# 1NC vs Holy Cross ND

#### Our interpretation is that the aff should defend the implementation of a topical governmental action. They don’t.

#### Resolved means a policy

Words and Phrases 64 Words and Phrases Permanent Edition. “Resolved”. 1964.

Definition of the word “resolve,” given by Webster is “to express an opinion or determination by resolution or vote; as ‘it was resolved by the legislature;” It is of similar force to the word “enact,” which is defined by Bouvier as meaning “to establish by law”.

#### “Resolved:” refers to a legislative debate.

Louisiana State Legislature 16, “Glossary of Legislative Terms,” http://www.legis.state.la.us/glossary2.htm

Resolution: A legislative instrument that generally is used for making declarations, stating policies, and making decisions where some other form is not required. A bill includes the constitutionally required enacting clause; a resolution uses the term "resolved". Not subject to a time limit for introduction nor to governor's veto. (Const. Art. III, §17(B) and House Rules 8.11, 13.1, 6.8, and 7.4 and Senate Rules 10.9, 13.5 and 15.1)

#### The World Trade Organization is an international body that governs trade.

Tarver 21 (Evan Tarver has 6+ years of experience in financial analysis and 5+ years as an author, editor, and copywriter, “World Trade Organization”, Mar 1, 2021, https://www.investopedia.com/terms/w/wto.asp)

Created in 1995, the World Trade Organization (WTO) is an international institution that oversees the global trade rules among nations. It superseded the 1947 [General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade](https://www.investopedia.com/terms/g/gatt.asp) (GATT) created in the wake of World War II.

#### Reduce means to make smaller.

Cambridge Dictionary ND (https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/reduce)

to [become](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/become) or to make something [become](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/become) [smaller](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/small) in [size](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/size), [amount](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/amount), [degree](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/degree), [importance](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/importance), etc…

#### Intellectual property protection means protection for creative inventions.

UpCounsel 20 (Law journal, June 23, 2020,https://www.upcounsel.com/intellectual-property-protection)

Intellectual Property Protection is protection for inventions, literary and artistic works, symbols, names, and images created by the mind.

#### Medicines are a treatment for illness of injury

Cambridge Dictionary ND (https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/reduce)

[treatment](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/treatment) for [illness](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/illness) or [injury](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/injury).

#### Vote Negative:

#### 1] Predictable limits: their model has no resolutional bound and creates the possibility for literally an infinite number of 1ACs. Not debating the topic allows debaters to specialize in one area of the library for 4 years giving them a huge edge over people who switch research focus ever 2 months. They get to pick the topic ex post facto which incentivizes vague argumentation that’s not grounded in a consistent, stable mechanism – that causes a race to the margins where they’re incentivized to defend uncontestable statements like “racism bad” or “2+2=4.” What is the disad to this aff? Black rage *bad*? Non-T affs force impossible neg positions.

#### Counter-interpretations are arbitrary, unpredictable, and don’t solve the world of neg prep because there’s no grounding in the resolution.

#### 2] Self-questioning – the process of researching, thinking about, and reflecting on a topic prior to debating it develops essential critical thinking and info-processing skills. Without a predictable, limited resolution that everyone is prepared to discuss, teams will resort to cognitive shortcuts and gut reactions that entrench biases. That means reading the aff on the negative solves all of your offense and you learn to understand the state in order to kritik it. NO PART of our interpretation says that you have to say that the state is good, just defend that the WTO takes a certain action

#### 3] TVA

#### ---A] Legal demands don’t conflate change with progress or validate legal institutions – it’s a tactical intervention that reduces violence while exposing the contradictions within law.

Spade 13 Dean Spade, associate professor of law @ Seattle University, “Intersectional Resistance and Law Reform” *Signs* Vol. 38, No. 4, Summer 2013

