### 1

#### A] Interpretation: Debaters must, on the page with their name and the school they attend, disclose all taglines, full citations, and the first and last three words of the pieces of evidence read in their cases on the NDCA wiki at least one hour before the round if they have read that case before.

#### B] Violation: My opponent doesn’t read cites or post open source or even send the aff before round – I’ve sent a bunch of screenshots

#### C] Net Benefit:

#### 1] Argument Quality

#### A] Disclosure prevents the element of surprise. A world without disclosure rewards debaters for running arguments not because they are good, but because their opponents won't know how to respond. Disclosure forces debaters to commit to quality; under my interpretation, debaters would have to write cases knowing that their opponents will have the opportunity for thoughtful preparation.

#### B] Disclosure encourages increased research and cross-pollination—debaters can use good ideas from each others wikis and also be forced to prep and research for more arguments. That means it’s better for argument quality because people can clash more specifically instead of making bad, generic arguments.

#### 2] Clash – Disclosure is the best method for increasing clash in debates because it allows debaters to substantively engage positions rather than relying on sketchy tricks to avoid the discussion. It also allows for more specific clash because debaters can see specific arguments disclosed instead of trying to link generic arguments in.

#### D. Voter: The voter is substantive engagement, which exists when debaters directly answer each other’s content instead of just avoiding it.

#### Prefer my voter to their impacts since

#### 1. It gives us the best methodologies, sicne both of us have to be responsive and comparative. Otherwise, we just yell in the dark and don’t compare real solutions

#### 2. Debate’s fundamental value comes from teaching us how to defend our beliefs, as that’s a skillset that applies in any context, like politics, job interviews, and everyday conversations.

#### Drop the debater: If the aff advocacy isn’t predictable, the round shouldn’t have happened to begin with. Dropping the arg is severance. *The AC frames the rest of the debate, so there’s no way to evaluate who did the better debating based on the entire round, when the round was skewed from the outset. It’s impossible to undo the fact s/he read his/her advocacy, so the round has to stop*

#### No RVIs: They force the round to be decided on theory—the round ends once the judge determines who wins theory. That kills all substantive engagement because there’s no topical debate.

#### Competing interps only makes sense for Theory specifically, since it’s not a debate about abusive burden structures, but rather how we should view the debate and whether it ought to have happened. Since interps contextualize how to view the topic, Theory debates need to be couched in terms of what the better interp is.

#### No OCIs on disclosure – it’s an objective rule for debate that isn’t couched in terms of things like identity that they will try to couch it in – it’s a question of whether disclosure is a good norm which we will win it is. This is also a reason theory and t come prior bc it’s a question of whether we can engage with the aff – it’s nothing to do with whether we’re nonblack or not

### 2

#### Interpretation: The affirmative may only defend that a just government ought to recognize an unconditional right of workers to strike.

#### Resolved means a policy

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

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

#### A just government is a moral government – that’s a hypothetical gov

Cambridge Dictionary No Date, (Cambridge Dictionary, “Just”), https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/just // MNHS NL

fair; morally correct:

#### Recognize means to accept as legal

Cambridge Dictionary No Date, (Cambridge Dictionary, “Recognize”), https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/recognize // MNHS NL

to accept that something is legal, true, or important:

The international community has refused to recognize (= officially accept the existence of) the newly independent nation state.

[ + (that) ] He sadly recognized (that) he would die childless.

You must recognize the seriousness of the problems we are facing.

#### A worker is one who works manually or in an industry for a certain wage

Merriam Webster ND <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/worker> VM

“one that works especially at manual or industrial labor or with a particular material”

#### They violate— they don’t defend a just government implementing the right to strike.

#### Vote neg to preserve substantive engagement --

#### 1] Preparation- changing the topic gives the aff a huge edge, they can prepare for 6 months on an issue that catches us by surprise. Preparation is better than thinking on your feet- research demonstrates pedagogical humility and research skills are the only portable debate training – the process of debate outweighs the content – only our interp generates the argumentative skills needed to rigorously defend their affirmative out of round and create engaged citizens

#### 2] Limits- there are an infinite number of non topical affirmatives. not debating the topic allows someone to specialize in one area of the library for 4 years giving them a huge edge over people who switch research focus ever 2 months.

#### 3] Switch side debate is good -- it forces debaters to consider a controversial issue from multiple perspectives which prevents ideological dogmatism. Even if they prove the topic is bad, our argument is that the process of preparing and defending proposals is an educational benefit of engaging it.

#### 4] fairness – debate is fundamentally a game which requires both sides to have a relatively equal shot at winning and is necessary for any benefit to the activity. That outweighs om decision-making: every argument concedes to the validity of fairness i.e. that the judge will make a fair decision based on the arguments presented. This means if they win fairness bad vote neg on presumption because you have no obligation to fairly evaluate their arguments.

#### 5] small schools disad: under-resourced are most adversely affected by a massive, unpredictable caselist which worsens structural disparities

#### TVA: read a soft left aff in which the just government enforces the unconditional right to strike for black workers – none of their offense indicts a just government, but even if it does, x-apply switch side debate – the aff can rectify problems in the squo via policy

#### Disads to the TVA prove there’s negative ground and that it’s a contestable stasis point, and if their critique is incompatible with the topic reading it on the neg solves

#### Winning their thesis doesn’t answer T because only through the process of clash can they refine their defense of it—they need an explanation of why we switch sides and why there’s a winner and loser under their model

#### Reject the team—T is question of models of debate and the damage to our strategy was already done. Drop the team on theory generally to deter infinite abuse

#### Competing interps – reasonability is arbitrary, you can’t be reasonably topical, and causes a race to the bottom of questionable argumentation.

#### RVIs and impact turns encourage all in on theory which decks substance and incentivize baiting theory with abusive practices.

#### No impact turns—exclusions are inevitable because we only have 45 minutes so it’s best to draw those exclusions along reciprocal lines to ensure a role for the negative

Fairness is good – two warrants – a] their **basis for fairness bad is a pessimistic basis - if we impact turn pessimism, fairness bad is not true b] fairness is a constitutive portion of any activity like debate- ask yourself if chess had no rules and had no fairness, what is the point of the game - we need that to be able to engage in the round otherwise one side always begins ahead**

### 3

#### We endorse the entire 1AC sans their rejection of movements. Their last piece of Wilderson evidence describes the Civil Rights and Black Power movements as failures oriented towards progress and says “radical movements perpetuate anti- Black racism”

#### Only mass movements are able to turn course on existential climate change.

**Lukacs 17** (Martin Lukacs is a Montreal-based investigative journalist. He is a former environmental writer for The Guardian, and has written for the Toronto Star, The Walrus, and The New York Review of Books. He is the author of The Trudeau Formula: Seduction and betrayal in an age of discontent. “Neoliberalism has conned us into fighting climate change as individuals”. July 17, 2017.)

Eco-consumerism may expiate your guilt. But **it’s only mass movements that have the power to alter the trajectory of the climate crisis.** This requires of us first a resolute mental break from the spell cast by neoliberalism: to stop thinking like individuals. The good news is that **the impulse** of humans **to come together** is **in**extinguishable – and the **collective imagination is** already **making a political come-back.** **The climate justice movement is blocking pipelines, forcing the divestment of trillions of dollars, and winning support for 100% clean energy economies** in cities and states **across the world. New ties are being drawn to B**lack **L**ives **M**atter, **immigrant and Indigenous rights, and fights for better wages.** On the heels of **such movements**, political parties seem finally ready to defy neoliberal dogma. None more so than Jeremy Corbyn, whose Labour Manifesto **spelled out a redistributive project to address climate change**: by publicly retooling the economy, and insisting that corporate oligarchs no longer run amok. The notion that the rich should pay their fair share to fund this transformation was considered laughable by the political and media class. Millions disagreed. Society, long said to be departed, is now back with a vengeance. So grow some carrots and jump on a bike: it will make you happier and healthier. But **it is time to** stop obsessing with how personally green we live – and **start collectively taking on corporate power.**

#### Their structural depiction of the world is only possible by actively pushing aside the activism of black women.

**Blain 20** (Keisha N. Blain is an associate professor of history at the University of Pittsburgh. She is the author of "Set the World on Fire: Black Nationalist Women and the Global Struggle for Freedom" and co-editor of "Four Hundred Souls: A Community History of African America, 1619-2019." “Black women are leading the movement to end police violence”. October 1, 2020.)

But one thing is clear: The nation is **pay**ing **close attention to** what unfolds in this case. And that is because of **the activism of Black women**. **Black women have taken the lead in finding** alternate routes to obtain **justice and** achieve **systemic change** due **to** the inability of **the criminal “justice” system** to administer punishment in cases of police shootings. Black women, including Taylor’s mother and sister, along with a network of writers and activists, built on this tradition of activism to bring national attention to the Taylor case. Despite the recent grand jury decision, Black female activists will continue to be at the forefront of a national movement to bring about tangible changes in American policing. **During the 20th century, Black female activists brought significant attention to** the problem of **police violence**, often focusing specifically on the vulnerability of Black women. In a 1930 newspaper article, **Madame** Stephanie **St. Clair** — dubbed the “Numbers Queen” of Harlem — openly condemned the actions of corrupt police officers “who are supposed to be the protection of the people. ” In November 1945, police officers shot and killed 14-year-old Harlem resident Wilbert Cohen. They claimed the teenager had been caught peeping through a window on East 119th Street. In the aftermath of the shooting, Cohen’s mother played an active role in raising awareness about the senseless act of police violence that took her son’s life. Black radical activist **Audley “Queen Mother” Moore** supported her efforts and at Cohen’s funeral publicly demanded justice for his family and police accountability in the city. Through these women’s efforts, the case garnered widespread coverage in the Black press **and** was cited in the 1951 United Nations petition “We Charge Genocide,” which **more** than 100 Black activists and intellectuals signed. **During the Civil Rights era, Black women were at the forefront of political movements against state-sanctioned violence.** In 1955, **Mamie Till** Bradley, mother of 14-year-old Emmett Till, emerged as one of the leading voices demanding justice after her son was brutally murdered while visiting relatives in Mississippi. Till had been falsely accused of whistling at a White woman while purchasing candy from a local store. In the aftermath of his lynching — at the hands of the White woman’s husband and her brother — Till’s mother relied on visual protest to force the public to face the violence of white supremacy. She insisted on an open casket at his funeral because she “wanted the whole world to see” and went on to lead a nationwide speaking campaign to denounce the persistent acts of violence against African Americans. Activist **Fannie Lou Hamer** carried on this work during the 1960s, boldly denouncing state-sanctioned violence and emphasizing the unique experiences of Black women. In her speech at the 1964 Democratic convention, Hamer decried the racist violence Black people faced on a daily basis in the Jim Crow South and shared details of her own painful personal experience with police violence. During the 1980s, **Mary Bumpurs and Veronica Perry**, two Black women in New York City, led a grass-roots initiative to combat police violence in Black communities. In 1984, New York City police shot and killed Mary’s 66-year-old mother, Eleanor Bumpurs, as she resisted eviction from her Bronx apartment. A year later, in June 1985, a plainclothes police officer shot and killed Veronica’s 17-year-old son Edmund Perry. In the aftermath of their relatives’ deaths, Bumpurs and Perry joined forces to transform their grief into political action. They delivered speeches, organized events and recruited other Black women to join them. **Carrie Stewart** — the mother of graffiti artist Michael Stewart, who was killed by New York City police in 1983 — and Annie Brannon, whose 15-year-old son Randolph Evans was killed by the NYPD in 1976, joined this campaign following a memorial service for their sons. During this same period, Black female activists in the city organized to demand justice following the 1987 fatal police beating of 28-year-old Jamaican immigrant Yvonne Smallwood and the 1991 police shooting of 41-year-old Bronx resident Mary Mitchell. For decades, these **Black women** and others **have pioneered innovative strategies** to organize and bring national attention to the systemic problem of police violence. And today, Black female activists continue to lead the fight. **The activism of the B**lack **L**ives **M**atter **founders — Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors and Opal Tometi — has electrified the nation**. Since 2013, they have inspired thousands to join the movement to end state-sanctioned violence and anti-Black racism. Relatives of victims of police violence, including Samaria Rice, the mother of Tamir Rice, and Gwen Carr, the mother of Eric Garner, have amplified this work. **In the case of Breonna Taylor**, it was her mother, Tamika Palmer, who sued the officers, initiating a series of events that ultimately catapulted the case to the national spotlight. As protests unfolded on the streets of Louisville in May, Taylor’s sister, Ju’Niyah Palmer, took to social media to call for peace and unity. In the following weeks, Cate Young, a Black writer, launched a massive digital campaign, #BirthdayForBreonna, as a call to action on June 5 — what would have been Taylor’s 27th birthday. Young encouraged supporters on social media to send birthday cards to Daniel Cameron — the Kentucky attorney general — demanding he file charges against the officers. **These efforts yielded some significant results.** Within two weeks of the digital campaign, **the Louisville Metro Council unanimously passed Breonna’s Law to outlaw “no-knock” warrants and require the use of body cameras during searches.** In addition, the Louisville Metro Police Department fired one of the three officers involved in the shooting. In June, Until Freedom, an organization led by civil rights activist Tamika Mallory, orchestrated a #JusticeForBreonnaTaylor rally in Frankfort, Ky., drawing more than 500 people. Mallory’s efforts, and those of **Tamika Palmer and Young, are just the latest in a long line of Black women in the United States who have led political movements** to challenge state-sanctioned violence. Like the members of the Taylor family, many of these women have experienced the pain of losing a relative to police violence, followed by the failure of the criminal “justice” system. Together, the nationwide efforts of Black women — as writers, organizers and activists — have shaped a national movement against state-sanctioned violence and anti-Black racism. The unfortunate outcome of the Breonna Taylor case shows just how much more work needs to be done. However, **Black women will continue to lead the way forward, organizing against racial injustice and demanding radical changes** in American policing.

