## 1NC Round 3 – Cal

### 1NC – K

#### Racial capitalism constitutes a racially hierarchical political economy. The violence of capitalism is co-constitutive of and produces anti-blackness materially and psychologically, which means the critique outweighs and turns the case.

Burden-Stelly 20 – [Charisse Burden-Stelly is an Assistant Professor and Mellon Faculty Fellow of Africana Studies and Political Science at Carleton College; "Monthly Review," Monthly Review, 7-1-2020, <https://monthlyreview.org/2020/07/01/modern-u-s-racial-capitalism/>] julian

Drawing on the intellectual production of twentieth-century Black anticapitalists, I theorize modern U.S. racial capitalism as a racially hierarchical political economy constituting war and militarism, imperialist accumulation, expropriation by domination, and labor superexploitation.14 The racial here specifically refers to Blackness, defined as African descendants’ relationship to the capitalist mode of production—their structural location—and the condition, status, and material realities emanating therefrom.15 It is out of this structural location that the irresolvable contradiction of value minus worth arises. Stated differently, Blackness is a capacious category of surplus value extraction essential to an array of political-economic functions, including accumulation, disaccumulation, debt, planned obsolescence, and absorption of the burdens of economic crises.16 At the same time, Blackness is the quintessential condition of disposability, expendability, and devalorization.

My operationalization of capitalism follows Oliver Cromwell Cox’s explication in Capitalism and American Leadership.17 Modern U.S. racial capitalism arose in the context of the First World War, when, as Cox explains, the United States took advantage of the conflict to capture the markets of South America, Asia, and Africa for its “over-expanded capacity.”18 Cox further expounds upon this auspicious moment of ascendant modern U.S. racial capitalism thus:

By 1914, the United States had brought its superb natural resources within reach of intensive exploitation. Under the stimulus of its foreign-trade outlets, the financial assistance of the older capitalist nations, and a flexible system of protective tariffs, the nation developed a magnificent work of transportation and communication so that its mines, factories, and farms became integrated into an effectively producing organism having easy access to its seaports.… [Likewise,] further internal expansion depended upon far greater emphasis on an ever widening foreign commerce.… Major entrepreneurs of the United States proceeded to step up their campaign for expansion abroad. The war accentuated this movement. It accelerated the growth of [modern] American [racial] capitalism and impressed upon its leaders as nothing had before the need for external markets.19

Relatedly, Peter James Hudson argues that the First World War fundamentally changed the terms of order of international finance, allowing New York to compete with London, Paris, and Berlin for the first time in the realm of global banking. This was not least because the Great War “drastically reordered global credit flows,” with the United States transforming from a debtor into a creditor nation.20 In addition to Latin American and Caribbean nations and businesses turning to the United States for financing and credit, domestic saving and investment patterns were altered to the benefit of imperial financial institutions like the City Bank.21

Although the United States is, to use Cox’s terminology, more a “lusty child of an already highly developed capitalism” than an exceptional capitalist power, the nation perfected its techniques of accumulation through its vast natural wealth, large domestic market, imbalance of Northern and Southern economies, and, importantly, through its lack of concern for the political and economic welfare of the overwhelming masses of its population, least of all the descendants of the enslaved.22 Modern U.S. racial capitalism is thus sustained by military expenditure, the maintenance of an extremely low standard of living in “dependent” countries, and the domestic superexploitation of Black toilers and laborers. Cox notes that Black labor has been the “chief human factor” in wealth production; as such, “the dominant economic class has always been at the motivating center of the spreads of racial antagonism. This is to be expected since the economic content of the antagonism, especially at its proliferating source in the South, has been precisely that of labor-capital relations.”23 In a general sense, racial capitalism in the United States constitutes “a peculiar variant of capitalist production” in which Blackness expresses a structural location at the bottom of the labor hierarchy characterized by depressed wages, working conditions, job opportunities, and widespread exclusion from labor unions.24

Furthermore, modern U.S. racial capitalism is rooted in the imbrication of anti-Blackness and antiradicalism. Anti-Blackness describes the reduction of Blackness to a category of abjection and subjection through narrations of absolute biological or cultural difference; ruling-class monopolization of political power; negative and derogatory mass media propaganda; the ascent of discriminatory legislation that maintains and reinscribes inequality, not least various modes of segregation; and social relations in which distrust and antipathy toward those racialized as Black is normalized and in which “interracial mass behavior involving violence assumes a continuously potential danger.”25 Anti-Blackness thus conceals the inherent contradiction of Blackness—value minus worth—obscuring and distorting its structural location by, as Ralph and Singhal remark, contorting it into only a “~~debilitated~~ condition.”26 Antiradicalism can be understood as the physical and discursive repression and condemnation of anticapitalist and/or left-leaning ideas, politics, practices, and modes of organizing that are construed as subversive, seditious, and otherwise threatening to capitalist society. These include, but are not limited to, internationalism, anti-imperialism, anticolonialism, peace activism, and antisexism.

Anti-Blackness and antiradicalism function as the legitimating architecture of modern U.S. racial capitalism, which includes rationalizing discourses, cultural narratives, technologies of repression, legal structures, and social practices that inform and are informed by racial capitalism’s political economy.27 Throughout the twentieth century, anti-Blackness propelled the “Black Scare,” defined as the specter of racial, social, and economic domination of superior whites by inferior Black populations. Antiradicalism, in turn, was enunciated through the “Red Scare,” understood as the threat of communist takeover, infiltration, and disruption of the American way of life.28 For example, in the 1919 Justice Department Report, Radicalism and Sedition Among the Negroes, As Reflected in Their Publications, it was asserted that the radical antigovernment stance of a certain class of Negroes was manifested in their “ill-governed reaction toward race rioting,” “threat of retaliatory measures in connection with lynching,” open demand for social equality, identification with the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), and “outspoken advocacy of the Bolshevik or Soviet doctrine.”29

Here, anti-Blackness, articulated through the fear of the “assertion of race consciousness,” was attached to the IWW and Bolshevism—in other words, to anticapitalism—to make it appear even more subversive and dangerous. Likewise, antiradicalism, expressed through the denigration of the IWW and Soviet Doctrine, was made to seem all the more threatening and antithetical to the social order in its linkage with Black insistence on equality and self-defense against racial terrorism. In this way, “defiance and insolently race-centered condemnation of the white race” and “the Negro seeing red” came to be understood as seditious in the context of modern U.S. racial capitalism.