What intersectional politics demands¶ Social movements using critical intersectional tools are making demandsthat are often difficult for legal scholars to comprehend because of the ways that they throw US law and the nation-state form into crisis. Because they recognize the fact that legal equality contains and neutralizes resistance and perpetuates intersectional violence and because they identify purportedly neutral administrative systems as key vectors of that violence, critical scholars and activists are making demands that include ending immigration enforcement and abolishing policing and prisons. These demands suggest that the technologies of gendered racialization that form the nation cannot be reformed into fair and neutral systems. These systems are technologies of racialized-gendered population control that cannot operate otherwise—they are built to extinguish perceived threats and drains in order to protect and enhance the livelihood of the national population. These kinds of demands and the analysis they represent produce a different relation to law reform strategies than the national narrative about law reform suggests, and different than what is often assumed by legal scholars interested in the field of “equality law.” Because legal equality “victories” are being exposed as primarily symbolic declarations that stabilize the status quo of violence, declarations from courts or legislatures become undesirable goals. Instead, law reform, in this view, might be used as a tactic of transformation focused on interventions that materially reduce violence or maldistribution without inadvertently expanding harmful systems in the name of reform. One recent example is the campaign against gang injunctions in Oakland, California. A broad coalition—comprising organizations focused on police violence, economic justice, imprisonment, youth development, immigration, gentrification, and violence against queer and trans people—succeeded in recent years in bringing significant attention to the efforts of John Russo, Oakland’s city attorney, to introduce gang injunctions (Critical Resistance 2011). The organizations in this coalition are prioritizing anticriminalization work that might usually be cast as irrelevant or marginal to organizations focused on the single axis of women’s or LGBT equality. The campaign has a law reform target in that it seeks to prevent the enactment of certain law enforcement mechanisms that are harmful to vulnerable communities. However, it is not a legal-equality campaign. Rather than aiming to change a law or policy that explicitly excludes a category of people, it aims to expose the fact that a facially neutral policy is administered in a racially targeted manner (Davis 2011; Stop the Injunctions 2011).¶ Furthermore, the coalition frames its campaign within a larger set of demands not limited to what can be won within the current structure of American law but focused on population-level conditions of maldistribution. The demands of the coalition include stopping all gang injunctions and police violence; putting resources toward reentry support and services for people returning from prison, including fully funded and immediate access to identity documents, housing, job training, drug and alcohol treatment, and education; banning employers from asking about prior convictions on job applications; ending curfews for people on parole and probation; repealing California’s three-strikes law; reallocating funds from prison construction to education; ending all collaborations between Oakland’s government and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE); providing affordable and low-income housing; making Oakland’s Planning Commission accountable regarding environmental impacts of development; ending gentrification; and increasing the accountability of Oakland’s city government while augmenting decision-making power for Oakland residents (Stop the Injunctions 2011). These demands evince an analysis of conditions facing vulnerable communities in Oakland (and beyond) that cannot be resolved solely through legal reform since they include the significant harm inflicted when administrative bodies like ICE and the Planning Commission implement violent programs under the guise of neutral rationales. These demands also demonstrate an intersectional analysis of harm and refuse logics of deservingness that have pushed many social movements to distance themselves from criminalized populations. Instead, people caught up in criminal and immigration systems are portrayed as those in need of resources and support, and the national fervor for law and order that has gripped the country for decades, emptying public coffers and expanding imprisonment, is criticized.¶ Another example of intersectional activism utilizing law reform without falling into the traps of legal equality is activism against the immigration enforcement program Secure Communities**.** Secure Communities is a federal program in which participating jurisdictions submit the fingerprints of arrestees to federal databases for an immigration check. As of October 2010, 686 jurisdictions in thirty-three states were participating.12 Diverse coalitions of activists and organizations around the United States launched organizing campaigns to push their jurisdictions to refuse to participate. Organizations focused on domestic violence, trans and queer issues, racial and economic justice, and police accountability, along with many others, have joined this effort and committed resources to stopping the devolution of criminal and immigration enforcement. Their advocacy has rejected deservingness narratives that push the conversation toward reform for “good, noncriminal” immigrants. These advocates have won significant victories, convincing certain jurisdictions to refuse to participate and increasing understanding of the intersecting violences of criminal punishment and immigration enforcement.13 This work also avoids the danger of expanding and legitimizing harmful systems that other legal reform work can present. It is focused on reducing, dismantling, and preventing the expansion of harmful systems.14¶ I offer these examples not because they are perfect—certainly a significant range of tactics and strategies are part of each of these campaigns, and, with detailed analysis, we might find instances of co-optation, deservingness divides, and other dangers of legal reform work occurring even as some are avoided and rejected. However, these examples are indicative of resistance to limitations of legal equality or rights strategies. These demands exceed what the law recognizes as viable claims. These campaigns suggest that those who argue that a politics based on intersectional analysis is too broad, idealistic, complex, or impossible—or that it eliminates effective immediate avenues for resistance—are mistaken. Critical political engagements are resisting the pitfalls of rights discourse and seeking to build broad-based resistance formations made up of constituencies that come from a variety of vulnerable subpopulations but find common cause in concerns about criminalization, immigration, poverty, colonialism, militarism, and other urgent conditions.Their targets are administrative systems and law enforcement mechanisms that are nodes of distribution for racialized-gendered harm and violence, and their tactics seek material change in the lives of vulnerable populations rather than recognition and formal inclusion. Their organizing methods mobilize directly affected communities and value horizontal structures, leadership development, mutual aid, democratic participation, and community solutions rather than top-down, elite-imposed approaches to political transformation. These analytical and practical methods owe a great deal to women-of-color feminist formations that have innovated and continue to lead inquiry and experimentation into transformative social justice theory and practice.1

#### ---B] Read the a whole-res aff, then read that it takes out medical innovation and the MIC – and that’s good because of their durazo card.

#### 4] Fairness is an impact –

#### ---A] It’s an intrinsic good – some level of competitive equity is necessary to sustain the activity – if it didn’t exist, then there wouldn’t be value to the game since judges could literally vote whatever way they wanted regardless of the competing arguments made

#### ---B] Probability – your ballot can’t solve their impacts but it can solve mine – debate can’t alter subjectivity, but can rectify skews

#### ---C] Internal link turns every impact – a limited topic promotes in-depth research and engagement which is necessary to access all of their education

#### ---D] Comes before substance – deciding any other argument in this debate cannot be disentangled from our inability to prepare for it – any argument you think they’re winning is a link, not a reason to vote for them, since it’s just as likely that they’re winning it because we weren’t able to effectively prepare to defeat it. This means they don’t get to weigh the aff.

#### 5] Paradigm issues:

#### ---A] DTD to deter abuse, because it’s a bad model of debate, and because of 4.D – DTA is incoherent and collapses to DTD because you would drop the aff

#### ---B] C/I to set better norms and reasonability is arbitrary and collapses to C/I’s

#### ---C] No RVI’s – you can’t win for being topical and it encourages baiting theory/T – also chilling effect means lowered checks on abuse

# CASE

#### Understanding both sides is k2 to strengthening one’s ability to critique it – in order to understand why pharma is bad. Otherwise they’re just being dogmatic and refusing to learn about the thing they’re critiquing.

## Case

### Presumption

#### Vote neg on presumption

#### 1] Spillover – nothing happens after your ballot is signed

#### 2] Systems – don’t alter debate, this aff has been read already

### Metaphysics

#### 1] They rely on a false instantiation thesis – progress within the state is possible because blackness can exist within the realm of the human and be cohered positively

Bright 21 [Jan 30, 2021 “Afro-Pessimism and the Instantiation Thesis” by Liam Kofi Bright, Assistant Professor Department of Philosophy, Logic, and Scientific Methods @ London School of Economics. He received an MSc and PhD in Logic, Computation, and Methodology from the Philosophy department at Carnegie Mellon University. Before attending CMU, he completed an MSc in the Philosophy of Science at the London School of Economics in the Department of Philosophy, Logic, and Scientific Method. This was funded by an Arts and Humanities Research Council Scholarship. In 2020 he was the recipient of the Philip Leverhulme Prize. Prior to the LSE, he completed a BA in Philosophy at the University of Warwick. [Afro-Pessimism and the Instantiation Thesis (sootyempiric.blogspot.com)](http://sootyempiric.blogspot.com/2017/07/afro-pessimism-and-instantiation-thesis.html)// gord0]