## Case

### AT: Arnav is racist

#### 1] Arbitrary – there’s nothing that means that bc im nonblack I deserve to lose every round – that defeats the purpose of debate and means that debate as a structure fails in their model

#### 2] Me reading afropessimism against a nonblack debater shouldn’t be a voting issue – it’s a question of engaging with the affirmative and testing whether the affirmative is antiblack or not – their model of gatekeeping is actively harmful bc it means that now I have no incentive to read Red White and Black or the Afropessimism books written by Wilderson – their model is counterproductive sit the fuck down

#### 3] There’s just no offense here – explain what violence I perpetuated against black people – there’s nothing they’re extending ehre

#### 4] Out of round abuse about other positions I read out of round shouldn’t be something that I can lose on bc that defeats the purpose of debating in round – disclosure is an exception bc it’s a question of engaging in round. Also means disclosure o/w

#### Don’t vote for them cuz they’re black

#### 1] Its an asinine standard. If we win that clash is good then voting on identity is bad.

#### 2[ Any argument about identity could fit which creates a race for judges to authenticity test. If you vote for this you have to be able to say that Zion should win debates solely because he is black and write that on the ballot. If its not solely because he's black it begs a question of how much does identity affect it which is an impossible calculus.

#### 3] Its a double turn with pessimism because pessimism says attempts to recognize blackness as an identity within the schematic of white institutions and the white conscious is bad. They read 6 minutes of offensive responses to this argument in the 1AC

### AT White Hyperreality

#### There is no single symbolic order

Fraser 13. Nancy Fraser is a Louise Loeb Professor of Political and Social Science and professor of philosophy at The New School [“Fortunes of Feminism,” 2013, p. 140-149]

Let me begin by posing two questions: What might a theory of discourse contribute to feminism? And what, therefore, should feminists look for in a theory of discourse? I suggest that a conception of discourse can help us understand at least four things, all of which are interrelated. First, it can help us understand how people’s social identities are fashioned and altered over time. Second, it can help us understand how, under conditions of inequality, social groups in the sense of collective agents are formed and unformed. Third, a conception of discourse can illuminate how the cultural hegemony of dominant groups in society is secured and contested. Fourth and finally, it can shed light on the prospects for emancipatory social change and political practice. Let me elaborate. First, consider the uses of a conception of discourse for understanding social identities. The basic idea here is that people s social identities are complexes of meanings, networks of interpretation. To have a social identity, to be a woman or a man, for example, just is to live and to act under a set of descriptions. These descriptions, of course, are not simply secreted by peoples’s bodies; nor are they simply exuded by people s psyches. Rather, they are drawn from the fund of interpretive possibilities available to agents in specific societies. It follows that, in order to understand the gender dimension of social identity, it does not suffice to study biology or psychology. Instead, one must study the historically specific social practices through which cultural descriptions of gender are produced and circulated.3 Moreover, social identities are exceedingly complex. They are knitted together from a plurality of different descriptions arising from a plurality of different signifying practices. Thus, no one is simply a woman; one is rather, for example, a white, Jewish, middle-class woman, a philosopher, a lesbian, a socialist, and a mother.4 Because everyone acts in a plurality of social contexts, moreover, the different descriptions comprising any individuals social identity fade in and out of focus. Thus, one is not always a woman in the same degree; in some contexts, ones womanhood figures centrally in the set of descriptions under which one acts; in others, it is peripheral or latent.5 Finally, it is not the case that peoples social identities are constructed once and for all and definitively fixed. Rather, they alter over time, shifting with shifts in agents’ practices and affiliations. Even the way in which one is a woman will shift— as it does, to take a dramatic example-, when one becomes a feminist. In short, social identities are discursively constructed in historically specific social contexts; they are complex and plural; and they shift over time. One use of a conception of discourse for feminist theorizing, then, is in understanding social identities in their full socio-cultural complexity, thus in demystifying static, single variable, essentialist views of gender identity. A second use of a conception of discourse for feminist theorizing is in understanding the formation of social groups. How does it happen, under conditions of domination, that people come together, arrange themselves under the banner of collective identities, and constitute themselves as collective social agents? How do class formation and, by analogy, gender formation occur? Clearly, group formation involves shifts in people s social identities and therefore also in their relation to social discourse. One thing that happens here is that pre-existing strands of identities acquire a new sort of salience and centrality. These strands, previously submerged among many others, are reinscribed as the nub of new self-definitions and affiliations.6 For example, in the current wave of feminist ferment, many of us who had previously been “ women” in some taken-for-granted way have now become “ women” in the very different sense of a discursively self-constituted political collectivity. In the process, we have remade entire regions of social discourse. We have invented new terms for describing social reality— for example, “ sexism,” “ sexual harassment,” “ marital, date, and acquaintance rape,” “ labor force sex-segregation,” “ the double shift,” and “ wife-battery.” We have also invented new language games such as consciousness raising and new, institutionalized public spheres such as the Society for Women in Philosophy.7 The point is that the formation of social groups proceeds by struggles over social discourse. Thus, a conception of discourse is useful here, both for understanding group formation and for coming to grips with the closely related issue of socio-cultural hegemony. “ Hegemony” is the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci’s term for the discursive face of power. It is the power to establish the “common sense” or “ doxa” of a society, the fund of self-evident descriptions of social reality that normally go without saying.8 This includes the power to establish authoritative definitions of social situations and social needs, the power to define the universe of legitimate disagreement, and the power to shape the political agenda. Hegemony, then, expresses the advantaged position of dominant social groups with respect to discourse. It is a concept that allows us to recast the issues of social identity and social groups in the light of societal inequality. How do pervasive axes of dominance and subordination affect the production and circulation of social meanings? How does stratification along lines of gender, “ race,” and class affect the discursive construction of social identities and the formation of social groups? T h e notion of hegemony points to the intersection of power, inequality, and discourse. However, it does not entail that the ensemble of descriptions that circulate in society comprise a monolithic and seamless web, nor that dominant groups exercise an absolute, topdown control of meaning. On the contrary, “ hegemony” designates a process wherein cultural authority is negotiated and contested. It presupposes that societies contain a plurality of discourses and discursive sites, a plurality of positions and perspectives from which to speak. Of course, not all of these have equal authority. Yet conflict and contestation are part of the story. Thus, one use of a conception of discourse for feminist theorizing is to shed light on the processes by which the socio-cultural hegemony of dominant groups is achieved and contested. What are the processes by which definitions and interpretations inimical to w om en s interests acquire cultural authority? What are the prospects for mobilizing counter-hegemonic feminist definitions and interpretations to create broad oppositional groups and alliances? The link between these questions and emancipatory political practice is, I believe, fairly obvious. A conception of discourse that lets us examine identities, groups, and hegemony in the ways I have been describing would be of considerable use to feminist practice. It would valorize the empowering dimensions of discursive struggles without leading to “culturalist” retreats from political engagement.9 In addition, the right kind of conception would counter the disabling assumption that women are just passive victims of male dominance. That assumption over-totalizes male dominance, treating men as the only social agents- and rendering inconceivable our own existence as feminist theorists and activists. In contrast, the sort of conception I have been proposing would help us understand how, even under conditions of subordination, women participate in the making of culture. 2. LACANIANISM AND THE LIMITS OF STRU CTU RA LISM In light of the foregoing, what sort of conception of discourse will be useful for feminist theorizing? What sort of conception best illuminates social identities, group formation, hegemony, and emancipatory practice? In the postwar period, two approaches to theorizing language became influential among political theorists. The first is the structuralist model, which studies language as a symbolic system or code. Derived from Saussure, this model is presupposed in the version of Lacanian theory I shall be concerned with here; in addition, it is abstractly negated but not entirely superseded in deconstruction and in related forms of French “ womens writing.” The second influential approach to theorizing language may be called the pragmatics model, which studies language at the level of discourses, as historically specific social practices of communication. Espoused by such thinkers as Mikhail Bakhtin, Michel Foucault, and Pierre Bourdieu, this model is operative in some but not all dimensions of the work of Julia Kristeva and Luce Irigaray. In the present section of this chapter, I shall argue that the first, structuralist model is of only limited usefulness for feminist theorizing. Let me begin by noting that there are good prima facie reasons for feminists to be suspicious of the structuralist model. This model constructs its object of study by abstracting from exactly what we need to focus on, namely, the social practice and social context of communication. Indeed, the abstraction from practice and context are among the founding gestures of Saussurean linguistics. Saussure began by splitting signification into langue, the symbolic system or code, and parole, speakers’ uses of language in communicative practice or speech. He then made the first of these, langue, the proper object of the new science of linguistics, and relegated the second, parole, to the status of a devalued remainder.10 At the same time, Saussure insisted that the study of langue be synchronic rather than diachronic; he thereby posited his object of study as static and atemporal, abstracting it from historical change. Finally, the founder of structuralist linguistics posited that langue was indeed a single system; he made its unity and systematicity consist in the putative fact that every signifier, every material, signifying element of the code, derives its meaning positionally through its difference from all of the others. Together, these founding operations render the structuralist approach of limited utility for feminist purposes." Because it abstracts from parole, the structuralist model brackets questions of practice, agency, and the speaking subject. Thus, it cannot shed light on the discursive practices through which social identities and social groups are formed. Because this approach brackets the diachronic, moreover, it will not tell us anything about shifts in identities and affiliations over time. Similarly, because it abstracts from the social context of communication, the model brackets issues of power and inequality. Thus, it cannot illuminate the processes by which cultural hegemony is secured and contested. Finally, because the model theorizes the fund of available linguistic meanings as a single symbolic system, it lends itself to a monolithic v iew of signification that denies tensions and contradictions among social meanings. In short, by reducing discourse to a “ symbolic system," the structuralist model evacuates social agency, social conflict, and social practice.12 Let me now try to illustrate these problems by means of a brief discussion of Lacanianism. B y “ Lacanianism," I do not mean the actual thought of Jacques Lacan, which is far too complex to tackle here. I mean, rather, an ideal-typical neo-structuralist reading of Lacan that is widely credited among English-speaking feminists.'5 In discussing “ Lacanianism,” I shall bracket the question of the fidelity of this reading, which could be faulted for overemphasizing the influence of Saussure at the expense of other, countervailing influences, such as Hegel.'4 For my purposes, however, this ideal-typical, Saussurean reading of Lacan is useful precisely because it evinces with unusual clarity the difficulties that beset many conceptions of discourse that are widely considered “ poststructuralist” but that remain wedded in important respects to structuralism. Because their attempts to break free of structuralism remain abstract, such conceptions tend finally to recycle it. Lacanianism, as discussed here, is a paradigm case of “ neostructuralism.” '5 At first sight, neo-structuralist Lacanianism seems to promise some advantages for feminist theorizing. B y conjoining the Freudian problematic of the construction of gendered subjectivity to the Saussurean model of structural linguistics, it seems to provide each with its needed corrective. The introduction of the Freudian problematic promises to supply the speaking subject that is missing in Saussure and thereby to reopen the excluded questions about identity, speech, and social practice. Conversely, the use of the Saussurean model promises to remedy some of Freuds deficiencies. By insisting that gender identity is discursively constructed, Lacanianism appears to eliminate lingering vestiges of biologism in Freud, to treat gender as sociocultural all the way down, and to render it in principle more open to change. Upon closer inspection, however, the promised advantages fail to materialize. Instead, Lacanianism begins to look viciously circular. On the one hand, it purports to describe the process by which individuals acquire gendered subjectivity through their painful conscription as young children into a pre-existing phallocentric symbolic order. Here the structure of the symbolic order is presumed to determine the character of individual subjectivity. But, on the other hand, the theory also purports to show that the symbolic order must necessarily be phallocentric since the attainment of subjectivity requires submission to “ the Father s Law.” Here, conversely, the nature of individual subjectivity, as dictated by an autonomous psychology, is presumed to determine the character of the symbolic order. One result of this circularity is an apparently ironclad determinism. As Dorothy Leland has noted, the theory casts the developments it describes as necessary, invariant, and unalterable.16 Phallocentrism, womans disadvantaged place in the symbolic order, the encoding of cultural authority as masculine, the impossibility of describing a nonphallic sexuality— in short, any number of historically contingent trappings of male dominance— now appear as invariable features of the human condition. Womens subordination, then, is inscribed as the inevitable destiny of civilization. I can spot several spurious steps in this reasoning, some of which have their roots in the presupposition of the structuralist model. First, to the degree Lacanianism has succeeded in eliminating biologism— and that is dubious for reasons I shall not go into here17 — it has replaced it with psychologism, the untenable view that autonomous psychological imperatives given independently of culture and history can dictate the way they are interpreted and acted on within culture and history. FOOTNOTE 17 INSERTED 17 Here I believe one can properly speak of Lacan. Lacans claim to have overcome biologism rests on his insistence that the phallus is not the penis. However, many feminist critics have shown that he fails to prevent the collapse of the symbolic signifier into the organ. The clearest indication of this failure is his claim, in The Meaning of the Phallus,” that the phallus becomes the master signifier because of its “ turgidity” which suggests “ the transmission of vital flow” in copulation. See Jacques Lacan, “ T h e Meaning of the Phallus,” in Feminine Sexuality: Jacques Lacan and the ecole freudienne, eds. Juliet Mitchell and Jacqueline Rose, N ew York: W.W. N orton & Company, 1982. END FOOTNOTE 17 Lacanianism falls prey to psychologism to the extent that it claims that the phallocentricity of the symbolic order is required by the demands of an enculturation process that is itself independent of culture.18 I f one h a lf of Lacanianism s circular argument is vitiated by psychologism, then the other half is vitiated by what I shall call symbolicism. B y symbolicism I mean, first, the homogenizing reification of diverse signifying practices into a monolithic and all-pervasive “ symbolic order,” and second, the endowing of that order with an exclusive and unlimited causal power tofix people s subjectivities once and for all. Symbolicism, then, is an operation whereby the structuralist abstraction langue is troped into a quasi-divinity, a normative “ symbolic order” whose power to shape identities dwarfs