#### The affirmative is a politics of resignification that occludes the division of labor.

Ebert 95 (Teresa, Prof. of Critical and Cultural Theory, Marxist Theory, Feminist Critique, Globalization Theory, University at Albany, SUNY, (Untimely) Critiques for a Red Feminism, from Post-Ality, Marxism and Postmodernism, edited by Mas'ud Zavarzadeh)//a-berg

In "basing" her theory of materiality on Foucault's notion of a diffuse, autonomous, contingent and aleatory power, Butler, like Foucault, makes power, itself, the constitutive "base" of society and all social processes, substituting it for the Marxist concept of a determining economic base. But how effective is such a move, especially when we also consider that Butler has articulated Foucault's analytics of power in relation to a deconstructive logic of supplementary, thus generating a circular logic that quite outdoes Foucault? As I have already suggested, Butler constructs a supplementary circuit in which all the fundamental concepts of her social analytics are equivalent — or tropically slide one into the other. She declares not only that "'materiality' designates a certain effect of power or, rather, is power in its formative or constituting effects" (34), but also that "performativity is one domain in which power acts as discourse . . . [as] a reiterated acting that is power" (225). Moreover, Butler insists, as we have already seen, on the "indissolubility of materiality and signification" (30) and that "materialisation will be a kind of citationality" (15), that is performativity. In other words, power is not only the constitutive base of the social, immanent in all processes, but, through a series of tropic slippages power is materiality is discourse is citationality is performativity. Such an understanding of power and materiality becomes so closed and circular as to border on the ludicrous. It does not so much explain processes of power and social construction as avoid explanation altogether by inventing a series of tropic displacements. Butler is, of course, following Foucault, who claims that "power is everywhere ... comes from everywhere" (History of Sexuality 93). But as Nancy Hartsock rightly points out, "Power is everywhere, and so ultimately nowhere" (170). Such a notion of power is so broad and idealist, it is both absurd and quite ineffectual. How much more absurd, then, is Butler's supplementary logic in which power is materiality is discourse is citationality is performativity.? Not only is power everywhere and nowhere, but power is everything and nothing.

While this may be a quite ineffectual theory of power for any politics of social transformation, it is nonetheless a very appealing and popular one among ludic feminists and theorists, precisely because it provides an analytics of power in which we do not have to confront the global relations and systematicity of power; in which we do not have to deal with the most serious consequences of power operating in dialectical relation to the mode of production and division of labour— , the consequences, in other words, of exploitation. By construing power as immanent in all processes, as operating as discourse, as citationality — and thus as a "reiterative acting" divided by differences-within — this ludic logic constitutes power as reversible, as generating its own resistances. The "compulsory power relations," that Butler argues operate through multiple local sites to "form, maintain, sustain, and regulate bodies" (34), are themselves "unstable" and indeterminate: generating and sustaining resistance along with regulation. Moreover, the privileged place ludic theories accord discourse means, as Foucault argues, that "Discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it." The agency of change, in other words, is discourse itself or power as discourse. More, specifically, it is what Butler calls "resignification."

The politics of such a ludic theory is that it blurs the lines between the powerful and powerless, oppressor and oppressed, and produces a social analytic that turns the historical binaries of social class intoreversible matters of discourse in which exploiter and exploited become shifting positions in the (Lacanian) Symbolic, open to resignification. This means that, through the play and invention of discourse (resignification), every subject, everyone, always already has access to the power imminent in discourse without any connection to the position of the subject in the social division of labour. In other words, in this analytics of power, the social relations of production-class relations-are covered up and concealed**.** Everyone is always already located in multiple sites of resistance no matter what their location in property relations may be. This view occludes the source of power: the fact that power is always constructed at the point of production**.** In contrast, power for historical materialists is always linked to relations of production and labour. In any society divided by the unequal division and appropriation of labour, power is a binary relation between exploiter and exploited; powerful and powerless; owner of the means of production and those who have nothing but their labour power to sell. Power, thus, cannot be translated into a plurality of differences as if all sites of power are equally powerful. The resolution of these binaries does not come about through a linguistic resignification but through revolutionary praxis to transform the system of exploitation and emancipate those it exploits.

We especially see Butler's assertion of the agency of invention (citationality) as a de-materialised site of reversible power in her efforts to account for the way "sex is both produced and destabilised in the course of this reiteration" of norms (10). Not only does citationality invoke the "chain of binding conventions," but it is also "by virtue of this reiteration that gaps and fissures are opened up," producing instability, and "this instability is the deconstituting possibility in the very process of repetition, the power that undoes the very effects by which "sex" is stabilised" (10). In other words, as supplementary processes, citationality, reiteration, and performativity, all simultaneously constitute and "deconstitute"; regulate and deregulate; 'produce and destabilise" the materialisation-sexing-of the body. The process of reiteration (citationality/performativity) is, in and of itself, a process of invention: the reversible, de-stabilising, de/reconstituting play of significations that subverts any stable, definite meanings. What this means is that the "regulatory power" of norms-which is established through reiteration-is itself reversible: it is also a deregulatory power.

However, contrary to ludic claims, this diverse deployment of deregulating invention by Butler, as well as by Cornell, Lyotard, Derrida and others (whether as performativity, citationality, resignification, remetaphorisation, refiguring, the differend, differance ... ) is not a progressive move beyond (free of) the bounds of existing systems and their material conditions. Rather invention is a way of avoiding the consequences of the structural forces in society-the social relations of production. The logic of invention is a double move that attempts to displace exploitation. Again, it does so by first construing material structural forces either as discourse or as so heavily mediated by discourses as to be "indissociable" from them, as Butler does. Then it reinterprets these structures in terms of the trope of invention and a differential logic (differance/differend/difference-within), thereby defining them as, in themselves, heterogeneous, indeterminate, self-deconstructing processes. In other words, within this ludic logic, structures are always already being undone by their own destabilising processes, their own differences-within. This means, in effect, that, for ludic theorists, there are no exploitative or determining structures or systematic relations, including production, because such structures would always already be in the process of undoing themselves and their effects. Of course, ludic critics do not deny oppression (that is, domination as opposed to exploitation), but they largely confine both their recognition and explanations of the occurrences of oppression to particular, local events and gestures of power that are, by definition, reversible, that generate their own resistances. What this means is that there is no need for revolution or class struggle since any oppressive "structure" is itself a deconstituting process that undoes its own effects (oppression). Domination is especially seen as undoing its own attempts to regulate subjectivities. As Butler argues, "'sexed positions' are not localities but, rather, citational practices instituted within a juridical domain," which attempts to "confine, limit, or prohibit some set of acts, practices, subjects, but in the process of articulating that prohibition, the law provides the discursive occasion for resistance, a resignification, and potential self-subversion of that law" (Bodies 109). Liberatory politics, for Butler, is thus a matter of invention, of resignification: the difference-within every citation or repetition of norm that opens up a space for reinvesting the norm and its symbolic regime, as in the regime of heterosexuality.