If you've been following debates within cultural studies at all over the past few years you've probably heard about Afro-Pessimism. Being a controversial thesis it has been much discussed and often maligned and often unfairly. I am going to, in this post, criticise what seems to be an element of it -- but I do so partly because I think it warrants more attention from philosophers of the social sciences, and we're an odd bunch who I think pay attention to things when they are criticisable. But I don't want to contribute to the general pattern of misrepresenting it (though I do in fact almost entirely disagree with it as I understand it) and am very very very far from expert, so really I think interested readers should check out [this](https://belliresearchinstitute.com/2017/02/23/a-very-short-intro-to-afro-pessimism/) introduction, and the associated text available [here](https://rackedanddispatched.noblogs.org/files/2017/01/Afro-Pessimism.pdf). It is on the basis of reading these, plus participating in or observing a number of informal conversations (and watching the odd lecture available online) that I comment, but I cannot stress enough that I am not actually expert on this and the scholars in that book would be a far better and more sympathetic source of introduction than me. In an all too small nutshell, the idea is as follows. One begins with the idea of slaves as socially dead, drawn from the historical work of Orlando Peterson, and defined as follows: ``[t]he slave, as an object, is socially dead, which means they are: 1) open to gratuitous violence, as opposed to violence contingent upon some transgression or crime; 2) natally alienated, their ties of birth not recognized and familial structures intentionally broken apart; and 3) generally dishonored, or disgraced before any thought or action is considered.'' (Quotation from the linked introduction above.) Being socially dead in this fashion renders you a non-human, in the sense of being fundamentally dehumanised, not subject to the kind of rights and protections and due-respect that a human is, not being a subject at all. Black people remain socially dead in the above defined sense, indeed blackness, or the condition of being a black, just is conceptually the same thing as being socially dead in the above named sense. This because blackness, the condition of being a black or socially dead, is playing a certain kind of conceptual or psychological role for everyone else -- it is to be the figure that others define themselves against, that others affirm their humanity against by defining themselves in opposition to. (This, again, certainly oversimplifies things. Read the introduction!) Now, there are a number of things one might disagree with here. The psychological theory is, at the least, speculative, and the exact scope of the theory is always rather unclear to me. It sometimes seems to be asserted as a theory of global communal life after some point in early modernity. But whatever plausibility it has as a theory of goings on in the West seems to me to be massively decreased as a theory of the psycho-social life of nomadic folk in inner Mongolia. Do they really care that much about us black folk as to define themselves against us? Finally, my suspicion is that there is sometimes a degree of equivocation involved -- the theorist themselves often does not really seem to see blackness as so bad as all that. I'm also going to set aside my [objections](https://philpapers.org/rec/BRIEL-2) to the category of human (rather than sentient being) being the one we orient our rights talk around, since I don't think Afro-pessimists mean to endorse this really. But set that all this aside, and ask oneself why this idea is described as Afro-*Pessimism*? Well it seems pretty pessimistic, right! Slavery never really went away in its essentials, black folk are fundamentally cut off from the category of the human with all the normative protections that entails, other folk's self-conceptions is founded on the possibility of gratuitous violence towards us. Not nice! But actually this all rather under-sells the pessimism. For, there is also built into the theory another kind of pessimism about what might be considered a tempting reform or even revolutionary project, and it is this I wish to discuss and problematise. One can imagine responding to the above narrative as follows. Ok, so, we take this idea of the human, and accepting that historically it has been defined against the figure of the black, we vow that henceforth we shall repurpose it to our new and more benevolent ends of <some more radical and cool sounding version of> making everyone be nice to each other. So now we are going to make it such that everyone counts as human (granting that this is not what the concept was initially or typically nowadays used for) and all are thereby due the respect this suggests, along with whatever material changes are necessary to concretely realise that. Afro-pessimists are, if I have understood the claim correctly, committed to rejecting the coherence of any reform or revolutionary effort which takes this form. The category of the human cannot be extended to encompass (all? maybe any of?) those we now call black. Why? Well, here's where The Instantiation Thesis comes in. On a number of occasions in the introductory text somebody asserts something like this: *``As a result, it is Blackness, and more specifically anti-Blackness, that gives coherence to categories of non-Black—white, worker, gay, i.e., “human.” Categories of non-Black must establish their boundaries for inclusion in a group (humanity) by having a recognizable self within. There must also, consequently, be an outside to each group, and, as with the concept of humanity, it is Blackness that is without; it is Blackness that is the dark matter surrounding and holding together the categories of non-Black. ''* That's from the introductory essay. But in the linked text Wilderson makes a similar sort of remark on page 20, and Hartman (I think but am less sure) is committed to various versions of this claim throughout her first essay. The key idea here is a claim about conceptual necessity, that I think stated fully generally (and we shall come back to that) would be as follows: if X is a coherent belief/claim/concept/idea, then the antithesis of X must be instantiated. For X to make sense, there have to be some not-Xs. This, then, grounds the pessimism about the above reform, hinted at in the quoted passage, and which informal conversation suggests to me is one of the defining features of Afro-Pessimism -- you cannot make everyone human, that is simply impossible; if there were no non-humans there could be no humans, so you cannot extend the rights and normative status of the human to everyone. The Instantiation Thesis, I take it, blocks the reformists' move by showing it to be an incoherent suggestion. Concepts don't work like that; you can reform who counts as human, but if you want some people to enjoy the rights and privileges of status as full human persons you can't make it such that nobody isn't human. We define black people as analytically those who are without (we mumble a bit and miss some subtleties about modal quantification in assuming that this means that roughly all the people or kind of people who actually are black now must forever remain inhuman -- I can forgive this!) and we say that there must always, as a matter of conceptual necessity, be black people, and the benevolent reformist project can't work. Here's the problem with the instantiation thesis. It's not true, and nothing like it is true. We have lots of concepts which we can make sense of even though their negations are not instantiated. I'm a non-unicorn and I am guessing so are you - this no wise proves there are unicorns. I'm a mortal Irishman, this does not mean that there is some immortal Irishman running around there. Even if I widened the catchment and said I am a mortal human, this would not in and of itself be proof of Christ's divinity. The table in front of me is (in the logician's sense) self-identical - this is not a proof that there are non-self-identical objects out there, nor does the fact that it is either red or not red prove that somethings are neither red nor not red... etc etc. This doesn't strike me as a problem with any particular way of spelling out the instantiation thesis, which perhaps some refinement could fix. It is just entirely false - we really don't need to instantiate the negation of a concept in order to make the concept itself intelligible. Now the worry might arise that I have over generalised. People do not usually state the Instantiation Thesis in so general a manner, after all. Perhaps they mean it just for normative concepts, or maybe just in particular for the relationship between the human and the black. If this is so, I would consider it an advance for this to be made more clear and explicitly defended as such, because I do not see why these concepts should be an exception. I think, for instance, that to say of someone that they are omnicidal (guilty of murdering all lifeforms) is coherent and condemnatory, but that thankfully there have never been any omnicidal people or groups that I know of. So it is not apparent to me that normative concepts form an exception that render the Instantiation Thesis true, and it is not at all clear why the human/black dichotomy should be sui generis in this regard. Another concern might be that I am treating this like it is a metaphysical or conceptual claim, when in fact it is a psychological claim. Yes it is coherent to think about concepts or possible objects whose antitheses are nowhere instantiated, but just as a matter of fact people cannot do that. And it is this psychological claim that Afro-pessimists really mean to rest their anti-reformism upon. If so, again, I would consider it an advance just for this point to be made clear and defended as such. But, also again, it seems false to me - I don't really find it hard to understand the idea of a non-unicorn or a mortal Irishman, I think I can easily identify such things and describe properties of them, and even orient my actions around them where it is pertinent -- that someone is both mortal and Irish might well be significant! So, if this is to be the claim, I would like to know why it should be believed. And without anything like the Instantiation Thesis I just don't see why Afropessimism couldn't prompt a sort of meliorative reformism (which may require revolutionary changes to the social order) as mentioned above. In fact, I think something like this may even be starting to happen in the popular sphere, as I have mentioned [before](https://sootyempiric.blogspot.com/2020/10/varieties-of-black-political-philosophy.html) that the 1619 Project seems to combine Afropessimist premises with a reformist (in this case non-revolutionary) liberal political bent. If the problem really is that blackness, or black people, are playing this global libidinal role of being the opposite of what's respectable and rights worthy - we could just not. We could stop that. Let's... let's stop that?