to the point of extinction that of mere historical institutions and practices. Actually, as Deborah Cameron has noted, Lacan himself equivocates on the expression “ the symbolic order.” '9 Sometimes he uses this expression relatively narrowly to refer to Saussurean langue, the structure of language as a system of signs. In this narrow usage, Lacanianism would be committed to the implausible view that the sign system itself determines individuals’ subjectivities independently of the social context and social practice of its uses. At other times, Lacan uses the expression “ the symbolic order” far more broadly to refer to an amalgam that includes not only linguistic structures, but also cultural traditions and kinship structures, the latter mistakenly equated with social structure in general.20 In this broad usage, Lacanianism would conflate the ahistorical structural abstraction langue with variable historical phenomena like family forms and childrearing practices; cultural representations of love and authority in art, literature, and philosophy; the gender division of labor; forms of political organization and of other institutional sources of power and status. The result would be a conception of “ the symbolic order” that essentializes and homogenizes contingent historical practices and traditions, erasing tensions, contradictions, and possibilities for change. This would be a conception, moreover, that is so broad that the claim that it determines the structure of subjectivity risks collapsing into an empty tautology.21 The combination of psychologism and symbolicism in Lacanianism results in a conception of discourse that is of limited usefulness for feminist theorizing. To be sure, this conception offers an account of the discursive construction of social identity. However, it is not an account that can make sense of the complexity and multiplicity of social identities, the ways they are woven from a plurality of discursive strands. Granted, Lacanianism stresses that the apparent unity and simplicity of ego identity is imaginary, that the subject is irreparably split both by language and drives. B ut this insistence on fracture does not lead to an appreciation of the diversity of the socio-cultural discursive practices from which identities are woven. It leads, rather, to a unitary v iew of the human condition as inherently tragic. In fact, Lacanianism differentiates identities only in binary terms, along the single axis of having or lacking the phallus. As Luce Irigaray has shown, this phallic conception of sexual difference is not an adequate basis for understanding femininity22— nor, I would add, masculinity. Still less, then, is it able to shed light on other dimensions of social identities, including ethnicity, color, and social class. Nor could the theory be emended to incorporate these manifestly historical phenomena, given its postulation of an ahistorical, tension-free “ symbolic order” equated with kinship.23 Moreover, Lacanianism’s account of identity construction cannot account for identity shifts over time. It is committed to the general psychoanalytic proposition that gender identity (the only kind of identity it considers) is basically fixed once and for all with the resolution of the Oedipus complex. Lacanianism equates this resolution with the child’s entry into a fixed, monolithic, and all-powerful symbolic order. Thus, it actually increases the degree of identity fixity found in classical Freudian theory. It is true, as Jacqueline R o se points out, that the theory stresses that gender identity is always precarious, that its apparent unity and stability are always threatened by repressed libidinal drives.24 B ut this emphasis on precariousness is not an opening onto genuine historical thinking about shifts in peoples social identities. On the contrary, it is an insistence on a permanent, ahistorical condition, since for Lacanianism the only alternative to fixed gender identity is psychosis. I f Lacanianism cannot provide an account of social identity that is useful for feminist theorizing, then it is unlikely to help us understand the formation of social groups. For Lacanianism, affiliation falls under the rubric of the imaginary. To affiliate with others, to align oneself with others in a social movement, would be tofall prey to the illusions of the imaginary ego. It would be to deny loss and lack, to seek an impossible unification and fulfillment. Thus, from the perspective of Lacanianism, collective movements would by definition be vehicles of delusion; they could not even in principle be emancipatory.25 Moreover, insofar as group formation depends on linguistic innovation, it is untheorizable from the perspective of Lacanianism. Because Lacanianism posits a fixed, monolithic symbolic system and a speaker who is wholly subjected to it, it is inconceivable that there could ever be any linguistic innovation. Speaking subjects could only ever reproduce the existing symbolic order; they could not possibly alter it. From this perspective, the question of cultural hegemony is blocked from view. There can be no question as to how the cultural authority of dominant groups in society is established and contested, no question of unequal negotiations between different social groups occupying different discursive positions. For Lacanianism, on the contrary, there is simply “ f/ie symbolic order,” a single universe of discourse that is so systematic, so all-pervasive, so monolithic that one cannot even conceive of such things as alternative perspectives, multiple discursive sites, struggles over social meanings, contests between hegemonic and counterhegemonic definitions of social situations, conflicts of interpretation of social needs. One cannot even conceive, really, of a plurality of different speakers. With the way blocked to a political understanding of identities, groups, and cultural hegemony, the way is also blocked to an understanding of political practice. For one thing, there is no conceivable agent of such practice. Lacanianism posits a view of the person as a non-sutured congeries of three moments, none of which can qualify as a political agent. The speaking subject is simply the grammatical “ I,” a shifter wholly subjected to the symbolic order; it can only and forever reproduce that order. The ego is an imaginary projection, deluded about its own stability and self-possession, hooked on an impossible narcissistic desire for unity and self-completion; it therefore can only and forever tilt at windmills. Finally, there is the ambiguous unconscious, sometimes an ensemble of repressed libidinal drives, sometimes the face of language as Other, but never anything that could count as a social agent.

### Solvency

#### There are 3 solvency claims the aff can make. We’ll answer each

* Afropessimist literature good
* Guerrilla linguistics good
* Weaponizing black death good’

1. **Don’t vote aff to endorse Afropessimist thought- Wilderson’s theory is psycho-analytic and descriptive ONLY. There is NO CURE for this, Wilderson himself says his corpus does not articulate a cure! He specifically says symbolic interventions like Gillespie endorses are useless. Stop reading double turns.**

Frank **Wilderson—July 14, 2010** (“Interview with Frank B. Wilderson: Wallowing in the Contradiction Part 1,” on *A Necessary Angel: The Ruminations, Prayers, and Complaints of Percy Howard* [http://percy3.wordpress.com/2010/07/09/frank-b-wilderson-%E2%80%9Cwallowing-in-the-contradictions%E2%80%9D-part-1/] accessed 9.20.14).

**If Blacks became** part of the **human** community then **the concept of “contemporaries” would have no outside**; and if it had no outside it could have no inside. Lacan assumes the category and thus he imagines the analysand’s problem in terms of how to live without neurosis among ones contemporaries. Fanon interrogates the category itself. For Lacan the analysands suffer psychically due to problems extant within the paradigm of contemporaries. For Fanon, the analysand suffers due to the existence of the contemporaries themselves and the fact that s/he is a stimulus for anxiety for those who have contemporaries. Now, a contemporary’s struggles are conflictual—that is to say, they can be resolved because they are problems that are of- and in the world. But a Blacks problems are the stuff of antagonisms: struggles that cannot be resolved between parties but can only be resolved through the obliteration of one or both of the parties. We are faced—**when dealing with the Black—with a set of psychic problems that cannot be resolved through any form of symbolic intervention such as psychoanalysis—though addressing them psychoanalytically we can begin to explain the antagonism (as I have done in my book,** and as Fanon does), **but it won’t lead us to a cure.**

#### Weaponizing black death to reclaim it is bad. Their attempt to repair images of black suffering reproduces a visual paradox – it reinforces the marginalization of black visuality, while deepening the hegemony of the visual field as a site for controlling, circumscribing, and containing blackness under a single authentic representation of death.

Fleetwood 11

(Nicole R Fleetwood, assistant professor of American Studies at Rutgers University, *Troubling Vision: Performance, Visuality, and Blackness*, pgs. 11)

Moreover, scholars writing about black visual artists and/or race and art history have pointed out that while black intellectual thought and public discourse have remained fixated on “the problem” of black images for much of the twentieth century, criticism has focused largely on television and film to the neglect of the practices of black visual artists. In her closing remarks to the “Black Popular Culture” conference—a field-defining event held in 1991—Michele Wallace criticized the audience of primarily black scholars and critics for marginalizing the visual arts in black culture.35 She spoke of (p.13) the general disinterest, bordering on contempt, for the works of contemporary black artists whose works had been curated as a visual component to the conference.36 Wallace's comments were well placed given that the conference highlighted scholars whose research grappled with contemporary imagery and historical legacies of black representation in dominant visual media. Building upon Wallace's assertion of the neglect of black visual arts, art historian Lisa Gail Collins frames the issue as “a visual paradox” in which there is a preoccupation with visual culture in its representations of blacks while simultaneously black visual art and artists are neglected. Collins argues that black American political leaders and intellectuals have placed emphasis on how blacks are represented visually, while ignoring or showing ambivalence toward the contributions of black visual artists throughout the last century.37¶ In essence, the visual sphere has been understood in black cultural studies as a punitive field—the scene of punishment—in which the subjugation of blacks continues through the reproduction of denigrating racial stereotypes

that allow whites to define themselves through the process of “negative differentiation.”38 Based in a ruthless history of representing blacks as abject, the mobilization against dominant visual representations of blacks, particularly throughout the twentieth-century cultural history of the United States, has led to a fixation on getting images of blacks “right” as a way of countering racist stereotypes, or what Michele Wallace and others have described as the debate over “negative/positive images.” This is a well-treaded area in writings on black visibility and one that I will not rehearse here but to mention its significance in shaping how blackness is conceptualized and made visible in scholarship. Visual representations of blacks are meant to substitute for the real experiences of black subjects. The visual manifestation of blackness through technological apparatus or through a material experience of locating blackness in public space equates with an ontological account of black subjects. Visuality, and vision to an extent, in relationship to race becomes a thing-in-itself.

### AT Ontology

#### Their valorization of the ontological reinforces the christening of Capital M Man as the vanguard of the human.

David **Scott** **and** Sylvia **Wynter** (David Scott is Professor of Anthropology in the Institute for Research in African American Studies, Columbia University. Sylvia Wynter is a Jamaican novelist, dramatist, critic, philosopher, and essayist. In 1974, Wynter was invited by the Department of Literature at the University of California at San Diego to be a professor of Comparative and Spanish Literature and to lead a new program in Third World literature. She left UCSD in 1977 to become chairperson of African and Afro-American Studies, and professor of Spanish in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese at Stanford University. She is now Professor Emerita at Stanford University. “The Re-Enchantment of Humanism: An Interview with Svlvia Wvnter”. Small Axe, Vol. 8, September **2000**.)

DS: In order to make this kind of argument**, do you not need a kind of ontological**ly prior human/**nature** ground **on which** these codes, **these historical codes, are inscripted**? A ground that forms the basis for the emancipated ecumenical conception of the human that you want to voice? SW: That's very well put. However, I was so caught up in listening to the way you formulated it, that I am **no**t sure how to answer it. DS: Let me put it another way. There is in your thought, on the one hand, a radical rehistoricization, because it is a transgressive countermove to the conventions of historiography, in particular historiographies of the relationship between Europe and its odiers. So there is on the one hand a radical rehistoricization that attempts to illuminate the place of Man in Europe's autobiography. But, on the other hand, you don’t simply want to historicize humanism, you want to provide **the ground for a different imagining of the human.** But that reimagining of the human has in some way to **rest** **on an** unhistoricizable a priori, and it is that unhistoricizable **a priori** that I want to understand. SW: Well, **that** was also the issue at the heart of the quarrel between Sartre and Levi-Strauss. For Sartre, history is the ground of everything, and so it is also, you will recall, for Jameson . 8) But for Levi-Strauss **all history**, including our present Western one, **is always already coded, already history-for ,** always **already an ethnohistory.** Now, here is where the conception of the genre of the human and of the governing sociogenic principle comes in. For it would be the code, the law of the code, the principle, which functions as the ground of the history that will be narrated and existentially lived. So the ground of our mode of being human will itself be the a priori or ground of the history to which it gives rise. But **the paradox here**, of course, **is that it cannot itself be historicized** within the terms of the ethnohistory to which it will give rise: that code/mode must remain, as you say, unhistoricizable. As ours now remains for us. So I want us to see history at two levels: I mean there is this history of us as a human species, wherever we are, in whatever part of the world, whatever the terms, the way in which we’re enacting, instituting ourselves as human and, if you look at it from our contemporary view, peopling the entire planet. So we are **starting from a very small scale in Africa**, where **the** singularity of our hybrid bios-Iogos, nature-culture mode of self-inscripting human beingness, in always-sacred religious terms, first occurs some fifty thousand years ago. Then spreading out across and from that continent, eventually to make ourselves at home in ever)' nook and cranny of the earth. So there’s that history. But then, inserted into that history, as a part of it, is another history. And it is in this **history**, in which the idea of humanism, **of** its de-godding of our modes of self-inscription first erupts, where **Man and its human Others** –

that is, Indians, Negroes, Natives - are first invented. And this history is the history of the expansion of the West from the fifteenth century onwards, and an expansion that is carried out within the terms of its own cultural conception of its own origins. And you see, it is this ethnoculturally coded narrated history **that is taught** both **in** a now **global academia** as well as in all our schools, while it **is** this history in whose now purely secular terms we are all led to imagine ourselves as Man, as purely biological and economic beings. The history for Man, therefore, **narrated** and existentially lived **as if it were the history-for the human itself.** So what I am saying here is that up until now, there has been no history of the human. Our only “universal” histories are ones conceived in monotheistic religious terms. So Judaism has its own “universal” history and so has Islam. While we now live as **Man in the second millennium** only because we’re living in a Judaic/Christian conception of history, one that **is now secularized**. **Man’s history**-for **is** therefore **now put forward as if it were** transcreedal, supracultural, **universal**. And my point here is that **if we are to be able to reimagine the human in the terms of a new** history whose **narrative** will enable us to co-identify ourselves each with the other, whatever our local ethnos/ethnoi, we would have to begin by taking our present history, as narrated by historians, as empirical data for the study of **a specific** **cultural coding of** a **history** whose narration has, together with other such discipl**in**ary narrations, given rise to **the** existential reality of our **present Western world system** - diat is, to the reality of a system enacted about the ethno-class conception of the human **Man**, which **represents itself as if it were the human, and in which we all now live.**

### Humanism Good

#### Their endorsement of pessimist thought explicitly disavows humanism as liberatory. Their Warren evidence misunderstands humanism as singular and says its either “humans like everyone else” or nonhuman. Only a positive orientation to humanism can avert major existential crisis. Multiple internals.