#### The aff’s embrace of local politics forecloses the possibility of constructing a counter-hegemony capable of systematic change.

Srnicek and Williams 15. (Nick Srnicek, lecturer at City University London, and Alex Williams, lecturer at City University London. Inventing the Future: Postcapitalism and a World Without Work. Verso Books: 2015. Pg. 27-31. iBooks.)

DEFINING FOLK POLITICS

What is folk politics? Folk politics names a constellation of ideas and intuitions within the contemporary left that informs the common-sense ways of organising, acting and thinking politics. It is a set of strategic assumptions that threatens to **debil**itate the left, rendering it unable to scale up, create lasting change or expand beyond particular interests. Leftist movements under the sway of folk politics are not only unlikely to be successful – they are in fact incapable of transforming capitalism. The term itself draws upon two senses of ‘folk’. First, it evokes critiques of folk psychology which argue that our intuitive conceptions of the world are both historically constructed and often mistaken**.**11 Secondly, it refers to ‘folk’ as the locus of the small-scale, the authentic, the traditional and the natural. Both of these dimensions are implied in the idea of folk politics.

As a first approximation, we can therefore define folk politics as a collective and historically constructed political common sense that has become out of joint with the actual mechanisms of power. As our political, economic, social and “technological world changes, tactics and strategies which were previously capable of transforming collective power into emancipatory gains have now become drained of their effectiveness. As the common sense of today’s left, folk politics often operates intuitively, uncritically and unconsciously. Yet common sense is also historical and mutable**.** It is worth recalling that today’s familiar forms of organisation and tactics, far from being natural or pre-given, have instead been developed over time in response to specific political problems. Petitions, occupations, strikes, vanguard parties, affinity groups, trade unions: all arose out of particular historical conditions.12 Yet the fact that certain ways of organising and acting were once useful does not guarantee their continued relevance. Many of the tactics and organisational structures that dominate the contemporary left are responses to the experience of state communism, exclusionary trade unions, and the collapse of social democratic parties. Yet the ideas that made sense in the wake of those moments no longer present effective tools for political transformation. Our world has moved on, becoming more complex, abstract, nonlinear and global than ever before.

Against the abstraction and inhumanity of capitalism, folk politics aims to bring politics down to the ‘human scale’ by emphasising temporal, spatial and conceptual immediacy. At its heart, folk politics is the guiding intuition that immediacy is always better and often more authentic, with the corollary being a deep suspicion of abstraction and mediation. In terms of temporal immediacy, contemporary folk politics typically remains reactive (responding to actions initiated by corporations and governments, rather than initiating actions);13 ignores long-term strategic goals in favour of tactics (mobilising around **single-issue politics** or emphasising process);14 prefers practices that are often inherently fleeting (such as occupations and temporary autonomous zones);15 chooses the familiarities of the past over the unknowns of the future (for instance, the repeated dreams of a return to ‘good’ Keynesian capitalism);16 and expresses itself as a predilection for the voluntarist and spontaneous over the institutional (as in the romanticisation of rioting and insurrection).17

In terms of spatial immediacy, folk politics privileges the local as the site of authenticity (as in the 100-miles diet or local currencies);18 habitually chooses the small over the large (as in the veneration of small-scale communities or local businesses);19 favours projects that are un-scalable beyond a small community (for instance, general assemblies and direct democracy);20 and often rejects the project of hegemony, valuing withdrawal or exit rather than building a broad counter-hegemony.21 Likewise, folk politics prefers that actions be taken by participants themselves – in its emphasis on direct action, for example – and sees decision-making as something to be carried out by each individual rather than by any representative. The problems of scale and extension are either ignored or smoothed over in folk-political thinking.

Finally, in terms of conceptual immediacy, there is a preference for the everyday over the structural, valorising personal experience over systematic thinking; for feeling over thinking, emphasising individual suffering, or the sensations of enthusiasm and anger experienced during political actions; for the particular over the universal, seeing the latter as intrinsically totalitarian; and for the ethical over the political – as in ethical consumerism, or **moralising critiques** of greedy bankers.22

Organisations and communities are to be transparent, rejecting in advance any conceptual mediation, or even modest amounts of complexity. The classic images of universal emancipation and global change have been transformed into a prioritisation of the suffering of the particular and the authenticity of the local**.** As a result, any process of constructing a universal politics is rejected from the outset.

#### If the aff devolves into “good for me,” it undermines movements by replicating therapeutic ethos.

Ella MYERS 13. Associate Professor of political science and gender studies, University of Utah. *Worldly Ethics: Democratic Politics and Care for the World*. Duke University Press. 46-9.