#### 2] A confluence of statistical factors prove racial progress is possible and occurring.

Hochschild 17 (Jennifer L. Hochschild , Professor of Government, African and African American Studies, and the Chair of the Department of Government (Harvard University), Chair in American Law and Governance at the Library of Congress, President of the American Political Science Association, “Left Pessimism and Political Science,” Perspectives on Politics, Volume 15, Issue 1, March 15th, p. 6-19, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1537592716004102> \*\*modified to allow for more humanizing frames)

Is Pessimism the Only Sensible or Empirically Warranted Response in these Two Arenas? It is easy to find evidence to support pessimism about American racial dynamics or the societal deployment of genomic science. The United States is notorious for its racially- and ethnically-inflected poverty and excessive levels of incarceration; undocumented migrants live in legal limbo; new genomics techniques such as CRISPR-Cas9 tempt humankind into hubristic manipulation of nature, and scientists’ promises to cure cancer through genetics knowledge ring hollow to many. The question for this article is whether there are also strong grounds for optimism in my two illustrative realms, such that one could plausibly and persuasively choose to be “centered on advancement concerns” rather than “centered on security concerns.” The answer is yes. Again I can point only to illustrative, suggestive evidence. First, the gap between ~~blacks’~~ [black people’s] and whites’ life expectancy declined from seven years in 1990 to 3.4 years in 2014. That is an astonishing, perhaps unprecedented, rate of change given the usual slow pace of demographic transformation. It is important in itself, of course, and also as a summary statement about an array of other social phenomena in which racial disparities are declining. ~~Blacks~~ [Black people] are living longer mainly because of declining rates of homicides, HIV mortality, infant mortality, cancer and heart disease, and suicide among black men.19 A lot of things have to go right for a group’s life expectancy to rise rapidly. Second, applications for U.S. citizenship rose from the previous year in ten of the fifteen years from 2000 to 2015, while declining in four (and remaining stable in one). That is an important indicator of immigrant incorporation, and especially relevant to political scientists because “Hispanics and Asians who are naturalized citizens tend to have higher voter turnout rates than their U.S.-born counterparts.” 20 Third, non-white Americans themselves tend to feel pretty good about their lives. Gallup Poll asked in 2016, “Where do you expect your life satisfaction to be in five years?” If whites’ response is standardized at 1, then ~~blacks~~ [black people’s] are at 2.97, and Hispanics at 1.29. Only Asian Americans, at 0.97, were less optimistic than whites. Gallup also asked about one’s level of stress in the previous day. If whites are again standardized at 1, then ~~blacks~~ [black people] are at 0.48; Hispanics at 0.53; and Asian Americans at 0.75. Middle-class ~~blacks~~ [black people] were half as likely as middle class whites to report stress during the previous day.21 In the arena of genomics also, one can point to grounds for optimism rather than pessimism. The Innocence Project, “dedicated to exonerating wrongfully convicted individuals through DNA testing and reforming the criminal justice system to prevent future injustice,” has enabled about 350 people to be released from prison. (Not so parenthetically, seven out of ten are African American or Latino, mostly poor men.) More extensive DNA testing might lead to many more exonerations; one careful analysis of serious crime convictions found that “in five percent of homicide and sexual assault cases DNA testing eliminated the convicted offender as the source of incriminating physical evidence.” Previous estimates had pegged the share of wrongful convictions at no more than one to two percent.22 More generally, “DNA profiling [of convicted felons] reduces the probability of future convictions by 17% for serious violent offenders and by 6% for serious property offenders .... These are likely underestimates of the true deterrent effect of DNA profiling.” 23 Genomic scientists can point to impressive successes with regard to Mendelian (single-gene) diseases, and they focus even more on diagnoses and cures yet to come. Eric Lander, director of the Broad Institute, likens the trajectory of genomic medicine to the development of medicine based on the germ theory of disease, which “took about 75 years. With genomics, we’re maybe halfway through that cycle.” In his view, “the rate of progress is just stunning. As costs continue to come down, we are entering a period where we are going to be able to get the complete catalogue of disease genes.” Cancer is a prime target, almost in sight:“If you understand that this is a game of probability, and there is only a finite number of cancer cells and each has only a certain chance of mutating, and if we can put together two or three independent attacks on the cancer cell, we win. If we invest vigorously in this and we attract the best young people into this field, we get it done in a generation. If we don’t, it takes two generations.” Lander is “not Pollyanna .... [I]t’s not for next year. We play for the long game. I don’t want to overpromise in the short term, but it is incredibly exciting if you take the 25-year view.” 24 This is a classic statement of optimism, or being centered on advancement concerns. It begins with expertise and perspective, sees dangers and weaknesses, and nonetheless asserts empirical grounds for faith. President Obama’s insistence that “if you had to choose a moment in human history to live ... you’d choose now” has the same quality. My point is not that left pessimism is wrong—only that there are grounds, perhaps equally strong, for left optimism. One can choose either, and then find good evidence for that choice. Why Is Left Pessimism Problematic? That wily politician, Barney Frank, offers the best answer from the vantage point of the public arena: “When you tell your supporters that nothing has gotten better, and that any concessions you’ve received are mere tokenism, you take away their incentive to stay mobilized. As for those you’re negotiating with, if you denigrate anything they concede as worthless, they will soon realize they can obtain the same response by giving nothing at all.” 25 One can offer the same type of answer from the vantage point of a teacher. Many of us have had the experience of teaching a course—about civil war, inequality and politics, environmental policy, or the meaning of liberty—only to have our students politely request on the last day of class some idea or piece of information about which they can feel good or which they can use in their public engagement. We need to offer answers. Optimism may also be associated with academic success; one careful study found that although achievement in mathematics was most strongly related to prior achievement and grade level, optimism and pessimism were significant factors. In particular, students with a more generally pessimistic outlook on life had a lower level of achievement in mathematics over time.” 26A study of college students similarly found that “dispositional and academic optimism were associated with less chance of dropping out of college, as well as better motivation and adjustment. Academic optimism was also associated with higher grade point average.” 27 And for those of us of a certain age, it is heartening to discover that “after adjusting for covariates, the results suggested that greater optimism [among middle-aged, predominantly white Americans] was associated with greater high-density lipoprotein cholesterol and lower triglycerides .... In conclusion, ... optimism is associated with a healthy lipid profile; moreover, these associations can be explained, in part, by the presence of healthier behaviors and a lower body mass index.” 28

