# 1NC R1 Badger Land

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#### Text – A just government ought to recognize a Right to Strike for all non-Hospital workers.

#### Hospital Strikes are devastating to public health infrastructure and patient care and sky-rocket costs – hospital strikes are relatively low now but the Plan green-lights more aggressive Strike actions.

Masterson 17 Les Masterson 8-15-2017 "Nursing strikes can cause harm well beyond labor relations" <https://www.healthcaredive.com/news/nursing-strikes-can-cause-harm-well-beyond-labor-relations/447627/> (Senior Managing Editor at Quinstreet)//Elmer

Officials said the lockout was required because they needed to give at least five-day contracts to 320 temporary nurses brought in to fill the gap. The nurses are back on the job now without a new contract, but the strike and subsequent lockout got the public’s attention. **Hospital strikes aren't** that **common** — usually, the sides agree to a new contract. Strikes or threatened strikes in recent years have typically involved conflicts over pay, benefits and staff workloads. **When strikes do happen**, however, **they can hurt a hospital’s reputation, finances and patient care**. Strike’s effect on patient safety A **study** on nurses’ strikes in New York **found** that labor actions have a temporary **negative effect on** a hospital’s **patient safety**. Study authors Jonathan Gruber and Samuel A. Kleiner found that nurses’ strikes **increased** **in-patient mortality by 18.3%** **and 30-day readmission by 5.7%** for patients admitted during the strike. **Patients admitted during a strike got a lower quality of care, they wrote.** “We show that this deterioration in outcomes occurs only for those patients admitted during a strike, and not for those admitted to the same hospitals before or after a strike. And we find that these changes in outcomes are not associated with any meaningful change in the composition of, or the treatment intensity for, patients admitted during a strike,” they said. They said a possible reason for the lower quality is fewer major procedures performed during a strike, which could lead partially to diminished outcomes. The study authors found that **patients that need the most** nursing **care** **are** **the ones who make out worst during strikes.** “We find that patients with particularly nursing-intensive conditions are more susceptible to these strike effects, and that hospitals hiring replacement workers perform no better during these strikes than those that do not hire substitute employees,” they wrote. Allina Health’s Abbott Northwestern Hospital in Minneapolis faced a patient safety issue during a strike last year that resulted in the CMS placing the hospital in “immediate jeopardy” status after a medication error. A replacement nurse administered adrenaline to an asthmatic patient through an IV rather than into the patient’s muscle. The patient, who was in the emergency room (ER), wound up in intensive care for three days because of the error. Allina said the error was not the nurse’s fault, but was the result of a communication problem. The CMS accepted the hospital plan of correction, which included having a nurse observer when needed and retraining ER staff to repeat back verbal orders. A strike’s financial impact **Hospitals** also **take** a **financial hit during strikes.** **Even the threat of** a **one- or two-day nurse strike** **can cost a hospital millions.** **Bringing in** hundreds or **thousands of temporary nurses** from across the country **is costly** for hospitals. They need to advertise the positions, pay for travel and often give bonuses to lure temporary nurses. The most expensive recent nurse strike was when about 4,800 nurses went on strike at Allina Health in Minnesota two times last year. **The two strikes of seven days and 41 days cost the health system $104 million.** The hospital also saw a $67.74 million operating loss during the quarter of those strikes. To find temporary replacements, Allina needed to include enticing offers, such as free travel and a $400 bonus to temporary nurses. Even the threat of a strike can cost millions. Brigham and Women’s **Hospital** in Boston spent more than $8 million and **lost $16 million** in revenue **preparing for a strike** in 2016. The 3,300-nurse union threatened to walk out for a day and much like Tufts Medical Center, Brigham & Women’s said the hospital would lock out nurses for four additional days if nurses took action. At that time, Dr. Ron Walls, executive vice president and chief operating officer at Brigham and Women’s Hospital, said the hospital spent more than $5 million on contracting with the U.S. Nursing Corp. to bring on 700 temporary nurses licensed in Massachusetts. The hospital also planned to cut capacity to 60% during the possible strike and moved hundreds of patients to other hospitals. They also canceled procedures and appointments in preparation of a strike. The Massachusetts Nurses Association and Brigham & Women’s were able to reach a three-year agreement before a strike, but the damage was already done to the hospital’s finances. Richard L. Gundling, senior vice president of healthcare financial practices at Healthcare Financial Management Association, told Healthcare Dive that healthcare organizations need to plan for business continuity in case of an event, such as a labor strike, natural disaster or cyberattack. “Business continuity is directly related to the CFO’s responsibility for maintaining business functions. The plan should include having business continuity insurance in place to replace the loss associated with diminished revenue and increased expenses during the event,” Gundling said. These plans should provide adequate staffing, training, materials, supplies, equipment and communications in case of a strike. Hospitals should also keep payers, financial agencies and other important stakeholders informed of potential issues. “It’s also key to keep financial stakeholders well informed; this includes insurance companies, bond rating agencies, banks, other investors, suppliers and Medicare/Medicaid contractors,” he said. “Business continuity is directly related to the CFO’s responsibility for maintaining business functions. The plan should include having business continuity insurance in place to replace the loss associated with diminished revenue and increased expenses during the event." Richard Gundling Senior vice president of healthcare financial practices, Healthcare Financial Management Association Impact to a hospital’s reputation Hospital strikes, particularly nurses’ strikes, can also wreak havoc on a hospital’s reputation. Nurses are a beloved profession. They work hard, often long hours and don’t make a fortune doing it. The median registered nurses’ salary is about $70,000, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

#### High Hospital Costs force closures – COVID puts them on the brink.

Thompson 2-26 Dennis Thompson 2-26-2021 "Pandemic Is Hitting Hospitals Hard, Including Their Bottom Line" https://consumer.healthday.com/2-26-pandemic-is-hitting-hospitals-hard-including-their-bottom-line-2650625725.html (Healthday Reporter)//Elmer

FRIDAY, Feb. 26, 2021 (HealthDay News) -- **U.S. hospitals** are expected to lose billions again in 2021, leaving them **in dire financial shape** **as** the **COVID**-19 pandemic **guts** the **industry** for a second year. Hospitals could lose $53 billion to $122 billion in revenue in 2021, between 4% and 10% of their total revenue, according to an analysis prepared by consulting firm Kaufman Hall & Associates for the American Hospital Association. These revenue declines would come on top of $320 billion in lost revenue in 2020, said Rick Pollack, the hospital association's president and CEO. The reasons? Hospitals are spending more to treat COVID-19 patients as well as maintain regular operations during the pandemic, Pollack said. At the same time, drug expenses increased by 17% in 2020; labor by 14%; and supplies by 13%, the Kaufman Hall report says. "All those **expenses keep going up**, and **at least four dozen hospitals entered bankruptcy** in 2020 according to data compiled by Bloomberg," Pollack said. "**This is of particular concern** for rural hospitals," he added. "**Nineteen** rural **hospitals closed in 2020**, and **135 have closed since 2010.** In many of these rural areas, residents lack other options for dependable care." Labor costs have increased because hospitals have had to hire part-time contract workers to cover for employees exposed to COVID-19, said David Ramsey, president and CEO of the Charleston Area Medical Center and Health System in West Virginia.

#### Hospitals are the critical internal link for pandemic preparedness.

Al Thobaity 20, Abdullelah, and Farhan Alshammari. "Nurses on the frontline against the COVID-19 pandemic: an Integrative review." Dubai Medical Journal 3.3 (2020): 87-92. (Associate Professor of Nursing at Taif University)//SJDH

The majority of infected or symptomatic people seek medical treatment in medical facilities, particularly hospitals, as a high number of cases, especially those in critical condition, will have an impact on hospitals [4]. The concept of hospital resilience in disaster situations is defined as the ability to recover from the damage caused by huge disturbances quickly [2]. The resilience of hospitals to pandemic cases depends on the preparedness of the institutions, and not all hospitals have the same resilience. A lower resilience will affect the **sustainability of the health services**. This also affects healthcare providers such as doctors, nurses, and allied health professionals [5, 6]. Despite the impact on healthcare providers, excellent management of a pandemic depends on the level of **preparedness of healthcare providers, including nurses**. This means that if it was impossible to be ready before a crisis or disaster, responsible people will do all but the impossible to save lives.

#### Pandemics cause Extinction

Bar-Yam 16 Yaneer Bar-Yam 7-3-2016 “Transition to extinction: Pandemics in a connected world” <http://necsi.edu/research/social/pandemics/transition> (Professor and President, New England Complex System Institute; PhD in Physics, MIT)//Elmer

Watch as one of the more aggressive—brighter red — strains rapidly expands. After a time it goes extinct leaving a black region. Why does it go extinct? The answer is that it spreads so rapidly that it kills the hosts around it. Without new hosts to infect it then dies out itself. That the rapidly spreading pathogens die out has important implications for evolutionary research which we have talked about elsewhere [1–7]. In the research I want to discuss here, what we were interested in is the effect of adding long range transportation [8]. This includes natural means of dispersal as well as unintentional dispersal by humans, like adding airplane routes, which is being done by real world airlines (Figure 2). When we introduce long range transportation into the model, the success of more aggressive strains changes. They can use the long range transportation to find new hosts and escape local extinction. Figure 3 shows that the more transportation routes introduced into the model, the more higher aggressive pathogens are able to survive and spread. As we add more long range transportation, there is a critical point at which pathogens become so aggressive that the entire host population dies. The pathogens die at the same time, but that is not exactly a consolation to the hosts. We call this the phase transition to extinction (Figure 4). With increasing levels of global transportation, human civilization may be approaching such a critical threshold. In the paper we wrote in 2006 about the dangers of global transportation for pathogen evolution and pandemics [8], we mentioned the risk from Ebola. Ebola is a horrendous disease that was present only in isolated villages in Africa. It was far away from the rest of the world only because of that isolation. Since Africa was developing, it was only a matter of time before it reached population centers and airports. While the model is about evolution, it is really about which pathogens will be found in a system that is highly connected, and Ebola can spread in a highly connected world. The traditional approach to public health uses historical evidence analyzed statistically to assess the potential impacts of a disease. As a result, many were surprised by the spread of Ebola through West Africa in 2014. As the connectivity of the world increases, past experience is not a good guide to future events. A key point about the phase transition to extinction is its suddenness. Even a system that seems stable, **can be destabilized** by a few more long-range connections, and connectivity is continuing to increase. So how close are we to the tipping point? We don’t know but it would be good to find out before it happens. While Ebola ravaged three countries in West Africa, it only resulted in a handful of cases outside that region. One possible reason is that many of the airlines that fly to west Africa stopped or reduced flights during the epidemic [9]. In the absence of a clear connection, public health authorities who downplayed the dangers of the epidemic spreading to the West might seem to be vindicated. As with the choice of airlines to stop flying to west Africa, our analysis didn’t take into consideration how people respond to epidemics. It does tell us what the outcome will be unless we respond fast enough and well enough to stop the spread of future diseases, which may not be the same as the ones we saw in the past. As the world becomes more connected, the dangers increase. Are people in western countries safe because of higher quality health systems? Countries like the U.S. have highly skewed networks of social interactions with some very highly connected individuals that can be “superspreaders.” The chances of such an individual becoming infected may be low but events like a mass outbreak pose a much greater risk if they do happen. If a sick food service worker in an airport infects 100 passengers, or a contagion event happens in mass transportation, an outbreak could very well prove unstoppable.

#### Outweighs under the AC’s ethical framework – the intent of a hospital strike is to use patients as a means to an end.

Loewy 2k, Erich H. "Of healthcare professionals, ethics, and strikes." Cambridge Q. Healthcare Ethics 9 (2000): 513. (Erich H. Loewy M.D., F.A.C.P., was born in Vienna, Austria in 1927 and was able to escape first to England and then to the U.S. in late 1938. He was initially trained as a cardiologist. He taught at Case Western Reserve and practiced in Cleveland, Ohio. After 14 years he devoted himself fully to Bioethics and taught at the University of Illinois for 12 years. In 1996 he was selected as the first endowed Alumni Association Chair of Bioethics at the University of California Davis School of Medicine and has taught there since.)//Elmer

“Essential” Work and Strikes **Healthcare professionals**, garbage collectors, and other “essential” workers have a responsibility that is considered to be different from, say, the responsibilities of workers in a supermarket chain. There are almost certainly other supermarkets, but there is generally only one municipal garbage collection service**, one police force, and one fire department; and in general, only one healthcare system available to us. In the medical setting, furthermore, workers are much more apt to deal with identified lives**: they know their patients and often have known them for some time. Striking against their employer (even if it is done in part to benefit the patient) is **denying meaningful and often essential services to some of these identified lives**. We tend to relate differently with those lives we know and therefore call “identified” from those whom we consider “unidentified” or statistical lives, in part, because we have obligations as a result of relationships; in part because we fail to recognize that these so-called unidentified lives are not in fact unidentified but are merely not identified by us.4 When strikes are called by healthcare professionals, both types of lives are apt to be injured or, at least, severely inconvenienced. Except in the pocketbook, strikes in the healthcare setting generally do not directly hurt the employer. The employer **is hurt through the** **patient**. The patient thus becomes a **means toward the employees’ ends**, a football being kicked between two contending parties—**even if one of the employees’ goals is to serve the good of patients in general.** Theoretically, patients will then bring pressure on the employer (be it the government or a managed care organization), thus, quite frankly, using the patient as a means toward the ends of the health professionals.5 The dilemma, of course, is that without significantly inconveniencing or even endangering patients, no pressure is likely to be brought and, therefore, no amelioration of working conditions is effected. To be effective, a strike of healthcare professionals has to “hurt” patients and often patients known to the healthcare professionals.

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#### Blackness provides the structural support for a bridge of desire over which flows the everyday unreality of the sovereign -- debates over Strikes are inseparable from desire for cartographic coherence that drives the myth of transcendental control over space-time.

**Moten and Harney ‘21** (Fred Moten, Professor of Performance Studies for the Tisch School of the Arts at NYU, PhD in English from UC Berkeley, 2020 MacArthur Genius Fellow, Stefano Harney, Professor of Strategic Management for the Lee Kong Chian School of Business at Singapore Management University, PhD in Social and Political Sciences from the University of Cambridge, co-founder of Ground Provisions—a curatorial collective, founder of the School for Study—a nomadic study collective, 2021, *All Incomplete*,)//Joey

Let’s imagine that Foucault shared a problem with us, and that problem was the metaphysical foundations of politics. That metaphysics says that there are individuals who bear rights and morals that must be protected by the state. Politics is the way those individuals then relate to each other, to their own selves, and to the government that emerges either from within this politics but also, as it were, outside of this politics by way of and also expressive of an authority whose foundations are not only, as Derrida says, mystical but also in and of a hard, brutal, real(ist) presence. Foucault, of course, did not believe in this metaphysics. He thought the individual, who will have been protected by the state but was in fact created by the state, was a prison house – but one created so subtly and seductively that we would open the door to it ourselves and close the door to it on ourselves. His tactic was to refuse this individual in favor of a self who would be tended to, directly, by the animate body concerned. Now, we want to share Foucault’s refusal of the metaphysical foundations of politics we find ourselves trapped within. We share that refusal, in fact, whether we want to or not. That is the first sense of **our complicity**, that sharing, which is a sharing of and in desire. It’s just that it is a sharing that is not, either in the first instance or the last, because there is neither a first instance nor a last, embodied. Sharing is, as Spillers teaches us, from within the field of black feminist theory and practice that Lorde also cultivates, a fleshly animation that moves disruptively in, while also surrounding, metaphysico-**political individuation** or, if you will, the body politic. We share, in complicity, that movement within that also surrounds. It is not that what we want is bound up with politics. It is that we find ourselves reduced or stayed by politics having to fight our way “back” to what is uncontained by politics. That elsewhere, where map and territory or blurred, where return fades beyond belonging, so that back becomes before, in terror and beauty, as Dionne Brand in submerged, cartographic walking, can’t be found by taking the path Foucault cuts, because that path, which is the animate body’s path, has always been denied to the flesh, and therefore most especially to black people who are for historical reasons violently entrusted with the keeping, in sharing, of what becomes what it always was, blackness, that anoriginal communism, which Morrison speaks of as the love of the flesh before she speaks of the care of the sources of the self and its regard.70 Refusing the ‘selves‘ and ‘bodies‘ refused to them, **black people live in the duress** of (the state’s, or **racial capital’s political body’s**) **total access** to – Spillers calls it a terrible availability of – what they protect but do not have, which is and must remain as the absolute vulnerability to valuation, grasp and possession of the absolutely invaluable, ungraspable, and dispossessively dispossessed. Therefore, if you follow in the swerving path of this access which must be kept open at the price of being left open, you have to, and you do, find another way. When J. Kameron Carter takes up the question concerning the “Godterms” that underwrite sovereignty, he shifts it and us so that we really start thinking, also, about the “Man-terms” that underwrite sovereignty as well.61 He works a kind of persistent cosmological inconstancy, with a dark energy that anticipates the unfixing of the stars that it follows, allowing us to have to ask why man became God as if it were before the question of why God became man; now we get to have to ask how it is that becoming God is tantamount to what Gayle Salamon calls, “*assuming a body*.”62 What is it to assume, to conceptualize, to take up and take onto oneself a body? What is it for the body and the self to take one another up and take one another on in serial preface to each, in the other, being taken out? What remains beyond that address, that incursion, that aggressive vulnerability, that brutally projective and protective settlement, which is sovereignty in the midst of its diffusion? Meanwhile, mutiny, the general strike, the remorseless working of no-things and no-bodies, romantic comedy in the commons, its antinomian swerve and quarrel, living’s dissolute spread, its dispersive largesse, its cosubstantial blur, its transubstantial fade, can’t be faded, **requiring** that we speak, maybe **appositionally**, to some insubstantial pageantry of the anasubstantial. Are substance and sovereignty so bound up with each other (substance being an unreal matter of *having* mass and *occupying* space in time, on time’s line) that we have to imagine a more improperly surreal physicality? Not anti-matter but ante- and after-matter. Maybe flesh is matter’s Auntie, matter’s play mama, who survives having and occupying. So that what’s at stake is the necessity of a more emphatic analysis of flesh, as something other than withdrawn or withheld or reduced body, as that which is, therefore, apposed to body. One wants to speak (of) (through) (as) flesh in its own terms; but flesh has no terms, though the terms that are imposed upon it become its interminable preoccupation with cœnobitic commotion. Despite the pressure Deming and other American overseers placed on Japanese workers in industry, productivity in Japan, contrary to the received storyline, did not improve at all in those years. But if the experiment was a failure as a productivity tool, this is not to say it failed as a management tool deployed amidst the intense labor strikes and worker solidarity that characterized Japan in the 1950s. Meanwhile, the **Americans still managing** Japan indirectly were already shifting to the tried and true American industrial strategy: government intervention and **market distortion**. First, they demanded that all their Asian post-War client states, inherited from the British, French, and Dutch, start to give Japanese imports preferential treatment, even at the expense of American products. Then, with the onset of war in Korea, the Americans increasingly put Japanese industry back on a war footing in order to supply their imperial belligerence. As a result, the Japanese economy took off in the direction of its post-War miracle and, with the same distortion later applied by way of the American war on Vietnam, Japan’s economy became legend. Deming and company had nothing demonstrable to do with this miracle. But they were in the right place at the right time, when American business needed its own ‘productivity solution.’ If the increase in Japanese industrial productivity is essentially fictive, so too is the ascendancy of quality. The oil shocks of 1973 and 1978 – part of a complex class struggle in the oil-producing regions, as the Midnight Notes Collective teach us – coincide not with the more reliable, higher quality Japanese durable goods that are supposed to be the products of a management miracle, but with cheaper cars that have better fuel efficiency. These cheaper cars appear amidst another class struggle not unrelated to the one in the oil fields. It is here that we can pick up the thread of operations management, especially ‘quality control,’ and its latent power as a class weapon. For while there is no evidence that total quality management was in any way responsible for the Japanese miracle, it was a useful tool in disciplining a collectivist insurgency in Japanese labor. Moreover, in the 1970s with the final breakdown of productivity deals in the United States, amid wildcat strikes and the rise of organizations like the League of Revolutionary Black Workers in Detroit’s auto industry, American management was looking for a new form of control. It is here that the failed management theory of Deming and company, burnished by the rise, for very different reasons, of competition in the car, electronics, and machine industries with Japan, finally had its day. How can we make a monstrous distortion, a spreading bullwhip through the flow? How can hapticality step out on criticality, that brutal, Delphicoracular imperative to ‘know thyself’? How can we join and intensify a general strike against calculation, against valuation? Such **a strike wouldn’t be an event** so much as the emergence of a general condition of exhaustion and radically impure generativity. It would be a crooked blow, with a curved and curling stick picked up on the run in afformative, depositional black repose. How can our study live in the flesh as a refusal (out) of mind, in the break of the flow? Let’s re-route Kafka through a passage in Spillers and see if we can refuse to adapt. This capacity to think and represent the inability to stave off errancy in the human, to regulate and manage black and inhuman flaw, is what makes us want to think Van Peebles and his ante-hero Jeff Gerber as a precursor to the Kafka we propose, who offers us a picture of Gregor’s anti-heroic condition as, in part, an inability to claim a certain monstrosity, an accession rather than a resistance to or refusal of total access. Is there a difference between Gregor and that sassy, all but sapphirically watermelon mannishness – in which one wakes up and realizes that he is not insofar as he is black, which blackness he has been trying to allay in a strenuous regime of constant improvement, so that Gerber is revealed as someone who’s been passing all along? Watermelon Man, whose self-improvement breaks down seemingly under its own weight, as if he literally sweated away his own makeup, his own capacity to keep (self-)making up for something, given in and as a whiteface that practically teases us with its audacious visual failure, doesn’t die alone in the room that is no longer, but has also never been, his own; rather, he enters into black sociality, walking into the blues with a drink in his hand. In *The Metamorphosis* we propose, Gregor will have realized he was a monster all along thereby claiming, which is to say radicalizing, the status of the shipped, the sold, in a general refusal and suspension of, a general strike against, calculation. The brain, in/and its synapses, is just another bad concept, a brutal conceptualization – by way of body, its spatiotemporal constitution, and its attendant metaphysics of the possessive individual self in networked relationality – of held flesh. What is valued is work directed toward the improvement of the flow, and in the social factory the flow of the line can run anywhere, and we must enter its streams. In Zen Buddhist philosophy the goal of the Heart Doctrine is ***ji ji muge***, which can be translated as *no block*. **Nothing prevents the path**, the way, from flowing. The heart travels freely. But when the heart travels freely it must not imagine it is free. That is why we must also translate *ji ji muge* as *non non block*. The difference between no block and non non block is both infinitely small and infinite. But where to look for this distinction? We have sought this distinction in the difference between diversity and the general antagonism or between touch and hapticality or indeed perhaps most explicitly between logistics and logisticality. Because what are we to make of the fact that today it is the science of logistics that most *seems* to have realized the Heart Doctrine of Zen Buddhism? It is the science of logistics that dreams of flow without blockage, and tries to turn these dreams into reality. Hard logistics and soft logistics work together. The yang of the Belt and Road and the yin of the algorithm fantasize together of *no block*. In **Zen Buddhist philosophy** the goal of the Heart Doctrine is *ji ji muge*, which can be translated as *no block*. Nothing prevents the path, the way, from flowing. The heart travels freely. But when the heart travels freely it must not imagine it is free. 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Logistics begins in loss and emptiness. And it begins in a fundamental misapprehension called spacetime. The loss that marks ownership, specifically the ownership of private property, the loss of sharing, the loss of the earth and the consequent making of the world, is simultaneously the misapprehension that what is privatized is empty and will be filled by ownership itself, by properties, by properties placed into it. This emptiness will be filled with an interior. This emptiness is confirmed by logistics, by the mobilization, the colonizing drive, of this interior – where properties are imported into empty space. The Zen heart travels without block. But we might also say it travels with nothing blocking it. And as we know first from Taoist philosophy, nothingness is not emptiness. It is not space. When the Zen heart travels through nothing, **nothing is its constant companion**. Nothing is the block through which it travels, on which it stands, in which it hangs. The block that makes no block into non non block. Nothing, naught, knot gives the Zen heart its directionless directions, its wandering syncopations, its tight-knit-open pansyncretic practices, allowing, in compelling, us to visit and renew. The unwatchable place we make when we watch with one another, having refused to watch one another, having refused one and another, is shared, unblocked, unloaded into a kink, the non non block of our stranded strand. What we want is usually said to be all bound up with what we don’t have. Zoe Leonard’s been talking about what we want, though, slantedly, in the dimensionless infinity room we can’t even crawl around in when we cruise the rub and whirr of the city as a grove of aspen in late fall, in the mountains, held and unheld at the bottom of the sea. She’s talking about what we want in relation to what we have when what we have is all this experience of not having, of shared nothing, of sharing nothingness. She speaks of and from a common underprivilege, from the privilege of the common underground, in and from the wealth of a precarity that goes from hand to hand, as a caress. Look at all the richness we have, she says, in having lost, in having suffered, in having been suffered, in suffering one another as if we were one another’s little children, as if we were in love with one another, as if we loved one another so much that all one and another can do is go. We want a president, Zoe says, who’s loved and lost all that with us, who’s shared our little all, our little nothing. Such a thing, the general and generative nothingness that is more and less than political, would be unprecedented. Maybe she doesn’t want a president; maybe she wants a precedent, the endlessly new thing of the absolutely no thing, its Zen xenogenerosity, its queer reproductivity, which keeps on beginning in beginning’s absence as ungoverned and ungovernable care(ss). The rhythm operates by way of a line. This line is two, zero and one. It is an assembly line where the same is done and the same is improved, as if in courtship with difference, until it is done again. The forwarded email with a comment is the mundane *kaizen* of this rhythm. But this example is deceptive, too, because it is not action but composure, comportment, algorithmic composition that is at stake. Improvement occurs in synaptic labor mostly not through making, but through making **more available for exploitation**, a primitive accumulation of the senses, and expropriation of intention, attention, and tension. The rhythm operates by way of an assembly line that runs through society, through the social factory, not to make anything in particular but itself. The line of production is its own product. This was the real meaning of kaizen, the improvement of improvement: metrics, algorithmic composition for itself. This means another connection must always be made, and another zero-one opened by that connection. Every connection becomes an arbitrage, every nerve is speculative as it fires in synapsis with another connection, discrete, equivalent, discrete again in nervous metrics of improvement. This metrics is both neurological and pathological in the face of all undercommon measure. And it must pursue such fugitive measure by necessity, by the compulsion to make available and be made available to this rhythm everywhere, all the time, in the where and when of this killing beat. This is the logistics of algorithmic composition, and the rhythm of logistical capitalism, which envisions and by envisioning envelops and entraps the earth in a world that runs to the end of the earth and is the end of the earth. Logistics runs the globe, runs after the earth and the logisticality that has developed as a capacity on this earth. Logistics extends, expands, accumulates the space and time of a capitalism driven across the earth by the algorithmic zero-one/one-two beat. And by doing so it forces upon the earth, the world. If logisticality is the resident capacity to live on the earth, logistics is the regulation of that capacity in the service of making the world, the zero-one, one-two world that pursues the general antagonism of life on earth. The world is posed as the way to live on the earth as the individual is posed as the way to live in the world. To live in the world as an individual is therefore to be logistic, and to be logistic is to settle into a rhythm that kills, to beat out that rhythm over the undercommon track that keeps (giving away) its own measure. To say that synaptic labor generalizes a certain availability is also to say that insofar as it is derivation, reduction, residuality, it cannot but be less amidst its drive to be more and to improve continuously. And so too for the desperate and dangerous acts of individuation, of global analysis, of policy, of settlement, of a finally imperial antipathy to empathy – a resonance open before it was opened and after it was enclosed. Kaizen means ‘improvement’ in Japanese and Chinese. Used in operations management in Japanese car factories, the term designated not just improvement but continuous, unceasing improvement as the responsibility of each worker on that flow line. With the advent of kaizen ‘philosophy’ comes the concept of optimizing flow as a mode of worker discipline. Worker discipline will have been optimized precisely because flow cannot be – if the flow of the line will never be good enough workers can constantly be submitted to this deficit, which they embody and internalize in an unceasing mechanics of (e)valuation. As the leading Japanese popularizer of the term in the English-speaking world, Masaaki Imai, puts it, “kaizen means continuous improvement by everyone, everyday, everywhere.” The rise of kaizen means there will no longer be the pursuit of Frederick Taylor’s “one best way.” Measurement – which had reassured us that we had found that best way and completed the job – would be replaced by metrics, powered by the algorithm. With kaizen we could say valuation shifted from the product to the process. A product has a value that can be measured in a price-making market. A process has a value that can only be temporarily read. The value of process is contingent, thereby rendering value a process in itself. This is why a financial product would be more accurately called a financial process – its value rests on ongoing metrics, or perhaps we should say its value never rests because of ongoing metrics, because of the ongoing improvement and acceleration of metrics. Metrics, here, is a kind of post-classical mechanics, whose detachment from any fundamental questions concerning *nature of value* make it a mindlessly powerful instrument for classical political economy and its underlying metaphysics of value. This quantum metrics is also based, in part, on an uncertainty principle, whose name is efficiency. Nothing can be deemed efficient without giving rise to the question of its efficiency. Operations management turns its attention away from efficiency measured by the profit realized by the commodity, and toward efficiency of the process, efficiency as the process, which is measured only momentarily. Continuous improvement means that every efficiency became inefficient the moment it is measured. Gradually, measurement itself becomes inefficient and is replaced by metrics, the relative taking of a measure that ‘benchmarks’ the flow in order to speculate on it, using the algorithm. The goal is for the flow line to outperform itself; or, in other words, with kaizen the goal is given as and shifts with speculation on the flow, itself, and not its productivity. Of course, there has long been a drive in capitalist firms for relative surplus, and even longer has there been pressure for efficiencies through capitalist competition. But with kaizen, attention to the flow of the line for its own sake becomes paramount and efficiency is detached from anything like measurable competition or market mechanisms. Continuous improvement makes speculative finance possible. Kaizen not only predated contemporary speculative finance’s entrance into the factory gates but also, crucially, served to link speculative finance to (the classical mechanics of) assembly line productivity. Now, the flow of the line itself represented potential. The assembly line became speculative or, rather, its flow did. Accounting shifts to include metrics for this speculative line, and finance moves in, in force. Everything is sold off (and rented back) except the speculation of the flow. Firms (and later even banks) are hollowed out in this process but not emptied. This is not a matter, as is sometimes portrayed, of firms becoming victims of financialization. On the contrary, kaizen makes financial speculation possible. What remains in the firm after financialization is speculation on the flow. The terms used for this speculation on the flow of the line are ‘core competencies,’ or sometimes the infamous ‘competitive advantage,’ and, today, ‘value proposition.’ All of these management concepts emerged to signal that a firm’s management team has a method for **improving the flow of the assembly line**, in any kind of assembly, to get more value out of workers by intensifying access to them. The reason to invest in newly evolving ‘resource-based’ firms is not because they hold certain assets, or make certain commodities, but because they and their management demonstrate the capacity continuously to improve the flow of a line through deeper access to workers, whether through technology or workplace cultures that extend their reach into every area of workers’ lives. The means of production itself thereby enters the speculative realm with kaizen. Today, this logic culminates in private equity firms who, with complete indifference, buy, disassemble, and reassemble not businesses but *business processes*, or so they say. Usufruct was itself never going finally to be done and there was always another property or body into which one needed to place a putatively independent self-improving will, in order to improve that thing. This speculation on the line resulting from kaizen – the **brutal decollectivization and individuation** of the line that is at the same time a sociopathological **demand for access to the individuated worker – has its origins in the slave labor** farms producing cotton in the United States, and sugar in the West Indies and South America, as the black history of slavery clearly shows. Slave work gangs are spread along a line of cotton plants, or sugar cane, and forced to improve continuously; and any cooperation amongst them is brutally punished, punished more severely even than the failure to improve, precisely because it disrupts the simple, individuative arithmetic that undergirds even the most mathematically exotic and sophisticated metrics. In the fields, there was no question of a subject reaction not least because it was refused by the enslaved without ever having been offered. Indeed, those who claim nothingness as opposed to those who make much ado about willfulness would eventually be forced toward burdened individuality. But the brutal irony remains that the subject reaction, the hard-won access to being accessed when liberation takes a liberal term, disavows the openness management and administration steals and fills at our peril. That openness, that nothingness, that vulnerability, that affectability, that inaccessible accessibility that we share, is all we have.