The therapeutic ethics advanced by Foucault and Connolly resonate strongly with dominant features of American culture. In particular, therapeutic ethics echoes a widely held popular belief, captured in this chapter's second epigraph, that working on oneself is the path to broader social change. This view is expressed quite clearly today in the doctrine of ethical consumerism, which holds that individuals should critically reflect on their consumption practices, making changes in themselves and in their personal conduct (namely, in what they buy) in order to generate collective change. In addition to expressing the striking and disturbing conviction that a primary way of shaping the self and becoming a better person is through purchasing commodities, this orientation rests on the belief that each individual's action will additively amount to something greater, producing transformation on a large scale. This is a more simplistic model than Connolly's in that it recognizes no difference between micropolitics and macropolitics, treating the latter as simply the cumulative result of the former. There are, nonetheless, real similarities between Foucauldian inspired ethics and the more generalized conviction that transforming oneself is the most important and even the most politically significant project a person can undertake. ¶ Even though Foucault's and Connolly's accounts of ethics may not intend to further the prevalent popular belief that you change the world by changing yourself, conceptualizing ethics primarily in terms of self intervention is dangerous in the context of an American cultural environment that can fairly be described as narcissistic.1l5 There is no doubt that the Foucauldian-inspired arts of the self Connolly advocates are meant to challenge reigning ways of being and to transform individuals in ways that enable them to engage more effectively in collective projects, including critical and oppositional endeavors that aim to alter status quo arrangements. Yet the massive popularity of self-help programs disseminating the view that worldly events are the direct result of one's personal thoughts, in conjunction with capitalist ideologies that tend to reduce the aesthetics of existence to the acquisition of a lifestyle through shopping, along with many other cultural influences that promote questionable techniques of the self, should make one hesitate before embracing an ethics that focuses so heavily on concern with oneself.1l6 Even Connolly's version of therapeutic ethics, which he wants to demarcate from unappealing forms of self-indulgence, runs the risk of being captured by prevailing habits and beliefs that can render arts of the self nondemocratic, even antidemocratic. ¶ Some of Connolly's own formulations bring this danger into relief. For example, Connolly sometimes uses the term micropolitics to refer not only to the self's reflexive tactics but also to small-scale intersubjective relations and projects that might not typically be recognized as political in nature but which Connolly maintains can support and enhance macropoliticsP7 Micropolitics of this sort are already "ubiquitous," but they can be developed, readers are told, in ways that are "more or less conducive to democratic politics."1l8 This dimension of micropolitics is sometimes depicted by Connolly as a bridge connecting concentrated work on the self to organized forms of collective citizen action. But the concrete examples of micropolitical activity that he gives, even those that extend beyond the self's relation to itself, raise new doubts about how resistant or transformative such activity really is. Indeed, some of what Connolly has in mind seems depressingly adaptive to contemporary arrangements, considering how focused his examples are on individual lifestyle choices rather than on the admittedly more difficult problem of how to mobilize energies for more collaborative, oppositional, and inventive endeavors. Writing of micropolitics, Connolly counsels, "If you are in the middle class, buy a Prius or a Volt and explain to your friends and neighbors why you did; write in a blog; attend a pivotal rally; ride your bike to work more often; consider solar panels; introduce new topics at your church." While these things may be worth doing, it is not clear why one should believe they will foster an urge to "participate in larger political assemblages in more robust ways," as Connolly wagers.ll9 Indeed, these recommendations seem to reinforce the belief that political change is a happy by-product of small decisions made by each individual. Despite Connolly's best intentions and his ambitious calls for broad transformation in the direction of deepening pluralization, greater economic equality, and less vengeful foreign policy-the therapeutic ethics he endorses is too easily absorbed, even co-opted, by a dominant culture that rewards forms of preoccupation with the self that do little to facilitate associative democracy. ¶ This point seems to be unwittingly made, in a slightly different context, by Cressida Heyes's Self-Transformations: Foucault, Ethics, and Normalized Bodies. Heyes's stated objective is to rescue Foucault's work on ethics from misreadings that liken self-care to self-indulgence, in order to defend the importance of "somaesthetics," in which the self strives to cultivate a body in ways that are resistant to normalization. Yet although Heyes is devoted to the idea that ethical self-diSCipline, performed by the self on the self, can be an "art of living with greater embodied freedom," the vast majority of the book is spent investigating, in great detail, case studies involving contemporary practices of askesis (sex reassignment surgery, Weight Watchers, and cosmetic surgery), which, Heyes convinc-. inglyargues, help to produce "docile bodies."12o So although Heyes continues to hold out the hope that concentrated work on the self, and specifically on one's body, can serve as a site of resistance against normalizing power, the overwhelming sense conveyed by her research is how readily and thoroughly care for the self is promoted and practiced in conformist, "self-absorbed" ways.l21 There is little acknowledgment of the difficulty her examples pose to her celebration of a transgressive, liberating somaes- thetics. What does it mean to endorse an ethics focused on rapport asoi and on "somatic askesis" in particular, in the context of a society that, by Heyes's own account, obsessively and successfully markets forms of selfcare that produce compliant and often solipsistic selves? Why should one believe that Heyes's preferred example of good somatic self-discipline, yoga, is somehow safe from the normalizing influences so well documented in her treatments of sex reassignment surgery, organized weight loss, and cosmetic surgery? Like Connolly, Heyes seems to neglect the way in which even the best-intentioned calls for care of the self may still be too complicit with an American culture that celebrates and aggressively markets depoliticizing modes of self-care. ¶ Still, the appeal of therapeutic ethics is undeniable. It soothes with the promise that one need not get tangled up in the messy, fraught world of intersubjective political struggle in order to engage in politically meaningful action. Whether tending to the self is seen as synonymous with politics, as in the popularized version of therapeutic ethics, or whether it is understood as a precursor to collective endeavors, as in Connolly's view, the suggestion that one ought to begin with focused attention on oneself is comforting. It spares one the challenges of attempting to address a public problem by acting in solidarity with and in opposition to other citizens, where there may be no assurance of success and when fatigue, disappointment, and frustration are likely. When the political landscape looks bleak-because there are few opportunities for ordinary citizens to govern themselves, because of growing corporate influence over politics at all levels, or because of any number of other depressing facts-therapeutic ethics reassures with the idea that one can be an engaged citizen all by oneself.

#### Capitalism causes mass inequality and social devastation.

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The grosteque conditions that inspired Marx to pen his original critique of capitalism are present and flourishing. The inequalities of wealth and the gross imbalances of power that exist today are leading to abuses that exceed those encountered in Marx’s day (Greider, 1998, p. 39). Global capitalism has paved the way for the obscene concentration of wealth in fewer and fewer hands and created a world increasingly divided between those who enjoy opulent affluence and those who languish in dehumanizing conditions and economic misery. In every corner of the globe, we are witnessing social disintegration as revealed by a rise in abject poverty and inequality. At the current historical juncture, the combined assets of the 225 richest people is roughly equal to the annual income of the poorest 47 percent of the world’s population, while the combined assets of the three richest people exceed the combined GDP of the 48 poorest nations (CCPA, 2002, p. 3). Approximately 2.8 billion people—almost half of the world’s population—struggle in desperation to live on less than two dollars a day (McQuaig, 2001, p. 27). As many as 250 million children are wage slaves and there are over a billion workers who are either un- or under-employed. These are the concrete realities of our time—realities that require a vigorous class analysis, an unrelenting critique of capitalism and an oppositional politics capable of confronting what Ahmad (1998, p. 2) refers to as ‘capitalist universality.’ They are realities that require something more than that which is offered by the prophets of ‘difference’ and post-Marxists who would have us relegate socialism to the scrapheap of history and mummify Marxism along with Lenin’s corpse. Never before has a Marxian analysis of capitalism and class rule been so desperately needed. That is not to say that everything Marx said or anticipated has come true, for that is clearly not the case. Many critiques of Marx focus on his strategy for moving toward socialism, and with ample justification; nonetheless Marx did provide us with fundamental insights into class society that have held true to this day. Marx’s enduring relevance lies in his indictment of capitalism which continues to wreak havoc in the lives of most. While capitalism’s cheerleaders have attempted to hide its sordid underbelly, Marx’s description of capitalism as the sorcerer’s dark power is even more apt in light of contemporary historical and economic conditions. Rather than jettisoning Marx, decentering the role of capitalism, and discrediting class analysis, radical educators must continue to engage Marx’s oeuvre and extrapolate from it that which is useful pedagogically, theoretically, and, most importantly, politically in light of the challenges that confront us.

#### Capitalism is a global violence against black space and for international exploitation. The K definitively outweighs the case on scope.