#### ~~3] Anti-Blackness isn’t ontological, is an ahistorical reading of the Black Radical Tradition, and their theory actively forecloses the capacity for revolutionary change~~

~~Brown 19 Marcus Brown 8-24-2019~~ [~~https://content.redvoice.news/bad-faith-and-afropessimism-notes-toward-a-debate/~~](https://content.redvoice.news/bad-faith-and-afropessimism-notes-toward-a-debate/) ~~(PhD candidate in the Department of Philosophy at Stony Brook University)//Elmer~~

~~As should by now be obvious, my intent in drafting these notes is not to call Wilderson up to the pillory. There is much to be admired in both the form and content of his books, essays, and interviews. He is a captivating narrator and prose stylist; and the thick splotches of pathos that sometimes distract from his arguments are regularly broken by ironic caesuras that prevent the reader's suffocating on Black pain. Compared with some of his colleagues and disciples, his arguments are mercifully lucid, capable of connection into something like an account of the social whole. Yet that whole turns out to be false, and not in the Adornian, but in the classical sense: Wilderson’s adopted standpoint fails to yield a coherent account of the contradictions that rend our social totality, or an actionable program for liberation from racial capitalism, because it mistakes a chimerical subject-position (the natally alienated Black subject) for the Archimedean point of a global modernity in crisis. Wilderson’s flawed standpoint has two regrettable consequences for Afropessimist thought. First, it limits Afropessimist sources of Black rebellion to our dehumanized being-for-others (the white other), rather than acknowledging positive forms of self-regard and communal recognition among Black folk that are reservoirs of resistance against white supremacy. Second, in overemphasizing the role of antiblackness in the constitution of Black and non-Black lifeworlds, Wilderson and his cohort seem deliberately to overlook the Fanonist basis for revolutionary internationalism: since the major antagonism in modern life centers on colonized versus non-colonized nations, the presence of un-reflective anti-Blackness among non-Black people of color does not prevent radical coalition with them, any more than similarly reactionary beliefs among and between Black groups cut off our shared revolutionary potential. Both positions ultimately land the Afropessimists on an error whose irony is underlined by their collective Francophilia. That error is Sartrean mauvaise-foi, or bad faith, the paradoxical human capacity to lie to ourselves about what we know to be true concerning our facticity (the inescapable accretion of our past decisions) and our freedom (to transcend what we have been toward what we are not yet). To my first criticism, I would like to invoke the modified Du Boisian concept of potentiated double-consciousness. Double consciousness, in Du Bois's classic formulation from Souls of Black Folk, is the ability of the colonized/racialized subject to see themselves not only through their own eyes, but also through the eyes of their oppressor. As Lewis Gordon and Paget Henry have argued, Du Boisian double consciousness is not just the undialectical opposition within the Black subject of our self-concept with that of the racial other—such an opposition, as even Du Bois understood, is not in itself productive of a radical politics. As their argument goes, the self-concept with which the Black subject begins must be affirmative of their humanity and value as a Black human being. If the Black subject understands that the imperatives of an antiblack world are the real source of degrading racial archetypes —and not their private inability to meet the unrealistic standards of white oppressors—then, they will not succumb to these archetypes by tragically identifying with them, or by neurotically avoiding them in slavish imitation of whites (as do the colonized petits-bourgeois of Fanon’s Black Skin, White Masks). Instead they will actively confront and resist them and the structures that produce them, as do the (Black and non-Black) makers of history in Wretched of the Earth. (Outside of Gordon’s Existentia Africana, the best brief description of potentiated double-consciousness can be found in Henry’s article “Africana Phenomenology: Its Philosophical Implications.”) This stance needs a positive self-conception of the colonized, in contrast with the Afropessimist position that defines Blackness, in Patterson’s term, strictly as ‘social death,’ i.e. as fully determined by the project of an antiblack world. Consistently with the Hegelian theory of recognition against which it nonetheless rises in critique, double consciousness implies the simultaneous acknowledgment of our human freedom to produce and sustain values as well as its limitation by social nonrecognition. This freedom is rejected in bad faith by our Afropessimist inscription outside of the human condition. In fact, it can be argued that the ideal Afropessimist consciousness is not doubled, but single, and singularly racist. The wholly negative conception of what it means to be Black is especially evident in the works of Saidiya Hartman. Already in Patterson’s account, there is a deliberate focus on the formative role of the slave for the identity of the master, and a corresponding neglect of the slave's psychic life. Hartman dutifully threshes out the Nietzschean-Foucauldian implications in her Scenes of Subjection, where to be Afro-American is simply to be a victim of existential disruption by the slave trade; and maintained in that slavery to the present, even with our dubious legal ‘progress’ from irresponsible human property to the ‘burdened individual’ personhood of liberal contractual relations (1997: 115-123). The play of continuity and rupture in this work has the predictable effect of preserving us as slaves (i.e., as antiblack society has constructed us), but denying our Africanity (i.e., how our ancestors chose to construct themselves) as positive content in our resistance to enslavement. In discussing collective memory on the plantation, Hartman rejects even the search for African cultural survivals conducted by Blassingame, Stuckey, and other scholars as a mythological-primitivist search for an unrecoverable past (ibid 72-75). For Hartman, the horizon of Blackness is traced by the pendulous swinging of a lynched slave. But more than that: the very humanist project of liberating Black folk from the literal-figurative rope and lash is but another technique in the subjection of those who are constructed as Black. Like Foucault’s imprisoned madman in Discipline and Punish, the Black subject acquires their Black identity inseparably with their powerlessness. An acquisition that, by a double move, also constitutes the liberal white spectator as conscience-stricken liberator, as the empowered possessor of a conscience. There is something to be said for Hartman’s hermeneutics of the white gaze; and no critical theorist can afford to be ignorant of the dialectic of freedom and slavery, of personal liberty and indebtedness, in modern liberal thought, least of all a Black theorist. The contradictions of white liberalism do concern us, no doubt; but where the majority of us must work, play, love, reflect, and die, they do not define us, even while they indicate the basic existential threat. Mute, dead objects cannot revolt against the possibility of having no possibilities. Unless they actually possess the human freedom to make the world other than it is at present, they could not possibly know or fight for what they would lose in the total objectification of real death. Which brings us to the second prong of Afropessimist bad faith. According to this camp, anti-blackness supposedly pervades the entire world, so that no existing social or political tendencies within it can lead to Black emancipation. Consequently, the non-Black ‘allies’ of the Bandung World are bound to betray us once a common tactical goal has been achieved—Du Bois’s Dark Princess vision dissolves in a vat of Bollywood antiblackness. But since the social world is not a product of natural laws, but is sustained by free human activity, then it follows that voluntary human attitudes can make a difference in shaping the structures and outcomes of that world. The point here is that commitment to the project of a new world in spite of all apparent evidence of its futility has made a difference in the Black freedom struggles of the past, and can make a difference in the future, even if it’s not guaranteed to do so in our lifetime. Like Fanon, Sartre, and Gordon, this counter-argument emphasizes that the terrible weight of the past hangs on the literal nothingness that is human freedom; that to discard the choice of struggle on the heap of past failure, cannot save us from our burning consciousness of even that choice. This has implications especially for the Afropessimist position on coalition-building. Let’s concede to the Afropessimist the antiblack structuration of the entire world. To then assume that any attempt to liberate oneself through coalition with the other victims of Western modernity is bound to be betrayed by non-Blacks, is nonetheless to reify an antiblackness that originates, after all, in the mutable attitudes of human beings. It’s to assume, like De Beauvoir’s polemical targets in The Second Sex, that what has always characterized relations between two antagonistic groups, always will. It’s to flee in bad faith from the anxiety of producing new strategies for Third World liberation, into a historically-grounded (merely factical) assurance that we can't collectively win because of the pervasive antiblackness that grips even our potential allies in the world of color. And then there is the real question of where custom’s inertia ends. Why shouldn’t the obvious normative roles played by heterosexism, national chauvinism, and other reactionary attitudes among Black people throughout the diaspora, similarly compromise Black liberation, but from within? How the Afropessimist squares all of this with those passages throughout Fanon’s oeuvre that urgently call for solidarity with all Third World peoples in the project of a new humanism, even while he acknowledges antiblackness among Arabs, for example, is unclear. Maybe it’s by the same selective reading that, in their review of anticolonial freedom struggles, allows them to overlook the many instances of Black folks working successfully with non-Blacks in anti-colonial struggles (in e.g. the Working People’s Alliance of Guyana, or the various Third World coalitions in the US New Communist Movement). But what it cannot be is the product of an authentic confrontation with the subjective and objective risks incurred by joining our energies in good faith with all of decolonizing humanity.~~