#### Their demand for durable fiat is a form of white delusion that represents an active misapprehension of reality -- there is an epistemic imperative to dismatle this anti-black social practice.

**McRae ’19** [Emily; May 13; Associate Professor of Buddhism at the University of New Mexico; *Buddhism and Whiteness: Critical Reflections*, *Philosophy of Race*, “Chapter 1,” p. 44-45]

I offer this story not only as an example of everyday white delusion, but also to set the tone of this chapter: From both the Buddhist and critical race theoretical perspectives that I draw on here, ignorance (delusion) is not someone else’s problem. There is a moral, and epistemic imperative to confront our own ignorance, to dismantle the false beliefs and misunderstandings that inform our everyday sense of reality. In this chapter, I use the Buddhist concept of avidyā (ignorance, confusion, delusion) to analyze the causes, mechanisms, and possible correctives for white delusion. In Buddhist contexts, avidyā refers not only to a lack of knowledge but also (and primarily) to an active misapprehension of reality, a warped projection onto reality that reinforces our own dysfunction and vice. Ignorance is rarely innocent; it is not an isolated phenomenon of just-not-happening-to-know-something. It is maintained and reinforced through personal and social habits, including practices of personal and collective false projection, strategic ignoring, and convenient “forgetting.” This view of avidyā has striking similarities to philosophical analyses of white ignorance, such as Charles Mills’s, which understand white ignorance not in terms of a passive lack of knowledge but as an active refusal by whites to confront basic facts about our social world.

I argue that Buddhist analyses of avidyā may help us understand the mechanisms of white ignorance and the practices for deconstructing it. On the Buddhist view, the mechanisms for maintaining avidyā include obsession with self and clinging to fixed narratives about the self (in the case of white delusion, “I’m not racist” or “I’ve earned and deserve everything I have”) and the refusal to take seriously cause and effect (such as a failure to historicize racism, the failure to understand broad, systemic effects of racism, and the inability to apply abstract knowledge of racism to specific cases). In my own case of white delusion, I was guilty of both kinds of mistakes: I was clinging to a narrative that obscured reality—that it was only women who bore the burden of managing physical appearance in our society—and I failed to apply my knowledge of how racism works in the abstract to the specifics of my partner’s life.  
Buddhist conceptions of ignorance or delusion may also help to locate possible correctives for white ignorance. Because avidyā is not simply a lack of knowledge, it cannot be completely remedied by exposure to facts and analyses of those facts. To be receptive to such knowledge in the first place, to remember and apply it, we must overcome our own dysfunctional emotional patterns that sustain our confusion. So, on a Buddhist ethical view, white people cannot combat white ignorance simply with knowledge about racism (which is already widely available) but rather white people need to do the personal and emotional work of deconstructing our own whiteness, as it arises in our own lives, to uproot our white ignorance. This is uncomfortable and ugly (but necessary) work that will require white people to correct for major moral blind spots by developing the moral skill of equanimity (or “tarrying,” as George Yancy has argued).3

#### Just like debate, international relations is complicit in an anti-black rationalism that pathologizes the lived realities of black folx as an insufficient critical prospective -- only the alt’s intentional incorporation of race into policy debates enshrines the empathy AND connectedness necessary to challenge the mundane white supremacy preserved through their practice of denial.

**Gordon and Harper-Shipman ’20** [Lewis and T.D.; 2020; Professor of Philosophy at UCONN-Storr; Assistant Professor of Africana Studies at Davidson College; *The Routledge Handbook to Rethinking Ethics in International Relations*, “Race and Ethics in International Relations,” p. 75-77]

Through a systematic positing of rationalism and parsimonious models, conventional IR elides the possibility of including the lived realities of black, brown, and red peoples in the Global South as valid forms of evidence and critical perspectives. To the extent that these voices can be quantified in an undifferentiated manner, they do not figure legitimately into the existing disciplinary paradigm. Without intentionally incorporating race into the framework, scholars are unable to explain phenomena such as the Global North’s continued imperial domination through globalization or the racialized political economy of contemporary forms of slavery such as sex-traffcking and forced domestic servitude in the United States (Crawford 2002; Georgis and Lugosi 2014; J.A. Gordon 2019). Alternative methodologies that may allow for a more ethical incorporation of race into IR include the world-travelling goal of achieving ‘a space of mutual understanding using the tool of empathy, which is the ability to enter the spirit of a different experience and find it in an echo of some part of oneself’ (Sylvester 2017, 182; see also Anzaldúa 1987; Sylvester 1995).There isalso poise, an epistemological framework for offering a critique of and reconstructing IR in a fashion that is void of colonial, capitalist-patriarchy (see Agathangelou and Ling 2004). Grovogui (2001) proposes reverse ethnography as a methodology available to the formerly colonized for assessing the colonizers’ ontological dispositions for what they are and not what the colonizers say they are. Exposing the limitations in this line of thinking in IR knowledge production demonstrates the provincial nature of the predominantly white approach to International Relations, which contradicts the current positivist paradigm. that calls for universal theorizing. Finally, though not exclusively, ethics demands connectedness and its concomitant obligation to others. This involves being in-relation-with-others instead of being separate. Models of IR premised on purity would require the elimination of relations with others (read as forms of contamination), whereas those premised on being-in-relations leads to a form of structural, ongoing mixture and transformation, which Jane Anna Gordon (2014) describes as ‘creolizing theory’. As the white supremacist origins of IR oppose such a model, overcoming that history requires acknowledging a different model of coexistence on our planet.

Conclusion

Race conjoined with ethics in IR thus raises normative, disciplinary, and methodological challenges to the field. The first raises the obligation of overcoming the normative project of global white supremacy through acknowledging that history and addressing how its continuation is often preserved through ongoing practices of denial. It also demands addressing how dominant global policies and the arguments that support them also facilitate disempowerment, dehumanization, and violence in the Global South and its manifestations in the Global North. This leads to disciplinary and methodological concerns that break down a neat divide between epistemological and normative practices. As the constructivist approaches tend to lead also to normative constructivism, the challenge of race and ethics in IR becomes also the imaginative act of theorizing different kinds of power relations and modes of coexistence with fidelity to extant global challenges on the organization of human and other planetary forms of life.

#### Unethical delusions are an existential threat.

**Loy ’18** [David; April 21st; Former professor of Ethics, Religion, and Society at Xavier University; Mountain Cloud, “Are Humans Special? Part 3 by David Loy,” <https://www.mountaincloud.org/are-humans-special-part-3-by-david-loy-2/>]

If we are special because of our potential, we must choose. We are free to derive the meaning of our lives from delusions about who we are — from dysfunctional stories about what the world is and how we fit into it—or we can derive that meaning from insight into our nonduality with the rest of the world. In either case, there are consequences.

The problem with basing one’s life on delusions is that the consequences are unlikely to be good. As well as producing poetry and cathedrals, our creativity has recently found expression in world wars, genocides, and weapons of mass destruction, to mention a few disagreeable examples. We are in the early stages of an ecological crisis that threatens the natural and cultural legacy of future generations, including a mass extinction event that may lead to the disappearance of half the earth’s plant and animal species within a century, according to E. O. Wilson—an extinction event that may include ourselves.

What needs to be done so that our extraordinary co-creative powers will promote collective well-being (collective in this case referring to all the ecosystems of the biosphere)?

From a Buddhist perspective our unethical tendencies ultimately derive from a misapprehension: the delusion of a self that is separate from others, a big mistake for a species whose well-being is not separate from the well-being of other species. Insofar as we are ignorant of our true nature, individual and collective self-preoccupation naturally motivates us to be selfish. Without the compassion that arises when we feel empathy — not only with other humans, but with the whole of the biosphere — it is likely that civilization as we know it will not survive many more generations.

In either case, we seem fated to be special. If we continue to devastate the rest of the biosphere, we are arguably the worst species on earth: a cancer of the biosphere. If, however, humanity can wake up to become its collective bodhisattva —undertaking the long-term task of repairing the rupture between us and Mother Earth — perhaps we as a species will fulfill the unique potential of precious human life.

#### The alternative is to submit to Black Buddhist meditation -- in the face of so called “acess”, we only offer silence. To ask our selves what does access actually mean in the face of white indemnity

**Vesely-Flad ’19** (Rima; May 13; Ph.D. Director of Peace and Justice Studies at Warren Wilson College; *Buddhism and Whiteness: Critical Reflections*, *Philosophy of Race*, “Chapter 5,” p. 85-86)//Raunak Dua

Lovingkindness practices toward the self, alongside personal interpretations of the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Noble Path, guide many Black Buddhist practitioners who have suffered generational trauma and racist degradation in our contemporary moment. Valerie Mason-John, also known as Vimalasara, an African-Canadian teacher in the Nichiren tradition, speaks of the importance of the Four Noble Truths for people of African descent in particular. The First Noble Truth is that suffering is a universal experience. Mason-John states, “We of African descent know what suffering is. It’s in our DNA.”20 The Second Noble Truth states that suffering is a result of ignorant craving. For many Black Buddhists, the interpretations of the causes of suffering are greatly expanded into teachings of white myopia, the desire to exist in delusion, and the collective ego of the dominant white culture. The Third Noble Truth is that there is a path to end suffering. The very promise of liberation is enticing for people of African descent. The Fourth Noble Truth describes the path of liberation, known as the Noble Eightfold Path. In this path, “Right Concentration,” which leads to settling the mind, is a particularly compelling practice.

Manuel writes in The Way of Tenderness:

Only in the deep silence of meditation did I begin to disbelieve that I was born only to suffer. Eventually after many years of sitting meditation, I recognized the root of my self-hatred, both external and internal, as a personal and collective denial or denigration of the body I inhabited.

Her reflections are echoed by Owens’s reflections on silence: “silence became the medium in which I was reborn into a sense of happiness and contentment. But overall, it ushered me into a period of thriving and flourishing in my life.”22 In meditation, practitioners cultivate their ability to confront the suffering wrought by their mental constructs rather than avoid pain. They seek to heal the damage wrought by racism and to rearticulate profound teachings that are rooted in concentration practices. In-depth interviews with Black Buddhist teachers and practitioners illuminate a progression in the process of acknowledging one’s racial identity and embracing teachings of non-self. The progression begins with claiming and rearticulating Blackness as part of the social self, and in so doing, embracing African ancestry. For many, the next step is entering into an experience of silence that facilitates a recognition of the truth of non-self. Finally, Black Buddhist teachers and long-term practitioners integrate embodiment with the psychologically liberating practice of silence. The ten Black Buddhist teachers and long-term practitioners interviewed for this chapter emphasized four primary themes in their articulation of embodiment and Anatta: (1) Being visible in social spaces; (2) Claiming African ancestral lineages; (3) Embracing the two truths of relative and absolute existence; and (4) Liberating the self and the community.

#### Independently, the impermanence of IR makes accurate predictions impossible.

**Hershock ’6** [Peter; 2006; Director of the Asian Studies Development Program at the East-West Center in Honolulu, B.A. in Philosophy from Yale University; *BUDDHISM IN THE PUBLIC SPHERE: Reorienting Global Interdependence*, *Routledge Critical Studies In Buddhism*, “DIVERSITY AS COMMONS: International relations beyond competition and cooperation,” p. 127-153; GR]