Bledsoe and Wright 18 – [Adam Bledsoe is an assistant professor in the Department of Geography and African American Studies Program at Florida State University. Willie Jamaal Wright is an assistant professor of geography at Florida State University; “The anti-Blackness of global capital,” 2018, pg. 10-11] julian

Expressions of violence are often the result of structural arrangements. Much of the routinized violence of the present day is tied to localized manifestations of global capitalism. These manifestations have resulted in new social and spatial relations, labor regimes, and specific practices of organizing and managing built and “natural” environments, as well as the populations therein. Regarding Afro-descendant populations, these changes result in new manifestations of violence. Cowen and Lewis (2016) argue that anti-Blackness takes on specific characteristics based on “shifts in the social order.” These shifts are part of emerging global political economic trends. Phenomena like white flight, urban renewal, and Black spatial displacement—which have affected the lived experiences of Black populations in the United States—are examples of how urban spaces in the United States have shifted in their social, economic, and material makeup over the past five decades.

While capitalism has always had a global reach, the late 20th century saw capitalist power achieve unprecedented levels of influence. This consolidation of capitalist power occurred, in part, as a response to the struggles of racialized populations and workers’ unions which, in the mid to late 20th century, demanded dignified employment, livable wages, social programs, and land reform, among other things (Gilmore, 2007: 39–40; Harvey, 2007: 7; Kaufman, 2013; Woods, 2017: 188). As a result of the organizing capabilities and political demands made by those in labor movements, the Civil Rights movement, the Black Power movement, and land reform activists, new manifestations of capitalism emerged that worked to reverse and appropriate the gains made by these movements and reify the influence of capitalist actors. Huey Newton diagnosed this phenomenon in 1971, noting that capital (specifically within the United States) has not only expanded its territorial boundaries but also shifted its forms of control such that there exists a global capitalist power that controls “all the world’s lands and people” (Newton, 2002: 186–187 emphasis in original).

According to Newton, one effect of the expanding reach of global capitalism is that the roles of nation-states fundamentally change. While previously nation-states maintained greater control of the political and economic aspects of their territory, the increased power of capital now means that nation-states’ “self-determination, economic determination, and cultural determination have been transformed by the imperialists of the ruling circle” (Newton, 2002: 170). More specifically, the governing role of the nation-state has become subordinated to the agenda of capital(ists), so that corporations’ actions “directly structure and articulate territories and populations. They tend to make nation-states merely instruments to record the flows of the commodities, monies, and populations that they set in motion” (Hardt and Negri, 2000: 31). In addition, sovereign state actions such as policing, military interventions, state and municipal funding, and taxes (or lack thereof) are increasingly influenced by, and manipulated for, the propagation of global capital. In short, expressions of state sovereignty are co-opted to benefit capital. As global purveyors of capital increasingly replace the nation-state as controllers of sovereign space, the various populations within these formerly bounded territories become subject to a number of shifts.

In order to counter labor organizing, capital uses the “spatial fix” to find labor pools and regulations that it can more profitably exploit (Harvey, 2001). This manifests in phenomena like capital flight and “outsourcing,” in which production moves to new locations. It is, in part, through such arrangements that the deindustrialization of cities like Detroit, Milwaukee, Baltimore, and Pittsburgh occurred, as the owners of the means of production moved manufacturing facilities to areas with cheaper sources of labor and less stringent financial and environmental regulations (Boggs, 1968). A result of this geographic rearrangement of production is that labor practices which previously provided stable, long-term, unionized jobs are replaced by “flexible”

arrangements defined by temporary, low-paid, insecure, and nonunionized employment. Simultaneously, precarious laborers, now under- and unemployed, occupy neighborhoods where land precipitously drops in value. With time, these undervalued locations become sites of real estate speculation and urban renewal (Marable, 2000; Taylor, 2016). These effects often take on both class and racial characteristics. Newton (2002), for instance, notes how globalized capital leads to increasing numbers of Blacks falling into the category of the lumpen proletariat (196; 210). Classed subordination is not the only (nor necessarily the most fundamental) form of oppression Black people face, however. Indeed, in the modern epoch, anti-Blackness does not simply “follow” global capitalism. Rather, through perpetual and multifaceted enactments of violence, anti-Blackness makes possible the accumulation necessary for capitalist reproduction.

Violent forms of domination accompany (and make possible) the reproduction of global capitalism. This violence targets all manner of people, specifically those who do not exhibit a form of humanity normalized under Western modernity (e.g., lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) and gender nonconforming folk, Muslims, Latinx, and undocumented immigrants) or a manner of spatiality that adheres to the tenets of capitalist notions of individual ownership (Mitchell, 2003). Under this new phase of capitalism, ever-expanding groups of people are subjected to precarious life (Mbembe, 2017). Still, experiences of anti-Blackness remain unique, as the openness of Black people to violence and the assumed a-spatial nature of Black populations remain constitutive factors of the modern world. The logics underpinning anti-Black violence are inheritances of chattel slavery. These logics cast Black geographies as empty and threatening, open to occupation, and subject to surveillance and assault. Indeed, capitalism’s perpetuation relies as much on anti-Blackness as it ever has. The following section seeks to clarify the ways in which anti-Blackness makes capital accumulation possible.

#### The alt is Revolutionary Marxism.

McNally 18 – (David, a long-time socialist activist and supporter of the Toronto New Socialists. He now teaches History at the University of Houston, Karl Marx: Revolutionary Heretic, New Socialist, October 25, 2018, https://newsocialist.org/karl-marx-revolutionary-heretic/)//a-berg