#### ~~4] Fungibility and gratuitous violence are reversible—their fatalism forecloses black resistance~~

~~Mahoney 19, Sommer. "(de) Humanization and Onticide: Lexicography for Ontology." CLAMANTIS: The MALS Journal 1.5 (2019): 5. (M.A. candidate in Liberal Studies at Dartmouth)//Elmer~~

~~Calvin Warren would pause here to reassert his claims about slavery—that slavery’s economic violence created and reaffirmed the white identity, and did so through the commodification of the slave into a fungible object. My argument against him is twofold. First: if we can trace the history of the moral schema that produced this fungibility, does that not mean that fungibility was invented, and can be uninvented? Is it not possible (not a universally recognized truth, but a possibility) that there is a way to unmake the schema that created whiteness and ritually sacrificed blackness? Perhaps Calvin Warren would argue that no, there is no way—because the black ontology is being perpetually sacrificed and destroyed, there is no way to stop that cycle. It is an endless feedback cycle, he would argue—and as it spins, it maintains its integrity (sacrifice and creation), and progresses forward, consuming each black ontology as each black baby is born. But here we can return to Kate Manne. Ignore Warren’s protestations for a moment, and consider the second part of my two-fold argument: even if the morality of agency schema brought about white identity, is it possible that black people have consistency rejected and fought off these assaults on their ontology? Is it possible that music, art, dance, religion, protest and defiance—all of which were rich traditions in slave culture—indicated a truth that white violence could not reach because it cannot understand? Here I would like to propose a new way to look at dehumanization: (de)humanization. The parentheses indicate liminal space between action and thought, the place where destruction and construction are in harmony. To de-humanize, to take away humanity, is an action. By definition, it is an action that can only be done to a human. To strip away humanity, the perpetrator must actually (like Manne suggests) recognize their victim as human. You wouldn’t call a monkey a “monkey!” as an insult because a) you recognize this to be a factual statement, and b) a monkey has no capacity to understand what an “insult” is, and cannot feel insulted. A person, especially a black person, can feel embarrassed, threatened, or degraded by being called a monkey. If slavers actually thought black humans were not humans—why build an ontology around (de)humanizing? How could that practice withstand the test of time: either it would have to stop, because black people were successfully denied humanity and there would be no more reason to (de)humanize, or the very attempts of de-humanization actually reaffirm the essential humanity possessed by each human. In an email I recently received from Dr. Warren, he told me that he is interested in finding a term other than “human” to underpin black self-worth. I am more inclined to agree with Dr. Manne, whose essay leads me to conclude that humans can and do inflict incredible violence on other humans—and thus, that being a human is actually not terribly valuable. To be a human is to be capable of great empathy and great violence, and to be subject to that empathy and brutality from others. Our humanity, even the humanity that we share with our “fellows” does not protect us from violence and may, in fact, make us more susceptible to violence. Dr. Warren and Dr. Manne are considering the same question, and their results differ in semiotics but both send a dire warning about the status of humanity. At the heart of their debate are those of us most susceptible to surplus violence, the minorities whose presence and identity challenge the predominant moral hierarchy.~~

