s “Letter to the Sovereigns” he describes his New World through embodied displacements of racialized, gendered fantasies onto indigenous islanders Columbus’s lack of actual contact allows a European notion of monstrosity to function as a metaphor for indigenous alterity Corporeal otherness becomes a justification for conquest, In the same letter Columbus argues that discovery holds promise because a militarized force could dominate such multiplicitous embodiments Once colonized resources and labor could be extracted The resulting “coloniality of power” is thus defined through differentiated and denigrated embodiment fantasies of nonnormative embodiment form the support pillars of European imperial fantasies from 1493 onward this imperialist project imagined Vitruvian Man” as a biologically superior basis for a justification of conquest While whiteness and maleness long dominated critiques of humanism able-bodiedness augments racialized and engendered coordinates in the realization of Western man’s contours while Mbembe and Weheliye leave disablement as a material imposition of violence Posthumanist disability theory neither avoids employing disability as proof of destructive power nor eschews attention to materiality’s morphing corporeal rearrangements disability embodiments reveal uncanny capacities where only unproductive incapacity was imagined to reign

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#### The frame of humanism locks in violent structures of anti-blackness and ableism, rejecting regimes compulsory vitality requires the formulation of beyond-humanist ecological relations that reject simplistic narratives of personhood and agency and instead embrace a form of politics operating along a different temporality to conceptualize the becoming and unbecoming of Black well-being

**Knadler 2019**

**ike Lugenia Hope, who were trying less to cure, fix, or remake the disabled and distressed as normal assimilated citizens than to create new ecologies for giving people what they needed and to cultivate well-being. early twentieth-century Black cultural production also gestures toward an alternative futurity beyond a logic of cure and rehabilitation to develop a posthuman** **ecological understanding of personhood and agency that affords us new paradigms for imagining Black freedom struggles beyond liberal narratives of “color-blind” opportunity and gradual progress.”ableism and antiblackness “operate in parallel and overlapping ways” as the debilitation of Black bodies and the invoking of Black distress has been a key part of antiblack violence. how to recognize a history of racial violence and the debilitation of minority life, yet also refuse the return of Western medical mod ls of “normal,” “healthy,” “able” bodies that might become part of a revisionary history of disability and racial oppression that “hurts.”**

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#### Thus the alternative embraces the habeas viscus – a definition of humanity based on the flesh rather than constructs of the subject defined in relation to the law, whiteness and ablebodniess. Weheliye 14

poetics and politics of habeas viscus are concerned not with inclusion in reigning precincts of the status quo but development of a collective consciousness informed by historical struggles for liberation as a relational assemblage exterior to the jurisdiction of law Claiming the flesh present weapons in the guerrilla warfare to “secure the full autonomy of the human habeas viscus animates the elsewheres of Man and emancipates true potentiality who live permanent state of exception:

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Bailey et al 2019

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#### Sunder 04

scholars would bemoan the propertization of culture, arguing that the commodification of culture lead to alienation property rights threaten to make cultures static As we witness a march toward the propertization of “every thing Revealing the relationship between intellectual property and progressive, theories about commodification helps us understand how the postmodern lawyer might leave minority cultures at the mercy of the forces of commerce and neocolonialism new property claims are transforming intellectual property and how law ought to respond to social relations. who is seeking greater property rights and why they seek them is a complex task new claims for property rights are struggles over the right to create one’s identity and to control cultural meanings under traditional law, their products have been characterized as common and free for the taking it is not enough to see all claims for more property simply as intrusions and violations Instead, we begin to see them as assertions of personhood.

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