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

Surely, we are at a moment of history fraught with new and old fOnTIS of anxiety, alienation, and antagonism; deepening poverty in the midst of increasing wealth; proposals and practices of ethnic cleansing and genocide; pandemic diseases; increased plunder; pollution and depletion of the environment; constant conflicts, large and small; and world-threatening delusions on the part of a superpower aspiring to a return to empire, with spurious claims of the right to preemptive aggression, to openly attack and overthrow nonfavored and fragile governments openly, and to seize the lands and resources of vulnerable peoples and establish "democracy" through military dictatorship abroad, all the while suppressing political dissent at home (Chang 2002; Cole et at. 2002). These anxieties are undergirded by racist and religious chauvinism, by the self-righteous and veiled references of these rulers to themselves as a kind of terrible and terrorizing hand of God, appointed to rid the world of evil (Ahmad 2002; Arnin 2001; Blum1995). At the same time, in this context of turmoil and terror and the use and threatened use of catastrophic weapons, there is the irrational and arrogant expectation that the oppressed will acquiesce, abandon resistance, and accept the disruptive and devastating consequences of globalization, along with the global hegemony it implies (Martin and Schumann 1997). There is great alarm among the white-supremicist rulers of these globalizing nations, given the metical resistance rising up against them, even as globalization’s technological, organizational, and economic capacity continues to expand (Barber 1996; Karenga 2002e, 2003a; Lusane 1997). There is great alarm when people who should "know" when they are defeated ridicule the assessment, refuse to be defeated or dispirited, and, on the contrary, intensify and diversify their struggles (Zepezauer 2002). Certainly the battlefields of Palestine, Venezuela, long suffering Haiti, and Chiapas, Mexico, along with other continuing emancipatory struggles everywhere, reaffirm the indomitable character of the human spirit and the durability and adaptive vitality of a people determined to be free

, regardless of the odds and assessments against them. Indeed, they remind us that the motive force of history is struggle, informed by the ongoing quest for freedom, justice, power of the masses, and peace in the world. Despite "end of history" claims and single-super- power resolve and resolutions, these struggles continue. For still the oppressed want freedom, the wronged and injured want justice, the people want power over their destiny and daily lives, and the world wants peace. And all over the world-especially in this U.S. citadel of aging capitalism with its archaic dreams of empire-clarity in the analysis of issues, and in the critical determination of tasks and prospects, requires the deep and disciplined reflection characteristic of the personal and social practice we call philosophy. But this sense of added urgency for effective intervention is prompted not only by the critical juncture at which we stand but also by an awareness of our long history of resistance as a people, because in our collective strivings and social struggles we seek a new future for our people, our descendants, and the world. Joined also to these conditions and considerations is the compelling character of our self-understanding as a people, as a moral vanguard in this country and the world. For we have launched, fought, and won with our allies struggles that not only have expanded the realm of freedom in this country and the world but also have served as an ongoing inspiration and a model of liberation struggles for other marginalized and oppressed peoples and groups throughout the world. Indeed, they have borrowed from and built on our moral vocabulary and moral vision, sung our songs of freedom, and held up our struggle for liberation as a model to emulate. Now, self-understanding and self-assertion are dialectically linked. In other words, how we understand ourselves in the world determines how we assert ourselves in the world. Thus, an expansive concept of ourselves as Africans-continental and diasporan-and as Africana philosophers forms an essential component of our sense of mission and the urgency with which we approach it. It is important to note that I have conceived and written this chapter within the framework of Kausaida philosophy (Karenga 1978, 1980, 1997) Kawaida is a philosophic initiative that was forged in the crucible of ideological and practical struggles around issues of freedom, justice, equalitys, self-determination, conullunal power, self-defense, pan~African- ism, coalition and alliance, Black Studies, intellectual emancipation, and cultural recovery and reconstlouction. It continued to develop in the midst of these ongoing struggies within the life of the mind and stmggles iottbtn the life of the people, as well as within the context of the conditions of the world. Kawaida is defined as an ongoing synthesis of the best of xAfrican thought and practice in constant exchange tuttb tl3e 'U)()ltd. It characterizes culture as a unique, instructive and valuable way of being human in the world-as a foundation and framework for self-understanding and self-assertion. As a philosophy of culture and struggle, Kawaida maintains that our intellectual and social practice as Nricana activist scholars must be undergirded and informed by ongoing efforts to (1) ground our- selves in our own culture; (2) constantly recover, reconstruct, .and bring forth from our culture the best of what it means to be African and human in the fullest sense; (3) speak this special cultural truth to the world and (4) use our culture to constantly make our own unique contribution to the reconception and reconstruction of this country, and to the forward flow of human history.

## 4

#### Claims of metaphysical ontology are inherently depoliticizing, locking in politics rather than opening up the possibility of a pragmatics of becoming acting directly upon the contingencies of power relations that make up the status quo.

Buck-Morss 13. Susan Buck-Morss, Distinguished Professor of Political Science at the CUNY Graduate Center, NYC, “A Commonist Ethics,” in The Idea of Communism, 2013, http://susanbuckmorss.info/text/commonist-ethics/

The First Point: Politics is not an ontology. The claim that the political is always ontological needs to be challenged.[1](http://susanbuckmorss.info/text/commonist-ethics/#fn:1) It is not merely that the negative the case — that the political is never ontological[2](http://susanbuckmorss.info/text/commonist-ethics/#fn:2) (as Badiou points out, a simple negation leaves everything in place[3](http://susanbuckmorss.info/text/commonist-ethics/#fn:3)). Instead, what is called for is a reversal of the negation: The ontological is never political. It follows that the move from la politique (everyday politics) to le politique (the very meaning of the political) is a one-way street. With all due respect to Marcel Gauchet, Chantal Mouffe, Giorgio Agamben, and a whole slew of others, the attempt to discover within empirical political life (la politique) the ontological essence of the political (le politique) leads theory into a dead end from which there is no return to actual, political practice. There is nothing gained by this move from the feminine to the masculine form. The post-metaphysical project of discovering ontological truth within lived existence fails politically. It fails in the socially disengaged Husserlian-Heidegerian mode of bracketing the existenziell to discover the essential nature of what “the political” is. And it fails in the socially critical, post-Foucauldian mode of historicized ontology, disclosing the multiple ways of political being-in-the-world within particular, cultural and temporal configurations. This is not news. From the mid-1930s on, it was Adorno’s obsessive concern, in the context of the rise of fascism, to demonstrate the failure of the ontological attempt to ground a philosophy of Being by starting from the given world, or, in Heideggerian language, to move from the ontic, that is, being [seiend] in the sense of that which is empirically given, to the ontological, that which is essentially true of existence (Dasein as the “a priori structure” of “existentially”[4](http://susanbuckmorss.info/text/commonist-ethics/#fn:4)). Adorno argued that any ontology derived (or reduced5) from the ontic, turns the philosophical project into one big tautology.[6](http://susanbuckmorss.info/text/commonist-ethics/#fn:6) He has a point, and the political implications are serious. Ontology identifies. Identity was anathema to Adorno, and nowhere more so than in its political implications, the identity between ruler and ruled that fascism affirmed. Indeed, even parliamentary rule can be seen to presuppose a striving for identity, whereby consensus becomes an end in itself, regardless of the truth content of that consensus.[7](http://susanbuckmorss.info/text/commonist-ethics/#fn:7) It is not that Heidegger’s philosophy (or any existential ontology) is in-itself fascist (that would be an ontological claim). Rather, by resolving the question of Being before subsequent political analyses, the latter have no philosophical traction. They are subsumed under the ontological a prioris that themselves must remain indifferent to their content.[8](http://susanbuckmorss.info/text/commonist-ethics/#fn:8) Existential ontology is mistaken in assuming that, once “the character of being” (Heidegger) is conceptually grasped, it will return us to the material, empirical world and allow us to gather its diversities and multiplicities under philosophy’s own pre-understandings in ways adequate to the exigencies of collective action, the demands of actual political life. In fact, the ontological is never political. A commonist (or communist) ontology is a contradiction in terms. But, you may ask, did not Marx himself outline in his early writings a full ontology based on the classical, Aristotelian claim that man is by nature a social animal? Are not the 1844 manuscripts an elaboration of that claim, mediated by a historically specific critique, hence an extended, socialontology of man’s alienation from nature (including his own) and from his fellow man? Yes, but in actual, political life, this ontological “man” does not exist. Instead, we existing creatures are men and women, black and brown, capitalists and workers, gay and straight, and the meaning of these categories of being is in no way stable. Moreover, these differences matter less that whether we are unemployed, have prison records, or are in danger of being exported. And no matter what we are in these ontic ways, our beings do not fit neatly into our politics as conservatives, anarchists, evangelicals, Teaparty-supporters, Zionists, Islamists, and (a few) Communists. We are social animals, yes, but we are also anti-social, and 0 are thoroughly mediated by society’s contingent forms. Yes, the early Marx developed a philosophical ontology. Nothing follows from this politically. Philosopher-king-styled party leaders are not thereby legitimated, and the whole thorny issue of false consciousness (empirical vs. imputed/ascribed [zugerechnectes] consciousness) cannot force a political resolution. At the same time, philosophical thought has every right – and obligation — to intervene actively into political life. Here is Marx on the subject of intellectual practice, including philosophizing: But again when I am active scientifically, etc, — when I am engaged in activity which I can seldom perform in direct community with others –- then I am social, because I am active as a man [human being[9](http://susanbuckmorss.info/text/commonist-ethics/#fn:9)]. Not only is the material of my activity given to me as a social product (as is even the language in which the thinker is active): my own existence is social activity, and therefore that which I make of myself, I make of myself for society and with the consciousness ofmyself as a social being. [10](http://susanbuckmorss.info/text/commonist-ethics/#fn:10) Again, no matter how deeply one thinks one’s way into this ontological generalization, no specific political orientation follows as a consequence. It describes the intellectual work of Heidegger and Schmitt every bit as much as it does that of Marx or of us ourselves.

#### The aff’s articulation of antiracist politics ahistoricizes the social transformations made possible by commitment to revolutionary politics—accusations of past failures within socialist movements become the justification for minimizing class struggle

Reed 17 (Adolph, Jr, Prof of Political Science @ U of Pennsylvania, “Revolution as ‘National Liberation’ and the Origins of Neoliberal Antiracism,” Socialist Register 2017, ed. Gregory Albo and Leo Panitch, p. 299-322)