International relations discourse maps an uncomfortable domain. Evident on the one hand is the rock-hard necessity of managing the global commons upon which any healthy present and future ultimately depends. Equally apparent on the other hand is a striking absence of the kinds of universally shared values, theories, and practices that would allow this managerial work to take place as a matter of course. And so, while cooperation seems necessary, competition, conflict, and failures of consensus seem inevitable. Until relatively recently, international relations theories—like most contemporary attemptst collaborative ethics—have attempted to make navigational sense of this domain by weighing common causes against sums of individual interests. These broadly utilitarian calculations have focused on how to maximize the shared benefits of cooperation while minimizing especially disparate costs to competing interest groups. Arguably, they have been less successful practically than in demonstrating the importance of establishing shared values for each variable in any relational calculus. Unfortunately, the ontological commitments presupposed by utilitarian calculations of the common good also lead to “naturalizing” a language of entitlements, rights, power, and proprietary and legislative regimes that perpetuates an understanding of freedom standing in such dark tension with equality that the common grounds for arriving at truly shared values would seem either pitifully thin or simply chimerical. Continued appeals to tacitly realist notions of utility will do nothing to actually (and not just ideally) foster jointly improvising and evaluating the kinds of shared norms required if managing the commons is going to go beyond describing and legally enforcing adherence to a lowest global denominator. Establishing such denominators may be quite useful in mapping supposedly “universal” grounds for secure co-existence. But this will provide only the most minimal resources for making the transition from mere co-existence to the sustained enhancement of personal, communal, and national capacities for relating freely in global context. For that—a transition that implies eliding the metaphor of management in favor of one centered on improvisation—some other approach is in order. Since the publication of Hedley Bull’s landmark book, The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics, 1 there has been growing agreement that (especially economic) globalization fosters the recognition that there are values we already hold in common, and that these values are catalysts for the consolidation of various types of international societies. In turn, this ongoing consolidation of interests feeds back into the processes by means of which the various actors comprised in international society constitute their own identities. Granted this, it is not surprising that as globalization processes have become both wider and deeper there has arisen increasingly sophisticated skepticism about whether rational calculations of self-interest are able to facilitate building the kinds of international systems needed to address the management of the commons, much less its conversion into an intimately shared and liberating resource ecology. If nothing else, late twentieth-century patterns of globalization have forced recognition that intersubjective meanings are just as important in managing or cultivating the commons as formal constitutions and rights conventions. The most crucial taskof international relations is not to facilitate purely factual cooperation, but to harmonize or systematically coordinate originally disparate spheres of meaning. In the absence of a sufficiently subtle concept of harmony, of any widely accepted set of critical resources for assessing competing goods, and of any substantially practical means for promoting greater and more consistent improvisation and deployment of truly common values, this work has remained a poorly expressed fiction. Thus, while the spectrum of mainstream international relations theories from realism to neo-liberal institutionalism and constructivism have been useful in articulating the need for a normative turn in international relations, and in raising important questions about how to articulate common values, this spectrum has not yielded the resources needed for answering such questions. In making a turn toward the normative, international relations comes face to face with its own incompleteness. Here, I want to explore why this is the case—why the cogent, eminently rational directives of realism, neo-liberal institutionalism and constructivism lead us, along disparate courses, around the same increasingly vicious circle. Doing so will involve “scaling up” insights and conclusions drawn over preceding chapters, sketching an alternative (or countercultural) Buddhist path “between” the horns of the international relations dilemma and establishing some cardinal points useful in orienting movement in a direction “perpendicular” to the prevailing spectrum of beliefs about achieving lasting international accord. Pivoting as they now do on key values of sovereignty and security, international relations are not committed first and foremost to conserving and cultivating the global commons, much less developing, sustaining, and enhancing truly global public good. In the absence of such a paradigmatic reorientation of international relations, global peace will remain content-less—an ideal state-of-affairs imagined by simply negating the blunt realities and tragic arc of conflict, lacking any uniquely positive characteristics of its own. In brief, thinking through Buddhist critical resources enables seeing the apt reorientation of international relations as a three-dimensional process of: first, of subverting the ontological commitments presently endemic to international relations discourse; second, of de-centering the role of security/stability as a goal for international relations practice; and third, of shifting away from the polar tension between competition and cooperation (and its associated ethics of calculations for secured co-existence) toward an emphasis on coordinated contribution and an ethics of virtuosity. Together, these open possibilities for seeing diversity as the most basic global commons and the key to shifting the karmic axis of international relations from consolidating power to cultivating strength. Realism as a treasonous metaphysics of competing interests Until quite recently, international relations were assumed to be stretched tensely between the demands of a fundamentally competitive reality and the idealistic promises of universal cooperation. According to such a view, the space of international relations is Darwinian. In it, individual persons, nations, and states are assumed to be actively competing for limited resources, cooperating only when circumstantially or directly coerced, and otherwise pursuing their own self-interest. Any sustained evolution of political regimes takes place strictly as a function of successful adaptations to changes in the objective contexts of competition. This realistic view is no longer widely accepted, at least in its bluntest formulations.2 The historically unprecedented consolidation of global interdependencies over the last decades of the twentieth century led to widespread disenchantment with radically realist politics, but also to equally widespread convictions about the necessity of a decisively normative turn in international relations. Among the signal effects of deepening and broadening global interdependence has been mounting evidence of the porosity of all political identities and the contingency of all claims to independent or sovereign status. Along with this evidence has come growing clarity with respect to the severe costs exacted upon the common good whenever significant resources are committed to securing such identities a statuses. Whether conceived in economic, social, cultural, or environmental terms, refusals to appreciate and contribute to our growing interdependence are, in the end, debilitating. To date, however, interdependence has been understood in relatively shallow practical terms as profitably mutual dependence. This is in part because the competitive advantages of (at least limited) cooperation can be accounted for through the same kinds of utilitarian calculation that undergird realistic approaches to international relations. Although the collective gains realized through cooperation can substantially outweigh the solitary benefits of conflict, these gains can effectively be seen as forwarding rather than undermining individual self-interest. That is, these gains do not command a critical reappraisal of the ontological commitments informing the tension between dependence and independence. Thus, political alliances like NATO, economic alliances like the IMF, monopolistic business mergers, and the trading of known talents for future draft choices in professional sports can all be seen as essentially self-interested forms of cooperation. Such forms of cooperation may make more and more sense as the stakes of competition escalate. But they do not counter the fundamentally competitive practice of finely calculating how most efficiently to realize desired hierarchies of control over the slope of advantages in any given situation. Alliances that are entered in pursuit of self-interest are, ultimately self-interested alliances. That there might be limits to this calculus only began to become apparent when it was realized that the space of international relations included actors of entirely different scales, competing for entirely different kinds of goods, within circumstances that were becoming so fundamentally shared that separating their independent interests was no longer practically possible. By the mid-1970s, for example, the interests of corporate capital were found to have already begun building up substantial bridges between the economies of states separated by major ideological rifts and engaged in very open political competition. Likewise, human rights focused NGOs came to be seen as conduit xs for information exchanges crucial to coalition building across national and regional boundaries. Because each of these bridges depended upon establishing and maintaining shared norms and institutions in globally shared spaces, it became difficult to insist that there were no such things as international societies and not merely simple alliances of individual nations. Among the central and, indeed, prescient insights of Bull’s (1977) characterization of world political order, however, was that the principle of sovereignty and its central importance in international relations can be seen as a function of recognizing the normative pluralism that characterizes the contemporary world scene—a recognition that fostered perceived needs to define both scopes of influence and the limits of justifiably instituted slopes of advantage and disadvantage. With the formal ending of the Cold War, some might have anticipated that nationalist and unilateralist currents in international relations would fully dissipate. But this has not happened. Instead, there has been a marked resurgence of radical individualism in international relations over the past decade. This has resulted from the multiplication of viably staked positions of self-interest, and thus stands as evidence of the degree to which the ontological bias toward independent existence has not been dissolved by expanding and intensifying patterns of global interdependence. Far from yielding homogenously unified patterns of international relations, globalization processes have also served to promote fragmentary dynamics, perhaps nowhere more starkly apparent than in the post-September 11 surge of American unilateralism. Still, there is general agreement that the question is not whether to cooperate or not—that being a foregone conclusion—but how. According to proponents of neo-liberal institutionalism, answering this question involves gaining clarity about the fact that what actually limits cooperation is not lack of good intentions, but good information. The key to cooperation is the development of institutions that foster exchanges of information about the strategies and concrete methods of each of the involved actors. As succinctly summarized by Robert Keohane, one of the major architects of this view,4 the limits of cooperation are simply the limits of possible coordination. Opponents have argued that the neo-liberal approach to fostering sustainable international societies, without recourse to coercive intervention, pivots on the untenable supposition that human needs and values are, at bottom, universally shared. The constructivist response to neo-liberal institutionalism is that the latter does not sufficiently stress how the intensification of normative or value pluralism that attends globalization brings with it the need—at some concrete point in each set of circumstances—to assess competing, equally resident values. It is precisely because of such situational divergences that constructivists announce the inadequacy of state consensus and the importance of citizen consent. Because international cooperation can serve state or corporate interests while subverting those of citizens and workers who are not partners in these forms of cooperation, the horizons of relevance applied in evaluating the merits of cooperation must be expanded well beyond, for example, the customary corridors of political and economic power. Respect must be given to alternative constructions of the meaning of a shared situation that might be undertaken by disparately powerful and extensive actors, working at markedly different scales of consideration. This insight involves seeing that the task of international relations is not to compile and to organize a globally comprehensive set of presumably objective benefits or threats, but rather to understand and enhance the process of arriving at a shared understanding of what is meant by a benefit or threat. Responsibly managing the commons or global public sphere includes, that is, making sense of the disparate meanings given to “environmental health” by multi-national oil companies and activist NGOs, or the contrary meanings given to such first generation human rights as the right to employment or education by the World Bank or the IMF and by anti-globalization organizations like the International Forum on Globalization or the Sustainable Living Network. Constructivists cannot avoid coming up against the realization that investigating the norms of the international system in terms of their constitutive roles and in ways that acknowledge their moral (and not merely instrumental) nature will eventually pose questions of authority and legitimacy. Asking how norms have come to play the role they have and why—questions answerable in factual historical terms from either institutionalist or constructivist perspectives—is not enough. Instead, it is imperative to ask pointedly ethical questions about the meaning of a better, good, just or diversity-enriching world. But, as many international relations theorists have stressed, neither institutionalists nor constructivists have managed to seriously address questions of this type.5 In spite of continuous appeal to a discourse about norms and values as key concepts, international relations has continued failing to articulate anything like a consistent philosophy of the good life or the traits of suitably evolving and mutually enhancing political orders. As it is currently configured, even at present levels of economic, political, and technological globalization, the practice of international relations cannot avoid being confronted (ala Gödel’s Theorem) with its own incompleteness. On the basis of its prevailing, axiomatic values, international relations is forced into posing quite intelligible directives that it cannot carry out. The paradoxical space within which international relations is practiced can thus be adequately described, but not traversed in its own terms. If we are not to remain transfixed by the purported absence between what “is” and what “is-not,” and hence committed to ironically mis-managing the global commons, we must develop a set of practices—a way—to make precisely such a journey possible. Political realism finally rests on a treasonous metaphysics of competing interests. It is a metaphysics that denies ultimate reality to shared meanings of the commons which international relations is in part intended to conserve and one that strenuously maintains options for disloyalty to the commons. In spite of efforts to move beyond a theoretical construction of the commons or the global public sphere as a Darwinian space of competitive agents, the central presuppositions of realism (and the rituals of rationality through which they are most substantially embodied) continue to persist in international relations discourse. That is, the assumptions undergirding international relations belie conceptual treason to the commons and serve as institutions for resisting the kind of paradigmatic shift needed if the tyranny of a realist past is not going to force us into believing, as Christopher Lasch has written, that “our future is predetermined by the continuing development of large-scale production, colossal technologies and political centralization . . .”—a belief structure that “inhibits creative thought and makes it [very] difficult to avoid the choice between fatuous optimism and debilitating nostalgia. We can begin making sense of what sort of practices must be developed to address the incompleteness of the current lineage of international relations and the dramatically vacuous choices it affords us by examining precedents for moving beyond the realist conception of competing interests to a conception of international relations in which competition is supplanted, not merely by cooperation and consensus—the values urged upon us by institutionalist and constructivist revisions—but by appreciative commitment and contributory virtuosity. Posed as questions, what kinds of paradigmatic conceptual and practical shifts are needed in order to bring about a “Copernican” revolution in metaphysics by means of which relationships and the values comprised in them—not individually existing things and facts true about them—will be taken as most basic? What equivalent revolution in ethics must be undertaken by means of which enhancing intimacy, and not sustaining integrity, will come to be taken as the paramount aim of international relations? In short, what would international relations look like, if undertaken in terms consistent with Buddhist practice and conducive to enhanced global diversity? International relations as evolving systems Some initial (and not entirely metaphorical) guidance in revising the conception and practice of international relations can be derived by seeing them as evolving systems. Just as contemporary theories of biological evolution have had to grapple with macro-level changes taking place beyond the “event horizon” describable within a strictly Darwinian framework, currently contending theories of international relations have had to chart similar courses in seeking to account for the large-scale changes in social, economic, and political organization that have been especially characteristic of late twentieth-century patterns of globalization. Indeed, the parallels are salient enough to warrant, at least briefly, our direct attention. Contemporary theories of evolution have been largely intent on explaining the kinds of major changes in morphology evidenced by fossil records, but which cannot plausibly be explained on the basis of small, incremental and adaptive changes undertaken by purely self-interested species. The evolution, for example, of new sense organs cannot plausibly be accounted for by appeal to small changes of existing morphology. Since none of the “half-way” steps toward new sense organs would function in especially useful ways, they would provide no competitive advantage and no grounds for continuing genetic selection. Neither can new sensory capacities be seen as consistent with efforts to “selfishly” maintain species identity since their realization must invariably mean an entirely unprecedented transformation of existing patterns of species–environment interaction—the realization, in effect, of a new species. Evolutionary biologists are now in broad consensus in appealing to the concept of “punctuated equilibrium” in accounting for major paradigm shifts in biological organization. While gradual evolution does take place during long, near-equilibrium phases of ecological history, when an ecological system drifts far away from equilibrium, the “rules of the game” change. There, evolution takes place through the “sudden” embodiment of strikingly new biological values correlated with major, creative leaps in species identity. Granted this, the kinds of structural reorganization associated with evolution can no longer be adequately explained by reference to the “interests” of individual species, but only by appeal to “allostatic” shifts taking place at the level of regional or global ecologies. Evolution is always, irreducibly, co-evolution. Such an understanding of evolutionary processes requires a severe bracketing of reductionist, building-block models of change that are committed to the adequacy of linear causation and the sufficiency of a metaphysics of competition. Evolution is not most fundamentally the evolution of ontologically distinct individuals, but rather of patterns of relationship. Especially in complex systems for which histories and meaning-making are central, the importance of scale heterogeneity and downward causation must be taken fully into account and with this a recognition of the dramatic—and not merely factual—nature of the evolutionary process. The development of evolution theory in the broadest sense can thus be characterized as a conceptual movement away from a bias toward independently existing entities interacting by way of linear causal processes, and in the direction of seeing evolution as taking place through non-linear patterns of dynamic interdependence. Rather than evolution pivoting on a steady accumulation of new traits gradually consolidated according to a logic of consequences, it is seen as crucially reliant upon large-scale shifts in relational constellations followed by interpolative processes through which the meanings of new patterns of relationship are further diversified and extended. Rather than evolution being driven by individual species competing over environmental resources, it is seen as correlated with the increasing competence with which species contribute to consolidating new, fuller, and more complex patterns of interrelatedness as such. There has been a commensurate movement among international relations theorists who have become aware of the need to address the “irrational” realities of non-incremental change and to reckon consistently with the role of norms and values in shaping new social, economic, and political identities. In general, this movement has polarized along either neo-liberal institutionalist or constructivist lines. In both cases, however, while ostensive appeals to the language of evolutionary discourse is often explicit, there has, to date, not been a marked, commensurate transition from realism’s underlying ontology of factual existence to one of irreducibly meaningful interdependence. It is this failure to question the ontological commitments of the realist worldview that has restricted both institutionalist and constructivist revisions to the necessary, but insufficient, tasks of describing and interpreting change in the structure of international relations. Persistent failure in this regard can only insure continued blindness concerning the possibilities of contributing to and carefully orienting the kinds of paradigmatic changes needed if meaningfully free passage is going to be articulated between the necessary and the inevitable in managing the global commons. For example, in the context of discussing political institutions as a “complicated ecology” of interconnected rules, routines, norms of appropriateness, and the elaboration of meaning, James March and Johan Olsen assert that, “[u]nless we assume that a political environment is stable, it is likely that the rate of change in the environment will exceed the rate of adjustment to it... [and that] the disparity between the rate of environmental change and the rate of adjustment is itself selfsustaining.”8 In their view, although crucial to any viable form of international relations, political institutions must be seen as a “shifting residue of history” that necessarily fall out of step with the times and leave themselves vulnerable to paradigmatic overhaul. Indeed, institutional efficiency with respect to near-neighborhood changes—that is, adaptive success—tends to precipitate overall obsolescence because these competences come at the cost of narrow focusing. Thus, political institutions are subject to a paradoxical “competency trap” wherein adaptive adjustments, particularly if successful, serve eventually to render the political regime as a whole increasingly susceptible to radical change.9 “By constraining political change, institutional stability contributes to regime instability.” March and Olsen see this as a general feature of adaptive systems, not as a peculiarity of political systems. And in this, they are arguably correct. If evolution occurs as a pattern of relational elaborations among overlapping rhythmic (rather than static or structural) orders, changes articulated on strictly consequentialist grounds must eventually run aground since they cannot be undertaken except from the perspective of a particular point of view on “what matters.” That is, carrying out paradigm change according to a pure logic of consequences could only make sense from the perspective of a “god’s eye” view from which all rhythmic orders are equally present. Barring that, the cost of consequentially ordered change will be increasing dis-coordination (or the prevalence of coercion) and vulnerability to unanticipated shifts in situational gestalt. Thus, like the consequentialist history of biological evolution, the evolutionary history of political institutions will be characterized by long periods of great stability, separated by periods of significant instability and sudden change. As long as evolution is understood as the consequence of adaptive changes undertaken from the perspective of particular individuals—and not an elaboration of order taking place in and among relationships as such—it cannot avoid being holistically blind. In other words, if individually existing entities are indeed basic, evolution can only mean long stretches of slowly building ignorance punctuated by brief moments of uncommon and effectively accidental insight. The evolution of international relations—to the extent that it is “naturalized” or “left to nature” in keeping with a realist metaphysics of individual existents—must, in an important sense, be seen as a phenomenon about which can only “wait and see.” Yet in light of such crises as global warming and the rampant extinction of local or vernacular economies in the face of global capital, this is clearly not good enough. If it is true that institutional and political changes customarily take place by means of relatively mundane sets of procedures rooted in patterns of experience and worldviews that develop only very gradually and in a necessarily composite, not systemic, fashion, then such changes will be characterized by considerable indeterminacy of direction. In effect, the logic of consequences underlying our interpretations of experience, the choices that these occasion, and the institutions derived from them are bound to enmesh us in a competency trap and cannot be the ultimate precedents for meaningful escape from it. This is especially true in the case of twenty-first century realities. Initiating change to bring about specific consequences can prove reliably successful in the context of slowly and regularly altering circumstances. The evolutionary model of small, incremental changes or reforms is adequate in conditions of relative equilibrium. But in the context of complex and accelerating change—the situation globally today—there are serious liabilities in remaining wedded to a strategy of inducing change with the aim of bringing about specific and predetermined outcomes. Interactions between complex systems and their environments are prone to high degrees of non-linearity. Because complex systems are not only self-organizing, but also novelty-generating, they are subject to changing in ways that, in principle, could not have been anticipated, and yet that will, after the fact, be manifestly in alignment with their own guiding values. In the context of complex global interdependencies like those informing twenty-first century realities, acting or inducing change to bring about specific outcomes cannot be relied upon to produce the effects desired, regardless of how precisely undertaken or with what level of relevant knowledge. In a complex world, freedoms to choose among outcome options can be exercised reliably only in the context of highly controlled—effectively closed—circumstances. To the extent that the logic of consequences underlying institutional adjustment in the face of context variability continues pivoting on the value of control—most fundamentally, control over experience and its meaning—its successful application will bring about situations in which further and ever more complicated (though not necessarily complex) institutions of control are needed. In terms of managing a truly global commons, and facing the realities of complex change, commitment to such a path is commitment to fighting a losing battle. The complex realities that are emerging as a result of contemporary patterns of expanding and intensifying global interdependence can be seen as commanding a shift of emphasis from consequentialist determinations of outcome to resolutely responsive opening of lines of opportunity. They are realities within which freedom is not indexed by quantities of available choices, but rather by qualities and depths of commitment. Every effort to induce change means incurring new responsibilities, new kinds of intimacy or internal relatedness, and hence new vulnerabilities. It is upon the refusal to accept this in earnest that both the treasonous nature of realist metaphysics and the shortcomings of institutionalist and constructivist revisions of international relations pivot. To be sure, these revisions insist that we go beyond realist assumptions of solipsistic actors in “accidental” interaction to explain the shifting terrain of international relations. But they do not far enough in challenging the ontological intelligibility of individually existing actors, the ultimate objectivity of their situations, and the strategic dialectic of independence and dependence. In result, while convinced of the need to go beyond the logic of consequences endemic to political realism, neo-liberal institutionalists and constructivists alike have remained at least tacitly wedded to political realism’s underlying values of control and security. Most crucially, they are impotent to address the karma of these values—that is, the particular patterns of outcome and opportunity to which they give rise. Thus, while appeals are now often made to an alternative “logic of appropriateness,”11 it continues to be assumed within this logic that international relations actors are essentially independent and choose what roles to play based on their interpretations of prevailing behavioral norms. But regardless of what canons of conformity or appropriateness to which actors turn in making such decisions, they cannot be a source of paradigmatic innovations in the meaning of their shared situation. If managing the commons is not a matter of factual adjustments in how we interact, but a revision of our dramatic or meaningful interdependence as such, secure co-existence cannot be an adequate goal of international relations and control cannot be a viable strategy for negotiating the dramatic impasse between the necessity of cooperation and the inevitability of conflict. For that to occur, it is not only necessary to change some of the individual rules of the international relations “game,” but to undertake an entirely different kind of play. International relations as an infinite game Although the Buddha did have occasion to counsel leaders over the course of his teaching career, and although his teachings focused on the meaningful resolution of conflict and suffering, he did not develop anything remotely resembling a theory of international relations or a strategy for directly managing the global commons. For these teachings and the practices out of which they emerged to prove relevant to international relations, at least a temporary, metaphorical bridge must be built between the personal and the political—a bridge that also joins the very different worlds that result from conduct primarily biased toward appreciative and contributory virtuosity and conduct biased toward competitively exercised control. To this end, I would like to introduce an apt extension of “game theory” suggested by James Carse in his book, Finite and Infinite Games. 12 As defined by Carse, finite games—including everything from board games like chess to world wars—take place among competitors who have agreed upon rules that will allow them to determine who has won. In spite of the importance of “spectators” and “referees” or “judges” in finite games, such games end only when the “players” agree that play has ended, meaning one of them has emerged as the winner and is thus granted an appropriate title. For this to be possible, finite games must have initially agreed upon spatial and temporal boundaries. They must also have a predetermined and agreed upon type of outcome. Up until very recently, international politics was quite plausibly played as a fully competitive finite game. But the kind of globalization that has taken place over the past century has gradually eroded the possibilities of politics being played sustainably in this way in the international arena. As evidenced by the very early and wide distribution of common artifacts and narratives, globalization is by no means a new phenomenon, but the scale and depth of globalization that has been taking place over the past hundred years are historically unprecedented. Simply stated, in contrast with previous eras, we are confronted with imperatives for managing processes of interaction with one another and our environments that extend indefinitely in time and space. It is no longer the managing of power distributions and change dynamics in a single valley, on a single plain, or along a given stretch of coastline that is at stake, but rather the distribution of power and authority over change across the entire planet. It is no longer just the lifetime of a despot or a beneficent ruler or even a dynasty that defines the scope of global temporality, but “any foreseeable future.” Moreover, the relational dynamics of globalization itself are no longer merely simple or complicated, they are truly complex with histories of their own that are in the continual process of being recursively revised from without and from within. The playing field of international relations has undergone apparently irreversible changes. The metaphysics of the game have changed. If Carse is right in claiming that competition is a kind of play that implies cooperative rules of engagement and conditions for victory and defeat, the field of international relations has undergone an ontological/topological mutation that renders—at best—any attempt at finite play ironic. At the dawn of the “third millennium,” international relations discourse maps the contours of a conceptual paradox. That we are at a crisis point in assuming responsibility for the global commons has become painfully apparent. Cooperation is not an option, but a necessity. Only as Carse points out, we cannot truly play if we must play or if the results of the game are given in advance. International relations discourse situates us in a game that should end, but cannot, precisely because playing it has become imperative and because there can be no clear winners. In managing the global commons, if there are any losers, we are all losers. It is not that the rules of a still-familiar game have substantially changed with globalization; we have made the transition into an entirely new kind of game. In this era of the “colonization of consciousness,” in which attention is being commodified and put up for grabs on the world market, and in which our personal and cultural resources for concertedly meaningful change are being depleted with alarming regularity and rapidity, there are no justifications for further maintaining the horizons of relevance, responsibility, and readiness that are key conditions for the possibility of finite gaming. Borders demarcating spheres of interest and influence have evaporated. And along with them have disappeared the kinds of fixed and unambiguous spatial and temporal horizons that are necessary for claiming any kind of substantial victories, or for seriously debating whether or not to cooperate. The question now is not whether to cooperate, or even how to cooperate, but how well. This signals a truly paradigmatic shift, and one that permits no turning back or reversal. Contrary to the proclamations of global advocates for market liberalism, we have not arrived at an end to political history or a culmination of the evolution of systems for trade, development and international relations. Rather, we have come to the point of needing to acknowledge that the complex processes global interdependence have irreparably eroded the foundations of independence- and sovereignty-biased international relations and brought to an unanticipated close the season of comfortably finite games of global power and control. We have entered an era of infinite games. In the context of finite gaming, political problems are open to final solutions. This is not so in context of infinite play wherein the future is purposefully held open on jointly improvised headings, in conscious avoidance of any form of final outcome, in the absence of any desired destination. In infinite play, solutions—political, economic, environmental, etc.