#### 6] Don’t conflate “a world is Anti-Black” with “the world is Anti-Black” – using this as an analytic locks in black oppression and violence

Lewis Gordon 17. Professor of Philosophy and African American Studies, University of Connecticut. “Thoughts on Afropessimism.” *Contemporary Political Theory* Forthcoming: 1-33. Emory Libraries. //Elmer

The first is that ‘‘an antiblack world’’ is not identical with ‘‘the world is antiblack.’’ My argument is that such a world is an antiblack racist project. It is not the historical achievement. Its limitations emerge from a basic fact: Black people and other opponents of such a project fought, and continue to fight, as we see today in the #BlackLivesMatter movement and many others, against it. The same argument applies to the argument about social death. Such an achievement would have rendered even these reflections stillborn. The basic premises of the Afropessimistic argument are, then, locked in performative contradictions. Yet, they have rhetorical force. This is evident through the continued growth of its proponents and forums (such as this one) devoted to it. In Bad Faith and Antiblack Racism, I argued that there are forms of antiblack racism offered under the guise of love, though I was writing about whites who exoticize blacks while offering themselves as white sources of black value. Analyzed in terms of bad faith, where one lies to oneself in an attempt to flee displeasing truths for pleasing falsehoods, exoticists romanticize blacks while affirming white normativity, and thus themselves, as principals of reality. These ironic, performative contradictions are features of all forms of racism, where one group is elevated to godlike status and another is pushed below that of human despite both claiming to be human.

#### 8] Their rejection of hope leads to individualism – collective struggle is a better basis for spiritual hope

Lloyd, Associate Professor of Theology and Religious Studies Villanova University, ‘15(Vincent, Afro-Pessimism and Christian Hope, in *Grace, Governance, and Globalization: Theology and Public Life*, http://vwlloyd.mysite.syr.edu/afro-pessimism-christian-hope.pdf)