Whatever it may have been at earlier historical moments, antiracism as a contemporary politics is not necessarily aligned with projects of broad social transformation animated by the egalitarian vision that prompted the twentieth century’s iconic revolutions. Rather, antiracist politics in the United States and elsewhere in the West and much of Latin America can be, and often enough has been, an antagonistic alternative to such projects of broad transformation. That is, notwithstanding a persistent inclination among leftists to consider it a discourse at least in dialogue with the left, antiracism is as likely now to be an ideological and practical programme that fits more comfortably within neoliberalism than with a socialist left. In the United States especially, but increasingly in Western Europe and Canada also, antiracism and other political tendencies based on ascriptive identities – that is, those expressing what one supposedly is rather than what one does2 – commonly reject Marxist and other socialist politics as insufficiently attentive, if not inimical, to the special position and needs of racial or other ascriptively defined populations understood to be oppressed in ways that are not causally or most consequentially rooted in capitalist political economy. In fact, these tendencies commonly object to the universalizing perspectives associated with socialism and Marxism in particular as Eurocentric (or phallocentric, or heteronormative) homogenization that denies the specificity of ascriptive groups’ distinctive perspectives, grievances and demands. To the extent the political orientation from which antiracist and other identity-based tendencies proceed is more ‘groupist’ than broadly solidaristic, the vision of a just society around which they cohere can be more in line with liberal interest-group pluralism than with a left that relates its lineage or marks its affinities to the broad tradition that generated the revolutionary movements of the last century. Eric Hobsbawm pointed to this tension in the mid-1990s indicating that, while the left naturally has supported movements advocating for the rights of stigmatized groups, identity groups ‘are not committed to the Left as such, but only to get support for their cause wherever they can’.3 Openness to this kind of politics stems partly, as Hobsbawm points out, from the left reflex to support the cause of the oppressed. The victories won in the second half of the twentieth century against ideologies and regimes of ascriptive hierarchy, chiefly those grounded on narratives of race and gender, made leftists, and labour, all the more conscious of past failings with respect to inattentiveness to, acceptance or even overt embrace of ascriptive inegalitarianism. The generation of leftists who emerged in the 1960s came of age with the militant anti-colonial movements and national liberation struggles in what was then known as the Third World, the civil rights struggle in the United States, and anti-apartheid struggles in South Africa, as well as the resurgent women’s movement. That generation was also likely to be self-critical regarding what were perceived as failings and limitations – some would say ossification, even debasement or perversion – of the dominant practical models of socialism in Eastern Europe and elsewhere on the capitalist periphery. The New Left generation’s inclination to criticize ‘really existing socialism’ extended also to the orthodox Marxist parties in the West, which were easily enough seen as out of touch with the new spirit of insurgency coming from youth, minority groups in advanced capitalist societies, and Third World movements of national liberation. In the US, many displayed similar scepticism toward the trade union movement, which in the eyes of many radicals had settled into a narrow, self-interested class collaborationism. This is a familiar story to Socialist Register readers, and one I summarize very schematically. In addition to Hobsbawm’s account mentioned above, Leo Panitch and the late Ellen Meiksins Wood have discussed these developments more extensively, especially the impact of the intellectual left’s movement both into the academy and away from an intellectual and epistemic commitment to class struggle.4 Several features of that moment are pertinent for making sense of the subsequent development of antiracist politics in itself and the left’s embrace of it. Disillusionment with democratic centralism and sclerotic bureaucratism fed a skeptical attitude toward organizational and intellectual discipline, as well as toward commitment to specific visions and programmes of social transformation. Those tendencies became exacerbated over the 1980s and 1990s as left activity retreated increasingly into universities. In that climate, as more and more of the left came to be defined by moral stance rather than strategic politics and practical programme, self-criticism and atonement regarding racism and sexism on the part of labour and the left in the past, and bearing witness against injustice in the present, loomed steadily larger as an element of left political discourse, especially in the US. And then, with rote repetition of ever more deeply embedded commonsense knowledge, the narrative of labour’s and the left’s past failings with respect to racial and gender inequalities was increasingly shed of nuance, to the point that in recent decades it has become a truism in some activist circles that failure to challenge ascriptive inequalities, or even active reproduction of them, has been a definitive characteristic of the working-class-based left and trade unions, and is substantially responsible for the decline of either or both.5 Commitment to the accusatory narrative can underwrite extraordinary historical misrepresentation, for example, Eugene Debs’s statement that socialism has ‘nothing special to offer the Negro’ is taken as evidence of his indifference to racial inequality – when his intent was exactly the opposite.6 A left that had by and large given up the goal of radical social transformation and the objective of pursuing political power for the purpose of realizing that goal became less distinct from liberalism. Such a left, as Russell Jacoby notes, ‘ineluctably retreats to smaller ideas, seeking to expand the options within the existing society’.7 Militant embrace of the discourses of identity politics, most notably antiracism, has helped to sustain an appearance that the left is not in retreat but remains on the cutting edge of transformational politics. That is because of the prominence of a view that construes ‘oppressions’ rooted in race and gender, etc., as both foundational to American society – or the West – and so deeply embedded that most whites/men are in denial about their power. From that perspective the civil rights movement’s legislative victories in the 1960s were superficial and could not address the deep-structural sources of racism and sexism, which are effectively ontological and therefore beyond the reach of normal political or social intervention. Thus the struggle against these sources of inequality is always insurgent because their power never diminishes. CONTEMPORARY ANTIRACISM’S AHISTORICAL CHARACTER Representing racism as a transhistorical phenomenon, sometimes character- ized as a ‘national disease’ or ‘original sin’, underwrites a claim that it continues to shape life chances for blacks and other nonwhites as it did in earlier periods when, as W. E. B. Du Bois put it, ‘the walls of race were clear and straight; when the world consisted of mutually exclusive races; and even though the exact edges might be blurred there was no question of exact definition and understanding of the meaning of the word’, that is, when notions of racial hierarchy were hegemonic and were open and explicit principles of social and political organization.8 That view, to the extent that it understands racism as transcending patterns of historically specific social relations, presumes primordial understandings of race/racism as a phenomenon shared by both postwar racial liberalism and the earlier racial determinism it challenged. This is, moreover, a political problem as well as an intellectual one. The politics crafted in this antiracist framework has a rearguard character that is expressed in its proponents’ tendency to rely on evocation of past racist practices – law professor Michelle Alexander’s book The New Jim Crow is one prominent illustration9 – to mobilize outrage about injustices in the present. The argument by means of historical analogy, i.e., that current injustices that may seem to derive most directly from different, more complex sources are more significantly understood as like latter-day instances of racist practices in the past, rests on the trope that the current outrages demonstrate the deep continuity of racism as a force and at least suggests the inadequacy of the victories of the civil rights struggle. Yet that trope is also in effect an acknowledgment that big victories on that front have indeed been won. Otherwise there would be no basis for assuming that the comparison would have rhetorical force. Condemnation of an act or practice by comparing it to slavery or Jim Crow could provoke the desired effect only if we can assume consensus that slavery and Jim Crow were bad things. Moreover, sustaining the conviction that racism remains most significantly causal of contemporary patterns of inequality requires terminological gymnastics which enable positing racism – ‘institutional’, ‘structural’, even ‘post-racial’ – as, at least by default, the causal explanation for inequalities that appear statistically as racial disparity and are lived as such in day-to-day life. In fact, historical analogy typically stands in lieu of empirical argument to explain why we should automatically see contemporary disparities as evidence of the unspecified workings of a generic racism rather than as products of current and concrete political-economic processes that are very much ‘presentist’ elements of the regime of steadily intensifying regressive redistribution, the mechanisms, that is, that constitute the telos of neoliberalism. Assertion of the centrality of racist ideas and practices among labour and the left is similarly ahistorical both as a representation of the past and in its implications of continuity in the present. It is more allegory or fable than historical account. Presumptions, stances, and practices that now would be clearly recognized and negatively sanctioned as racist certainly were common enough in the Marxist left and the labour movement in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The appropriate basis of comparison – if one wants to make the sort of moral assessment that many critics of those institutions intend – would, however, not be early twenty-first century sensibilities, but whether racism and sexism were more prominent within unions and left politics than within other contemporaneous institutions. Frankly, from an historicist perspective this sort of exercise in moralistic calculation seems rather puerile, but, because antiracist criticisms of the left in the present depend so heavily on claims regarding the past, it is necessary to address them. Toward that end an important first step is recognizing that what race means and does not, how it has operated as a politically and ideologically potent category, as well as its meanings and significance, have evolved over time and context. The period of revolutionary ferment out of which the Bolshevik revolution emerged coincided with the historical moment when the race idea was at or approaching its apogee in the history of the world, before or since. At the beginning of the twentieth century race science identified between three and sixty-three ‘basic’ races in the world, including between three and six, or even thirty-six, in Europe alone.10 That ambiguity was the inevitable result of efforts to establish precise characteristics of a nonexistent phenomenon: ‘races’ simply do not exist as natural populations. Race theorists assumed that their efforts at taxonomic specification failed because generations of population movement and mixing had diluted original, ‘pure’ racial types; so they looked for racial essences beneath national or linguistic affiliations. This conviction in turn supported the manifestly unscientific approach of positing a priori ideal types and attempting to classify existing populations ‘racially’ by comparing the frequencies of geographical distribution of physical characteristics imputed to the ideal racial types constructed in the race scientists’ taxonomies.11 Marxists and other leftists were more likely to dissent from hegemonic racialism than others, but race-thinking permeated political and intellectual discourse and everyday common sense. It was reproduced among progressives, Fabians and many socialist reformers, as well as conservatives, in dominant notions of evolution as progress. Teleological presumptions about fixed stages of cultural and social evolution and the comparative method in Victorian anthropology that considered contemporary ‘primitives’ as living versions of ancestral Europeans reinforced the tendency – convenient for proponents of colonial expansion – to rank populations hierarchically on the basis of natural limits and capacities ascribed to them. And even many revolutionaries believed that colonial domination was justified because ‘backward’ peoples needed periods of tutelage to prepare them for the modern world. Many English race scientists were convinced that the indigenous working class was racially different from the aristocracy. Just as some socialists opposed imperialist expansionism on egalitarian grounds, others opposed it on racial grounds, expressing fear of degeneration through contact with racially inferior populations.12 Often class struggle was fought at least partly on the terrain of racialist ideology. In the latter half of the nineteenth century fights in the American West over importation of Chinese labour and Japanese immigration also centred around racialist ideologies. Railroad operators and other importers of Chinese labour imagined and openly asserted that those workers’ distinctive racial characteristics made them more tractable and able to live on less than white Americans; opponents, including the California labour movement, argued that those very racial characteristics would degrade American labour and that Chinese were racially ‘unassimilable’. But it was the employer class, not the workers likely to be displaced or impoverished, who established the debate on racial terms. Post-bellum southern planters imported Chinese to the Mississippi Delta region to compete with black sharecroppers out of the same racialist presumptions of greater tractability, as did later importers of Sicilian labour to Louisiana sugarcane and cotton fields.13 Large-scale industrial production in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries depended on mass labour immigration mainly from the eastern and southern fringes of Europe. The innovations of race science – that is, of racialist folk ideology transformed into an academic profession – promised to assist employers’ needs for rational labour force management and were present in the foundation of the fields of industrial relations and industrial psychology. Hugo Münsterberg, a founding luminary of industrial psychology, included ‘race psychological diagnosis’ as an element in assessment of employees’ capabilities, although he stressed that racial or national temperaments are averages and considerable individual variation exists within groups. He argued that assessment, therefore, should be leavened with consideration of individuals’ characteristics and that the influence of ‘group psychology’ would be significant ‘only if the employment not of a single person, but of a large number, is in question, as it is most probable that the average character will show itself in a sufficient degree as soon as many members of the group are involved.’14 As scholarship on race science and its kissing cousin, eugenics, has shown, research that sets out to find evidence of racial difference will find it, whether or not it exists. Thus race science produced increasingly refined taxonomies of racial groups, and the apparent specificity of race theorists’ just-so stories about differential racial capacities provided rationales for immigration restriction, sterilization, segregation and other regimes of inequality and subordination, including genocide. It also generated practical applications to assist employers in assigning workers to jobs for which they were racially suited. A ‘racial adaptability’ chart used by a Pittsburgh company in the 1920s mapped thirty-six different racial groups’ capacities for twenty-two distinct jobs, eight different atmospheric conditions, jobs requiring speed or precision, and day or night shift work.15 Of course, all this was bogus, nothing more than narrow upper-class prejudices parading about as science. It was convincing only if one shared the folk narratives of essential hierarchy that the research assumed from the outset. But the race theories did not have to be true to be effective. They had only to be used as if they were true to produce the material effects that gave the ideology an authenticating verisimilitude. Poles became steel workers in Pittsburgh, Baltimore, Buffalo, Chicago, and Gary, not for any natural aptitude or affinity but because employers and labour recruiters sorted them into work in steel mills. RACIALIST IDEOLOGY’S MATERIAL FOUNDATIONS As a significant social force, racialist ideology has always been anchored to material imperatives, in both domestic and international domains. It became commonsense truth to the extent that it connected with the perspectives and interests of powerful elites. Like all ideologies of ascriptive difference, it would pre-empt debate over evolving programmes of exploitation and domination by reading them into nature. While the discourse of white supremacy certainly has had no shortage of sincere adherents, it became hegemonic over the second half of the nineteenth century because it comported well with upper-class prejudices and capitalists’ economic programmes. That is how, as the Pittsburgh racial adaptability chart illustrates, it became the conceptual frame of reference within which other groups and strata came to understand their social position, articulate their own interests and thus constitute themselves practically as groups. In the US for instance, in the late 1830s and 1840s, in a context of rising abolitionist sentiment and the democratization of public discourse associated with the spread of universal (white male) suffrage, white supremacist ideology undergirded and propelled a shift in defences of slavery. Previously, pro-slavery arguments centred on defending the institution as a ‘necessary evil’, an unpleasant and even morally dubious requirement of the plantation- based economic order of the southern states. One antebellum planter put the matter succinctly: ‘For what purpose does the master hold the servant? Is it not that by his labor, he, the master, may accumulate wealth?’16 In the changing political climate, the rhetorical centre of gravity of defences of slavery shifted to an argument that the institution was indeed a positive good for all involved, including the enslaved. This moment coincided with the formation of the embryo of what by the end of the century would become race science. As the sectional crisis sharpened in the late 1840s and early 1850s, propagation of white supremacist ideology – both rhetorically and institutionally, through carrots and sticks – became important as a basis for accommodating non-slaveholding southern whites to the possibility of secession. Appeals to racial solidarity provided a narrative of political cohesion and negatively sanctioned dissent. To be clear, indicating that it had a material foundation is not to suggest that embrace of white supremacy was ‘purely’ instrumental, even among proto-race scientists and pro-slavery ideologues. An important feature of ideologies of ascriptive difference is that they hopelessly cloud the distinction between principled belief and pursuit of self-interest. Josiah C. Nott and George R. Gliddon, the authors of Types of Mankind, one of the most prominent texts of mid-nineteenth century race theory, both no doubt believed sincerely that the races they identified were equivalent to separate species and that blacks were naturally fit for enslavement. They were also, respectively, a wealthy slave-owning Alabama physician and an English Egyptologist who also wrote on the cotton economy in Egypt.17 A striking testament to the harmonizing power of ideology is the appearance of an antebellum field of slave medicine, devoted to identification and treatment of conditions peculiar to blacks. Among those was drapetomania, a ‘disease of the mind’ that afflicted slaves with an irrational inclination to ‘run away from service’. Samuel A. Cartwright, the slave-owning Louisiana physician who discovered and reported the malady in the early 1850s, when ‘positive good’ arguments had become dominant among slavery’s defenders, was convinced that he had identified a genuine medical condition, preposterously transparent as it seems to a twenty-first century sensibility.18 White supremacist ideology, and the racialism in which it was embedded, operated similarly, of course, in relation to European and American colonialism in the late nineteenth century. Pioneer sociologist Edward A. Ross in 1901 laid out an especially clear account that links scientific race theory, rooted in the neo-Lamarckian evolutionism common in the early social sciences, and an argument for imperialism and colonization as inexorable imperatives of the ‘vigorous’ races.19 In an illustration of the complex ways that hegemonic racialism could work, Ross had been fired from the Stanford University faculty the year before for having run afoul of Jane Lathrop Stanford, widow of Leland Stanford of the Union Pacific railroad and domineering force on the University’s board of trustees. Ross had earned Mrs Stanford’s ire for two particular transgressions: he militantly advocated, in league with trade unions, intensified enforcement of Chinese exclusion on racial grounds (Union Pacific was a principal proponent of importing Chinese labour, also on racial grounds); and he advocated with equal militancy public ownership of utilities.20 Rudyard Kipling, a literal product of British imperialism, extolled ‘The White Man’s Burden’, which – in a gush of enthusiasm at the US’s recent acquisitions from the Spanish- Cuban-American War – he urged Americans to take up. I am agnostic with respect to how earnestly Kipling held the brew of condescension dressed as altruism projected in his infamous contention. We can say with certitude, though, that he understood that there was much more to colonialism than altruistic tutelage. In response to Kipling, one of the most emphatic racists of the day in American politics, Democratic US Senator from South Carolina Benjamin R. ‘Pitchfork Ben’ Tillman, denounced imperialist expansionism on racial grounds, stressing concerns that sustained contact with inferior populations would lead to white racial degeneration.21 By the turn of the twentieth century racialist ideology had become a global frame of reference through which arguments about colonialism and economic and political hierarchy were commonly conducted. Therefore, it should not be surprising that opposition to those hierarchies would be expressed, at least initially, in that same language. An oft-cited instance of that perception is W. E. B. Du Bois’s 1903 observation that ‘the problem of the Twentieth Century is the problem of the colour line’, which he went on to specify as ‘the re lation of the darker and lighter races of men in Asia and Africa and the islands of the sea’.22 In the US, mass disfranchisement of blacks and imposition of strictly codified white supremacist apartheid in nearly all the South made the colour line particularly salient as a bulwark against egalitarian political interests. This is consistent with how ascriptive ideologies naturalize contingent material relations of inequality by making them invisible within narratives of fixed hierarchy. The racialized discourse of tutelage, persistence of the presumptions of the Victorian comparative method, and direct and overt racialized domination all reinforced a similar understanding of the driving impetus of colonialism. It was reasonable for egalitarian opponents to assume either that racialist ideology was the proximate source of the inequality and exploitation, or that combating that ideology was a necessary precondition for attacking the inequality. It is noteworthy that both in the US and in much of the fin-de-siècle colonial world, as Du Bois’s colour line apothegm illustrates, the first tentative expressions of modern political assertiveness from the dominated populations were formulated within the paradigm of tutelage of the underdeveloped. The nascent professional and functionary classes in the colonies and the American South, the ‘new men’, as Judith Stein describes them, began to yield a stratum who pursued advocacy for subordinate populations alongside managerial authority over, and organized guidance of, their progress toward self-government. In the US that stratum of racial advocates, often describing themselves as ‘race men’ and ‘race women’, attained civic voice in the context of mass disfranchisement and shared a commitment to the large ideal of ‘racial uplift’.23 This established a recognized social role and occupational niche for the race or ethnic group leader as a sort of freelance broker or ethnic-group entrepreneur. Booker T. Washington and Du Bois were prominent voices of this stratum. Both in the US and colonial territories this politics of group advocacy often rested on racialist presumptions about the subordinate populations’ general backwardness and the stewardship role the group’s more cultivated and advanced members should play in leading the masses out of their benighted state. This was a petition politics that addressed governing elites as its principal audience because it understood them to be the only source of e ective political agency. That meant as well that the mission of group uplift was defined within parameters set by the ruling class. By the 1930s racialist ideology was increasingly under attack on biological, anthropological, and political fronts, in part as an expression of the left’s social momentum, which helped to buttress and disseminate egalitarian ideas and sensibilities. In that environment, the Great Migration from the Jim Crow South to big cities in the North and Midwest encouraged popular mass politics among black Americans, particularly as black workers were incorporated into the new industrial unionism. Mass organization as a political form as