—give way to resolutions or abiding commitments rooted in shared and sustained patterns of values–intentions–actions. Destinations give way to directions. In infinite games—like those into which we are thrust by the necessity of managing the planetary commons, by the imperative to take account of and conserve cultural differences that continue to make a difference, or by intimate partnership—scripts are not only useless, they are ultimately distractive and destructive. Whereas finite play and power politics are theatrical in the sense that they depend on roles that are scripted and performed for an audience and courses of action that are destined for conclusion, infinite play and the kinds of politics proper to it can be termed dramatic or social. That is, they evidence commitments to the shared improvisation of meanings for our situation, in the absence of any anticipated or desired conclusion. In this type of play—which Carse illustrates by contrasting the dramatic nature of committing to be a parent with the theatrical nature of choosing to take on the role of parent—there can be no final results and thus no power. What matters most is not arriving at a particular envisioned destination or outcome, but the way in which ongoing play opens opportunities. Visions of manifest destiny give way to clarity about what constitutes improved quality. With trenchant simplicity, Carse argues that power only factors into finite games because power cannot be accurately measured until a particular game— political, social, economic, or sexual—is completed. Effectively, “one does not win by being powerful; one wins to be powerful.”13 Indeed, being sufficiently powerful to win before a game has begun insures that whatever follows is not a competition after all, but simply a ritual of capitulation, the specific terms of which may be negotiable, but nothing more. According to such a view, then, it is possible to be powerful only “through the possession of an acknowledged title— that is, only by the ceremonial deference of others.”14 This, however, means that power is never one’s own, but always conferred by others, when all other players have conceded that, “you have won”—perhaps even before play has begun. The politics of power is thus always ironic, and always theatrically or societally and not socially choreographed. It follows from this that power will always be possessed and exercised by a small minority of selected players. As noted in earlier discussions of the karma of control as a technological value, power is inevitably assymetrical and never shared. By contrast, in infinite games, there is and can be no real power, but anyone can be strong. In Carse’s terms, “[s]trength is paradoxical. I am not strong because I can force others to do what I wish as a result of my play with them, but because I can allow them to do what they wish in the course of my play with them.”16 Strength, unlike power, connotes a capacity to improvise new orders—new patterns of value–intention–action—with others, not an ability to secure a certain type of order in the face of potential challenges. Whereas power can be consolidated and reinforces the boundaries without which independence and dependence are finally unintelligible, strength obtains only in the relational expression of virtuosic interdependence. Globally, we have reached a crucial juncture: our shared history and the space of international relations can no longer be effectively construed as theatre in which wins and loses are played out. Rather, they must be construed as boundaryless fields for infinite gaming on which the logic of existence has yielded to that of dramatic interdependence. In bringing about such a paradigm shift in the exercise of international relations, it is not the politics of power that is most crucial, but the politics of strength. A distinctive characteristic of Buddhist traditions of thought and practice is that they offer a diverse array of systems for seeing the world in fully dramatic terms and for cultivating precisely the attentive and responsive skills needed to realize increasingly intimate forms of mutually beneficial strength. Toward a Buddhist revision of international relations A metaphysical iconoclast, the Buddha claimed that “is” and “is-not” are the twin barbs on which all humankind is impaled. At the root of all conflicts lie claims of independence and imputations of dependence. Contrary to rationalist intuitions, resolving conflicts and ending suffering cannot be accomplished by way of achieving absolute certainty about how things really are and are-not—or, for that matter, how things should or should-not be. Indeed, that kind of certainty— whether our own, that of others, or provisionally shared—makes continued conflict and suffering unavoidable. To conclusively exit the path of continued discord, the Buddha enjoined seeing all things as marked by impermanence, trouble (duhkha), and the absence of any essential nature. This last practice is of particular importance in the present context since it entails actively undermining the ontological foundations of essentially competitive international relations. Seeing all things as having no essential nature or self involves cultivating awareness of their emptiness (funyata) and interdependence and occasions an ongoing realization that nothing literally exists or “stands apart” (existere) from all others. Autonomous subjects and objects are, finally, only artifacts of abstraction. In the formula rehearsed repeatedly in the (Mahayana) Diamond Sutra, seeing all things as empty and interdependent is to actively realize that: [things] are not really “things,” we only refer to them as “things.” What we refer to as “things”— whether mountains, human beings, or complex phenomena like histories—are simply the experienced results of having established relatively constant horizons of value or relevance (“things”). They are not, as common sense insists, naturally occurring realities or [things]. Indeed, what we take to be objects existing independently of ourselves are, in actuality, simply a function of habitual patterns of relationship. In metaphysical terms, these teachings compose a system for challenging the twin myths of “the given” and of “existence”—a concert of strategies for dissolving the conditions of continued conflict and suffering. Buddhist metaphysics—if that is not an oxymoron—is a metaphysics of ambiguity in which things are not originally “this” or “that” but become such only by way of jointly undertaken (often ritually constituted) acts of disambiguation. The particulars of our experience do not arise on the basis of objective processes in which our values and intentions play no crucial role. Rather, they arise in the course of our projecting well-maintained horizons for relevance. “This” becomes fully distinct from “that” only through the process of excluding from attention their shared middle ground—that is, through ignorance of their emptiness or irreducible interdependence. This amounts, of course, to a selective silencing of our partners in interdependence, a refusal to admit the full range of their contribution to the changes presently taking place. And it is precisely by thus submitting things to the hierarchy of our own determinations of what is important that we open ourselves to conflict with them as well as with one another. Because we are born into families and communities and cultures, the patterned ignorance through which our experienced world comes into being is not something instituted alone, randomly, or according to inherently fixed principles. Rather, it takes shape in compliance with our likes and dislikes, according to our motivating values, our needs and desires, and our strategies for fulfilling them. In a word, we project horizons for relevance—ignoring the interdependence of all things—in an expression of our karma. Others—and here is the central dilemma of taking the normative turn in international relations—do so from different points of view from which different things do or do-not matter. At a minimum, the Buddhist teaching of karma alerts us as to how the topographies of our life histories correspond meticulously with the complexion of our own values and intentions. The conflicts that we encounter in the course of our lives are not rooted in objective operations of so-called “natural law” or in the capriciousness of chance, but in tensions among our own values and aspirations, our likes and dislikes, our desires and dreams. Indeed, if our aim is to resolve all troubles or suffering as they occur, our world cannot effectively be seen as fundamentally factual or objectively given. Instead, it should be seen as irreducibly dramatic—a world of unlimited, meaningful interdependence. According to the teaching of emptiness, bringing conflict to an end is not a matter of engineering universal agreement about how things are or should be. Indeed, that can only be achieved by way of so thoroughly abstracting our concerns from our immediate situations that none of the differences among us can continue to make any difference. The realization of such a state of affairs in which each thing fails to mean anything to any others does not mark a Buddhist “perfection of wisdom,” but perfect ignorance—the denial of emptiness and a collapse of all opportunity into increasing dramatic entropy. But neither do we fare any better by having recourse to postmodern embraces of the relative truth of all perspectives. Again, this is simply a way of asserting and making room for our differences to not matter by excluding the middle ground of our interdependence as such. Between the all-frozen sameness of universal agreement and the madly swirling variety of relativist agreements to disagree, there is little to choose. In contrast with such dispositions and their liabilities for increasing dramatic entropy, Buddhist enlightenment can be understood as horizonless readiness to turn our situation toward increasing dramatic intimacy. By eschewing exclusive claims about what “is” or “is-not” and directing our attention instead to the primacy of relationality as such, we open ourselves to the full range of meaningful contributions being made by each thing to our shared situation. Because such a turn takes place in a world in which nothing has any essential nature—in which relationships are more basic than “things related”—and which is also characterized by trouble and impermanence, these contributions and the partnerships they craft are necessarily improvised and dramatic. Minimally conceived, Buddhist practice involves unrelenting commitment to improvising situational pathways through dramatic impasse. It is a way, in other words, of continuously negotiating shifts in the meaning of our situation away from samsara (the world of supposed autonomy and continued suffering and conflict) toward nirvana (the world of dramatic freedom and intimacy). Buddhist practice is not, then, a means to a final end or destination, but rather the meaning of expressing and refining appreciative and contributory virtuosity. As we relinquish those habits of attention and conception that have brought our experienced world of discrete “subjects” and “objects” into being, we begin understanding that the cost of habitually ignored dramatic interdependence is an inability of our situation to truly take care of itself. Seeing all things as empty is to open ourselves onto the typically excluded “middle ground” where all things subsist in relationships of mutual support and enjoy the meaningful liberty of contributing as needed to the improvised, situational translation of samsara into nirvana. This, in a Buddhist context, is what we have referred to as the activation of emptiness—a disclosure of the profound diversity of our situation, as it has come to be. It is also, I would argue, the meaning of international relations committed to globally realizing sustained and equitable public good. We have already seen that global interdependence, as currently directed, is bringing about and further consolidating both kusala and akusala eventualities— situational dynamics that are wholesome and good, as well as dynamics that are deeply troubling. As the Sakkapanha Sutta makes clear, this effectively means the continued proliferation of situational blockages and conflict. Global economics in particular have become a primary engine of compounding inequities. The translation of local production ecologies to global production monocultures, the commodification of virtually all subsistence needs, and the powerfully compelled expansion and increasing density of market operations are central features of economic activity oriented according to the values of control, convenience, and choice— values that ramify karmically in ways that work against both equity and virtuosity. This economic karma, we have seen, reiterates in the political sphere as well. There, the bias toward understanding freedom in terms of autonomy has led to the consolidation of powerful compulsions toward sovereignty and security—values that dispose political processes toward generating insulating media that effectively institutionalize differences as what separate us as individuals rather than what allow us to contribute to one another. So, while it is true that clearly demarcated political boundaries, the rule of law, and human rights conventions, enable us to enjoy steadily increasing autonomy and equality, they do so at the incalculable cost of mutually enriching patterns of felt community. In sum, the general pattern is this: the globally dominant constellations of values being deployed to offset apparent troubles and address proximate conditions of conflict and suffering in our shared situation, as it has come to be, have crossed scale thresholds to begin ramifying ironically. We are discovering that our present approaches to making things better are also, somehow, making them worse. From a karmic perspective, this is tantamount to admitting that there obtain persistent dissonances among our favored patterns of values–intentions– actions. Conventionally, it can be claimed that the work of international relations is to solve concrete problems arising with respect to failed cooperation or unduly aggressive competition among members of the world community. But if international relations is to have any functional connection with the realization of global public good, then its ultimate work must be predicament resolution. This work is ultimately one of developing globally the strengths needed skillfully to resolve dissonant patterns of value–intention–action, disclosing differences as opportunities for mutual contribution: the realization of robustly shared commitments to appreciating (or adding value to) our broadening and deepening interdependence. The need for such a normative turn in international relations—that is, a turn toward the task of negotiating significantly shared senses of what we mean, for example, by “good environments” or “healthy economies” or “free trade and development”—is immediate. It is also a need that can only be met by fundamentally challenging the logic of existence, the polarization of presence into dependence and independence, and the discourses of power to which these inevitably lead. In traditional Buddhist terms, mounting these challenges is a matter of practicing sustained insight into the interdependence and emptiness of all things: the realization of wisdom. This is not a purely (or even primarily) cognitive matter. In Buddhism, wisdom is understood as coeval with compassion, which in turn is understood as arising along with three other immeasurable headings for enhanced relational quality: equanimity, loving-kindness, and joy in the good fortune of others. Wisdom and compassion can be seen, then, as interdependent and interpenetrating qualities of relationships that are oriented toward the meaningful and sustainable resolution of suffering and trouble. Especially in Mahayana Buddhist traditions, the realization or activation of emptiness is thus seen as inseparable from alloying enlightening patterns of sentience and sentiment in unswerving commitment to bodhisattva action—that is, in the compassionate demonstration of limitless relational virtuosity or skillful means (upaya). International relations oriented toward sustainably enhancing global common good must, first and foremost, engage in countering the economic, political, social, and cultural karma that have come to mean the systematic conversion of diversity to mere variety. Its primary work, then, is to bring about conditions in which differences are increasingly realized as opportunities for virtuosic mutual contribution, harmonizing values–intentions–actions in ways conducive to the emergence of resolutely appreciative and appreciating relational orders. From a Buddhist perspective, however, the improvised negotiation of shared situational meaning—that is, of the intensity and direction of our karma or dramatic interdependence—is precisely what is connoted by emotion. This leads to the controversial, an.d yet ultimately liberating, insight that the function of international relations is emotional refinement. From a Buddhist perspective, just as we do not “have” thoughts, precisely because there is no self that stands apart from thinking as its source and owner, we do not “have” emotions. Emotions, like all things, are situationally focused relational processes. In particular, they arise as situation-specific negotiations of the intensity and direction of the interdependence among all things, as they have come to be, in this specific situation. Emotions appear when and where currents of meaning converge, representing regions or spaces of dramatic confluence. Emotions are expressions playing across the face of emptiness, disambiguating the interdependence of all things. Given such a definition,17 it is clear that all negotiations of shared meaning are not merely laden with personal or subjective feelings and sensations (emotions in the more common sense of the word), they are irreducibly emotional in nature. This is as true at the national and international levels of negotiating shared meaning as it is at the personal. Yet, in a karmic cosmos shaped and oriented as a function of the interplay of sustained patterns of values–intentions–actions, it can equivalently be said that all situations—as complexes of shifting outcomes and opportunities—are in some degree emotional. Negotiating shifts in the tenor or direction of our situation can take place as the committed expression of familial and romantic love, under the dark compulsions of vengeance, through the cool exercise of existence-biased rationality—itself a particular emotion—or as the evolution of complex ecologies (whether natural, economic, political, or cultural). This means that diversity, as a measure of situationally realized capacities for contributing to improvised and yet resolutely shared welfare, can usefully be seen as a measure of emotional maturity. Conversely, translating situational diversity into mere variety can be seen as conducive to dramatic immaturity—a way of directing interdependence that practically insures the necessity of competition, if not conflict, and the erosion of contributory resources. In Buddhist terms, emotional immaturity most commonly manifests as habitual recourse to anger, hatred and greed—emotions that dramatically split our shared situation as a result of refusals to share fully in negotiating its meaning and value. These emotions—and their countless permutations—play out in both the personal and the international sphere. Courses of action informed by convictions that “our way” is “the only way,” that ruthless competition is the globally most favorable way of determining slopes of advantage, or that war or more structural forms of violence are simply effective means to good ends justifiably imposed on others are all common expressions of emotional immaturity in this sense. There is, then, considerable emotional immaturity in the perceived necessity of choosing between either adopting universal, but thin principles of global prosperity and fairness, or insisting upon the relativity of all norms in a capitulation to thick, but strictly local values for “the good life.” Either way, the vulnerability of engaging in truly shared negotiations of the meaning of our situation as a whole is effectively refused. Although these alternatives express insight into the ill-consequences of persisting in finite quests for power—for the ability to determine what things will mean—they are not yet commitments to the infinite path of resolving all conflicts and differences by way of contributory and appreciative virtuosity. A normative turn in international relations may be considered, but not actually taken. Beyond competition and cooperation: converting power to strength International relations oriented toward enhancing diversity in pursuit of global common good necessarily involve turning away from playing finite games (whether informed by theories of rational choice, by heroic simplicity, or by autocratic arrogance). They require resolutely embarking on a path—like that taken by the bodhisattva vowing to save all sentient beings—that is infinite in length and from which all things can be seen as opportunities or resources for awakening. On such a path, and in the playing of international relations as an infinite game, advance is always qualitative—a function of enriching relationships that are, necessarily, irreducibly shared. While finite games progress by way of a dialectic of empowerment and disempowerment, infinite games carry on by means of strengths begotten by and begetting other strengths in extending the meaning of relating freely. During the era of cold-war realism, relatively solipsistic actors on both sides of the iron curtain assumed that they alone stood on firm moral ground, with good on their own side and something approaching (or even expressing) evil on the other. With the breakup of the Soviet Union, market-reform in China, and the continued acceleration of global interdependence, things became significantly more complicated and complex. The myth of separate existences seems to have dissolved irreversibly and the perniciously digital moralism of good versus evil has faded considerably—at least in the space of international relations. The recent invocation of an “axis of evil” by the second Bush administration in the United States, unfortunate though it is in virtually every respect, can serve positively as a ironic reminder that any appearances to contrary notwithstanding, the global situation is now such that international relations must be seen as taking place in deeply shared ethical space. To a historically unprecedented extent, we are being forced to confront and accommodate our differences. At least for now, there is simply nowhere to turn that allows us to fully turn away from others who differ from us.19 We are faced— in virtually every domain of human endeavor—with needing to take into account undeniable trade-offs as we meet ever shifting needs to accommodate and not simply adjudicate among contrasting goods. Conserving and (perhaps, even enhancing) the global commons—the primary responsibility of international relations discourse—is now manifestly a process that cannot help veering into ethical or karmic straits that have the very unusual feature of being impossible to navigate independent. These straits represent sticking points where differing sets of values–intentions– actions have come to converge, entangling one another in ways that block being freely interdependent. The unique topography of these karmic straits has not been widely or deeply enough appreciated: while any independent actor presents a much smaller axiological profile than do any collaborative actors, it is the latter and not the former who are able to negotiate clear passage through these bottlenecks in things, as they have come to be. The counter-intuitive topography of these key features in the space of international relations requires us to take interdependence as basic if we are to succeed in traversing them. An important ramification of this topographic peculiarity—again, very much counter to rationalist and realist intuitions—is that navigating through or around apparent conflicts is not most effectively or surely undertaken on the basis of either instrumental reasoning and/or ideally “thin” moral concepts. At least since Rawls’ classic book, A Theory of Justice, 20 there has been considerable and favorable recognition of the pertinence of “thin” conceptions of core concepts in ethics, especially when ethics seeks to claim relevance across cultural or political boundaries that are understood as having become irreversibly porous. The general assumption has been that any concepts or values suited to brokering truly global agreement about the good life are likely to be minimalist in nature. Hence, the widespread call for minimum standards in respect of working conditions, dietary regimes, or health care, and the negotiation of such minimalist frames of reference as the United Nations’ universal declaration of human rights. But if the shared ground of international relations has the peculiar topographic features just claimed, axiological minimalism is likely to be counterproductive in alloying the kinds of common norms and values needed to resolve international conflicts and crises. In a space of irreducible interdependence, the thicker the network of explicitly shared resources and felt relations maintained by collaborations of actors, the more likely it is that their negotiations will be successful. Thus, rather than effectively minimizing the contributions of individual collaborators in crafting commonly held values, these contributions must be vigorously cultivated if we are to realize the kind of ethical consonance needed to successfully manage the commons. Moreover, because the negotiations of meaning that take place through such patterns of mutual contribution are—as suggested earlier— inescapably emotional in nature, their success depends on cultivating ever deepening capacities for emotional sensitivity and maturity. Bringing rationality to the negotiating table—no matter how important an emotion it has come to be—is simply not enough. At the very least, practices like those associated in Buddhism with realizing the four immeasurables are needed to provide basic training for the kind of emotional refinement needed if international relations is to be played as a truly infinite game. Barring such refinement, we will simply be in no position to respond as needed within troubled situations—be these personal or political. Deeply shared meaning will remain elusive. It is instructive, then, that Rawls and other advocates of universal liberalism have been criticized as implicitly overwriting uniqueness in the service of overarching principles that fail to democratically order the international sphere. As an alternative, many critics have insisted on maintaining locally thick concepts as the sine qua non of any viable approach to international relations. For them, global order consists, both necessarily and ideally, of a quilting of persistently distinct value systems.21 Value pluralism is not simply an undeniable twenty-first century reality, it should be conserved as an ideal at all scales of interrelatedness. Critical commitments of this sort are, I think, an important corrective to conducting international relations as a universalist discourse based on thin and practically traction-less conceptions of the good. But they are not enough. In addition to recognizing and conserving alternative value systems as inherently valuable products of human history, it is necessary to engage in their sustained appreciation. For those faring on the infinite path of bodhisattva action, the virtuosic qualities of attention and commitment that are needed to truly appreciate—or enhance the value—of all things are most fundamentally (and continuously) cultivated through mindfulness and insight meditation. In sharp contrast with a relativist acceptance or tolerance of alternative value systems— systems that thereby remain steadfastly other, if not alien—these rudimentary Buddhist practices aim at attending to the ways in which each thing is relevant to all other things, contributing uniquely to their meaning. This is basis of the bodhisattva’s limitless capacity to accord with any situation, responding as needed to direct it, as a relational whole, toward consummation as a maximally diverse and truly liberating environment in which all things are strong: that is, capable of relating freely. It can reasonably be objected, of course, that this realization of the relevance of all things is in itself of scant relevance for real-world international relations. It may be that mindfulness and insight meditation yield personal benefits: increasingly refined capacities for attending to and attuning with situational dynamics. Undoubtedly, these capacities have a direct bearing on our readiness for innovation and improvisation—skills that are very much needed in a complex world requiring us to face and respond to changes that we literally could not have anticipated. But apart from this generic relevance at the level of personal self-cultivation, what possible bearing might they have on how we conduct and orient international relations? Mindfulness and insight, from a Buddhist perspective, develop sensitivities and sensibilities relevant to reorienting processes of change and interdependence. They engender conditions under which the conceit of existence unravels and with it the fixed positions and identities that are a primary cause of conflict and suffering. Although international relations ostensibly focuses on relationality and change, it has done so in keeping with the same metaphysical assumptions—or ontological convictions—that undergird prevailing patterns of economic and political activity. International relations are thus considered external relations between sovereign states that exist first and foremost as autonomous and self-interested individuals. Mindfulness and insight in international relations mean seeing through the conceit that relations are second-order realities contingent upon pre-existing actors. They involve realizing that we—for example, as nations, ethnic groups, religious communities, or non-governmental organizations—are only what we mean for other and what we allow others to mean for us. This amounts to an ontological gestalt shift from taking independent and dependent actors to be first order realities and relations among them as second order, to seeing relationality as first order (or ultimate) reality and all individual actors as (conventionally) abstracted or derived from them. An immediate result of such a shift is seeing that power is not something differentially possessed and wielded by individual actors. Rather, power consists of a polarizing relationship; empowering on one hand, disempowering on the other. Exercising power cannot, in short, be a sustained approach to doing good in the sense of realizing truly common good. Eventually, power means power-over others who will only accept their disempowerment if their contributory capacity has dropped to such a low level that they can no longer protest their powerlessness and dependency. This, however, is a status that renders them less and less valuable to those with power who stand to gain little if anything from the relationship. The disempowered become a burden; the relationship weakens. The polarizations of power—the empowering of some and disempowering of (many) others—undermine strength. That is, they undermine capacities for relating freely. Over especially the past half century, empowering the previously powerless has come to be celebrated as a course for redressing histories of excessively consolidated and unfairly exercised power. The aim generally is, through empowering marginalized groups and individuals, to achieve an abiding balance of powers and to redistribute more fairly the benefits of power. Unfortunately, while this may work to assuage recently wakened consciences, it does little to build strength. In an important causal asymmetry, the ravaging of strength by power cannot be healed by more, or better distributed, power. Strength is a relational quality, the loss of which amounts to a situational degradation. Whether granted by those in power or wrested violently away from them, new or renewed abilities to act autonomously in pursuit of one’s own self-interest does not, and cannot, signal an abandoning of the metaphysics of individual existence. Strength can only be regained when the conceits of existence—tragic or ironic, competitive or cooperative—can be fully relinquished. In traditional Buddhist practice regimes it is acknowledged that while mindfulness and insight together are all that is required to launch this process, not everyone in every situation can sustain restorative commitments to building the liberating strengths needed to revise the meaning of change and interdependence from samsara to nirvana. Two provisions are made: practicing under the guidance of a skilled master, and retreat from the full range of relational dynamics constitutive of daily social life. In the Cakkavatti-Sïhanada Sutta, for instance, when society has reached something very close to a moral nadir, no skilled masters remain extant and there are no communities of people devoted to practicing the Dharma. Those few people unwilling to be drawn into the collapse of society have no alternative but to withdraw, doing so individually at first and then banding together as they recognize their shared commitments. Over time, they form a counter-community based on their distinctively shared values–intentions–actions. Historically, Buddhist monastic institutions functioned as places of retreat in which practicing mindfulness and insight could be carried on continuously and with as few distractions and obstructions as possible. By analogy, it can be argued that while restoring strengths in the context of international relations may in theory be globally possible, this may not be actually the case. Indeed, there would seem to be many actors for whom developing sustained, mindful insight into the outcomes and opportunities associated with prevailing patterns of global interdependence is not practically possible—not, at least, as long as they are fully embedded in those patterns of interdependence. Ironically, some independence from those patterns may be required if the discourse of power is to be ultimately subordinated. In terms of the Mahayana teaching of the two truths, the ultimate reality of strength may need to be at first provisionally expressed through the conventional reality of power. There is a superficial similarity between the discourse of empowering the powerless and the course of building strengths or capacities for relating freely by first retreating into practical independence from the relational polarizations of power. But closer examination makes evident that a crucial difference obtains between the characteristic patterns of value–intention–action associated with each strategy. The former aims at the balancing of powers, and is therefore committed to continuing to have resort to them. A world of balanced powers among resolutely self-interested actors is a world of managed competition or cooperation in the strict sense of “operating together” in secure co-existence. The strategy of provisional retreat, however, aims at overturning biases toward autonomy, control, and secured sovereignty to subordinate power to strength. Only on the basis of this subordination is it possible to commit to a course of relating freely—a course that goes beyond competition and cooperation to robust coordination. In practical terms, this might mean, for instance, that countries being pressured to open up to the regime of “free trade”—a regime that has been steadily skewing global interdependence toward increasingly inequitable distributions of income and access to resources—may wish to remain un-integrated into global markets. They may wish instead to develop counter-communities with like-minded actors dedicated to sustaining local economic strengths by resisting the commodification and aggressive marketing of subsistence goods and services by global production monocultures. A turn in international relations away from the conflict-prone dynamics of competition and cooperation to robust contribution requires those related within a given situation to arrive at common karma—a common pattern of values–intentions–actions—oriented away from control grounded freedoms of choice toward relating freely in mutual contribution and appreciation. Yet, as we have seen, good intentions must be paired with appropriate values and actions to sustain kusala or wholesomely virtuosic eventualities and at the same time reduce those that are akusala. Rawls’ appeals to justice and fairness as key values for reorienting governance practices so as to effect positive social change can be seen as rooted in keen intuitions about the central importance of values in shaping how, and how well, we live. Justice and fairness are offered as values suited to reducing conflict and trouble—the sum total of human and planetary suffering—and steadily building better lives toward the end of realizing good lives for all. As we have seen, however, Rawls’ good intentions have run up against substantial real-world resistance—resistance that, from a Buddhist perspective, can be traced to the indebtedness of his (arguably a priori) construction of justice and fairness as universal values grounded metaphysically on generically conceived autonomy and individual existence. While it is possible to derive from Buddhist teachings and practices values that play out relationally in ways not dissimilar to those accorded justice and fairness by Rawls, they would be rooted in the metaphysical irreducibility of dramatic interdependence. Ultimately, they would consist of values distilled “after the fact” from things as they have come to be and would thus represent embodied resources for shared meaning-making. That is, they would be values engendered relationally, not theoretically, in active improvisation of shared commitments to common goods. Autonomy and existence-derived concepts like justice and fairness have the advantage of being “thin” enough to pass through the permeable boundaries of virtually all the actors engaged in international relations—values that can comfortably be affirmed by all. By contrast, values derived through mindfulness and insight in accord with Buddhist commitments to realizing liberating intimacy among all beings would be globally thick and locally thin. As such, they offer a middle path between “universal-but-thin” and “thick-but-local” approaches to achieving viable international community. Throughout our conversation, I have been forwarding diversity as a primary value for realizing strong coordination in public policy. Unlike ideally thin concepts distilled through universally enjoined experiments in rationality, Buddhist diversity is thinnest at the local level and thickest at the global. Unlike the quilted order envisioned by opponents to moral universalism, however, the order expressed by the Buddhist concept of diversity does not assume the ultimate independence of contributors, but rather their ongoing, meaningful interdependence. Instead of an unmitigated pluralism of quilted orders—a regime of variety in which persistently autonomous, neighboring value systems are effectively stitched together by focusing only upon selectively salient aspects— Buddhist diversity invites ever fuller participation of whole communities in relationships of mutually articulating support and dramatic furtherance. In specifically international relations terms, diversity means opening viable courses around both the apparent necessity of cooperation (as managed competition) and the inevitability of conflict, turning decisively away from an exclusive focus on the external relations between essentially autonomous actors and shaking fully free of realist contentment with articulating lowest global denominators for secure co-existence. As a passage between claims of absolutely universal goods and claims of irresolvable moral and cultural relativism, the path of increasing diversity challenges the logic of the excluded middle, the priority of facts over values, the metaphysical centrality of existence rather than creative ambiguity, and the supposition that meaning is essentially a function of subjective interpretation and not of improvisationally shared offering. International relations based on the values of control, stability, security, and institutionally mediated co-existence can reproduce the conditions of their own necessity, but cannot give rise to an alternative world in which the ideal of virtuosic, mutual contribution and the primacy of constitutive, felt relationships is no longer taken to be fundamentally “unrealistic.” In such a world of continuously negotiated diversity, agreements about universal norms give way to interweaving improvisations of surprisingly shared meanings. This clearly requires attentive and responsive skills that far exceed those of populations that have been dramatically impoverished by subjection to ways of life in which opportunities for appreciatively and directly contributing to one another’s welfare have been all but submerged in market-delivered floods of occasions for commodity consumption; in which political participation has been reduced to instantiating the myth that democracy is simply “one person, one vote”; and in which the unrestricted exercise of freedom can only take place in a state of utter privacy and privation, or infinite want and desire. Building various kinds of civil society may suffice to provide at least temporary stepping stones across the widening dramatic gulf that results when autonomy and equality are heralded as irreducible communal values, when differences are institutionally prohibited from truly making a difference, and when control prevails as the central technological value. Civil society, at least as customarily conceived, arises at the interface of society and the state as a concrete medium for consolidating and exercising power for political (but also economic and social) change. Civil society, in this sense at least, is not contrary to the polarizing discourse of power, but emerges as a force for balancing or redirecting that discourse. As such, it cannot ultimately reverse the dramatic impoverishment that power and the valuing of autonomy and control occasion, whatever its conventional benefits. Similarly, building institutional bridges of the sort that link various players of different scales and perspectives on the field of international relations will not provide the resources for breaking free of the karma of control and its underlying logic of consequences—a karma according to which the better we get at getting what we want, the better we get at wanting, only to be left wanting by what we finally get. The bridges and the societies thus realized may well revise the terms of competition and cooperation, but they will not eventuate in robust coordination. In Buddhist terms, they may soften the akusala eventualities brought about by existence-biased international relations and power. But they do not take the further step of building strengths, so long as their very possibility is dependent on technologies through which control is most efficiently exercised, and through which the colonization of consciousness is most systematically deepened.23 The karma of control is such that commitment to it as a value—even for the purpose of positive social change—eventually helps bring about situations that will be perceived as increasingly in need of control. Civil societies can, indeed, mediate the articulation of appropriate kinds of control. They will not, thereby, eliminate the need for more of the same. The dramatic gulf opening up between individual persons, ethnic groups, religious traditions, nations, and regions through late twentieth- and early twenty-first century patterns of inequitable globalization cannot be addressed by appeal to the same values that have made this type and degree of globalization possible and then inevitable. Fighting fire with fire is possible—but only if the fire to be extinguished can be isolated within an encircling band of controlled burning. This is not possible when the fire to be extinguished is global in extent. If diversity is, indeed, a counter-value capable of stimulating a gestalt shift in the meaning of change, it is so only to the extent that it means developing the kinds of attentive and responsive skills needed if international relations is to be played as an infinite game in which strength—and not power—prevails. Unless built by actors who are capable of horizonless civil virtuosity, civil society is a useful, but finally self-defeating response to the crisis of community now taking place worldwide. It is becoming painfully apparent in this first decade of the “century of interdependence” that the major issues in international relations cannot be resolved by appeal to balancing or adjudicating among separate interests and identities as ontologically basic building blocks. Neither can these issues be solved by simple factual measures: they have the nature of predicaments than can only be resolved on the basis of first allowing that they arise as impasses in situations that are shared but poorly recognized as such, pointing to conflicts among our values, many of which are absolutely crucial to who we take ourselves to be. Committing to the resolution of predicaments in the public sphere means placing our “selves” at risk. Whether aiming to resolve conflicts between Myanmar’s SLORC and NLD, or between the PRC and Tibet or Taiwan, or between the “developed” North and the “developing” South, success and failure swing on how well we improvise (or prove incapable of improvising) shared meanings for our increasingly undeniable interdependence, and how consistently and creatively we are able to appreciate and contribute to our diversity as our most precious global commons. As a global commons or public good, diversity denotes the totality of relational resources for making meaningful differences in realizing sustainable patterns of intimately shared welfare. The primary function of diversity-oriented international relations is not hammering out agreements that level down differences in pursuit of a universal ethic. Neither is it institutionalizing tolerance, preserving difference by insuring that it no longer makes a difference—a relativist version of universalism. Rather, the primary function of international relations becomes strengthening differences in the sense of appreciating how they can be related in order to foster relating freely. As diversity is globally enhanced across all domains of endeavor bearing on public good, international relations will—in terms of present ideals—work paradoxically against increasing security and for deepening vulnerability shared among all relevant actors. There is, ultimately, no other route to truly liberating intimacy. Yet, because diversity consists, in Buddhist terms, of the activation of emptiness or the mutual relevance among all beings, the increasing vulnerability that comes with increasing intimacy is always also an enriching opening-up of what we mean for one another. There are risks in resolutely orienting international relations toward diversification. But they are the kinds of risk that must be taken if the interdependence and emptiness of all things is to manifest as our shared realization of unlimited skill in means: horizonless capacities for contributory and appreciative virtuosity. Failing to commit to reorienting international relations in this way, the very conditions that might otherwise have been turned to creative consummation will draw us inexorably into continued conflict and suffering.