Consider first the theoretical program set out in the letter to Ruge.[2] Marx makes the case for historically immanent criticism, as opposed to abstract commentary or dogmatic pronouncement. The young radical theorist describes his new outlook as follows: it is precisely the advantage of the new trend that we do not dogmatically anticipate the world, but only want to find the new world through criticism of the old one. Hitherto philosophers have had the solution of all riddles lying in their writing-desks, and the stupid, exoteric world had only to open its mouth for the roast pigeons of absolute knowledge to fly into it. . . But, if constructing the future and settling everything for all times are not our affair, it is all the more clear what we have to accomplish at present: I am referring to ruthless criticism of all that exists, ruthless both in the sense of not being afraid of the results it arrives at and in the sense of being just as little afraid of conflict with the powers that be. This anti-dogmatic protocol informs the rest of his life: to learn from the social dynamics of actual struggles in order to articulate a real (as opposed to abstractly utopian) program for revolutionary transformation. Whether it is his changed views in the 1860s on Irish liberation, whose national independence he came to support, or his reconsideration of the need to dismantle the state in light of the Paris Commune of 1871, Marx the revolutionist is oriented on finding “the new world through criticism of the old.” The second vital theme is his reminder that the radical project is human emancipation, not merely the overcoming of private property. Since the liberated society will be one of freedom and radical democracy among dis-alienated people, it includes much more than a change in the form of ownership: “the abolition of private property and communism are by no means identical.” If there is to be a future for revolutionary socialism, part of it will lie in this focus on the content of social relations, rather than the mere form of property. Equally important, thirdly, is the turn from philosophy to politics, a turn conducted in the spirit of anti-dogmatism sketched above: Just as religion is a register of the theoretical struggles of mankind, so the political state is a register of the practical struggles of mankind. . . . Therefore the critic not only can, but must deal with these political questions. Hence, nothing prevents us from making criticism of politics, participation in politics, and therefore real struggles, the starting point of our criticism, and from identifying our criticism with them. In that case we do not confront the world in a doctrinaire way with a new principle: Here is the truth, kneel down before it! We develop new principles for the world out of the world’s own principles. We do not say to the world: Cease your struggles, they are foolish; we will give you the true slogan of struggle. We merely show the world what it is really fighting for. Here again we see the insistence that revolutionary politics cannot counterpose its preferred state of things to reality. There is no point in telling the world, “this is how it should be.” Instead, emancipatory politics begins with the actual struggles that, however elementally, point beyond the existing state of affairs. It then seeks to deepen and generalize those struggles, to radicalize their most liberatory elements. But it never informs those engaged in real struggles that “they are foolish.” Rather than dismissing them, it seeks their inner deepening and development in revolutionary directions. Finally, Marx comes to the dialectical interweaving of the future with the past: “It will become evident that it is not a question of drawing a great mental dividing line between past and future, but of realising the thoughts of the past.” Here is a non-linear conception of historical time, one in which unrealized struggles for freedom are not dead and gone. Instead, they are incomplete, awaiting realization in new circumstances. It is in this sense that the Haitian Revolution, the Paris Commune, the October Revolution, the global upheavals of 1968 are still alive, the embodiments of dreams of liberation that continue to inspire protagonists today. However, to realize is not to repeat. There is no “playbook” from Marx, Lenin or anyone else waiting to be applied to our age. To realize the thought and struggles of the past is to actualize in new conditions, in conditions that are in some respects more appropriate to the struggles of the past. This requires attending to the changed circumstances in which we operate, while nourishing past dreams of liberation. And this too can only mean nurturing the dialectical core of Marxism as emancipatory theory and practice. At the heart of Marx’s political thinking is dialectical criticism. And genuine criticism of this sort can only ever be historical in his view. For, to tackle a political problem is to work through its history—how it has come to be and how it might come to be no more. And since our historical knowledge can only ever be incomplete, it is—or ought to be—in a constant process of development, amendment, and revision. Marx’s commitment to revisiting earlier problems and old formulations in the light of new experience is an invaluable legacy for the left today. A New Scenario for World Revolution But this approach was also decisive for Marx himself, particularly after the defeated revolutions of 1848, as he reconsidered the dynamics of world revolution. By the mid-1850s, it is clear that Marx had moved toward the multilinear conception of history that is on display in his Grundrisse notebooks of 1857. Kevin Anderson has insightfully explored many of the intellectual sources for Marx’s shift from a unilinear (and Eurocentric) philosophy of history to this multilinear (and increasingly anti-colonial) one.[3] Recently, Thierry Drapeau has added to our understanding of this shift by highlighting the influence on Marx during these years of the Chartist radical, Ernest Jones. Drapeau notes Jones’s fierce support for Irish independence (also shared by Marx’s daughter, Eleanor), for which the Chartist radical spent two years in prison. He also reveals Jones’s intransigent opposition to British colonialism, particularly manifest in the verses of his, “The New World, a Democratic Poem,” which envisions a world revolution that breaks out in India before spreading to Africa and then the Americas. Drapeau traces compelling influences of Jones’s revolutionary anti-colonialism on Marx throughout the 1850s, during which his politics became increasingly anti-colonial. Across these years, Marx contributed about 30 articles to Jones’s papers, often co-writing them with his Chartist comrade.[4] Marx was learning, in other words, from a leading representative of the most militant wing of the British working-class movement.[5] Through this process, he was absorbing lessons from anti-colonial struggles in Ireland, India and China. In the coming decades he would equally learn, as he himself acknowledged, from the movements of African-American slaves and of Russian peasants and workers. In the process, he began to entertain scenarios in which world revolution might begin outside the capitalist core, though the working classes there would remain crucial for its completion. Indeed, in Capital (1867), Marx slyly referenced the Taiping Rebellion in China from 1850-64 as just such an event. “One may recall,” he writes, “that China and the tables began to dance when the rest of the world appeared to be standing still – pour encourager les autres.”[6] To encourage the others—this alludes to the initiating role of revolutions outside the capitalist heartlands. In this scenario, world socialist revolution becomes a complex process involving anti-colonial rebellions, peasant revolts, and working-class uprisings—all converging into a global unitary process. In short, Marx was entertaining a new schema for world revolution in which non-European social agents played a driving role. Marx’s new perspectives on world revolution are testimony to his allergy to confronting “the world in a doctrinaire way with a new principle.” They indicate his insistence on learning from the actual social struggles of one’s age. In an era in which the left is struggling to reinvent itself in opposition to new configurations of global capitalism and in the midst of new mass struggles, this is the Marx we need.

### Case

#### Vote negative on presumption—CX proves that their impact arguments are non-UQ, topic committees can’t know that voting aff is a form of resistance – no spillover claim AND several topics of continued antiblackness prove no solvency. Voting affirmative does not mean anything other than I lost the debate—no internal link to changing topics OR forms of resistance.