well as trade unionism also spread through much of the colonial world. In both settings, insurgent politics understandably joined opposition to racism with opposition to exploitation, as defences of those hierarchical regimes still depended on racialist arguments and would continue to do so for several decades. But the cultural and ideological victory of egalitarianism over racialism that consolidated in post-Second World War intellectual life came with a very large asterisk. What was largely defeated was the historically specific strict bio-determinist discourse of race that had prevailed as common sense between the last decades of the nineteenth century and the first quarter of the twentieth. Walter Benn Michaels and Werner Sollors have shown that the retreat from race to culture in theories of social di erence that began in the 1920s was in some ways more an exchange of one metaphor of essential di erence for another than a rejection of the notion of essential group di erence. As historian of anthropology George Stocking, Jr points out, from its origins in the early twentieth century the modern culture idea never fully escaped race theory’s presumptions.24 In the postwar years, culture increasingly supplanted race in discourses legitimating inequality, particularly regarding exploitation of colonized societies and racial minorities in the US. In its taxonomy of ‘stages of development’, modernization theory in the academic study of comparative political development merely rehearsed hoary racialist accounts, such as that by E. A. Ross cited above, and the logic of the Victorian comparative method, while dressing them in a later generation’s scientistic raiment. Robert Vitalis has shown recently how the academic field and political practice of international politics in the US remained rooted in substantively racialist paradigms well into the 1960s.25 And the State Department’s and other national elites’ concerns about the impact that domestic civil rights agitation could have on US imperial designs in former colonial territories led to a concern with damage control that generated, on the one hand, censorship of news broadcast abroad and intense monitoring and policing of domestic activists’ overseas engagements and, on the other, liberal Cold Warriors’ pressure on the domestic front in support of some versions of the movement’s aims.26 AMBIGUITIES OF RACE AND CLASS IN POSTWAR INSURGENCIES Anti-colonial and national liberation movements also paid attention and to some extent drew inspiration from the postwar black American insurgency and vice versa. At least through the 1950s, movements on both planes of insurgency mobilized in general terms on a popular front basis. In both spheres – economic position and racial or national category – each signified the other. In the black American case, the postwar insurgency, which had germinated since the mid-1930s, incubated by industrial unionism and socialist agitation, was propelled partly by a tension between what Preston Smith characterizes as racial democratic (i.e., committed to radical equality of opportunity within American capitalism) and social democratic tendencies and programmes.27 Occasionally, the ultimate contradiction between those tendencies would erupt as open conflict around specific initiatives. However, in quotidian experience racial discrimination and subordination and economic exploitation and degradation seemed, and on one level were, elements in a singular system of oppression. For leftists in both loci of insurgency, pursuit of redistribution along racial and class lines each seemed to be a necessary condition for successful pursuit of the other, if they were not treated as indistinguishable. By the end of the Second World War, even very conventional black liberals and moderates were emphatic that continued growth of industrial unionism and expansion of public social wage policies were indispensable for black Americans’ advancement toward equality.28 For many, including activists, the social-democratic and racial-democratic imperatives were so tightly melded that, even on those occasions when tension between them erupted into explicit conflict in relation to specific initiatives, the sources of conflict typically were interpreted as deriving from individual, idiosyncratic di erences rather than more portentous ideological contradiction. A downside of the popular front style of politics, which was very successful through the major legislative victories of the mid-1960s, was that it proceeded from an abstract commitment to the interests of the race as a whole as a governing norm for political judgment, which was by definition murky and facilitated evasion of those sharp, potentially zero-sum disagreements over political vision that would surface in strategic or even tactical debates. This murkiness left many popular front black radicals ill- prepared for a critical moment in the mid-1960s when the submerged class contradiction sharpened in debate over ways forward after the legislative victories against segregation. THE CLASS CONTRADICTION That tension in black politics was at its core a class contradiction; racial democracy is the social ideal of the aspiring professional-managerial and business strata. Failure, inability or reluctance to address class dynamics in black politics as such, while understandable in the context of dynamic racial popular front insurgency as a strategic desideratum or even simple oversight, nonetheless has had consequences for subsequent understandings of the relation of race and politics and assertions of the scope of authentically black political interests that eventually undermined possibilities for sustaining a working-class agenda in black politics. Antagonistic reactions from both antiracist activists and political elites to Senator Bernie Sanders’s campaign for the 2016 Democratic presidential nomination, on a platform inspired by social democracy, threw into bold relief the extent to which what is now generally recognized as black politics is fundamentally a professional- managerial class programme that constitutes the left-wing of neoliberalism. This politics actively invokes the cultural authority of earlier moments of black insurgency, shorn of their working-class programmatic character, and spectres of the racial order it opposed, to align with a neoliberal ideal of social justice – parity in the distribution of capitalism’s costs and benefits among recognized ascriptive categories – as the boundary of the politically thinkable, even among a nominal left. This odd state of affairs is the product of several developments in postwar American politics, beginning with the impact of the business counterattack on labour in the years after the war and the aggressive anti-communism of the late 1940s and 1950s, and including the terms on which the victories of the mid-1960s were consolidated institutionally within black politics and the country at large. And, perhaps counter-intuitively, identification with Third World anti-colonial and national liberation movements in the 1960s and 1970s played a significant role in rendering invisible the class dynamics that shaped the thrust and impact of post-segregation black politics. The decade after the end of the Second World War was a key moment in helping form the trajectory that has culminated in contemporary antiracist politics in the US. Two linked pressures, one suppressive and the other affirmative, shifted the balance in black popular front radicalism sharply in favour of the racial-democratic tendency. The reactionary anti- communist offensive of those years, as was its domestic intent, stigmatized and suppressed expressions of socialist or anti-capitalist politics or critique. Its effects on accelerating purges of the left from the labour movement are well known. Leah N. Gordon and Risa Golubo have examined its impact on the strategic orientation of black politics and racial advocacy.29 Crucially, aggressive, putschist anti-communism and its ‘loyalty’ apparatus drove a retreat from political-economic interpretations of the bases of racial inequality and toward an individualist, psychologistic perspective focused on racism as prejudice, bigotry, or intolerance. On the affirmative side of the ledger, that new racial liberalism divorced from political economy encouraged a litigation strategy of challenging the codified apartheid in the South as violating the guarantees of equal protection against discriminatory state action provided by the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution. By the mid-1940s the federal courts had shown that that direction could produce positive results for litigants, and that potential opening impelled a focus on the segregationist southern order and its infringements on the civil rights of blacks as a class of individuals. Of course, segregation violated the Fourteenth Amendment no more in 1954, when the US Supreme Court found state-sponsored racially segregated education unconstitutional by definition, than it had in 1896, when the Court’s ruling in Plessy v. Ferguson upheld codified segregation in the ‘separate but equal’ doctrine. Moreover, black activists had fought against the segregationist regime with whatever means available since before Plessy had established it as legitimate. What had changed was the political and cultural centre of gravity with regard to racial inequality and discrimination. To be sure, the social-democratic tendency in black politics did not disappear. It remained an important engine of popular political action through the 1960s. The fabled 1963 March on Washington was organized principally by labour leader A. Philip Randolph’s Negro American Labor Council, and was officially called the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, organized and carried out with considerable trade union support. The impetus for the protest in Memphis at which Martin Luther King, Jr was assassinated was a sanitation workers’ strike that was an outcropping of a regional organizing campaign of the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME). Labour and class-related issues were central to much of the militant action that made up the high period of southern civil rights activism from the 1940s through the 1960s, as well as a two-decade long struggle – mainly outside the South, where ruling-class dominance was too complete – for local, state, and federal Fair Employment Practices legislation. This would extend beyond anti-discrimination efforts to authorize public intervention in labour markets to pursue full employment, which had been a central goal of black political agitation – and the black-labour-left alliance in which it was embedded – since the war years. Even in the South, however, as the Memphis case illustrates, labour and class issues were often as not high on the movement’s agenda. Even such proceduralist liberal staples of the anti-segregation struggle as restoration of voting rights were linked in the minds of activists and rank-and-file movement supporters to working-class and labour objectives. NATIONAL LIBERATION, BLACK POWER AND CLASS POLITICS As Cold War liberalism and postwar racial liberalism converged, activists increasingly tended to link the civil rights agenda to the Cold War international agenda, especially regarding the decolonizing Third World, characterizing southern segregationists as out of step with world opinion and harmful to national security. Thus, at the same time as politically attentive black Americans drew inspiration from and inspired decolonization and national liberation movements abroad, many also found it at least instrumentally useful to identify their domestic struggles with US international aspirations. Not many perceived that there was a possible contradiction between those positions. Black Americans’ identification with anti-colonial struggles rested on an almost unavoidable and a ectively powerful sense of common, or at least comparable condition. I recall, on first seeing the film soon after its release, finding the ‘Battle of Algiers’ immensely resonant; it seemed that I had lived some of it as a child and adolescent in New Orleans and other American cities. But that general identification was also in important ways superficial and naïve, and it would eventually become implicated in the critical defeat of the social-democratic tendency in black politics in the late 1960s and 1970s. Black American Third Worldism was more nationalist than revolutionary. Going back to Du Bois’s apothegm about the colour line – and it is much less known that he essentially recanted it by the early 1950s, specifically describing race as an ‘excuse’ in class war30 – black identification with colonized populations stemmed partly from an idealized racial nationalism that presumed white supremacist constructions of the stakes of western imperialism. Du Bois’s 1928 novel Dark Princess is a romance based on the premise of a global rising of united peoples of colour.31 In the 1930s and even into the war, many black Americans cheered on Japanese imperialism as a non-white challenge to white supremacy.32 The roots of the characterization of black Americans’ position as an instance of ‘domestic colonialism’ in the early 1960s lay in an e ort not merely to elevate the black insurgency’s power and significance through association with Third World struggles, but also to advocate a model of national liberation as a programme and approach for black politics in the US.33 Third Worldism was in general more a rhetorical phenomenon than a substantively programmatic one. Marxist revolutionaries on the capitalist periphery embraced it as an aspiration. Mao propounded a ‘three worlds’ theory, and Cuba still maintains the Organización de Solidaridad con los Pueblos de Asia, África, y América Latina (OSPAAL). Left governments in Venezuela and elsewhere have drawn on imagery at least evocative of Third Worldism and Non-Alignment in their e orts to organize regional and supra-regional (typically based on common export commodities) economic and political blocs. The Alianza Bolivariana para los Pueblos de Nuestra América (ALBA), with member states in South America, Central America, and the Caribbean, is arguably the most extensive and successful of those e orts. For the most part, however, the history of Third Worldism and the Non-Aligned Movement as predicated on the goal of global alliance of ‘peoples of colour’ – anti-imperialist or otherwise – has been very much oversold.34 Moreover, the view that non-whiteness provides a basis for transnational political alliance simply rehearses the mystification that colonialism had been driven fundamentally by white supremacist ideology. As Fanon observed early in the period of decolonization, that mystification, in identifying racial transfer of formal authority as the essence of national liberation, also obscured the extent to which imperialism was always first and foremost a class project, of which colonialism buttressed by racialist fables was only one historically specific form. In any event, as anti-colonial and national liberation struggles intensified in the 1960s against the backdrop of the escalating Indochina War, Western leftists, almost as a reflex, generally supported those insurgent movements and defended them against inegalitarian critics and imperialist state power; doing so was consistent with the left’s egalitarian and democratic values. Many of those movements contained different ideological and class tendencies, a complexity often obscured by their populist rhetoric, which posited claims to represent the authentic ‘people’. How class dynamics played out in national liberation movements that succeeded in winning independence and official self-determination is well known. Even several of those movements that embraced socialism and attempted to link the national liberation struggle to a popular class politics – e.g., the FLN in Algeria, the African National Congress in South Africa and those that came to power in the former Portuguese colonies in Africa – were ultimately incorporated into the logic of capitalist globalization in ways that articulated with domestic class contradictions.35 In the US, escalation of the war on Vietnam encouraged greater attentiveness in the left to imperialist interventionism, and over that decade armed national liberation or revolutionary struggles intensified in much of the former colonial world and Latin America. At the same time the Black Power nationalist embrace of the domestic colonial analogy and the discourse of national liberation gave a radical halo to what was, militant rhetorical flourishes aside, programmatically an ethnic politics fully incorporable with the pluralist interest-group system. Notwithstanding the sincere convictions of adherents, Black Power was, consistent with ethnic politics in general, very much a class-based affair, harnessing an abstract and symbolic racial populism to an agenda that centred concretely on advancing the interests and aspirations of new political and entrepreneurial strata which emerged from the victories of the civil rights movement and demographic racial transition in American cities.36 In relation to a history of racial exclusion, it was reasonable and appropriate that many leftists supported what was substantively a programme for inclusion on a racial-democratic model. And the rhetorical militancy and racial-populist symbolism associated with Black Power, including the tropes of national liberation, reinforced the sense that it was a radical or revolutionary tendency that leftists should support. For more than half a century that view of Black Power has obscured the significance of the mid-1960s debate in black politics over the movement’s direction in the wake of the legislative victories. On one side, a working- class and labour-based black radicalism, propounded principally by A. Philip Randolph and his associate and longtime civil rights activist Bayard Rustin, argued that the struggle for black equality faced new, larger challenges opened by the defeat of Jim Crow that required building a different sort of movement centred on the familiar black-liberal-labour-left alliance. In questioning whether ‘civil rights movement’ even remained an accurate description, Rustin argued, in a widely read essay published a year before Stokely Carmichael introduced the Black Power slogan to the world, that the next phase of the struggle called for expanding the movement’s vision ‘beyond race relations to economic relations’. He argued that it could not succeed ‘in the absence of radical programs for full employment, abolition of slums, the reconstruction of our educational system, new definitions of work and leisure. Adding up the cost of such programs, we can only conclude that we are talking about a refashioning of our political economy.’ For that reason, he contended: ‘The future of the Negro struggle depends on whether the contradictions of this society can be resolved by a coalition of progressive forces which becomes the effective political majority in the United States. I speak of the coalition which staged the March on Washington, passed the Civil Rights Act, and laid the basis for the Johnson landslide – Negroes, trade unionists, liberals, and religious groups.’37 This was an unambiguous assertion of the social-democratic tendency in black politics, which Randolph and Rustin followed up with introduction of a ‘Freedom Budget’ that laid out an agenda for realizing a full-employment economy and its benefits for the society as a whole, noting that black Americans’ circumstances would be improved disproportionately if the Budget were implemented.38 For a variety of structural and idiosyncratic reasons, their call did not gain social traction.39 Contributing to its defeat was that the racial-democratic tendency aligned more comfortably with new institutional opportunities made available by the Voting Rights Act, racial transition in cities, anti-discrimination enforcement and the War on Poverty, all of which constituted a class-based racial redistribution that comported with the material aspirations of the emerging, post-segregation black professional-managerial class.40 Incipient Black Power racial populism obscured the class character of those developments. Particularly ironic, in light of the subsequent development of black politics, is that many radicals successfully deployed racial populism, reinforced by allusions to anti-colonial and national liberation struggles, to portray the social-democratic approach advocated by Randolph and Rustin as a conservative ‘integrationist’ call for subordination to white interests. Because black radicals never had the political capacity to challenge for state power or a broad and deep popular base, the movement’s class tensions seldom surfaced in political debate. By the mid-1960s the racial-democratic tendency’s cultural force and institutional clout – including its incorporation within postwar liberalism – had made its commitment to racial redistribution practically hegemonic as the standard of justice and equality for black Americans. In retrospect, that moment marked the birth of antiracism as a claim to a discrete politics. The ambiguity and murkiness in black popular front radicalism regarding intra-racial class dynamics undercut the ability of social-democratic advocates to mount appropriate critical responses. For the most part, such advocates also fell back on a discourse of racial authenticity and objections that the strategies and objectives of the emerging political class did not properly represent the interests of the ‘community’ or the ‘people’. The conceptual limitations imposed by that fetishized racial populism testified to and reinforced professional-managerial class hegemony in black politics. Partly from ideological purblindness, partly from material imperatives, the expressions of political radicalism that purported to dissent from the consolidating new black class politics – openly idealist cultural nationalism, a new, anti-imperialist Pan-Africanism, and a potted Marxism-Leninism – defined their radicalism through withdrawal from mundane political dynamics and embrace of one or another flavour of millenarian revolutionary catechism.41 Some black radicals, particularly in the 1970s moment of the largely Maoist New Communist movement in the US, strove to meld their fundamentally nationalist discourse of national liberation with a Marxist anti-imperialism. The Black Panther Party had been an early expression of this inclination.42 However, that turn retained the crucial assumptions of national liberation discourse, especially the most significant one – the nationalist premise that posits the group as an authentically communitarian and singular ‘people’ united against external oppression, and represents the character of class struggle within the population (e.g., black Americans) as that ‘people’ arrayed against inauthentic ‘misleaders’ or a co-opted, comprador element. That view originated in the ‘domestic colonialism’ analogy that emerged from some radicals’ early 1960s identification with Third World insurgencies. The great irony of this apparently radical tendency is that the communitarian populism on which it rested worked mainly to obscure class dynamics within black politics. It is a marker of retreat from programmatic commitment to social transformation that many who consider themselves on the left accept the stance that racial politics is more radical or inclusive than class politics and that pursuit of socialism is suspect on identitarian grounds. Ascriptive identity becomes the primary basis for political commitment, and solidarity on the basis of who we are trumps solidarity on the basis of what we believe only when the left no longer has a transformative vision around which to cohere as a basis for political judgment. Antiracism does not have an affirmative agenda, a fact that complements a left that by and large has little clarity of social vision itself. Antiracist politics mimes radicalism with posture and performative evocation of earlier insurgent politics like Black Power radicalism in the US and the national liberation movements of the 1960s and 1970s, but with complete erasure of the class and political-economic tensions in which those movements were immersed. CONCLUSION Positing a singular black community or racial political aspiration has had long- reaching effects on black politics, and leftist scholarship on black Americans, that have facilitated accommodation to neoliberal imperatives often while intending quite the opposite. Proliferation of a literature that presumes a singular ‘black freedom movement’, ‘black liberation movement’ or even a ‘long civil rights movement’ divests black Americans’ political activity of its tensions and structural contradictions. The effect is to de-historicize examination of black politics. Politically, this tendency has obscured thirty years or more of steadily lowered expectations for what can be gained from political action. This was exemplified clearly during the 2016 campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination when in South Carolina, longtime Georgia Congressman and former civil rights movement icon John Lewis and his fellow black Congressman James Clyburn from South Carolina denounced the Sanders campaign’s proposal for free public higher education as irresponsible because it sent the bad message that people should expect free things – that is, decommodified public goods and services – from government. ‘Nothing is free in America’, Lewis snarled.43 Left-neoliberal exuberance surrounding the Democratic National Convention’s official nomination of Hillary Clinton as its presidential candidate made undeniably clear that antiracism and other identitarian expressions are more than simply compatible with neoliberalism but are most meaningfully active components of its ideological reproduction. Dara Lind, writing in vox.com, exulted that ‘a commitment to diversity has become the [Democratic] party’s unifying principle’, and Jeet Heer gushed in The New Republic that ‘the Democratic Party opened their arms to Republicans – without compromising their liberal values’.44 Identity and social liberalism in this happy vision will completely override the Democrats’ enduring class loyalties, and contradictions. There are two final ironies to note regarding the left embrace of antiracist politics. First, all politics in a class society is class politics. Antiracism is not exempt from that reality. What its proponents will not admit is that it is a class politics but not a working-class politics. Second, representing race as a primordial identity also elevates it as a social force above the dynamics of the reproduction of capitalist social relations; in that sense, antiracist politics of the contemporary sort proceeds from the same primordialist view of race as did fin-de-siècle race theorists. And that is also a case of argument by historical analogy coming home to roost.