#### Interp: affirmatives must defend their epistemic project prior to weighing the plan. This means they have to win why talking about the affirmative outweighs the link arguments before evaluating a risk of solvency.

#### 1 - Mutual dispossession comes in haptically, ONLY through incorporation of empathy absent of the automation of transparent resource management through IR and executive status, this orientation disconnects connectivity by the refusing of affect connectivity

**Harney & Moten ‘2** (Harney, Stefano, and Fred Moten. "ALL INCOMPLETE" (2021): 1. Pgs 1-201 (Stefano Harney is the Professor of Strategic Management Education at Singapore Management University., Fred Moten is the professor of Performance Studies at New York University and has taught previously at University of California, Riverside, Duke University, Brown University, and the University of Iowa)//Joey

Algorithm is the imposition – by rule, at scale – of the impossible task of shared **abstraction**. Mary Pat Brady shows how scale’s bad feel, and the bad feelings the desire for scale requires and induces, are implications of this shared abstraction, this abstracted sharing, this discretionary metaphysics of individuation given in electronic lock step and brutal (single-)line dance as pulse enforcement’s networked composition.25 On all them other hands, algorithm contact **improvisational violence** to the zero-one/one-two, a disruption of its protocols, which form the binary rhythm of the iron system as Adorno accurately described and inaccurately ascribed it. When the senses become theoreticians in their practice a **discomposition** of the individual **occurs**; flesh/ blackness, as the end/death of the individual, is the individual’s decomposition. The move from **logistics** to **logisticality** – from forced availability (“in the flesh” as Hortense Spillers puts it) to a mechanics of undercommon hapticality – is, itself, spooky action at a distance, the exterior affects and effects of the intramural. We study the relation between the intramural, as Spillers works it, and entanglement, as Silva works that. They **breathe agony** into **empathy** and empathy into ethics and we feel that; they weave difference without separation and we wear that. In the interest of being really useful, we study the minor internal contact and internecine radiation of various quartets, which remain unheard by the ones, you know, the zero-ones/one-twos, who have interests, who are interested in being themselves in the interest of some kind of owning, as if owning were a mode of **defense**. The only defense **is openness**. The only **owning is unowning**. Give everything away until you have nothing. Give it all away until you are nothing. You got to give it up. You can’t get ahold of it; you gotta **hope, against hope**, that it gets ahold of you. That’s what the (zero-) ones(-twos) call stealing, when neither self nor world are graspable, which is to say that the closer you get to grasping either one, the closer we get to disappearing. But you already know that everything in blurred lines was already there in got to give it up. In the face of this stealing from the stolen what we continue to receive in them is their stealing away, in undercommon assembly, in the thickness, in varying sharpnesses of drafting and overdrafting, of speculative, anarchitectural, antinational, profanational drawing, of parabolic turns and eccentric, centrifugal, extracircular returns of the drawing of breath, drawn away from it, in and out of itself, off scale, over (and under) rule, (up) against it. Our high-low monastic nothingness is irrectangular blurrrrr, out of line and out of round and out of turn, multiply tabled/terkhed/torqued/ twerked/tongued, our uncorralled chorale. This is the logistics of algorithmic composition, and the rhythm of logistical capitalism, which envisions and by envisioning envelops and entraps the earth in a world that runs to the end of the earth and is the end of the earth. Logistics runs the globe, runs after the earth and the logisticality that has developed as a capacity on this earth. Logistics extends, expands, accumulates the space and time of a capitalism driven across the earth by the algorithmic zero-one/one-two beat. And by doing so it forces upon the earth, the world. If logisticality is the resident capacity to live on the earth, **logistics** is the **regulation** of that capacity in the service of making the world, the zero-one, one-two world that pursues the general antagonism of life on earth. The world is posed as the way to live on the earth as the individual is posed as the way to live in the world. To live in the world as an individual is therefore to be logistic, and to be logistic is to **settle** into a rhythm that kills, to beat out that rhythm over the undercommon track that keeps (giving away) its own measure. To say that synaptic labor generalizes a certain availability is also to say that insofar as it is derivation, reduction, residuality, it cannot but be less amidst its drive to be more and to improve continuously. And so too for the desperate and **dangerous** acts of **individuation**, of global analysis, of policy, of settlement, of a finally imperial antipathy to empathy – a resonance open before it was opened and after it was enclosed. What one might call the social life of things is important only insofar as it allows us to imagine that social life is not a relation between things but is, rather, that field of rub and rupture that works, while being the work of, no one, nothing, in its absolute richness. Such (social) work is no work at all but the madness remains; rub and rupture all but emerge, but in nothing like an emergence, as something imprecision requires us to talk about as if it were some thing, not just discrete but pure. More specifically, almost salvifically, we want to call it a line, or a pulse, but it won’t come. Ani*mater*ial riddim cutting rhythm cutting method – microtonality’s overpopulation of measure, *Zaum* preoccupying *Raum* with an extrarational, hyperganjic, dancehallsanskritic, anachorasmiatic, al-Mashic, all mashed up buzz, the alternate groove we in, the devalued and invaluable local insurgency – disobeys our most loving invocation. This gift of spirit gives itself away and zero-one/one-two is left embittered. The pathway to the lived experience of impossible individuation goes through rigid conformity, whose severed, separate performances are strictly accounted for. School is where the social contract is taken out on kids. In good schools, network’s eclipse of contact is enacted with great efficiency; in bad schools, an experiment might happen, either accidentally, where networks and the networked don’t apply, or under the protection of an idea of the alternative. The loss of empathy in the submission of the social to the contractual ought only ever make us want to ask, can there be cybernetic bruise? Cybernetic caress? Cybernetic sensation? This we do in remembrance of the general antagonism and the general strike we keep all but enacting, recognizing that these questions arise not from the fact of new computational hardware but rather from the values that animate old computational software – a spiritless theory of mind/hand coordination manifest most clearly in the reduction of reverent touch to instrumental grasp. It’s not that touch is nonviolent. It’s that we need lovingly to return such violence from resource improvement back to its multiple sources. We want to intensify our thoughtful feel of bad complicity in the interest of its brush against the good so that no one can ever say, ‘Watch me make my own way through this bullshit.’ The record shows, no one can take the blows and remain intact in the effort to remain intact, which is only given in the taking of the blows. If we want to fight for the good, we have to overturn the bad rather than navigate it by ourselves in crowded loneliness. It’s all nappy and out of all compass – dread, naught, knotty, naughty, dred as worn cover and rent vessel. The oldness, the oldheadedness of the people, is given in their recognition and refusal of this turbulence we go through. There, they study what also can’t be there. It’s like a band straining against development, trying to make a music that studies it while avoiding it. Is there a point where you can’t go on indefinitely? Is that space limited or unlimited? The broken document of a workshop that breaks out into poetry by breaking from the crafting of poems is a concert film. The record of thoughtful play becomes a play. The undercommons is the refusal of the interpersonal, and by extension the international, upon which politics is built. To be undercommon is to live incomplete in the service of a shared incompletion, which acknowledges and insists upon the inoperative condition of the individual and the nation as these brutal and unsustainable fantasies and all of the material effects they generate oscillate in the ever-foreshortening interval between liberalism and fascism. These inoperative forms still try to operate through us. In this light, we might begin to understand the decolonial petty bourgeoisie’s strange incapacity to self-nominate either as a class or as revolutionary while proffering an all but constant critique of imperialism. It turns out not to be such a mystery if we move in the way of analytic description, refusing the opposition of description and analysis while working way off to the side of self-description and self-analysis, as well. Maybe analytic description begins with the awareness that there has to be more to it than analytic description, which is not in and of itself para-ceremonial practice. **Black critical reflexivity** can’t simply declare itself to have escaped the hall of mirrors that constitutes (self-)representational mind and its political arts. What it will have been to publish has to open onto a kind of **devotional incompleteness** rather than incompleteness’s disavowal. What sisters will Cabral have been grounding with, sharpening the weapon of theory ‘round a kitchen table in the absence of a kitchen? Meanwhile, is din, which is, as Glissant says, our discourse, the sum of sin + don? Is our damned foregivenness – this terrible practice of having been there before in being gone, in going off – the revolutionary **gift** that passes through us, or to which we are appended as leaves to or in a common wind, so that we are carried by what drives and pierces, so that we accompany the breath we bear in our dispersal, in how we share not being in a fade or fringe or soufflé of ash? Is fallenness - which is our fleshliness, our monstrosity, as gift - just this entanglement of entanglement and decay and survivance that attends being held and touched and handed in this tendency of pending, as if all we are is just this continual being broken by and broken off, inseparably? Is this principle of incompleteness in common, of being clothed in naked skin, of being apparel’d in sin, of having donne’d our flesh in a general, atmospheric intra-vulnerability, only to be claimed through being lost, through being stolen, in being shared in tight dis place/meant’s interminable delay? We’ve always been attuned to the fact that we’re dying here, that we’re dying all the time, in this survival that we share. We’ve always been despised for that attunement, in **survival**, to survival in passing on by this (mad)Man who wants to **live (apart)** forever. Surveillance will have stayed us so he can stay and try to stave all off in stealing everything. But somehow being-held escapes the hold’s epistemological and politico-economic grasp and works disruptive refusal of the normative politico-economic discourse on corruption. That discourse disavows corruption, projects it onto a new world, or a third world, while it is reduced to the fixed operationalization of an inveterate and brutal stability that constitutes the globalization of normative political economy. Neoliberalism’s relation to corruption is, in this regard, like Pat Boone’s relation to Fats Domino. What they call corruption is, really, a form of politico-economic embalming. A mummification of the dead body politic against the degenerative and regenerative force of social existence. A daily practice to engage these questions has always been at the core of my lived experience in the general antagonism. Some may consider the idea of such insurgent hapticality too idealistic, too romantic or too insignificant. But I can point to that afternoon with Dee and countless other moments of sharing, however short-lived, moments too wild, too queer, too ungovernable to simply reinforce the structures and conditions of ontological precarity. There’s always a “beyond,” always a “more than” which fosters social wealth and unlikely microclimates of care. That doesn’t mean the matter of how we survive and thrive isn’t still the most urgent, most immediate concern – we cannot wait for a tomorrow that will never come. We have always figured out, in the here and now, ways to stir up ripples of daily care that expand into tidal waves of fugitive power. We often don’t practice blurring the dots between quotidian reality and future possibility, but that shit’s been real for me. I’m the product of such care in the hold. I wouldn’t be here without it although I know I’ll meet the same premature fate as all of my kinfolk who didn’t/won’t make it. There’s this formulation that Robert Duncan gets from Erwin Schrödinger that helps a certain disordering along. Schrödinger says “living matter evades the decay to equilibrium.” Well, if Proudhon is right, and slavery, murder, robbery, and property are a unit; if the general regime of private property is most accurately understood as social death; then what if death/private property is that equilibrium of which Schrödinger speaks? What John Donne speaks of by way of God’s sovereign capacity to preserve is a problem that will have been meant to solve a problem; and when Schrödinger speaks of evading the decay to equilibrium, he isn’t saying that all decay is bad. Corruption is our (accursed) share, our antological practice, our eccentric centering, as M.C. Richards might say. How we evade ownership/equilibrium is given precisely in that refusal to **prevent loss** that we call sharing, rubbing, empathy, hapticality: the undercommon love of flesh, our essential omnicentric or anacentric eccentricity. Every acquisition, every improvement, is an ossification of sharing. This ossification is given in and as containment. The first odious vessel produced by and for logistics is not the slave ship, but the body – flesh conceptualized – which bears the individual-in-subjection. A profound viciousness begins with this colonization of the posited body, the appointment of the posited mind, and the manipulation – in various modalities of brutality – of their mutually enveloping redundancy, given in the dead perpetual motion of the will to colonize. This enclosure, this settlement, will be repeated because it must be repeated. Every slave will have been every time the mirror in which the self, in seeing itself, comes into existence in and as itself, which is an omnicidal fantasy. In Zen Buddhist philosophy the goal of the Heart Doctrine is *ji ji muge*, which can be translated as *no block*. Nothing prevents the path, the way, from flowing. The heart travels freely. But when the heart travels freely it must not imagine it is free. That is why we must also translate *ji ji muge* as *non non block*. The difference between no block and non non block is both infinitely small and infinite. But where to look for this distinction? We have sought this distinction in the difference between **diversity** and the general antagonism or between **touch** and hapticality or indeed perhaps most explicitly between logistics and logisticality.

#### 2 - Spiritual Attunement -- debates about the “fiated consequences of the plan” promote ethical failure.

**Locke ’19** [Jessica; May 13; Associate Professor of Buddhism at Loyola University of Maryland; *Buddhism and Whiteness: Critical Reflections*, *Philosophy of Race*, “Chapter 9,” p. 161-175]

In Buddhist ethics and whiteness studies, we can find rich discussions of the problems and possibilities that stem from the perceptual habits that ground our ways of having a world. While the content of these traditions, on the face of it at least, appears to deal with radically different problems, they both point to the depth of the ethical ramifications of our phenomenological rapport with the world. The entire Buddhist path is predicated upon human beings’ ability to work to transform our phenomenological orientation in order to extirpate ourselves from the fundamental ignorance that causes our suffering and our ethical failures. Anti-racism likewise hinges upon not only the possibility but the necessity of working to revise racialized perceptual habits and thereby challenge the racist valuations that arise within and because of white supremacy.

In what follows, I use moral phenomenology as the unifying concept through which to read Buddhist ethics and whiteness alongside one another. My aim is to draw forth the structural similarities between the Buddhist account of releasing oneself from the self-cherishing attitude and the antiracist task of challenging racialized perceptual habits. The latter task is especially urgent for white people, for whom whiteness is often difficult to single out as a subjective structure of experience. Whereas people of color are much more aware of white privilege, racism, and the way norms of whiteness function as a standard of value in American culture, white people more often lack perceptual attunement to our own privilege, to racialized dynamics in society, and indeed to our own racialized styles of thinking and perceiving. For this reason, much (but not all) of my analysis of whiteness as a moral-phenomenological problem will problematize it within white peoples’ experience.

My approach to these moral phenomenologies is not just descriptive. Ultimately, reading these moral phenomenologies alongside one another helps draw into focus the available trajectories for working on the structure of conscious experience to change ourselves at the dispositional level. The aspiration to cultivate ethical subjectivity and transform consciousness in this way is bold; it asks much more of us than subscription to moral norms. Instead, it makes experience itself an ethical project. While the task of transforming our way of having a world sounds impossibly vast or possibly even naïve, both Buddhist ethics and anti-racism demonstrate how indispensable this form of ethical self-cultivation is to our flourishing.

Moral phenomenology addresses the ethical salience of experience itself. The qualities of my experience—the valuations that I bring to the objects of my experience and my affective responses to those things—comprise the scene in which my moral life unfolds. I am disposed to the world—pushed and pulled by certain ideas, objects, people, and courses of action—because of the meanings that supervene on all of these things. These meanings guide my navigation of the world; they comprise the frames of reference within which I think, feel, and act. The values and significances that populate my world come to me with a “wake of historicity,” as Merleau-Ponty would say; they are invested in the objects of experience by way of perceptual habits that sediment over time through repeated engagement and practice. This kind of habituation finds myriad instantiations in our perception. One would not have to search too long to find two Americans who perceive a semi-automatic weapon according to vastly different perceptual habits: such a weapon is either revolting—a grotesque, infuriating symbol of the NRA’s cold-blooded grasp on American policy and public safety—or it is evocative of American independence, self-determination and freedom from the always-lurking threat of tyranny or threat of the “Other.”

While the significance of our world seems seamless and totalized, in fact the specificity of its meaning for us is underwritten by the subjective styles by which we experience it. Our perceptual habits draw forth the meaningful particularities of our world. In this sense, we see ourselves reflected within the world that we help to constitute; the significances that stand out to us as meaningful are not objective facts of our world per se but rather are given to us through the subjective structures that we provide for having a world at all. Nonetheless, the subjective contribution we make toward its appearance for us is hidden behind its seamlessness and totalized quality. We do not see our perceptual habits but rather we see and experience through our perceptual habits, and our ethical lives—every choice we make and even how the terms of our choices appear to us as such—are grounded first and foremost in perception.

What moral phenomenology highlights for us, therefore, is that how we comport ourselves in the world is profoundly conditioned by the habitual, phenomenological structures that run much deeper than our explicit intellectual commitments. Our ethical flourishing and the fullness of our character are not matters of subscribing to a “correct” view at an intellectual level, and we cannot eschew ethical infelicities simply by intellectually assenting to a philosophical or a political tenet. The real ethical work that moral phenomenology suggests lies in addressing the contradiction between our reflective, consciously avowed values and our pre-reflective, unconscious feelings and responses that comprise the conditions under which we gear into our ethical lives.

UNDOING THE HABIT OF SELF-CHERISHING: MAHĀYĀNA BUDDHIST ETHICS

In the traditional Buddhist iconographic representation of the human condition known as the Wheel of Life, the cyclic suffering of our existence turns on the “hub” of the so-called three poisons—the afflictions of passion, aggression, and ignorance, represented by a rooster, a snake, and a pig, respectively. In many renderings, the rooster and the snake are depicted emerging from the mouth of the pig, symbolizing how passion and aggression are in fact products of our fundamental ignorance (Sanskrit: avīdya). This ignorance names our fundamental, primal misapprehension of the way things truly are—interdependent and impermanent.2 We hypostasize the content of our experience and our own atomic, individualized selfhood, projecting upon them a permanence and a substantial reality that they in fact lack. Then, based upon that misapprehension, we perceive and experience the world through a structure of subject-object duality.

Clinging to the self and phenomena as permanent entities skews our experience. Everything that we perceive is understood relative to the reified self as either worthy of desire and pursuit (passion, the rooster) or revulsion and avoidance (aggression, the snake). This is a mediated world “full of symbolic representations,” as twentieth-century Tibetan teacher Traleg Kyabgon puts it.3 By clinging to the self and to the meanings and values that we project onto the content of our world as intrinsically existent, we establish a highly polarized, ego-centered frame of reference that serves as the map with which we navigate our world.

We interrogate the world through a perceptual habit of this clinging to “permanent essences,” and this imputation of intrinsic reality of a self and a world produces an ethical orientation that is an expression of confusion. By postulating a substantial self dialectically opposed to a solid world “outside,” populated by essential objects to which we are either attached or from which we are repulsed, we engage in an exhausting, never-ending drama of fighting to defend or fortify ourselves. As Traleg Kyabgon puts it, “We do objectify things in the sense of seeing everything in a dualistic fashion—subject and object, perceiver and perceived—but we also fail to objectify things, and so end up seeing it all too personally.”4 In postulating a fixed, objective world, we effectively give ourselves a profoundly subjective world with ourselves placed at the center of it.

This dualistic way of taking up the world is the origin of suffering, the central problem addressed by Buddhist ethics.5 Fundamentally, the Buddhist ethical approach to ending suffering and promoting human flourishing problematizes the conventional phenomenological orientation that is the cause of our suffering. It calls us to transform that orientation in the interest of ethical self-transformation. Following Jay Garfield,6 I read this ethics as a moral phenomenology;7 it calls for a process of ethical self-cultivation that moves the practitioner from a state of deluded egocentrism toward a liberated state of non-clinging, allowing her to become fully open to and skillful in the task of benefiting sentient beings. When we posit the “I” as our own mobile center of the universe, we automatically develop the instinct to protect and privilege its interests, producing an orientation classically termed “self-cherishing.” The twentieth-century Tibetan scholar Geshe Lhundub Sopa is unsparing in his emphatic warnings about the perils of self-cherishing, which he refers to as “the real enemy” and as a “demonic attitude” through which both “you and others will be harmed by your egocentric behavior.”8 Self-cherishing harms us because it reinscribes the reification of self and other, thus entrenching us ever more deeply in ignorance and prompting us toward exclusive selfconcern and indifference to the interests of others.