#### Viewing the ballot as a method of resolving their impacts is neoliberal wounded attachment politics—turns the case.

**Nash 18** (Jonathan Nash, The University of Western Ontario September 2018 The Politics of Wounds The Political Sphere of Wounds Page 8 – 11 <https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=7736&context=etd> Rose)

In the Cultural Politics of Emotion, Sara Ahmed suggests that “our response should not simply be to critique the rhetorical use of injury or wounds, but to attend to the different ways in which ‘wounds’ enter politics.”23 As such, I must delineate between how the “wound” enters white nationalist projects and how it enters other political projects such as Indigenous resurgence and black feminist theory, which sometimes operate on a politics of redress through legal and economical claims. Indeed, quite a breadth of scholarship in critical race and feminist theory attends to the politics of wounds as it enters the discourses of marginalized groups and subaltern voices, aiding in the construction of cohesive identities. Notably, feminist scholar Wendy **Brown makes the argument that identity formation in marginalized communities tends to fetishize a wounded subjectivity by virtue of being excluded from the benefits of neoliberal capitalism**. For Brown, **this strategy reinforces the structures that excluded them in the first place, ultimately undermining their criticisms of the structure itself**. As such Brown poses a shrewd question: “what kind of political recognition can identity-based claims seek—and what kind can they be counted on to want—that will not resubordinate a subject […]?”24 I raise Brown’s question here because wounds share an affiliation with the politics of recognition that have been addressed by various critics, as I will show below. Recent Indigenous scholarship has critically addressed the political stakes of recognition, particularly within the context of the settler colonial state. Rather than offering new political avenues for recognition within the colonial state, many Indigenous thinkers have argued for a politics of refusal to avoid the appropriation of wounds by the colonial state in these acts of recognition, which often leads to the further disenfranchisement of Indigenous communities and disavowment of Indigenous wounds that do not readily fit into national narratives of healing and progress. For example, as Glen Coulthard points out, in an attempt to repair an injurious legacy, the colonial state frames Indigenous claims to ongoing wounds or pain as reactionary politics that impedes the colonial state’s “healing process.” As Coulthard rightfully and bitterly contends, “what gets implicitly represented by the state as a form of Indigenous ressentiment— namely, Indigenous people’s seemingly pathological inability to get over harms inflicted in the past—is actually a manifestation of our righteous resentment: that is, our bitter indignation and persistent anger at being treated unjustly.”25 Coulthard avoids the pitfall of political recognition that resubordinates the subject, by positioning Indigenous resentment as refusing the settler state’s recognition of Indigenous wounds within a narrow purview. In her seminal work, Scenes of Subjection, **Saidiya Hartman expertly charts how the scene of the wounded flesh of the slave, as an event of recognition, fails to liberate the slave from this fleshly subjection.** Instead, **these scenes merely conflate “injury with personhood.”26 Of course, this has engendered all too convenient “bare life” and “victimization” tropes in critical scholarship that all too often inhibit the possibility of active refusals and creative futures, which have become central to black feminist thought**.27 While I intend to pick up these threads in the proceeding chapters, in this chapter I am interested in further thinking through how pain, wounds, and suffering enter—or perhaps more accurately have been appropriated—into “the political struggles” of white nationalist movements, particularly in the realm of identity/group formation. I suggest, then, that Euro-American (white) nationalism co-opts the language of wounds, vulnerability, and injury, familiar to minority politics, to frame the (white) nation as exceptionally wounded or exceptionally vulnerable. In his analysis of France’s political and moral defeat with the loss of its colony, Algeria, in 1964, Achille Mbembe asserts that “to be acknowledged politically, struggles for recognition must be constructed around an exceptional signifier—my suffering and my wounds.”28 The exceptional signifier of suffering and wounds in contemporary American discourse without a doubt is September 11, 2001. My intention here is not to downplay the tragedy that is 9/11 nor to create a hierarchy of tragedy within the politics of wounds. I am merely investigating the exceptionalisation of 9/11 as a national wound and how the wound in discourse is moored to 9/11, and how it enters into the political project of whiteness. After all, the fall of the Twin Towers has commonly been documented as a wounding of neo-liberalism, late stage capitalism, and imperialism—all of which are political and economic categories that find their roots, if not gratuitousness, in white supremacy. As such, September 11, 2001 becomes the exceptional event that describes historical and material wounding insofar as it interrupts America’s narrative of its own continuity of exceptionality. This exceptionality poses serious political and material ramifications that have led to both the acceleration of and concealing of the “unequal distribution of death, suffering, and pain,” which have become hallmarks of late liberalism. In other words, the very “exceptionalisation” of 9/11 as wound renders all other wounds in the realm of political discourse mute. Hence, I am struck by Elizabeth Povinelli’s radical question in light of this event that apparently jumpstarted an inert history: “How do specific arrangements of tense, eventfulness, and ethical substance make affectively and cognitively sensible and practical, late liberal [unequal] distributions of life and death, hope and harm […]?”29 In other words, while, for example, Indigenous communities and black communities materially suffer under the violent economical tectonics of late liberalism, whiteness rallies around its wounded ego post-9/11 as if it is the only legitimate political concern facing the 21st century. As such, as I will show later in this chapter, there is an interesting discursive link between the rhetoric of terror and the Unite the Right Rally’s foundational claims of white genocide, white displacement, and white injury.

#### Neurological, racial bias is flexible and determined by coalitional habit forming in the brain – orienting groups around institutional change best breaks down bias. This is offense because their theory rejects these solutions. Disproves libidinal economy

Cikara and Van Bavel 15. (Mina Cikara is an Assistant Professor of Psychology and Director of the Intergroup Neuroscience Lab at Harvard University. Her research examines the conditions under which groups and individuals are denied social value, agency, and empathy. Jay Van Bavel is an Assistant Professor of Psychology and Director of the Social Perception and Evaluation Laboratory at New York University. The Flexibility of Racial Bias: Research suggests that racism is not hard wired, offering hope on one of America’s enduring problems. June 2, 2015. <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/the-flexibility-of-racial-bias/>)