#### Capitalism causes war, violence, environmental destruction and extinction

Robinson 14(William I., Prof. of Sociology, Global and International Studies, and Latin American Studies, @ UC-Santa Barbara, “Global Capitalism: Crisis of Humanity and the Specter of 21st Century Fascism” The World Financial Review)

Cyclical, Structural, and Systemic Crises Most commentators on the contemporary crisis refer to the “Great Recession” of 2008 and its aftermath. Yet the causal origins of global crisis are to be found in over-accumulation and also in contradictions of state power, or in what Marxists call the internal contradictions of the capitalist system. Moreover, because the system is now global, crisis in any one place tends to represent crisis for the system as a whole. The system cannot expand because the marginalisation of a significant portion of humanity from direct productive participation, the downward pressure on wages and popular consumption worldwide, and the polarisation of income, has reduced the ability of the world market to absorb world output. At the same time, given the particular configuration of social and class forces and the correlation of these forces worldwide, national states are hard-pressed to regulate transnational circuits of accumulation and offset the explosive contradictions built into the system. Is this crisis cyclical, structural, or systemic? Cyclical crises are recurrent to capitalism about once every 10 years and involve recessions that act as self-correcting mechanisms without any major restructuring of the system. The recessions of the early 1980s, the early 1990s, and of 2001 were cyclical crises. In contrast, the 2008 crisis signaled the slide into a structural crisis*. Structural crises* reflect deeper contra- dictions that can only be resolved by a major restructuring of the system. The structural crisis of the 1970s was resolved through capitalist globalisation. Prior to that, the structural crisis of the 1930s was resolved through the creation of a new model of redistributive capitalism, and prior to that the struc- tural crisis of the 1870s resulted in the development of corpo- rate capitalism. A systemic crisis involves the replacement of a system by an entirely new system or by an outright collapse. A structural crisis opens up the possibility for a systemic crisis. But if it actually snowballs into a systemic crisis – in this case, if it gives way either to capitalism being superseded or to a breakdown of global civilisation – is not predetermined and depends entirely on the response of social and political forces to the crisis and on historical contingencies that are not easy to forecast. This is an historic moment of extreme uncertainty, in which collective responses from distinct social and class forces to the crisis are in great flux. Hence my concept of global crisis is broader than financial. There are multiple and mutually constitutive dimensions – economic, social, political, cultural, ideological and ecological, not to mention the existential crisis of our consciousness, values and very being. There is a crisis of social polarisation, that is, of *social reproduction.* The system cannot meet the needs or assure the survival of millions of people, perhaps a majority of humanity. There are crises of state legitimacy and political authority, or of *hegemony* and *domination.* National states face spiraling crises of legitimacy as they fail to meet the social grievances of local working and popular classes experiencing downward mobility, unemployment, heightened insecurity and greater hardships. The legitimacy of the system has increasingly been called into question by millions, perhaps even billions, of people around the world, and is facing expanded counter-hegemonic challenges. Global elites have been unable counter this erosion of the system’s authority in the face of worldwide pressures for a global moral economy. And a canopy that envelops all these dimensions is a crisis of sustainability rooted in an ecological holocaust that has already begun, expressed in climate change and the impending collapse of centralised agricultural systems in several regions of the world, among other indicators. By a crisis of humanityI mean a crisis that is approaching systemic proportions, threatening the ability of billions of people to survive, and raising the specter of a collapse of world civilisation and degeneration into a new “Dark Ages.”2 This crisis of humanity shares a number of aspects with earlier structural crises but there are also several features unique to the present: 1. The system is fast reaching the ecological limits of its reproduction. Global capitalism now couples human and natural history in such a way as to threaten to bring about what would be the sixth mass extinction in the known history of life on earth.3 This mass extinction would be caused not by a natural catastrophe such as a meteor impact or by evolutionary changes such as the end of an ice age but by purposive human activity. According to leading environmental scientists there are nine “planetary boundaries” crucial to maintaining an earth system environment in which humans can exist, four of which are experiencing at this time the onset of irreversible environmental degradation and three of which (climate change, the nitrogen cycle, and biodiversity loss) are at “tipping points,” meaning that these processes have already crossed their planetary boundaries. 2. The magnitude of the means of violence and social control is unprecedented, as is the concentration of the means of global communication and symbolic production and circulation in the hands of a very few powerful groups. Computerised wars, drones, bunker-buster bombs, star wars, and so forth, have changed the face of warfare. Warfare has become normalised and sanitised for those not directly at the receiving end of armed aggression. At the same time we have arrived at the panoptical surveillance society and the age of thought control by those who control global flows of communication, images and symbolic production. The world of Edward Snowden is the world of George Orwell; *1984 has arrived;*  3. Capitalism is reaching apparent limits to its extensive expansion. There are no longer any new territories of significance that can be integrated into world capitalism, de-ruralisation is now well advanced, and the commodification of the countryside and of pre- and non-capitalist spaces has intensified, that is, converted in hot-house fashion into spaces of capital, so that *intensive* expansion is reaching depths never before seen. Capitalism must continually expand or collapse. How or where will it now expand? 4. There is the rise of a vast surplus population inhabiting a “planet of slums,”4 alienated from the productive economy, thrown into the margins, and subject to sophisticated systems of social control and to destruction - to a mortal cycle of dispossession-exploitation-exclusion. This includes prison-industrial and immigrant-detention complexes, omnipresent policing, militarised gentrification, and so on; 5. There is a disjuncture between a globalising economy and a nation-state based system of political authority. Transnational state apparatuses are incipient and have not been able to play the role of what social scientists refer to as a “hegemon,” or a leading nation-state that has enough power and authority to organise and stabilise the system. The spread of weapons of mass destruction and the unprecedented militarisation of social life and conflict across the globe makes it hard to imagine that the system can come under any stable political authority that assures its reproduction. Global Police State How have social and political forces worldwide responded to crisis? The crisis has resulted in a rapid political polarisation in global society. Both right and left-wing forces are ascendant. Three responses seem to be in dispute. One is what we could call “reformism from above.” This elite reformism is aimed at stabilising the system, at saving the system from itself and from more radical re- sponses from below. Nonetheless, in the years following the 2008 collapse of the global financial system it seems these reformers are unable (or unwilling) to prevail over the power of transnational financial capital. A second response is popular, grassroots and leftist resistance from below. As social and political conflict escalates around the world there appears to be a mounting global revolt. While such resistance appears insurgent in the wake of 2008 it is spread very unevenly across countries and regions and facing many problems and challenges. Yet another response is that I term *21st century fascism*.5 The ultra-right is an insurgent force in many countries. In broad strokes, this project seeks to fuse reactionary political power with transnational capital and to organise a mass base among historically privileged sectors of the global working class – such as white workers in the North and middle layers in the South – that are now experiencing heightened insecurity and the specter of downward mobility. It involves militarism, extreme masculinisation, homophobia, racism and racist mobilisations, including the search for scapegoats, such as immigrant workers and, in the West, Muslims. Twenty-first century fascism evokes mystifying ideologies, often involving race/culture supremacy and xenophobia, embracing an idealised and mythical past. Neo-fascist culture normalises and glamorises warfare and social violence, indeed, generates a fascination with domination that is portrayed even as heroic.