Self-cherishing is therefore an ethical problem with epistemological roots, and Buddhist ethics addresses it by asking us to unweave the habits of perception that polarize our experience. In Mahāyāna Buddhism, this takes the form of cultivating bodhicitta, the “awakening mind” (Tibetan: byang chub kyi sems). Bodhicitta names the realization of the selflessness of one’s own identity and the emptiness of all phenomena, together with the compassionate intention to become enlightened in order to benefit sentient beings. Altogether, this marks a total dissolution of the self-other binary that motivates self-cherishing. Of course, this binary is already refuted by Buddhist metaphysics; philosophically speaking, this is the “View” to which all Mahāyāna practitioners subscribe. Simply subscribing to this view does not quite suffice as a method for extirpating ourselves from ignorance, however. The view of emptiness and the ethical comportment that pairs with it have to be integrated at a deep, intrapersonal level, and that requires an ongoing practice of working with phenomenological habits.

The Tibetan Buddhist Mind Training (Tibetan: blo sbyong) tradition is dedicated to the project of cultivating bodhicitta. The Wheel-Weapon Mind Training, a text attributed to the eleventh-century Indian sage Dharmarakṣita, is an especially provocative example of this moral-phenomenological training.9 One of its most prominent tropes is the repeated listing of various types of suffering, such as social alienation, mental anguish, sickness, failure (both worldly and spiritual), destitution, unwieldy mental states, and the list goes on, and then pairing them with a meditation upon the sort of ego-clinging that is its cause. For example, one such verse reads: “When there is disagreement as soon as my companions gather, it is the weapon of my own evil deeds turned upon me for peddling my discontent and evil disposition everywhere. From now on without any ulterior motive, I shall behave well toward all.”10 The primary exercise here is a reorientation of the practitioner’s understanding of her own suffering. Rather than seeing it from the standpoint of being victimized by something “out there,” again and again the practitioner locates the cause of suffering in herself, in her own ego-clinging mind, and commits herself to reversing this tendency by doing the opposite of the habitual behavior that led to the suffering in the first place.

The text goes on to celebrate the value of suffering and its role in pointing out to us the fact of our self-cherishing. In wonderfully florid language, the text supplicates for the destruction of ego-clinging: “Roar and thunder on the head of the destroyer, false construction! Mortally strike at the heart of the butcher, the enemy, Ego!”12 This move—of turning our attention toward the ego-centricity of our phenomenological orientation to the world— interrupts the conventional attitude of experiencing the world antagonistically, from the “zero point” of our own atomistic selfhood. In his commentary on this text, Geshe Lhundub Sopa summarizes this instruction as follows: “We usually blame countless external causes [for our suffering], but now we should place the blame only on the view of a real personal identity and the self-cherishing attitude. Nobody and nothing else should be blamed.”13 This is not a moralistic instruction toward self-flagellation. It is a method for training the mind away from our habitual responses to suffering. It hinges first and foremost upon the exercise of stepping outside of our ordinary ways of navigating the world and contesting the objectivity of the assumptions and values that supervene on our experience. There is nothing esoteric about this mind training practice; it engages with our most mundane irritations, social obstacles, and personal challenges, explaining them in a way that reveals their potency as nearly endless objects of moral-phenomenological practice, so long as we relate to them skillfully.

At one point, the text acknowledges the profound effects of our habituation in creating the conditions for our suffering: “Habituated to attachment and aversion, I revile everyone opposed to me. Habituated to envy, I slander and deprecate others.”14 The Tibetan verb that is the root of the term “habituated” in this verse is goms, which is also the root of the verbs “meditate” and “cultivate.” Indeed, elsewhere in the text, this verb is used in a highly phenomenological sense to describe the consequences for “cultivating impure vision” and the need to “cultivate only pure vision.”15 The difference between these two uses of the root verb goms involves a subtle but revealing detail of Tibetan grammar. Goms can take a volitional or a non-volitional valence, distinguished by a difference in spelling; to be “habituated” is to dwell within the dualism and afflictive emotions of our confusion non-volitionally, whereas “to cultivate” involves a volitional engagement and intervention upon the structure of our experience. The moral-phenomenological lesson here is that the habitual structures that we dwell within come together through a process of cultivation that is accessible to us if we actively engage with it. Meditation and the moral-phenomenological self-cultivation of Buddhist ethics writ large are volitional acts that can become part of the non-volitional, background structure of our experience. This grammatical quirk in Tibetan points to the link between the “active” and “passive” aspects of our subjectivity that Buddhist moral phenomenology exploits.

Altogether, the Wheel–Weapon is an extended exercise in reframing the significance of suffering, making suffering an instruction that points back at us, at the practitioner, to our own attitudes and ways of experiencing the world. This exercise restructures those habitual patterns that define and condition our suffering and self-cherishing. This practice of mind training is a rigorous method for eradicating the orientation that has proceeded from the reification of self and other and for setting the practitioner aright with a more epistemologically and ethically felicitous orientation. It shows how true ethical flourishing relies upon a process of transforming the practitioner’s way of having a world through a practice of de-habituation from ignorance and toward bodhicitta.

CONTESTING HABITS OF WHITENESS: MORAL PHENOMENOLOGY IN WHITE ANTI-RACISM

bell hooks argues that it is necessary “for concerned folks, for righteous white people, to begin to fully explore the way white supremacy determines howthey see the world, even as their actions are not informed by the type of racial prejudice that promotes overt discrimination and separation.”16 She notes that well-meaning white people face an obstacle in recognizing the elements of our own experience—the ways we perceive and navigate the world, the subtleties of our values and feelings—that are, in fact, rooted in racism and therefore play a collaborative role in white supremacy. Even if white people disavow the harms caused by racism, we often unwittingly re-enact those harms by embodying a stance of white normalcy to which we have become habituated by our culture. This recalls James Baldwin’s assertion that white people are “trapped in a history which they do not understand; and until they understand it, they cannot be released from it.”17 For white people to truly engage with anti-racism means not just addressing overt bigotry or structural racism but what hooks calls the “encompassing and profound reality” of the holistic, world-forming impact of white supremacy, which carries the past into the present at each instant, in our social discourse as well as our subjective experience within which white supremacist values and attitudes supervene, though they may not be obvious as such.

hooks goes on to call for “a paradigm, a practical model for social change that includes an understanding of ways to transform consciousness that are linked to efforts to transform structures.”19 The moral-phenomenological significance of a practical model for transforming consciousness is what I examine in the following section.20 My objective in drawing out this moral phenomenology is to go beyond a diagnosis of whiteness as a totalized phenomenological and social structure and to move toward a more proactive engagement with the possibilities for transforming consciousness on the order of what hooks says is necessary.

Whiteness provides a set of norms, meanings, and values based upon a centering and valuation of whiteness and white people and a decentering and devaluation of blackness and black people. There is nothing essential or ultimately ontologically true about whiteness or white normalcy, but even in its contingency it is a powerfully regulative norm of social discourse and embodied subjectivity. As George Yancy puts it, whiteness is a “relationally lived phenomenon”; it is not a metaphysical reality.21 People of color are marked and “Otherized” by the norms of whiteness; Yancy describes the experience of being black under the white gaze as an invasion, a distortion, and as a rupture of one’s own body schema.22 Conversely, white people experience whiteness as an absence, as being the unraced “norm” against which blackness and all other racial categories are dialectically known, raced, marked, and named. Whiteness remains unmarked, while blackness becomes the object of the white gaze. Black “Otherness” is marked, disciplined, and made to stand out as “abnormal”—outside the norm of whiteness—while whiteness remains “unremarkable.” Yancy illustrates this point by recounting an encounter at an annual meeting of the American Philosophical Association, in which a white philosopher admonished Yancy not to use African American vernacular in his writing and remarked that Yancy “[speaks] very well.” The implication was that Yancy was out of turn in using a writing style that did not conform to “standard” American English and that, from the unspoken but centered standpoint of the white philosopher’s authority on language, style and professional mores, Yancy’s blackness marked him as problematic and at the margin of the profession.23 For a white person, the experience of being centered as “the standard” in this way elides the contingency of the highly polarized valuation conferred upon us. As Sara Ahmed puts it, whiteness “becomes the very ‘what’ that coheres a world” but also functions as “a category of experience that disappears as a category through experience.”24 Whiteness orients subjects and dictates how they inhabit and navigate their world, but it does so while disappearing into their implicit, background experience.

In taking the valuations that define our experience of the world as objective and failing to appreciate all the ways in which our subjectivities are constituted in contradistinction to the violently targeted “Other” of blackness, white people are indeed beset by a specific and pernicious form of ignorance. This is the “white ignorance” that Charles Mills defines as “a particularly pervasive—though hardly theorized—form of ignorance.”25 This ignorance yields an inaccurate rendering of the world, because the biases that inhere in white ignorance entail not seeing what is there but instead “seeing” a fictionalized Other. On the other end of this fictionalization is, of course, a person of color who can and does realize that “they are not seen at all.”26 The regulatory work being done by whiteness is thus not equally invisible to everyone; as Ahmed points out, privilege is only invisible to those who have it.27 White ignorance is not simply one standpoint among others; there is a veridical viewpoint that this white ignorance precludes, a knowledge to which those situated outside the “zero point” of white normalcy have access.28 Phenomenologically speaking, the norms and valuations of whiteness become sedimented in perceptual habits as preferences toward whiteness and aversions toward blackness. These perceptual habits are often so seamlessly integrated into the lifeworld of the perceiving subject that he [they] does not even realize they are at play, though for the well-meaning, liberal white person, they undercut his explicitly held beliefs about race.

Implicit bias is a telling example of how this process of undercutting functions. In the years since the Civil Rights era, the number of white people in the United States who avow racially discriminatory views has declined.29 However, as many social-psychological studies across decades suggest, even well meaning, liberal white people still perceive and respond to people of color in a racist, biased way. While on the whole it has become far more taboo to be explicitly bigoted (notwithstanding the recent resurgence of flagrant white supremacist rhetoric in the era of Donald Trump’s election and presidency), and while more and more white Americans now profess racially egalitarian values, in point of fact, even these white people still instantiate racist views in their lived experience and social comportment. For example, in their study of bias in hiring decisions, Dovidio and Gaertner assigned white people who had claimed not to hold racially discriminatory views the task of rating the resumés of hypothetical job applicants. In cases when the standard for judging qualifications was ambiguous, the study subjects demonstrated a bias in favor of candidates with stereotypically white-sounding names and against candidates with stereotypically black-sounding names.30 That is, “moderate qualifications are responded to as if they were strong qualifications when the candidate is wh ite, but as if they were weak qualifications when the candidate is black.”31 Despite professing liberal, egalitarian ideals, these subjects saw potential job applicants through a gaze that inflected black applicants with disfavor and projected preference for white applicants. The gaze with which these study subjects met their world (and these potential job applicants) constitutes an ethical failure, a mismatch between their explicitly held morals and their actual, practical discourse with the world and with others.

What this shows is that even if white people intellectually assent to antiracist politics, we are still subject to the powerfully influential historicity of white supremacy that shows itself in pervasive, unconscious racist perceptual habits that influence feelings about and behavior toward people of color. Examining an encounter with a white woman in an elevator whose discomfort with being alone with a black man was palpable, Yancy writes that even if she comes to “judge her perception of the Black body as epistemologically false, . . . her racism may still have a hold on her lived body. I walk into the elevator and she feels apprehension.”32 Conceptually agreeing with racial justice does not undo all of the subtleties of the embodied, affective, symbolic, and perceptual facets of racial bias that have sedimented as part of our phenomenological rapport with the world.

Implicit bias is a manifestation of a phenomenological orientation conditioned by the standards of norms of whiteness that distort perception. Through this distortion, what is seen is not the black person but the racism of the white gaze itself. On this point, Yancy writes, “The white gaze defines me, skewing my own way of seeing myself. But the gaze does not ‘see’ me, it ‘sees’ itself.”33 That the white gaze is polarized at all is not obvious to the white person, however. The error and distortion rendered by the white gaze is belied by its totalizing function, and what is given through the white gaze, while clearly both product and reproduction of a cultural patrimony of white supremacy, is experienced as ahistorical and objective. What appears vis-àvis the white gaze arises within the seamless, totalized lived experience of the white subject. Again, we return to bell hooks: “When liberal whites fail to understand how they can and/or do embody white-supremacist values and beliefs even though they may not embrace racism as prejudice or domination . . . , they cannot recognize the ways their actions support and affirm the very structure of racist domination and oppression that they profess to wish to see eradicated.”34 Problematizing racism and white supremacy in the world and in American society does not equate to routing the effects of white supremacy in one’s own thinking, perception, and ways of having a world.

For the white subjects in the implicit bias studies to truly live out their ideals of racial equality, they must not only ascribe to those politics in a nominal fashion but also work to inculcate those valuations at the level of their structures of perception, so that in their everyday discourse, their perceptual practices, and their various forms of bodily comportment they do not reinscribe and re-enact the long history of white supremacy that they claim to disavow. White anti-racism must go beyond offering “corrections” to mistaken views about race and offer practical ways for transforming consciousness. This is why Shannon Sullivan argues that the unconscious habits of white privilege are not simply the result of naïveté that can be cast out by informing a white person of the factual errors embedded in her assumptions about race.35 There is something durably pernicious about the unconscious habits of white privilege such that even well-meaning and well-informed attempts to rout it often miss the mark. Simply acknowledging the fundamental fictitiousness of racial categories or the injustice of white supremacy, for example, is not enough to unfurl the tapestry of racialized habits of perception. Metaphysics and intellectualization are not enough, an insight that is the subtext of hooks’ call for a pedagogy that can transform consciousness to address the “encompassing and profound reality” of white supremacy at the level of how we see and experience the world.

An example of a pedagogy in this vein comes from Patricia Devine and her colleagues at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, who developed a multifaceted implicit bias intervention program.36 The program included five types of interventions: stereotype replacement, counter-stereotypic imaging, individuation, perspective taking, and increasing opportunities for contact that together produced “encouraging evidence . . . in promoting enduring reductions in implicit bias.”37 Each of these interventions, while mutually reinforcing, takes a distinct approach to undermining negative stereotypes of blackness.38 To delve into but one example, the intervention of counter- stereotypic imaging provides rich fodder for moral-phenomenological analysis. This intervention utilizes the explicit thought process of “mental imagery” to show that implicit stereotyping processes are malleable and indeed more “interdependent” with explicit thought processes than they might otherwise appear.39 Subjects were asked to repeatedly and in detail draw forth “positive exemplars” whose identity or characteristics cut across conventionally negative valuations of blackness. These exemplars could be “abstract, embodying a specific quality (e.g., smart Black people), famous (e.g., Barack Obama), or non-famous (e.g., a personal friend).”40 In subsequent tests of their implicit bias, these subjects showed a diminished proclivity for racial stereotyping, effectively showing that a practice of counter-stereotyping— together with the full complement of other interventions prescribed by the program—can make a racial stereotype less hegemonic in dictating how one thinks about and perceives members of an out-group.

At first blush, this intervention may appear shallow or tokenistic. After all, having the “positive exemplars” of Barack and Michelle Obama in the White House for eight years quite manifestly did not “end” racism in the United States.41 From a moral-phenomenological standpoint, however, actively engaging in a practice of counter-stereotyping goes much deeper than tokenizing or making an empty gesture toward the value of diversity. What makes this intervention more meaningful and fruitful than that is its repeated, sustained practice and its active confrontation with habitual thinking as such. Rather than papering over racialized perceptual habits, it seeks to displace them by developing a rich, detailed competing narrative about blackness. What is underway in a practice of mental imagery such as this is a regime of de-habituation; it uses explicit thought processes to intervene upon implicit values, and its primary tool is affective and aesthetic rather than strictly rational or argumentative. It uses the intimacy of a visualization process to disrupt the totalization of a single, stereotypical perceptual habit over and over again. The stylizing function of the white gaze is confronted by a competing narrative that foregrounds black positivity. This process interrupts the seamless totalization of the white gaze, and, as a result, the valuations of whiteness become less hegemonic.

In similar fashion, other recent social-psychological research has studied the effects of a traditional Buddhist meditation technique known as lovingkindness meditation upon implicit bias with promising results. Loving-kindness meditation can take several forms, but a classic technique is to visualize a specific person and mentally repeat to oneself again and again phrases such as, “May you be at ease and happy.”42 At the University of Sussex, Alexander Stell and Tom Farsides found that practicing loving-kindness meditation toward a member of a racial out-group increased explicit, controlled cognition and decreased automatic, implicit cognition, resulting in a diminution of implicit bias toward the target group, as measured by the Implicit Association Test.43 (In this particular study, the loving-kindness was practiced with a specific black person in mind and resulted in decreased implicit bias toward black people in general.) Put more simply, this evidence suggests that this loving-kindness meditation makes subjects less beholden to their “knee-jerk,” stereotypical responses. Utilizing Buddhist meditative techniques in this specifically anti-racist way highlights the moral-phenomenological ramifications of actively countering stereotypical thinking and habituated responses. On the whole, studies such as these point to the potential of “Buddhistinspired,” contemplative anti-racist pedagogies to help reshape the racialized perceptual habits that cannot be accessed by intellectual learning alone.

Nonetheless, the potential gains of anti-racist pedagogies such as these are still, admittedly, modest, and we should not become too grandiose in our hopes that something like a solitary practice of counter-stereotypic mental imagining can “solve” racism. While this research on implicit bias does indicate the malleability and mutability of our phenomenological structures, it also underscores what an incremental and long-term commitment the revision of these structures will require. Even Devine’s report warns that “effort [is] necessary for implicit bias reduction” and “it is also likely that there is no single ‘magic bullet’ that, by itself, prompts the regulation of implicit bias.”44 The weight of a lifetime’s sedimentation of whiteness is certainly heavy, which is why even those of us who want not to be racist still may find ourselves manifesting racialized perceptual habits in our quotidian discourse.

Nonetheless, research such as this gives us meaningful insight into the moral-phenomenological project of transforming consciousness in the interest of anti-racism. These findings highlight the revisability of our perceptual processes. The phenomenological structures through which we have a world are indeed historical. These perceptual habits are not primordial, and the fact that they have a history should also draw our attention to their futurity. Specific, targeted interventions such as counter-stereotyping practice show that all experience changes us, and what we choose to bring into our milieu can work either to further entrench or to undermine the totalization of our racial categories. Doing so is not tantamount to disavowing whiteness or casting off white privilege, which is simply not possible to do in a racist society. Rather, it is a way of consciously naming how one’s position is conditioned by whiteness and becoming less embedded in the ignorance that it entails.

THE MORAL-PHENOMENOLOGICAL VALUE OF NAMING AND DE-CENTERING OUR ORIENTATION

Reading the moral phenomenologies of Buddhist ethics and white anti-racism alongside one another highlights the value of naming our phenomenological orientation as a phenomenological orientation and then working to displace its centrality in our way of having a world. Naming the self-cherishing attitude as such—as the product of the avoidable ignorance of a reified self-other binary—uproots phenomenological structures and calls into question the objectivity of what is given in experience. The entire 2,500-year history of Buddhist practice hinges upon the human capacity to accomplish this profoundly radical moral-phenomenological shift. Likewise, for white people, the practice of taking stock of and challenging how whiteness inflects our way of having a world is required if we are truly to decenter white supremacy in our own thinking as well as in the broader culture. Refusing to own the specificity of one’s orientation as a white person only reinforces the status of whiteness as the basic standard of “the human” and the “Otherness” of anything defined in contradistinction to whiteness.

Traleg Kyabgon reminds us that “our nature is one of tremendous potentiality, but a potentiality seldom explored. Due to our habits, we have done almost every conceivable thing except take full advantage of our potentiality. In fact, we have achieved the opposite, firmly putting a lid on our potential.”45 Exploring the tremendous potentiality of our subjectivity does not begin and end with embracing an intellectual anti-foundationalist metaphysical point about the fluidity of subjectivity. Such an exploration likely begins with an admission that the terms of our experience are mutable, but the real ethical work lies in taking up a practice of working on those terms in the interest of ethical self-cultivation. We can understand the temporality and historicity of our subjectivity as invitations to their revision, but we also must take responsibility for the hard, incremental work required to accomplish such revision. This recalls the famous line from the twelfth-century Tibetan lama Gampopa, who admonished his students to practice with such urgency “as if a snake had crawled into your lap or your hair had caught fire.”46 Self-cherishing has deep roots, and the opportunity that we have to practice the Buddhist dharma is precious. If nothing else, what Buddhist ethics can help the aspiring white anti-racist appreciate is the need for a long, sustained commitment to this practice. There are no instantaneous “fixes” for moral-phenomenological infelicities; these are structures of our consciousness that have come together over a long history and require dedicated practice in order to challenge.

Those who are pessimistic about the likelihood that white people will engage deeply with their own moral phenomenology cannot be blamed for drawing that conclusion; the phenomenon of white fragility speaks to the unwillingness of many white people to earnestly examine the racist norms that structure our thinking and perception. Not only must a white person be willing to contest their privileged, centered position in the epistemic, social and economic regime of whiteness; they must also submit to the disorientation and dissolution of their self-constitution that accompanies phenomenological self-transformation. Even the most committed white anti-racist must be prepared for the potential uncertainty and groundlessness that come with being de-centered from one’s conventional orientation to the world.

This brings to mind a notable distinction between Buddhist ethics and white anti-racism, which is the motivation to practice. The lodestone and primary driver of Buddhist practice is the painful, lived reality of suffering. We are all ensconced in suffering, and it is up to us and us alone to find a way out of it. This gives us a powerful reason for us to address our ignorance. Many Buddhist texts foreground the painful reality of the human condition in order to encourage the practitioner to exert herself on her path of practice. For example, the popular Tibetan teaching known as the Four Reminders outlines four key points that are meant to help motivate the practitioner: the difficulty of attaining the freedoms and advantages of human life, the reality of death and impermanence, the defects and suffering endemic to our cyclic existence, and the weight of karmic cause and effect. The second of these, the contemplation of death, deliberately evokes fear in order to spur the practitioner to take seriously the opportunity she has to practice. In her book on the Four Reminders, the contemporary Tibetan teacher Jetsun Khandro Rinpoche writes, “Reflecting on the impermanence of all phenomena should give rise to a sense of fear—not a paralyzing fear that keeps us from generating positive tendencies or bringing our potential to fruition, but a genuine sense of urgency in the face of impermanence.”47 Buddhist literature frequently invokes the value of this fear (Sanskrit: saṃvega), which Lajos Brons defines as “a religiously and morally motivating state of shock or agitation.”48 This fear can be highly productive inasmuch as it “produces and deepens insights in the nature of suffering and the brevity and irretrievability of an individual’s life,” which makes suffering intolerable and motivates the practitioner to decrease suffering in oneself and in others.49 All this is to say, Buddhist practitioners are given many opportunities to consider the urgency of the moral-phenomenological task before them. Although this task may be intensely challenging at times, it is framed as the only viable alternative to an endlessly repeating cycle of suffering. Buddhist practitioners are responding to a real and urgent existential problem.

White people likewise need to generate a motivational state similar to the Buddhist use of fear, a “white saṃvega.” The subjects in Dovidio and Gaertner’s study on implicit bias espouse ethical ideals of racial equality but then fail to enact them in their lived, embodied social discourse. Is this not a profound failure to achieve ethical flourishing? What I think this indicates is that altruistic motivation and positive emotions such as compassion—while good and likely necessary—may not on their own prompt the kind of deep self-examination and self-critique required for finding and challenging the parts of our moral subjectivity that go against how we see ourselves or how we wish to be in the world. For those of us who wish not to collaborate with white supremacy, the extent to which any of us are able to remain unaware of or indifferent to the racist patterns and habits that structure our experience of the world should be deeply disturbing, provoking a genuine sense of urgency to unseat the embodied, affective, perceptual habits that are undermining our explicitly held ethical values. In the same way that Khandro Rinpoche qualifies the difference between fear that paralyzes us and fear that motivates us, white people must learn to discern the difference between fearing racism because it is taboo to be racist (and therefore avoiding the topic altogether) and fearing racism because it stands between us and the values by which we wish to be guided in our ethical lives and that we wish to see manifest in our communities and society.50 Cultivating this motivational fear is a moralphenomenological exercise in itself, inasmuch as it reorients the significance of white people’s relative comfort within white supremacy—both material and epistemic—as in fact an obstacle to flourishing.

In sum, these moral phenomenologies of Buddhist ethics and white antiracism offer a vivid, highly relevant illustration of what it means to transform consciousness. The Buddhist project of releasing oneself from self-cherishing can sound archaic, grandiose or simply beyond reach of any normal person in a way that elides the quotidian intimacy of what bodhicitta might mean in our ordinary discourse, while the project of challenging racialized perceptual habits likewise might seem impossibly unrealistic or too personally taxing to attempt. Nonetheless, this comparative moral-phenomenological analysis shows us that by engaging wholeheartedly in practices that uproot our ordinary, habitual orientations, we can exploit the always-unfinished trajectory of our ethical subjectivity.