The city of Baltimore was rocked by protests and riots over the death of Freddie Gray, a 25-year-old African American man who died in police custody. Tragically, Gray’s death was only one of a recent in a series of racially-charged, often violent, incidents. On April 4th, Walter Scott was fatally shot by a police officer after fleeing from a routine traffic stop. On March 8th, Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity members were caught on camera gleefully chanting, “There Will Never Be A N\*\*\*\*\* In SAE.” On March 1st, a homeless Black man was shot in broad daylight by a Los Angeles police officer. And these are not isolated incidents, of course. Institutional and systemic racism reinforce discrimination in countless situations, including hiring, sentencing, housing, and even mortgage lending. It would be easy to see in all this powerful evidence that racism is a permanent fixture in America’s social fabric and even, perhaps, an inevitable aspect of human nature. Indeed, the mere act of labeling others according to their age, gender, or race is a reflexive habit of the human mind. Social categories, like race, impact our thinking quickly, often outside of our awareness. Extensive research has found that these implicit racial biases—negative thoughts and feelings about people from other races—are automatic, pervasive, and difficult to suppress. Neuroscientists have also explored racial prejudice by exposing people to images of faces while scanning their brains in fMRI machines. Early studies found that when people viewed faces of another race, the amount of activity in the amygdala—a small brain structure associated with experiencing emotions, including fear—was associated with individual differences on implicit measures of racial bias. This work has led many to conclude that racial biases might be part of a primitive—and possibly hard-wired—neural fear response to racial out-groups. There is little question that categories such as race, gender, and age play a major role in shaping the biases and stereotypes that people bring to bear in their judgments of others. However, research has shown that how people categorize themselves may be just as fundamental to understanding prejudice as how they categorize others. When people categorize themselves as part of a group, their self-concept shifts from the individual (“I”) to the collective level (“us”). People form groups rapidly and favor members of their own group even when groups are formed on arbitrary grounds, such as the simple flip of a coin. These findings highlight the remarkable ease with which humans form coalitions. Recent research confirms that coalition-based preferences trump race-based preferences. For example, both Democrats and Republicans favor the resumes of those affiliated with their political party much more than they favor those who share their race. These coalition-based preferences remain powerful even in the absence of the animosity present in electoral politics. Our research has shown that the simple act of placing people on a mixed-race team can diminish their automatic racial bias. In a series of experiments, White participants who were randomly placed on a mixed-race team—the Tigers or Lions—showed little evidence of implicit racial bias. Merely belonging to a mixed-race team trigged positive automatic associations with all of the members of their own group, irrespective of race. Being a part of one of these seemingly trivial mixed-race groups produced similar effects on brain activity—the amygdala responded to team membership rather than race. Taken together, these studies indicate that momentary changes in group membership can override the influence of race on the way we see, think about, and feel toward people who are different from ourselves. Although these coalition-based distinctions might be the most basic building block of bias, they say little about the other factors that cause group conflict. Why do some groups get ignored while others get attacked? Whenever we encounter a new person or group we are motivated to answer two questions as quickly as possible: “is this person a friend or foe?” and “are they capable of enacting their intentions toward me?” In other words, once we have determined that someone is a member of an out-group, we need to determine what kind? The nature of the relations between groups—are we cooperative, competitive, or neither?—and their relative status—do you have access to resources?—largely determine the course of intergroup interactions. Groups that are seen as competitive with one’s interests, and capable of enacting their nasty intentions, are much more likely to be targets of hostility than more benevolent (e.g., elderly) or powerless (e.g., homeless) groups. This is one reason why sports rivalries have such psychological potency. For instance, fans of the Boston Red Sox are more likely to feel pleasure, and exhibit reward-related neural responses, at the misfortunes of the archrival New York Yankees than other baseball teams (and vice versa)—especially in the midst of a tight playoff race. (How much fans take pleasure in the misfortunes of their rivals is also linked to how likely they would be to harm fans from the other team.) Just as a particular person’s group membership can be flexible, so too are the relations between groups. Groups that have previously had cordial relations may become rivals (and vice versa). Indeed, psychological and biological responses to out-group members can change, depending on whether or not that out-group is perceived as threatening. For example, people exhibit greater pleasure—they smile—in response to the misfortunes of stereotypically competitive groups (e.g., investment bankers); however, this malicious pleasure is reduced when you provide participants with counter-stereotypic information (e.g., “investment bankers are working with small companies to help them weather the economic downturn). Competition between “us” and “them” can even distort our judgments of distance, making threatening out-groups seem much closer than they really are. These distorted perceptions can serve to amplify intergroup discrimination: the more different and distant “they” are, the easier it is to disrespect and harm them. Thus, not all out-groups are treated the same: some elicit indifference whereas others become targets of antipathy. Stereotypically threatening groups are especially likely to be targeted with violence, but those stereotypes can be tempered with other information. If perceptions of intergroup relations can be changed, individuals may overcome hostility toward perceived foes and become more responsive to one another’s grievances. The flexible nature of both group membership and intergroup relations offers reason to be cautiously optimistic about the potential for greater cooperation among groups in conflict (be they black versus white or citizens versus police). One strategy is to bring multiple groups together around a common goal. For example, during the fiercely contested 2008 Democratic presidential primary process, Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama supporters gave more money to strangers who supported the same primary candidate (compared to the rival candidate). Two months later, after the Democratic National Convention, the supporters of both candidates coalesced around the party nominee—Barack Obama—and this bias disappeared. In fact, merely creating a sense of cohesion between two competitive groups can increase empathy for the suffering of our rivals. These sorts of strategies can help reduce aggression toward hostile out-groups, which is critical for creating more opportunities for constructive dialogue addressing greater social injustices. Of course, instilling a sense of common identity and cooperation is extremely difficult in entrenched intergroup conflicts, but when it happens, the benefits are obvious. Consider how the community leaders in New York City and Ferguson responded differently to protests against police brutality—in NYC political leaders expressed grief and concern over police brutality and moved quickly to make policy changes in policing, whereas the leaders and police in Ferguson responded with high-tech military vehicles and riot gear. In the first case, multiple groups came together with a common goal—to increase the safety of everyone in the community; in the latter case, the actions of the police likely reinforced the “us” and “them” distinctions. Tragically, these types of conflicts continue to roil the country. Understanding the psychology and neuroscience of social identity and intergroup relations cannot undo the effects of systemic racism and discriminatory practices; however, it can offer insights into the psychological processes responsible for escalating the tension between, for example, civilians and police officers. Even in cases where it isn’t possible to create a common identity among groups in conflict, it may be possible to blur the boundaries between groups. In one recent experiment, we sorted participants into groups—red versus blue team—competing for a cash prize. Half of the participants were randomly assigned to see a picture of a segregated social network of all the players, in which red dots clustered together, blue dots clustered together, and the two clusters were separated by white space. The other half of the participants saw an integrated social network in which the red and blue dots were mixed together in one large cluster. Participants who thought the two teams were interconnected with one another reported greater empathy for the out-group players compared to those who had seen the segregated network. Thus, reminding people that individuals could be connected to one another despite being from different groups may be another way to build trust and understanding among them. A mere month before Freddie Gray died in police custody, President Obama addressed the nation on the 50th anniversary of Bloody Sunday in Selma: “We do a disservice to the cause of justice by intimating that bias and discrimination are immutable, or that racial division is inherent to America. To deny…progress – our progress – would be to rob us of our own agency; our responsibility to do what we can to make America better." The president was saying that we, as a society, have a responsibility to reduce prejudice and discrimination. These recent findings from psychology and neuroscience indicate that we, as individuals, possess this capacity. Of course this capacity is not sufficient to usher in racial equality or peace. Even when the level of prejudice against particular out-groups decreases, it does not imply that the level of institutional discrimination against these or other groups will necessarily improve. Ultimately, only collective action and institutional evolution can address systemic racism. The science is clear on one thing, though: individual bias and discrimination are changeable. Race-based prejudice and discrimination, in particular, are created and reinforced by many social factors, but they are not inevitable consequences of our biology**.** Perhaps understanding how coalitional thinking impacts intergroup relations will make it easier for us to affect real social change going forward.