#### The alternative is to theorize through Marxist Materialism, which contests the political efficacy and descriptive accuracy of the 1AC by returning to the conceptual tools long central to the American black radical tradition

Ferguson ‘15 (Stephen C., Assoc. Prof. in Liberal Studies @ North Carolina A & T State U., *Philosophy of African American Studies: Nothing Left of Blackness*, p. 7-14)

Marxism in Ebony Materialist Philosophical Inquiry and Black Studies In any academic discipline, there exist varying, oftentimes even conflicting, conceptual frameworks, theoretical approaches, and methods. Black Studies is no different. In light of the theoretical works prominent today, however, a number of students in AAS might easily conclude that philosophical idealism is the only school of thought. To the contrary, Black Leftist activists were significant players during the early period of Black Studies. The first introductory textbooks in African American Studies were written by Marxist/socialist scholars and activists; for instance, Peoples College's Introduction to Afro-American Studies and Clarence Munford's Production Relations, Class and Black Liberation: A Marxist Perspective in Afro-American Studies. Communist like Jack O'Dell and Robert Rhodes taught African American Studies courses at the Antioch College branch campus in Washington, D. C. And pioneering Black historian and "antibourgeois gadfly" Earl Thorpe - chair of the history department at North Carolina College - was recruited to teach courses on "Marxism and Black Liberation" for the Black Studies program at Duke University.23 However, today, Leftist thought is marginal to the politics and philosophy of Black Studies. Socialism and Marxism-Leninism are integral parts of African American history and culture. Of course, Marxist scholar/activists contributed to African American intellectual history and culture long before what is, in more formal terms, considered the advent of Black Studies during the late 1960s. In the tradition of Hubert Harrison, Susie Revels Cayton, Maude White Katz, Richard B. Moore, Paul Robeson, Oliver Cox, Eugene Holmes, Abram Harris, Claudia Jones, Walter Rodney, Angela Davis, and John McClendon, there is a need to bring the Black working-class-men and women-back into AAS. A materialist philosophy inquiry into Black Studies is grounded on three presuppositions. A materialist conception of epistemology and ontology presumes that there is a reality independent of our consciousness. A materialist ontology asserts the primacy of material reality over consciousness. And a materialist epistemology posits that this reality is knowable and knowledge or what is cognitive (social consciousness) corresponds to and thus ideally approximates this material reality. Lastly, a materialist philosophy presupposes that the social world is a stratified ontology of which class relations (i.e., social relations of production) form the ground for understanding social processes. The call for a materialist conception of science and epistemology should not be seen as a call for an essentialist ascription of AAS, wherein it is viewed only as a social scientific enterprise devoid of cultural studies. The current popularity of cultural studies, often in collaboration with various species of historicism and postmodernist trends, fosters a separation between cultural studies and social relations of production. As a school of thought, it gives less attention to the material conditions that give rise to African American culture and relativizes the objective character of the Black experience. In my estimation, the Black working-class has become lost in the whirlwind of cultural idealism. Contemporary Black cultural theory – under the spell of poststructuralism and Afrocentricity – has declared: class is dead! All that exists is intersectionality and a "matrix of domination," in which everyone is oppressed – women, men, capitalist, workers, children, ad infinitum. And there is a tendency in Black Studies to transform the Black workingclass into some obscure gray matter known as the consumer, the multitude, or – my favorite from the "friends of the poor" – the Black underclass.24 The relevance and importance of the Black working-class must be brought to the forefront of Black Studies.25 This would entail discarding analytical notions such as "cultural deprivation," "human capital," "culture of poverty," "nihilism," "feminization of poverty," "intersectionality," "underclass," "cultural pathology," and "menticide" that have served to explain the contemporary and historical crisis that confronts the Black working-class. We must discard the cultural idealism of Maulana Karenga, Corne! West, Jawanza Kunjufu, Marimba Ani, Patricia Hill Collins, Molefi Asante, and William Julius Wilson who perceive the "Negro Question'' as an ideological or axiological crisis, for example, as alienation from ancient African values, the loss of a "love ethic," or the lack of human capital. When we view the “Negro Question” as preeminently ideological, moral, or cultural, we ultimately discount the determinate role of material contradictions rooted in class contradictions. As Robert Allen astutely noted, " ... the question is not politics or no politics; rather it is which politics? Whom will Black Studies serve? Will it be truly democratic in its intellectual and political vision, or will it become 'apolitical' and acquiesce to a narrow, elitist and bourgeois view of education?"26 Black Studies and the Question of Western Civilization Revisited C. L. R. James wrote what could be considered a Marxist manifesto for Black Studies in 1969. Speaking at Federal City College, James argues, at the level of theory, that Black Studies should be anti-racist and anti-imperialist in character, but not anti-white. From James's perspective, there is no intellectual space in Black Studies for philosophies of Blackness in which ancient African civilizations, values, and cultural perspectives constitute a "presuppositionless beginning" for Black Studies.27 He parts company with Black nationalists and their contemporary progeny (e.g., Afrocentrists) who argue that every culture rests on a metaphysical, permanent substratum that gives rise to a particular system of thought. He cogently proclaims: We need a careful systematic building up of historical, economic, political, literary ideas, knowledge and information, on the Negro question ... Because it is only where we have Bolshevik ideas, Marxist ideas, Marxist knowledge, Marxist history, Marxist perspectives, that you are certain to drive out bourgeois ideas, bourgeois history, bourgeois perspectives which are so powerful on the question of the races in the United States.28 [Italics Added] For James, the antithesis between bourgeois ideology and proletarian ideology is essential to the development, direction, and aim of Black Studies. James is often viewed as someone who was head-over-heels in love with Western culture and/or civilization. Yet, it is important to note that dialectical and historical materialism (or Marxism-Leninism) constitutes the conceptual and theoretical framework for his assessment of "The Fate of Humanity." In a 1939 article, "Revolution and the Negro" James boldly avows, "What we as Marxists have to see is the tremendous role played by Negroes in the transformation of Western civilization from feudalism to capitalism. It is only from this vantage-point that we shall be able to appreciate (and prepare for) the still greater role they must of necessity play in the transition from capitalism to socialism."29 James's classic works such as *The Black ]acobins* and *A History of Pan-African Revolt* are ardently attentive to the fact that slavery, colonialism, and imperialism are part and parcel of capitalism. Moreover, the revolutionary resistance of people of African descent ostensibly indicates the critical role of Black people as actors or subjects of history and the dialectical development of Western civilization. In unswerving disapproval of Hegel's views about Africans and their place outside of world history, James meticulously documents and effectively demonstrates that-far from being removed from world historical event-African people and their descendants in the diaspora transformed the landscape of world history in a monumental fashion.3° Yet, James's historiography is not some form of racial vindicationism, which claims that ancient African civilization is the real source of Black historic magnitude and ultimately collective identity. Rather James offers insights into the Black struggles against slavery and colonialism as manifestations of the antagonistic contradictions within the modern (bourgeois) stage of world history. Cultural idealism has no place within James's worldview and consequently his philosophy of history. James's philosophy of history is not anti-European, anti-Western, or anti-white; his philosophy of history is stridently anti-slavery, anti-imperialist, anti-racist, and anticapitalist.31 James introduces a conceptual distinction between what is European and what is Eurocentrism. Moreover, he did not accept the abstract concept of the West as monolithic, devoid of internal class relations and contradictory class interests. Black sociologist Alex Dupuy points out that James's dialectical analysis takes into consideration the tremendous value of European culture and its influence on the African diaspora, and vice versa.32 Dupuy argues, "James was redefining the meaning of Western culture away from its Eurocentric understanding. For [James], West Indians were a modern and Western people, though they were not European, a point [James] made in many of his writings, e.g., his semiautobiography, Beyond a Boundary (1963)." 33 James resolutely rejected any outlook that requires Black Studies to be grounded on a uniquely formulated Black perspective (e.g., Senghor's Negritude or Karenga's Kawaida or Asante's Afrocentricity). Dupuy points out that James does not "reject African culture in favor of Western culture." 34 Rather, James's analysis is based on "a historical materialist understanding of culture" and the recognition that "the predominant influences in the Caribbean were those of Western Europe."35 As Dupuy insightfully notes, "The Black ]acobins remains ... one of the most succinct critiques of the barbarism of Western European imperialism but also of the promise of bourgeois civilization."36 Any philosophy of AAS worth its salt should follow in the "Giant Steps" of C. L. R. James. Embracing an ethnophilosophy that is anti-European is as fruitful as masturbation. It may be pleasurable, perhaps even therapeutic, but it won't give birth to a scientific approach to Black Studies. "And that Black Fist becomes a Red Spark" Black Studies and Black Working-Class Studies37 In a post-Cold War world, the "spectre of communism" has apparently been exorcised and laid to rest. There is the widespread belief that we have witnessed the death-knell of Marxism. So, why argue for the legitimacy of and necessity for Marxism in Black Studies? No doubt this has been a hotly debated question both in the Black Liberation movement and in Black Studies for a considerable time. I tend to agree with Brian Lloyd: "I presume that we are witnessing, not the death of Marxism, but the end of the first period during which Marxists managed to seize and, for a time, wield state power. That it has fewer adherents at the end than during other phases of this period, and that as many of them can be found in universities as in factories or fields, is neither disheartening as is imaged by some of its proponents nor as amusing as is supposed by all of its detractors."38 It has become the custom to summarily dismiss Marxism as a viable methodological approach and philosophical perspective for Black Studies. Most of the adversarial postures toward Marxism-Leninism in Black Studies have discounted the value of a materialist dialectical philosophy of liberation, class analysis, class struggle, proletarian internationalism, and the scientific socialist principle of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Despite the sharp divergence of their political views, Harold Cruse, Cedric Robinson, Cornel West, Marimba Ani, Patricia Hill Collins, and Charles Mills have condemned Marx and Marxism for everything from economic determinism to class reductionism to historical teleology and any number of other "conceits." We even find Asante making such puerile statements such as the following: "In fact, we have no history of a communist movement in the United States where communists put their bodies and l.ives on the line as African Americans did."39 Contrary to Asante's claim, scholars such as Mark Naison, Ted Vincent, Erik S. McDuffie, Gerald Horne, Carole Boyce Davies, Robin Kelley, Minkah Makalani, and Mark Solomon in addition to autobiographies by Harry Haywood, Hosea Hudson, and Michael Hamlin offer a much more nuanced picture of communism, socialism, and Marxism-Leninism in Black life and culture. Over the years, scholarship in labor studies and Black Studies has revealed the historical legacy of Black worker militancy. As we travel through the annals of Black history, we unearth Peter Clark's crucial involvement in the Great Railway Strike of 1877, Lucy Parsons's unflinching engagement in the Haymarket Square struggle, the heroic efforts of Ralph Gray, Tommy Gray, Eula Gray, Al Murphy, and scores of Black sharecroppers, tenant farmers, and agricultural laborers to organize the predominantly Black underground organization the Share Croppers Union, A. Philip Randolph's tireless efforts with rhe Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, Ferdinand Smith's vanguard role in the National Maritime Union and Paul Robeson's monumental efforts to use folk music to entertain Spanish Civil War loyalists and striking workers as he gave support to international socialist solidarity. We could mention the steadfast leadership of Velma Hopkins and Moranda Smith in the 1947 strike at the Reynolds Tobacco Company in Winston Salem, North Carolina. There were Black postal workers like Cleveland Morgan, a member of New York Branch 36 of the National Association of Letter Carriers, who played a seminal role in the nationwide 1970 postal wildcat strike. We could also mention the historic efforts of the League of Revolutionary Black Workers to organize wildcat strikes in Detroit, Michigan. And, in more recent times, we could mention working-class Black women who have fought against the attack on public services, such as public housing and welfare. We should not ignore the fact that many of these activists were socialists, and quite a few were Marxist-Leninist in their ideological outlook. The scholarship of Clarence Lang, John Arena, Adolph Reed, Barbara Ransby, Rhonda Y. Williams, and Joe Trotter has demonstrated the historic importance of the Black working-class to African American history and culture. They bring to light the centrality of class struggle and conflict as determinate features of what makes up the Black working-class. World capitalism gave birth to the Black working-class. The initial accumulation of large sums of capital, which in turn, was invested in the exploitation of European workers, derived from the slave trade and the plantation system in the so-called New World. In volume one of Capital, Marx so famously wrote "capital comes dripping from head to foot, from every pore, with blood and dirt."40 The ruthless exploitation of Black bodies, in a manner of speaking, became the proverbial goose that lays golden eggs, possessing the magical ability to increase the magnitude of capital. Incidentally, the profitability of the "proverbial goose" prompted slaveholder Thomas Jefferson to remark, "it would never do to destroy the goose."41 Leaving the decks of the slave ship, "In the Name of Jesus," large numbers of Wolof, Mande, Fulani, and Mandingo were bound together by chains, from neck to neck and wrist to wrist.42 Out of the diversity of African ethnic groups a new synthesis was formed under the brutal system of capitalist slavery, giving birth to African Americans. The incessant "demand for Black labor" by Northern industrial capital and the plantation bourgeoisie fueled world capitalist development. Black slaves toiled in textile mills, shipyards, sawmills, and coalmines from Virginia to Mississippi. Black women labored on tobacco fields in the Carolina piedmont and picked cotton on plantations along the coast of Georgia. Black men like Tom Molineaux and Black women like Sylvia DuBois were given release time from slave labor in order to engage in athletic labor (as boxers) to bring entertainment and profits to slaveholders and the larger white Southern community. 43 From the seventeenth century to the twenty-first century, from slave plantations to auto factories, Black women, men, and children labored under the hard times of capitalist exploitation. The brutal forces unleashed by the capitalist drive for surplus value laid the foundation for the development of African American life and culture, from religion to music.44 Presently, we are witnessing, from New York to North Carolina to Missouri to Wisconsin to California, concerted attacks on public sector workers in order to resolve the economic crisis ravaging US capitalism. We cannot ignore the fact that Black people are prominent in the leadership as well as in the rank and file in a great number of these mass demonstrations. In cities throughout the country, working-class men and women, Black, white, and Latino, are being blown away by police officers who are ultimately protected by the rule of law. In the aftermath of the murders of Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown, Aiyanna Jones, Yvette Smith, Rekia Boyd, and Eric Garner, Black working people are not silently standing by while the "Lords of Capital" via their "special bodies of armed men'' – with military weapons and tanks – confront them in the streets. This seminal point is lost on Black critics of Marxism during the past 90 years. As numerous studies in AAS have demonstrated, the working-class is not one-dimensional, exclusively composed of white people. The working-class is composed of women, men, and children, in addition to being multinational in character. Marxist studies of Black working-class life and culture are needed now more than ever because in the souls of the Black working-class the grapes of wrarh are filling and growing heavy. As Karl Marx so famously put it, "The weapon of criticism cannot, of course, replace criticism of the weapon, material force must be overthrown by material force; but theory also becomes a material force as soon as it has gripped the masses."45 Philosophy of African American Studies, I hope, wilt serve a prolegomena to the Herculean task of developing a philosophy of AAS from the standpoint of materialism. How well I have backed up this reaffirmation of philosophical materialism and revolutionary socialism with good arguments I leave it to my readers to judge. But the attempt to do so provides an answer-satisfactory to me at least-to justify writing this book.

## Disclosure Screenshots