#### 3 – Their 1AR framework arguments are an attempt to return to business as usual -- weighing the case and the K as a “middle ground” is a racialized politics of tolerance that can’t wait to change the channel and return to “real scholarship” they recognize. Overcorrect your desire to go back to the “scheduled programming” that “we all expect”.

**Suh ’19** [Sharon; May 13; Professor of Buddhism at Seattle University; *Buddhism and Whiteness: Critical Reflections*, *Philosophy of Race*, “Chapter 1,” p. 5-7]

“WE INTERRUPT YOUR REGULARLY SCHEDULED PROGRAMMING TO BRING YOU THIS VERY IMPORTANT PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT . . .”: AKA BUSINESS AS USUAL IN THE ACADEMY

“We interrupt your regularly scheduled programming to bring you this very important public service announcement. . . .” Many of us grew up with this interruption, eyes glued to Saturday-morning cartoons, cereal bowl and spoon in hand. Or maybe it was the regular evening sitcom—an important announcement appears on the screen, the spectator watches with some concern, but maybe grows restless with the interruption of their televised fantasies, and then the programming we all expect and have invested in comes back on screen. I was reminded of these televised public service announcements while participating on a recent panel on power, privilege, and identity in American Buddhisms at the annual conference of the American Academy of Religion in 2017. The panel presenters included critical remarks on whiteness, class privilege, and sexual difference to a largely white audience of Buddhist Studies scholars who attended presumably to listen to some of the leading voices in Buddhism and difference. However, as the panel proceeded, it became readily apparent that the majority white audience was merely tolerating our scholarly interruptions (albeit with growing agitation) and that they could not wait to return to their regular programming of presentations analyzing Buddhist sutras or “real” scholarship. In other words, they wanted to change the channel on us and return to the disciplinary discussions they recognized— those that did not need to mention whiteness and that did not need to include much discussion of the simultaneity of identities that comprised much of the panel—Asian and Asian American Buddhist scholars, a queer white scholar from England, a white female scholar who studies whiteness and Buddhism, a black gay Buddhist lama, and myself—a second-generation Korean American cisgendered woman who studies Buddhism, gender, and race.

After the first few discussions of sexuality, the panel moved to the theme of race and that is when I began to sense in my bones that feathers were ruffled. Somehow, a presentation on sexuality was acceptable, but as soon as the term whiteness was uttered and whiteness in American Buddhism brought to the forefront, especially by an Asian American female body, there was a palpable shift in the room. I was not performing race in the ways the audience expected after all, for I began by troubling the whiteness in the room, the academy, and in sangha spaces. Our scholarly audience that was presumably here to listen to what we had to say about power and privilege began to fold arms over chests, shift in chairs, and the façade of exasperation and shut down ensued. They were not here for the purposes of genuine engagement and the egoless listening and epistemological humility that Charles Johnson offers as the foundations of Buddhism, but rather, out of a desire to gaze at difference with curiosity which soon turned into displeasure.13 They were there to witness the temporary disruption of their regular programming (an uncritical study of Buddhism steeped in Orientalist flavoring and racial superiority of whiteness and white normativity) and to show their support—tolerance—for diversity so they could return to their regular programming and business as usual.

In my own presentation, I spoke about the importance of acknowledging the hypervisibility and hyperinvisibility of people of color in American sanghas and studies of Buddhism in the West and how solid scholarship should engage in the requisite of interrogating power and privilege which induced sighs that seemed to complain “oh, this again?” I addressed the investments in whiteness that the field of Buddhist Studies has made and the costs of marginalization, racism, and minoritization of their knowledge meted out on people of color in the academy and in American sanghas. While their body language spoke volumes, their mouths remained silent. In the follow up question and answer, not one white scholar wanted to engage my explicit critique of Buddhism and whiteness. The experience was like a pin dropping—a silent but potential threat. As I gazed out at the audience, I could only see people of color with smiles on their faces; I got vigorous shakes of the head, thumbs up, and wide vocal applause. It was as if the only people in the room listening were the other people of color; white scholars neither challenged me nor expressed congratulations. In my hypervisibility I became invisible again. I was a flash on the screen giving a public announcement about whiteness and white supremacy and in an instant the channel returned to business as usual.

I am not sure why I was surprised by how the panel and presentation transpired; after all, it follows a formulaic storyline. This seems to be the way that spectatorship works with whiteness—a white gaze falls upon the spectacle of a person of color who has entered the guild, listens for evidence of their right to be part of the guild, notes the person’s failure to engage in “real scholarship,” and quickly returns to the gaze upon itself. It was in the question and answer period that I reached for my Buddhist killjoy survival kit and quickly devised an expedient mean to shift the dynamics of the panel itself, for several white male scholars of the audience began to pose exceptionally long questions about subjects not related to our panel and proceeded to answer the questions themselves. In so doing, they recentered whiteness as once again all eyes were on them; they attempted to reestablish that their words were the product of serious scholarship and that our time in public was up.

A seemingly endless debate about largely unrelated issues ensued as several white scholars in the audience began to pose critiques in the form of questions they themselves had the answers for and, in so doing, they shifted the attention of the room onto themselves. We, the actual panelists, were now sitting in the back of the room as the white male scholars suddenly recentered themselves and reestablished whiteness as the prevailing norm. I quickly decided in that moment that I no longer wished to be on air in this strange exhibition of power and privilege. I suddenly reached out for another Buddhist killjoy, one whose support I needed for my survival kit. I turned to the Buddhist lama, looked him in the eye and said, “I think we should have a moment together.” Shifting our gaze away from this curious spectacle of whiteness, our eyes locked and he said, “yes, let’s have a kumbayah moment” as he picked up my hands. Although the gesture was spontaneous, I reached out to the lama as another Buddhist killjoy, knowing that the gesture “is about the experience of having others who recognize the dynamics because they too have been there, in that place, that difficult place.”14 In so doing, we became the refuge and a gem to each other and created sanctuary in the midst of whiteness. I sought out safety and the only way that I knew how in that moment was to turn to my fellow Buddhist killjoy whose work on Buddhism, sexuality, and race I had deeply admired. I wanted to make a lateral dialogical move because I knew that the programming had just returned to “normal” so I shifted the landscape. Rather than become a silent voyeur to the new mini-panel that developed as a few audience members took over the space, I reached out to my co-panelist as a refuge and a lifeline that Ahmed describes as “a fragile rope, worn and tattered from the harshness of weather, but it is enough, just enough, to bear your weight, to pull you out, to help you survive a shattering experience.”15 It was a moment of co-bearing witness to whiteness.

#### 4 -- Even if you don’t think weighing the case is “racist”, the inevitable 1AR framework interp is perceived as an anti-black microaggression: This is empirically proven by the way that the Louisville Project was systemically excluded by groups like the PRL -- this exacerbates health disparities, physiological stress, and psychological violence against black debaters that are at an all-time high due to COVID AND a summer of racial protests over police brutality.

**Clark ’99** [Rodney; 1999; Professor and Researcher for Wayne State; “Racism as a Stressor for African Americans”, American Psychologist, October 1999, https://www.isr.umich.edu/williams/All%20Publications/DRW%20pubs%201999/racism%20as%20a%20stressor%20for%20african%20americans.pdf]

Biopsychosocial Effects of Perceived Racism in African Americans: A Contextual Model Examining the effects of intergroup racism and intragroup racism in African Americans is warranted for at least three important reasons. First, if exposure to racism is perceived as stressful, it may have negative biopsychosocial sequelae (N. B. Anderson, McNeilly, & Myers, 1991; Burchfield, 1979; Herd, 1991; James, 1993; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Selye, 1983) that might help explain intergroup differences in health outcomes (Dressier, 1991; Klag, Whelton, Coresh, Grim, & Kuller, 1991; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1985). Second, differential exposure to and coping responses following perceptions of racism may help account for the wide within-group variability in health outcomes among African Americans. Third, if exposure to racism is among the factors related to negative health outcomes in African Americans, specific intervention and prevention strategies could be developed and implemented to lessen its deleterious impact. These strategies would provide a needed supplement to efforts aimed at reducing health disparities in American society. Despite hypothesized links between perceptions of racism and health outcomes (Browman, 1996; Cooper, 1993; Jones, 1997; King & Williams, 1995; Klag et al., 1991; Krieger, Rowley, Herman, Avery, & Phillips, 1993; Krieger & Sidney, 1996; Landrine & Klonoff, 1996; Tyroler & James, 1978; Williams, Yu, Jackson, & Anderson, 1997), few studies have examined the effects of perceived racism within a comprehensive and empirically testable biopsychosocial model (see Figure 1). This proposed model is consistent with the conceptualizations of other researchers (e.g., Andersen, Kiecolt-Glaser, & Glaser, 1994; N. B. Anderson et al., 1991; Jorgensen, Johnson, Kolodziej, & Schreer, 1996) who have proposed relationships between biopsychosocial factors and specific health outcomes. Although unique in that it is tailored to apply to perceptions of racism, the model builds on the more general stress-coping model proposed by Lazarus and Folkman (1984). The principal tenet of this proposed model is that the perception of an environmental stimulus as racist results in exaggerated psychological and physiological stress responses that are influenced by constitutional factors, sociodemographic factors, psychological and behavioral factors, and coping responses. Over time, these stress responses are posited to influence health outcomes. Furthermore, the perception of environmental stimuli as racist and ensuing coping responses are postulated to be a function of a complex interplay between an array of psychological, behavioral, constitutional, and sociodemographic factors. Although it is possible for psychological, behavioral, constitutional, and sociodemographic factors to influence coping responses directly, for simplicity of illustration these connections are not included in Figure 1. The remainder of this section is devoted to explicating each component of the model and highlighting its relevance to research on health outcomes in African Americans. Following the discussion of "environmental stimuli," the section is divided into subsections delineating the moderator and mediator variables in the proposed model. Consistent with the work of Baron and Kenny (1986), moderator variables are defined herein as factors that influence the direction or magnitude of the relationship between predictor and criterion variables. Mediator variables, on the other hand, are operationalized herein as factors that may account, at least in part, for the relationship between predictor and criterion variables. Environmental Stimuli African Americans are disproportionately exposed to environmental stimuli that may be sources of chronic and acute stress (James, 1993; Outlaw, 1993; Sears, 1991; V. L. S. Thompson, 1996). The historical basis for many of these exposures has been experienced by few, if any, other ethnic groups to the extent it has by African Americans (James, 1993; Jones, 1997). A myriad of these stimuli (especially interpersonal) could be perceived as involving racism. For example, more than 50% of African Americans attribute substandard housing, lack of skilled labor and managerial jobs, and lower wages for African Americans to ethnic discrimination (Sigelman & Welch, 1991). Moreover, given that psychological and physiological stress responses are more sensitive to an individual's perception of stressfulness than objective demands (Burchfield, 1979; Matheny, Aycock, Pugh, Curlette, & Cannella, 1986), there is no a priori way of determining if an environmental stimulus will be perceived as racist by an individual (Adams & Dressier, 1988). Distinguishing between chronic and acute sources of perceived racism may be particularly instructive, given that these two sources of stress may differentially predict selfreported health status (Williams, Yu, & Jackson, 1997). Moreover, the combined effects of chronic and acute perceptions have the potential to contribute to psychological and physiological sequelae that may be particularly toxic in African Americans (Cooper, 1993; Feagin, 1991; Sigelman & Welch, 1991). Therefore, perceived racism as a potential source of stress should be viewed as having both chronic and acute dimensions. Moderator Variables Constitutional factors. Numerous constitutional factors are hypothesized to influence the relationship between exposure to environmental stimuli and health outcomes. For example, among many African Americans, skin tone has been associated with perceptions of ethnic discrimination (Keith & Herring, 1991; Udry, Bauman, & Chase, 1971), occupational status (Hughes & Hertel, 1990; Keith & Herring, 1991), and personal income (Keith & Herring, 1991). In addition to skin tone, family history of hypertension has been the focus of studies examining intergroup and intragroup differences in cardiovascular reactivity, resting blood pressure, and the prevalence of essential hypertension. Findings from studies examining the predictive utility of these markers to independently differentiate groups at varying levels of hypertension risk have been mixed (N. B. Anderson, Lane, Taguchi, & Williams, 1989; Hohn et al., 1983; Klag et al.( 1991; Korol, Bergfeld, & McLaughlin, 1975; Lawler & Allen, 1981; Tyroler & James, 1978). A growing body of research suggests, however, that family history of hypertension and skin tone influence the development of hypertension indirectly. That is, these constitutional factors may interact with sociodemographic variables to increase the risk of negative health outcomes like hypertension (N. B. Anderson & Armstead, 1995; Ernst, Jackson, Robertson, Nevels, & Watts, 1997; Harburg, Gleiberman, Russell, & Cooper, 1991; Harburg, Gleiberman, Roeper, Schork, & Schull, 1978; Klag et al., 1991). Sociodemographic factors. One sociodemographic factor that is particularly relevant to the proposed model is socioeconomic status (SES). SES is associated with perceptions of racism (Forman, Williams, & Jackson, 1997), ethnicity (Jaynes & Williams, 1989; Williams & Collins, 1995), and biopsychosocial functioning (N. B. Anderson & Armstead, 1995; Williams, Yu, Jackson, & Anderson, 1997). Research has suggested that the relationship between SES and the other components of this model is complex (Forman et al., 1997). That is, some research has found a positive relationship between SES and discrimination, whereas other studies suggest that SES is inversely related to experiences of discrimination among African Americans (Sigelman & Welch, 1991). It is plausible that the pattern of association between SES and racism among African Americans depends, in part, on what dimension of racism is assessed. For example, with measures that tap subtler expressions of racism, it is probable that higher SES African Americans report perceiving their environments as more discriminatory because of their tendency to negotiate environments where racism is less overt. Conversely, lower SES African Americans may be more sensitive to overt racism and as a result report more racism with measures that assess more overt expressions of racism and those that assess institutionally mediated dimensions of racism (e.g., access to good jobs). Moreover, SES has been found to interact with ethnicity, such that lower SES African Americans appear to be more vulnerable to some negative health outcomes than higher SES African Americans and many other ethnicitySES groups. At least two explanations can be forwarded to help explain findings that African Americans at comparable educational levels have a higher prevalence of hypertension and all-cause mortality than do Caucasians (Pappas, Queen, Hadden, & Fisher, 1993). First, within SES groups, the distribution of wealth among African Americans and Caucasians is not comparable (N. B. Anderson & Armstead, 1995; Williams & Collins, 1995). Second, relative to Caucasians, African Americans report exposure to more stressors like racism and other unfair treatment (Krieger, 1990; Williams, Yu, Jackson, & Anderson, 1997). As a consequence, African Americans may have to utilize coping responses more frequently to deal with these added stressors than do Caucasians, thereby increasing the likelihood of both resource strain-behavioral exhaustion and psychological and physiological distress. It is probable therefore that lower SES African Americans are not only exposed to more chronic stressors than higher SES African Americans, but they may also have fewer resources with which to cope with these stressors, leading to more deleterious health outcomes (Feagin, 1991). Relative to other components of this model, there has been less research exploring associations between perceived racism, other sociodemographic factors, and health outcomes. For example, age and gender may influence health outcomes through their association with the amount and frequency of potential stress exposure, the cognitive appraisal process, coping responses, and stress responses (N. B. Anderson & Armstead, 1995; Herd, 1991; Keith & Herring, 1991; Neal & Wilson, 1989). Adams and Dressier (1988) reported that age was inversely related to perceptions of racism and injustice in a community sample of African Americans. Although paradoxical, these authors reasoned that older African Americans may have come to accept discriminatory treatment and not label it as such. This subsample may be similar to those in Krieger (1990) and Krieger and Sidney (1996), who did not report being recipients of unfair treatment yet showed elevated resting blood pressure levels. Krieger and Sidney (1996) suggested that denial may be one important coping response members of ethnic minority groups may use in dealing with racism that may have health consequences. Psychological and behavioral factors. Depending on individual factors, any event could be perceived as stressful (Pearlin, 1989) and involving racism (Adams & Dressier, 1988). Various psychological and behavioral factors may influence how individuals perceive and respond to environmental stimuli (Adams & Dressier, 1988; V. R. Clark & Harrell, 1982; Pearlin, 1989; Wiebe & Williams, 1992). Additionally, these factors may "play a potential role in the presentation or treatment of almost every general medical condition" (American Psychiatric Association, 1994, p. 676). Type A behavior, cynical hostility, neuroticism, self-esteem, obsessive-compulsive disorder, hardiness, perceived control, and anger expressionsuppression are among the psychological and behavioral factors that are postulated to influence the stress process, cardiovascular outcomes, and immune functioning (Adams & Dressier, 1988; Bandura, Taylor, & Williams, 1985; Everson, Goldberg, Kaplan, Julkunen, & Solonen, 1998; Larkin, Semenchuk, Frazer, Suchday, & Taylor, 1998; Miller, Dopp, Myers, Stevens, & Fahey, 1999; Pearlin, 1989; Wiebe & Williams, 1992). For example, research has suggested that of the usual ways by which African Americans cope with anger, the affective state most commonly reported to follow perceptions of racism (Bullock & Houston, 1987) is related to cardiovascular reactivity and resting blood pressure (Armstead, Lawler, Gorden, Cross, & Gibbons, 1989; Johnson & Browman, 1987). It remains to be determined if and how these psychological and behavioral factors influence the relationship between perceived racism and health status. Mediator Variables Racism as a perceived stressor. Perceived racism refers to the subjective experience of prejudice or discrimination. Therefore, perceived racism is not limited to those experiences that may "objectively" be viewed as representing racism. For example, subtler forms of racism include belief systems and symbolic behaviors that promulgate the ideology of "free will" (McConahay & Hough, 1976; Sears, 1991). Although the ideology of free will may not be inherently racist, Yetman (1985) remarked, when applied to black Americans, the belief system of free will is racist in that it refuses to recognize or acknowledge the existence of external impingements and disabilities (such as prejudice and discrimination) and instead imputes the primary responsibility for black disadvantages to blacks themselves, (p. 15) Although many Caucasians who are proponents of free will may not view their beliefs or actions as racist, such beliefs and actions may be perceived as serious or threatening (e.g., involving racism) by some African Americans. During the past 20 years, several self-report measures have been developed to assess perceived racism. These include scales by Allan-Claiborne and Taylor (1981), Barbarin (1996), Harrell (1997), Landrine and Klonoff (1996), McNeilly, Anderson, Armstead, et al. (1996), C. E. Thompson, Neville, Weathers, Poston, and Atkinson (1990), and Utsey and Ponterotto (1996). Although these scales vary in their multidimensionality, each one has the potential to facilitate empirical investigations that disentangle the complex relationship between ethnically relevant stressors and health outcomes. Whereas other self-report measures of stress have been accepted widely (e.g., those assessing job strain, life events, and daily hassles), there may be a tendency to discount reports of racism simply because they involve a subjective component. Such a tendency to discount perceptions of racism as stressful is inconsistent with the stress literature, which highlights the importance of the appraisal process. For example, Lazarus and Folkman (1984) noted that it is both the individual's evaluation of the seriousness of an event and his or her coping responses that determine whether a psychological stress response will ensue. That is, the perception of demands as stressful is more important in initiating stress responses than objective demands that may or may not be perceived as stressful (Burchfield, 1985; Matheny et al., 1986). With this in mind, the initiation of psychological stress responses as a result of perceiving environmental stimuli as involving racism would qualify these stimuli as stressors. Coping responses. Even among African Americans who perceive certain stimuli as stressful, whether ethnically based or not, there are likely to be wide individual differences in psychological and physiological stress responses. The magnitude and duration of these stress responses will depend on the availability and use of coping responses. Coping responses that do not attenuate stress responses are considered maladaptive and may negatively affect health (Burchfield, 1985; Clark & Harrell, 1982). That is, when maladaptive coping responses are used, the perception of an environmental event as racist will trigger psychological and physiological stress responses. If an individual fails to replace these maladaptive coping responses with more adaptive ones, this model further predicts a continued state of heightened psychological and physiological activity (Selye, 1976). A similar stress response pattern would be expected in African Americans who perceive the stimulus as a stressor without racist content. Adaptive coping responses, on the other hand, are postulated to mitigate enduring psychological and physiological stress responses, thereby reducing the potentially untoward effects of racism on health. As such, it may be possible to identify coping responses that influence the relationship between perceived racism and stress responses. Both adaptive and maladaptive coping responses would be expected to influence the duration and intensity of psychological and physiological stress responses (Burchfield, 1979). A potential limitation of this model is that some individuals may not report perceiving any stressor or may inhibit the expression of psychological responses (e.g., anger) yet show exaggerated physiological responses to stimuli (Jorgensen, Gelling, & Kliner, 1992; Jorgensen et al., 1996; Ruggiero & Taylor, 1997; Sommers-Flanagan & Greenberg, 1989). To partially address this potential limitation, social desirability and repression measurements could be used to help identify individuals who exhibit this response pattern. Coping responses to ethnically relevant stimuli have been conceptualized as general (e.g., Armstead et al., 1989; Clark & Harrell, 1982; Sutherland & Harrell, 1986-1987) or specific (e.g., Armstead et al., 1989; Bullock & Houston, 1987; Clark & Harrell, 1982; Krieger, 1990; Krieger & Sidney, 1996; Myers, Stokes, & Speight, 1989). General coping responses refer to strategies that are usually used to deal with stressful stimuli—irrespective of their nature. In the only published study to investigate the efficacy of general coping strategies as moderators of the perceived racism-cardiovascular reactivity relationship, Armstead et al. (1989) found that as Anger Out scores on the Framingham and Anger Expression scales increased, blood pressure levels decreased after viewing racist video scenes. Research has suggested that the effects of more general coping responses, such as "John Henryism" (James, Hartnett, & Kalsbeek, 1983), social support (McNeilly, Anderson, Robinson, et al., 1996), and religious participation (Jones, 1997), may be particularly relevant for African Americans and interact with sociodemographic factors to modify risk for negative health outcomes like elevated blood pressure (N. B. Anderson et al., 1991; James et al., 1983; James, Strogatz, Wing, & Ramsey, 1987). Racism-specific coping responses refer to cognitions and behaviors used to mitigate the effects (e.g., psychological and physiological) of perceived racism. Although numerous investigators have examined the relationship between general coping responses and health outcomes, few have sought to identify specific coping responses African Americans use in response to perceptions of racism. Two notable exceptions include recent studies by McNeilly, Anderson, Armstead, et al. (1996) and Harrell (1997) that outlined a broad range of emotional and coping responses to racism and a method for measuring them. Given their recent addition to the literature, published research examining the efficacy of these coping measures as predictors of health outcomes does not yet exist. To date, only six published studies (Armstead et al., 1989; Clark & Harrell, 1982; Krieger, 1990; Krieger & Sidney, 1996; Myers et al., 1989; Williams, Yu, Jackson, & Anderson, 1997) have examined the relationship between racism-specific coping responses and physiological responses and health status. The observed association between racism-specific coping responses and health outcomes varies depending on the outcome under consideration. For example, after adjusting for sociodemographic and psychological factors, Williams, Yu, Jackson, and Anderson (1997) found that passive and active coping responses to discrimination (including ethnic-group discrimination) were related to increased psychological distress, poorer well-being, and more chronic conditions among African Americans. In two of the laboratory studies, racism-specific coping responses were not related to cardiovascular responses to ethnically relevant stressors (Armstead et al., 1989; Myers et al., 1989). Conversely, Clark and Harrell (1982) found that scores on the "cognitive flexibility" dimension of a coping scale were positively associated with initial resting systolic blood pressure and time to recovery for diastolic blood pressure. Their findings suggest that individuals who use the cognitive flexibility style to cope with perceived racism may process the racist content of the stimulus longer than do individuals using more active coping responses. Over time, chronic perceptions of racism coupled with more passive coping responses may lead to frequent increases in and prolonged activation of sympathetic functioning resulting in higher resting systolic blood pressure levels. Many authors have proposed that such chronic stress-induced sympathetic activation may be among the factors that lead to hypertension (for a review see Manuck, Kasprowicz, & Muldoon, 1990). For instance, Krieger (1990) found that African Americans women (45+ years old) who responded to unfair treatment (e.g., racism and gender discrimination) with passive coping responses (e.g., keeping quiet and accepting treatment) were 4.4 times more likely to have self-reported hypertension than African American women whose coping techniques were more active. Similarly, Krieger and Sidney (1996) found that among African American working class men and women, passive coping responses were associated with markedly higher resting blood pressure levels. Additionally, the efficacy of various coping strategies in reducing the chronic and acute psychological and physiological effects of ethnically relevant stimuli may depend, in part, on the frequency of the perceived stressor and the context or setting in which racism is perceived. For example, although coping responses like projection and denial may be adaptive with acute stressors, they may be maladaptive when used to negotiate chronic stressors (Burch field, 1979; Jorgensen et al., 1992; Krieger & Sidney, 1996; Sommers-Flanagan & Greenberg, 1989). Similarly, whereas expressing emotional reactions to peers may be adaptive in some contexts, this approach may be maladaptive in others. Psychological and physiological stress responses. Numerous psychological stress responses may follow perceptions of racism. These responses include anger, paranoia, anxiety, helplessness-hopelessness, frustration, resentment, and fear (Armstead et al., 1989; Bullock & Houston, 1987). Psychological stress responses may, in turn, influence the use of subsequent coping responses (Burchfield, 1979; James, 1993; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Pearlin, 1989). For example, perceptions of racism that engender anger may lead to coping responses that include anger suppression, hostility, aggression, verbal expression of the anger, or the use of alcohol or other substances to blunt angry feelings (Armstead et al., 1989; Cooper, 1993; Cornell, Peterson, & Richards, 1999; Grier & Cobbs, 1968; Harris, 1992; Novaco, 1985). These psychological responses are not necessarily independently occurring phenomena, given that responses to primary stressors may elicit prolonged psychological responsiveness and sociocultural adjustment (L. P. Anderson, 1991; Pearlin, 1989). For example, chronic feelings of helplessnesshopelessness may evoke feelings of frustration, depression, resentment, distrust, or paranoia (Fernando, 1984; Peterson, Maier, & Seligman, 1993; Seligman, 1975) that lead to passivity, overeating, avoidance, or efforts to gain control (Bullock & Houston, 1987). Physiological responses following exposure to psychologically stressful stimuli most notably involve immune, neuroendocrine, and cardiovascular functioning (Andersen et al., 1994; Cacioppo, 1994; S. Cohen & Herbert, 1996; Herd, 1991). In the immune system, for example, two immune reactions (humoral and cellular) may be affected. In response to chronic stress, the adrenal gland produces hormones that suppress the activity of B- and T-lymphocytes, thereby preventing the body from destroying or neutralizing foreign substances (e.g., bacteria and viruses) and increasing vulnerability to disease (S. Cohen & Herbert, 1996). In one meta-analysis of the stressimmune literature, Herbert and Cohen (1993) found that chronic and interpersonal stressors are related to lower natural-killer cell activity. Research suggests that immune responses to these chronic and acute stressors are not transient (Stone, Valdimarsdottir, Katkin, Burns, & Cox, 1993). For example, in studies examining the chronic stress associated with caregiving and immune functioning, researchers have found that spouses who are caring for partners with Alzheimer's dementia show decreased cellular immunity and prolonged respiratory infections (KiecoltGlaser, Dura, Speicher, Trask, & Glaser, 1991) and decreased expression of the growth hormone mRNA (Wu et al., 1999). Results from immune-function tests on blood samples have also shown that laboratory-induced conflict among married couples is associated with lowered immune functioning that persists well after the experimental session (Kiecolt-Glaser et al., 1993). Additionally, it has recently been demonstrated that stress-induced immune changes may slow the healing process (Kiecolt-Glaser, Marucha, Malarkey, Mercado, & Glaser, 1995). Although tentative, these studies suggest that perceived stress is related to decreases in immune functioning (e.g., lower helper Tcells, lower natural-killer cell cytotoxic activity, and higher antibody titers to the Epstein-Barr virus) that may increase susceptibility for an array of health outcomes (S. Cohen et al., 1998; S. Cohen, Tyrrell, & Smith, 1991; Kiecolt-Glaser & Glaser, 1995). Stress-induced neuroendocrine responses include activation of the pituitary-adrenocortical and hypothalamicsympathetic-adrenal medullary systems (Burchfield, 1979; Herd, 1991). Findings from human and animal studies have suggested that the activation of the these systems results in numerous physiological changes. For example, in response to acute stressors, these changes include the release of antidiuretic hormone, prolactin, growth hormone, glucocorticoids, epinephrine, norepinephrine, adrenocorticotropic hormone (which influences the production of cortisol via the adrenal gland), cortisol, and /3-endorphin (Anisman, Kokkinidis, & Sklar, 1985; Herd, 1991; McCance, 1990). Concurrent with these neuroendocrine changes, there is an increase in cardiovascular activity. According to Herd (1991), the cardiovascular responses include "increased rate and force of cardiac contraction, skeletal muscle vasodilation, venoconstriction, splanchnic vasoconstriction, renal vasoconstriction, and decreased renal excretion of sodium" (p. 326). Upon repeated exposure to acute stressors, the magnitude and duration of these neuroendocrine and cardiovascular responses would depend, in part, on an individual's ability to successfully cope with the stressor (Brandenberger, Follenius, Wittersheim, & Salame, 1980; Burchfield, 1979; F. Cohen & Lazarus, 1979; Light & Obrist, 1980; Ursin, Baade, & Levine, 1978). Health outcomes. Psychological and physiological responses to perceptions of racism may, over time, be related to numerous health outcomes. For example, Fernando (1984) postulated that as a potential added stressor for many African Americans, perceived racism may influence the genesis of depression by (a) posing transient threats to self-esteem, (b) making the group's failure to receive normative returns more salient, and (c) contributing to a sense of helplessness. Although some research has suggested that reports and expectations of discrimination are associated with depressive symptomatology among African Americans (McNeilly, Anderson, Robinson, et al., 1996) and adolescent immigrants (Rumbaut, 1994), other reports have questioned the validity of these discriminatory reports and expectations. For example, Taylor, Wright, and Ruggiero (1991) concluded that mental health problems like depression could affect perceptions of life experiences and lead individuals to perceive discriminatory practices that do not exist. Although studies explicating the long-term health effects of perceived racism remain limited, there is a growing body of research in the more general stress literature that documents the relationship between stress and health. For example, stress has been linked to low birth weight and infant mortality (James, 1993), depression (Kendler et al., 1995), the healing process (Kiecolt-Glaser et al., 1995), breast cancer survival (Spiegel, Bloom, Kraemer, & Gottheil, 1989), heart disease (Jiang et al., 1996; Kamarck & Jennings, 1991; Rozanski, Blumenthal, & Kaplan, 1999), mean arterial blood pressure changes (R. Clark & Armstead, in press), and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (Narsavage & Weaver, 1994). Additionally, research suggests that exposure to stress is related to upper respiratory infections and the development of clinical colds (S. Cohen et al., 1991). There is some suggestion, however, that the duration of stress exposure moderates the relationship between stress exposure and cold susceptibility. For example, S. Cohen et al. (1998) found that exposure to chronic psychological stressors (lasting 1 month or longer)—not acute stressors—is related to cold susceptibility. Although not all studies have found support for the hypothesized perceived racism-health status association (Browman, 1996), significant relationships between perceptions of racism and resting blood pressure (Krieger & Sidney, 1996) and subjective well-being (Jackson et al., 1996; V. L. S. Thompson, 1996) have been documented. In one multistage area probability sample of 1,106 African American and Caucasian adults in the Detroit metropolitan area, Williams, Yu, Jackson, and Anderson (1997) found that unfair treatment attributed to racial or ethnic discrimination and racial or ethnic discrimination over the lifetime predicted psychological distress, well-being, number of bed days, and chronic conditions for African Americans. Among Caucasians, racial or ethnic discrimination over the lifetime predicted psychological distress and well-being. The focus of this article has been on the role of racism as a perceived stressor and its implications for health. It is also possible however, that racism may affect health even when it is not perceived as a stressor. For example, institutional racism (Jones, 1997; Williams, Yu, & Jackson, 1997) may reduce access to goods, services, and opportunities for African Americans in ways that have important health consequences. In a recent study, for example, it was found that ethnicity is a strong determinant of physicians' recommendations for critical cardiac assessments for patients experiencing chest pain, even among patients with similar risk factors, clinical features, and economic resources (Schulman et al., 1999). In this instance, institutional racism in health care may have dire consequences for the health of African Americans—even when no individual racism may be perceived. Therefore, perceived racism may be one of several possible pathways by which racism may affect health. Summary Despite the different sampling schemes and data quantification methodologies and the paucity of studies, the results of the research reviewed in this section were generally consistent. The perception of racism usually resulted in psychological and physiological stress responses. To deal with the effects of perceived racism, African Americans were found to use various coping strategies. These strategies were associated with physiological reactivity and health status. The research reviewed in this section does provide a basis for a stress and coping approach to the study of the effects of perceived racism. Conclusions and Recommendations The purpose of this article was to provide a discussion of the potential usefulness of studying the biopsychosocial effects of perceived racism within a stress and coping model. Research examining the psychological, physiological, and social effects of perceived racism were presented. Overall, research in this area is lacking, and the research that has been conducted is without conceptual and methodological cohesion. As a step toward advancing this field of study, a contextual model was presented that may serve as a guide for systematic investigations of perceived racism and its biopsychosocial concomitants and sequelae. On the basis of the proposed model, research examining the effects of ethnically relevant stressors like racism may contribute to a better understanding of interethnic and intraethnic group health disparities. Given that available research also suggests that non-African Americans not only perceive racism but that such perceptions also adversely affect their psychological well-being (Serafica, Schwebel, Russell, Isaac, & Myers, 1990; Williams, Yu, Jackson, & Anderson, 1997), this stress and coping analysis could be expanded to include other populations. Interdisciplinary investigations, examining the following questions, are encouraged to broaden the knowledge base in this area.