Deep Racism and Secular Hope Afro-pessimist scholarship itself rarely turns towards practical questions and rarely asks: what are we to do, or how are we to hope?12 [Begin Footnote 12] For an exception, concluding that Afro-pessimism must reject hope and embrace nihilism, see Calvin L. Warren, “Black Nihilism and the Politics of Hope,” CR: The New Centennial Review 15:1 (2015): 215-248. [End Footnote 12] Afro-pessimist scholarship is largely descriptive work, taking political events (lynchings and police shootings, for example) as symptomatic of a deeper, racialized metaphysics. There is, however, a broader scholarly conversation about deep pessimism caused by difference that may be instructive. Scholars of Native American studies, immigration, and queer studies have also explored how these categories of difference are deeply embedded in Western culture**, but in some cases they have grappled more explicitly with questions of hope.** Jonathan Lear has identified a virtue he labels “radical hope” in Native American communities facing the elimination of their ways of life.13 Focusing on Plenty Coups, the last chief of the Crow, Lear studies a context where the social practices that constituted the Crow world were no longer possible. For example, with lands stolen by the US government and traditional means of resolving conflicts disrupted by firearms, the practice of bravery in battle - which involved face painting by a wife, care for horses, and recounting the victory post-battle, so was woven into Crow life in many ways - was no longer possible. To be a Crow meant to do the social practices of the Crow, but when those social practices are foreclosed, Lear echoes Plenty Coups in concluding that “nothing happened.” Crow continued to live, but with their culture gone it was only the barest form of biological existence. The good life, its meaning culturally determined, could no longer be pursued; practical reasoning went haywire when there were no longer goods to be pursued. However, all was not lost. As Lear tells it, Plenty Coup had a dream (significant because it indicates a break with practical reason) which the chief interpreted to mean that the Crow must acknowledge their traditional way of life was coming to an end, but they also must be committed to the notion that the Crow will survive and new social practices and new goods will come about, even if it is impossible to know what they are or how they will come about now. This radical hope rejected as futile practical reasoning, self-destruction, and fantasy. Soberly assessing the world as it is, radical hope persists in acting as if a wholly new world is possible – and so exercises the virtues of adaptability and perceptiveness. Yet radical hope only works, Lear argues, because of the Crow’s premise that God exists and is good. Might radical hope offer a way for Black theology **to respond to the problem of Afro-pessimism?** There are clear similarities between the cultural devastation faced by the Native American community Lear studies and the cultural devastation wrought on Blacks through, among other things, the slave trade and the prison system. Unlike the Crow, Black cultural devastation was not a one-off event but, according to the Afro-pessimist critique, is an ongoing process inherent in Euro-American culture itself, continually grinding away at the social practices of Blacks. Or, put another way, the continual pressures on Black individuals and communities tend not simply to take away social practices but to corrupt them, changing them at times from incubators of virtue to incubators of vice (one thinks of the corporate appropriation of Black music or the performance of Black respectability necessary for success in the white business world). Lear’s account of radical hope depends on a robust culture that once, in the not-too-distant past, existed to fuel hope for the future (this past is the source of the chickadee, the symbol of hope in Plenty Coups’ dream, along with the Crow view of God and the crucial practice of dream interpretation). The Afro-pessimist charges that Western anti-Blackness is so deep-seeded that there was never a robust culture from which such a radical hope could flow; even if there was, the centuries of fruitless hope and embattled community would surely lead to the collapse of the virtue. Another approach to deep racism found in recent secular scholarship **is to reject hope altogether**. Such approaches propose two different sorts of alternatives: an embrace of grief or an embrace of the present. Anne Cheng’s The Melancholy of Race exemplifies the former approach.14 She agrees that racialization has an enormous, persistent impact – in the context of her study, on African Americans and Asian Americans. She agrees that race shapes the ideological foundations of the West. On her view, the usual response to racism, articulating grievances and pressing for them to be addressed, does not adequately address the depths of the problem; indeed, it masks those depths. By formulating a list of grievances and putting one’s hopes in the possibility that they will be rectified, the racialized subject imagines that she will achieve equality and dignity. Then, she will be just like everyone else: the world will be post-racial. Cheng argues that grievances obscure grief, the deeper process that afflicts the psyche of racialized subjects who know they will never be “normal” – and grief distorts the psyche of white subjects as well since white identity is constituted in relation to the racialized other. In the face of deep pessimism, the proper response, on this view, is to look beyond the specific grievances (and hopes) of a racial minority and instead explore the varied ways that the wound of racism sabotages the affective economy of that minority. Acknowledging and interrogating rather than rejecting grief – racial melancholia – is the only way to see the world rightly and so **is the** prerequisite **for any properly directed social or political action.** Cheng’s response to deep racial pessimism is decidedly secular and decidedly individualist. Her critique of grievance, which could be read as a critique of hope directed at specific objects or as desire for specific goals masked as hope, is in a sense of critique of idolatry, but her response to idolatry is to reject transcendence altogether in favor of the folds and wrinkles of immanence – of our affective economies. **But what if we consider grievances** not as ends in themselves **but as** instrumentally used in collective (anti-racist) struggle? Might the process of collective struggle, and not any particular goal, provide a means of healing psyches damaged by racism? Tracking and probing this damage seems less important than commending the forms of collective practice and community **organizing that could cultivate the virtues which serve as a buffer against disabling grief**. Indeed, this is a point made forcefully by the first and second generations of Black theologians: Black communities are essentially communities of struggle and, as such, shape character in a way that holds off despair. Like Cheng, Lee Edelman rejects hope and acknowledges the radical exclusions faced by minority communities.15 Edelman is particularly concerned with queer men, and for him queer identity is fundamentally opposed to any future orientation – and so to any hope. The normative, heterosexual world is concerned with the future because it is concerned with reproduction: individuals with reproducing themselves through their children and societies with reproducing themselves from generation to generation. The figure of the child is sanctified, according to Edelman, because she or he represents this reproduction of the way things are. Yet queers, as incapable of reproduction, are excluded from this heteronormative way of seeing the world. Indeed, queers disrupt the smooth reproduction of the ways of the world – and, Edelman contends, they ought to embrace this role. They ought to embrace pleasure in the moment rather than pleasure deferred to the next generation; they will not suffer now so that a child can have a better life. In short, queers are a minority structurally excluded from Western metaphysics, and the proper response for the minority is to happily embrace hopelessness along with all temporality other than the now. Edelman helpfully demonstrates the way that interest in the future is closely tied to selfinterest and to the powers that be in the present. He also helpfully demonstrates the way that minority groups whose exclusion is fundamental to regnant ideology can potentially short-circuit that ideology by refusing to participate in normative future-directed practices. Indeed, there is at times a messianic tone to Edelman’s project, finding the fullness of time in the present moment. Yet the heart of Edelman’s project is an extension of Cheng’s, an extension from the critique of idolatry to the critique of ideology. Where Cheng took issue with specific hopes, Edelman presents himself as taking issue with hope as such – but in fact he is taking issue with hope motivated by present social structures and institutions. In other words, Edelman is warning against an embrace of hope that is really not about the wholly new, hope that advances the interests of the old with the rhetoric of the wholly new. For Edelman, as for Cheng, the only alternative is making ourselves into gods: an even deeper form of idolatry (an even subtler rouse of ideology). Black theologians grappling with Afro-pessimism can learn much from these secular efforts and their sharp critical perspectives, but Black theologians also bring to the problem of racism a view of hope directed towards a God who is irreducible to worldly terms or desires. God the Future of Blacks The quick and easy response of Black theologians to Afro-pessimism is to simply present Christ as the solution. In the Afro-pessimist framework, Black being is an oxymoron: Blackness has no being, is defined by its exclusion from being. Christ raises the dead, turning non-being into being, flesh defined by death into flesh defined by life. Participation in Christ means participation in His resurrection: denying the world’s denial of being. Such a stance does not take the form of overcoming Blackness, of becoming white. That Blackness is defined by death does not mean that whiteness is defined by life. To the contrary, whiteness hubristically claims life, being, on its own – whiteness claims ontology without theology and that is idolatry. Blackness is not outside of being but paradoxically inside and outside at once, being that is not counted as being, that thus disturbs the regime that would define being. J. Kameron Carter, working along these lines, labels Blackness “paraontological.”16 Concealing the being of the slave, or the prisoner, or the native, takes much ideological work, for the principle of Black non-being must overcome the stubbornness of lived reality. Blackness points to the precariousness of ontology, reminds that the present order of being is not natural, not universal. Blackness essentially destabilizes the order of things, so the resurrection of Black being is not the assimilation of Blackness into the order of things, into whiteness, but rather is triumph of the theological over the ontological. What does this mean concretely? The resurrection of Black being means Black agency: Black writing, Black art, Black rhetoric, Black creativity that is unexpected, unauthorized, and, from the perspective of the white world, often unintelligible. The slave writes, the prisoner paints, or the native imagines. The objects of these verbs, these acts, need not be God – indeed cannot be God, for that would be idolatry. Independent of their object, these verbs represent participation in God because they represent the resurrection of non-being into being, Blackness triumphant, Christ triumphant. This account of Black theology responsive to Afro-pessimism is appealing but ultimately deeply flawed. It suffers from individualism, a profoundly secular ailment – the ailment that defines the secular. The creativity and strength of the Black man (for such creative agency is gendered) will save the world from itself. In this theology there is no space for community, for love, or, crucially, for hope. There are no virtues of Blackness developed in community, just the act of individual rebellion against the powers that be. And there is no vision of a future world transformed, just a set of disconnected Black men doing art in their attics, as it were. The Black theologian inclined to such a view may respond that “church” would consist of the informal networks created among these, what Fred Moten calls the “undercommons.”17 But such networks seem a far cry from communities of virtue that could nurture, sustain, and properly order the Black rebellious spirit. Indeed, such a theological perspective suffers from an extreme Christocentrism, the theological vice corresponding to the secular vice of individualism. Christ cleaved from God and Spirit defines all value; indeed, what matters on this account is not even a Christ who loves or suffers but exclusively a Christ who is risen. What is needed is a Black theology responsive to Afro-pessimism but also concerned with the social world, with love, and with justice. The theological reflections of Edward Schillebeeckx offer a useful if unexpected resource to accomplish this task. Of Schillebeeckx’s extensive, learned corpus, I will focus exclusively on one essay, “The New Image of God, Secularization and Man’s Future on Earth,” the final chapter of God the Future of Man. 18 This is a particularly important essay, consolidating much of Schillebeeckx’s thought and clearly developing the themes that are central to much of his writing over the decades before and after. In this essay, Schillebeeckx makes three key points. First, he offers a new way to think about secularization. Christians, instead of lamenting declining church membership rolls, should see secularization as part of a re-orientation away from the past and towards the future. Science and technology hold new possibilities while changing social arrangements create new ways of living. Life no longer consists of repeating the past or interpreting the past for lessons on the present. Instead of looking backwards we now look forwards. To determine what ought to be done now we look less to what has always been done than to what might eventually be done. We act on our hopes instead of on our memories.