## 3

### Case

#### Aff gets circumvented.

Lanard 17 [Noah Lanard, editorial fellow. Donald Trump just took another swipe at the labor unions that helped elect him, Mother Jones, 7-19-2017, Accessible Online at http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2017/07/trumps-labor-board-appointments-are-another-blow-for-unions/]

Trump’s NLRB nominees are expected to create further challenges for workers seeking to unionize. Emanuel is a shareholder and longtime lawyer at Littler, the world’s largest management-side employment law firm. Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) has called it is one of the nation’s “most ruthless” union-busters. Emanuel’s clients include Uber and other companies accused of violating workers’ rights, according to his ethics disclosure form.

Outside of his legal practice, Emanuel has decried California’s “terrible climate for job creation,” citing the state’s generous overtime and break requirements for employees.

Kaplan was previously an attorney for the House education and labor committee. In that role, he drafted a bill to reverse an NLRB rule, dubbed the “ambush election rule” by conservative critics, that allowed workers to vote on unionization as soon as 11 days after a petition was submitted. The bill, which did not pass, would have also reversed the board’s recognition of micro-unions.

At Emanuel and Kaplan’s nomination hearing last week, Sens. Al Franken (D-Minn.) and Warren were particularly concerned by Emanuel’s record of defending the mandatory arbitration agreements that Carlson and many others have signed. Pressed by Franken, Emanuel declined to criticize arbitration agreements that prevent women who are sexually harassed from suing their employers in court. In theory, the legality of the arbitration agreements is now in the Supreme Court’s hands. But Ronald Meisburg, a former NLRB board member, has said it’s possible the NLRB could revisit the decision before the court decides. Emanuel told Warren he does not expect to recuse himself if the issue comes up.

The committee’s approval of both nominees along party lines on Wednesday follows other moves under Trump that are less than friendly to labor. Trump’s nominee for deputy labor secretary, Patrick Pizzella, was criticized last week for working with disgraced lobbyist Jack Abramoff to advocate for what was compared to sweatshop labor in the Northern Mariana Islands, a US commonwealth, in the early 2000s. The goods, which were often made by Chinese and Filipino workers, had the advantage of being stamped “Made in the USA.”

Neil Gorsuch, whom Trump appointed to the Supreme Court, has a long record of siding with employers in labor disputes. In the court’s upcoming term, Gorsuch will hear arguments in a case that will decide whether mandatory arbitration agreements violate the National Labor Relations Act.

#### Unions are inaccessible to minorities – that leads to increasing inequality.

Ahlquist 17 [John; School of Global Policy and Strategy, University of California San Diego; “Labor Unions, Political Representation, and Economic Inequality,” 3/9/17; AnnualReviews; https://www.annualreviews.org/doi/pdf/10.1146/annurev-polisci-051215-023225] Justin

Immigration may exacerbate inequality to the extent that immigrants take jobs for lower wages than native workers do. Immigration may also put pressure on existing unions, since immigrants may be harder to organize owing to linguistic or cultural differences. For these reasons—along with simple prejudice—unions in immigrant-receiving countries, mainly Australia, Canada, and the United States, opposed immigration for several decades. Rosenfeld & Kleykamp (2009) use CPS data to look at the most recent wave of Hispanic immigration and find that Hispanics continue to join unions. They find that Hispanic unionization rates, unlike those for African Americans, can largely be explained by positional factors. Many American unions have recognized that organizing immigrants is crucial to their survival (Milkman 2006), but immigrants’ more precarious job status has made union gains harder to consolidate through the Great Recession (Catron 2013).

The situation for female workers is more complicated. The gendering of employment and the expectation that women would leave the labor force after marriage have long limited women’s access to unionized parts of the economy (Iversen & Rosenbluth 2011). In some countries union bargaining objectives, norms of fairness, and public policy were predicated on an assumed singleearner household. But standardized terms of employment and promotion along with an expanded public sector may attract more women into union jobs. The effect of unionization on wage inequality between men and women is therefore ambiguous. Union density in rich democracies shows no association with the gap between median male and female wages. However, in the United States and United Kingdom, the gender wage gap narrowed at the same time unionization fell.

#### Dissimulation DA: Double Bind — either the harms are the 1AC are true and they cannot solve for their impacts before they control the levers of power which means you can vote negative on presumption OR their harms are constructed for the purpose of alarmism which means you can vote negative on principle.

**Their simulated game playing is insidiously removed from the real, inculcating a erasure of materiality while simultaneously facilitating a broader network of technocratic domination**

Hoofd 17. Ingrid, Assistant Professor Department of Media and Culture Studies, Higher Education and Technological Acceleration, <http://www.palgrave.com/it/book/9781137517517> //brackets for clarity

The conception outlined in Chap. 1 of media technologies as not neutral but inherently bound up in aggravating the aporia at the heart of the university immediately suggests that they are a multi-faceted and ambiguous force in the constitution of any learning platform and its pedagogical aims, regardless of the module’s specific content and the assignments that are disseminated through these media. E-learning content itself may in many ways point towards the non-neutrality of the larger socio-economic landscape, in which the medium operates by virtue of the relationship between aesthetics and the context in which this aesthetic is enunciated. The problematic common sense discourse which educators and administrators uphold within higher education, that claims that media are neutral conduits of learning, is therefore itself already symptomatic of a cultural context in which the idea of transparent mediation functions to obscure forms of oppression and disenfranchisement. We can see this misguided claim around neutrality or objectivity that problematically [[[this]]] dissimulates the Eurocentric assumptions behind these tools while simultaneously forcing radical alterity and inter-subjective interpretation and rapport out of the communicative relation in the ‘digital humanities.’ This common sense discourse, as with the very notion of the university itself, is after all historically related to Eurocentric and masculinist ideas of the subject and his potential to autonomously and intentionally transmit as well as control meaning and knowledge through any medium of communication, about which more in Chap. 4 . Instead, I hold to the view in this book that the medium of learning co-constitutes knowledge and engenders certain subject-positions that are consecutively required by the larger economic and social imperatives that universities, and by extension their academic staff, serve. In other words, if the tools and ideology of e-learning are built on a set of assumptions that have historically tended to favour a Western and male elite, what does this mean for local [[[implicates]]] student empowerment and disempowerment along the lines of gender, ethnicity, and class within and outside especially the non-Western classroom? Also, how may the teacher’s responsibility for teaching students, that is, to become profi cient at learning and communicating through new media tools as demanded by the academic institution to ensure the students’ future empowerment and employability lead to a host of tensions within the pedagogical scene between her own in-class authority and the relinquishing of such authority due to the students’ capacity to do ‘self-guided’ online learning? What are the potentials and pitfalls of the displacement of pedagogical authority and responsibility into the e-learning medium, in which, as Lyotard reminds us, power gets uncoupled from truth (or rather, technological power risks becoming the only truth), leaving little space for questioning its automation? This also explains why the advocating of new media in the academic classroom is often simply in and of itself perceived as a ‘good thing’ which will ‘enhance’ learning, as new media themselves problematically come to stand in for humanist ideas of democracy and emancipation. But this ‘virtual emancipation’ for the happy few is then intimately bound up with an accelerated subjugation of the not-so-happy majority, as its prerogative is the sustenance and advancement of neo-liberal globalisation and [[[through]]] its new economic speed-elites. This means that e-learning, through its inherent validation of active, vocal, masculine, connected, and cosmopolitan personhood, is implicated in the reproduction and generation of new hierarchies between students inside as well as outside the university classroom, even though its explicit rhetoric is often about the elimination of these very divisions and disconnections, as well as about an inclusion of the marginalised into the universitas . Some good examples of this paradoxical logic of differential student empowerment (and connection) through oppression (and the dissimulation of disconnection) by way of e-learning are the new learning tools called ‘educational games.’ Educators and teachers logically explore using educational games in the classroom because most of today’s young learners often have ample experience with electronic gaming. Also, the argument is often put forward that if studying can be presented as play, students may be more willing to subject themselves to the ‘un-pleasantries’ of learning. Work as play (or the material confusion of production and play through new media) is nonetheless also one of the hallmarks of the aforementioned contemporary creative economy and its quest for knowledge workers, in which the consumption of electronic media has become thoroughly enmeshed with creative production and circulation. Educational games not only seek to present a learning environment that is in many ways an aesthetic and technical microcosm of a larger current socio-economical context, learning and thinking themselves have [[[becomes]]] a direct extension of the perpetual need for capitalist circulation and innovation, which is itself in turn implicated in forms of highly unequal globalisation and distribution. Electronic games therefore relate to this uneven form of globalisation on two levels: in terms of their technique of instantaneity and acceleration, as well as on the level of their inherently militaristic aesthetics or content (see for instance, also Kline et al. 2003). Learning through educational games must then lead to what I would call a ‘double objectifi cation’ by way of the bilateral speedy dissimulations of oppression that it engenders, especially when it claims to empower the student and seek larger social justice. Let me illustrate this claim with the example of an (at fi rst glance) sympathetic American educational game called Real Lives . According to its online manual, the pedagogical aim of Real Lives is for students to “learn how people really live in other countries” (Educational Simulations 2010). The makers of the game argue that Real Lives is an “empathybuilding world,” which will grant students an “appreciation of their own culture and the cultures of other peoples”—a clear indicator of the speedelitist validation of (virtual) mobility and cross-cultural dialogue. The game starts by assigning to each player a randomly selected character of a certain country, class, and gender. Since the ascription of the game character is based on actual statistical possibilities in terms of place of birth and economic status, the likelihood is high that the character gets born poor in countries like India, Mexico, or in other densely populated places. During the game, the player can take virtual actions like deciding to put her or his character in a school or have her staying at home to help her parents. The player can also determine which hobbies the game character will take up, what job she should take, and so forth. The game time takes one-year leaps at which the student-player can see the impact of external events like disease or fl oods, and his or her own actions on the character and her family. The game software also shows a map of the character’s birth region and its statistics, like its population density, gross annual income, currency, health standards, and such. The character would also possess traits like happiness, athleticism, musicality, and health. While the player’s actions defi nitely infl uence the character and her family’s health and economic status, the potentially interesting part of the game lies in the fact that it contains events and situations that are beyond the player’s control. Such a game structure potentially endows the student with a sense that wider meritocratic or competitive discourses may be fl awed. It is nonetheless obvious that the attributions in Real Lives , while based on statistical facts, may be problematic as they may easily lead students to a simplistic view of a country and its inhabitants. While India, for instance, certainly has many poor people, and while the girls in its poorer areas are frequently not allowed or able to go to school, to have the white Western student come across such representations of ‘India’ time and again can lead to the reproduction of stereotypes and a failure to grasp the complexities of Indian society. Moreover, ‘other’ parts of the world are continually framed through lenses that appeal to a Western mind-set, for instance, through suggesting romantic love interests when the game character reaches adolescence. This then is the fi rst level of objectifi cation that educational games inhabit. But even more serious than such stereotypical representation is the formal mode of objectifi cation and its distancing effects that the game generates. This second objectifi cation resides in how the interface—the ‘flight simulator’—like visual layout on the screen which displays an overview of the categories and character attributes, the major actions and events in the character’s life which can be activated at the stroke of a key—grants the player a false sense of control, as students engage with a machine programmed in such a way that it appears to let them identify with and act out his or her empathy vis-à-vis a ‘real’ child in need. This discursive confusion of reality and simulation is problematic because while students are engrossed in playing this game, the actual children in need disappear from the student-player’s field of vision. Real children in need become a large but distant and vague group of ‘others’ who are effectively beyond the student’s and teacher’s reach of immediate responsibility. As such, time spent engaging in virtual empathy eclipses the real oppressions from the student’s view and experience. In addition, Real Lives eclipses the intricate social and economic relationship between the material production and consumption of such virtual play and the continuous exploitation of people on the brink of social, economic, and environmental disenfranchisement. While relatively affluent young students may indulge in turning other peoples’ distress into an enjoyable and instructive game, such indulgence is precisely based on a speed-elitist neo-liberal structure that exploits the environment, especially that of the poor in countries like India and Mexico, and allows for the outsourcing and feminisation of ever cheaper Third World labour for the computer assembly industry. Long-term attitudinal changes in the student notwithstanding, Real Lives’ disconnecting properties as a technology of acceleration can therefore [[[displacing]]] the effect of the teachers,’ makers,’ and students’ good intentions and empathy into an instantaneous technocratic and symbolic violence. We can see here that the game content is indeed symptomatic of the larger global structures of disenfranchisement, and that the speed-elitist quest for social justice always claims empowerment in the future while engendering disempowerment right now. Although one could counter that such e-learning is only entangled with such negative effects on a macro or global scale, I would nonetheless argue that similar forms of objectifi cation and disenfranchisement also occur within the university classroom as part of e-learning’s justifi cation for residing in speed-elitist discourses and techniques. Four major pieces of evidence of such stratifi cation can be found among the university student body itself, namely issues of ubiquitous teaching and learning, new techniques for surveillance, real-time and spatial disconnection, and the displacement of teacher authority and student responsibility into new media technologies that have become oppressive vision machines.

#### Strikes fail and spark countermobilization.

Grant and Wallace 91 [Don Sherman Grant; Ohio State University; Michael Wallace; Indiana University; “Why Do Strikes Turn Violent?” University of Chicago Press; March 1991; <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/2781338.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3Aca3144a9ae9e4ac65e285f2c67451ffb>] Justin

\*\*RM = Resource-Mobilization, or Strikes

3. Violent tactics.-Violent tactics are viewed by RM theorists exclu- sively as purposeful strategies by challengers for inciting social change with little recognition of how countermobilization strategies of elites also create violence. The role of elite counterstrategies has been virtually ig- nored in research on collective violence. Of course, history is replete with examples of elites' inflicting violence on challenging groups with the full sanction of the state. Typically, elite-sponsored violence occurs when the power resources and legal apparatus are so one-sidedly in the elites' favor that the outcome is never in doubt. In conflicts with weak insiders, elites may not act so openly unless weak insiders flaunt the law. Typically, elite strategies do not overtly promote violence but rather provoke violence by the other side in hopes of eliciting public condemnation or more vigorous state repression of challenger initiatives. This is a critical dynamic in struggles involving weak insiders such as unions. In these cases, worker violence, even when it appears justified, erodes public support for the workers' cause and damages the union's insider status.

4. Homogeneity and similarity.-Many RM theorists incorrectly as- sume that members of aggrieved groups are homogeneous in their inter- ests and share similar positions in the social structure. This (assumed) homogeneity of interests is rare for members of outsider groups and even more suspect for members of weak-insider groups. Indeed, groups are rarely uniform and often include relatively advantaged persons who have other, more peaceful channels in which to pursue their goals. Internal stratification processes mean that different persons have varying invest- ments in current structural arrangements, in addition to their collective interest in affecting social change. Again, these forces are especially prev- alent for weak insiders: even the group's lowest-status members are likely to have a marginal stake in the system; high-status members are likely to have a larger stake and, therefore, less commitment to dramatic change in the status quo.

Internal differences may lead to fragmentation of interests and lack of consensus about tactics, especially tactics suggesting violent confronta- tion. While group members share common grievances, individual mem- bers may be differentially aggrieved by the current state of affairs or differentially exposed to elite repression. White's (1989) research on the violent tactics of the Irish Republican Army shows that working-class members and student activists, when compared with middle-class partici- pants, are more vulnerable to state-sponsored repression, more likely to be available for protest activities, and reap more benefits from political violence. When we apply them to our study of strike violence, we find that differences in skill levels are known to coincide with major intraclass 1120 Strikes divisions in material interests (Form 1985) and are likely to coincide with the tendency for violent action. For instance, skilled-craft workers, who are more socially and politically conservative than unskilled workers, are less likely to view relations with employers as inherently antagonistic and are prone to separate themselves from unskilled workers, factors that should decrease their participation in violence.