



More than and beyond racism: theoretical and political meditations on antiblackness

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ABSTRACT

KEYWORDS:

Antiblackness
Antiracism
Black feminism
Combahee River
Collective
Intersectionality
radical politics
racismo
social theory

This article keys in on *antiblackness* and distinguishes it from *racism*, laying bare the false universality of the Social and the Human: racism takes place in the Social among the Human, while antiblackness continually casts Black people and Blackness out of those foundational modern categories whose definitions derive from the violent expulsion. To delineate, the article analyzes two paradigmatic texts that strive to deal uncompromisingly with antiblackness but through the language of racism: George Yancey's *Who Is White?* and "The Combahee River Collective Statement." The article concludes by suggesting the need for a Fanonian leap of invention and an all-encompassing abolition.

RESUMO

PALAVRAS-CHAVE:

Antinegitude
Antirracismo
feminismo negro
Combahee River
Collective
Interseccionalidad
política radical
Racismo
teoria social

Este artigo tece considerações sobre *antinegitude* e a distingue do *racismo*, expondo a falsa universalidade do Social e do Humano: o racismo ocorre no Social entre os Humanos, enquanto a antinegitude continuamente expulsa os negros e a negitude dessas categorias modernas fundamentais cujas definições derivam da expulsão violenta. Para delinear a discussão, o artigo analisa dois textos paradigmáticos que se esforçam para lidar intransigentemente com a antinegitude, mas através da linguagem do racismo: George Yancey, *Who Is White?* e "The Combahee River Collective Statement." O artigo conclui sugerindo a necessidade de um salto de invenção fanoniano e uma abrangente abolição.

RESUMEN

PALABRAS-CLAVE:

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Este artículo considera la antinegitud y la distingue del racismo, exponiendo la falsa universalidad de lo Social y lo Humano: el racismo ocurre en lo Social entre los Humanos, mientras que la antinegitud continuamente expulsa a los negros y a la negitud de estas categorías modernas fundamentales cuyas definiciones derivan de la expulsión violenta. Para esbozar la discusión, el artículo analiza dos textos paradigmáticos que se esfuerzan por abordar sin concesiones la antinegitud, pero a través del lenguaje del racismo: George Yancey, *Who Is White?* y "La declaración colectiva del río Combahee". El artículo concluye sugiriendo la necesidad de un salto fanoniano de invención y una abolición integral.

SUBMETIDO: 22 de março de 2023 | **ACEITO:** 24 de abril de 2023 | **PUBLICADO:** 30 de abril de 2023

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Asking for directions. Babysitting. Barbequing. Campaigning. Cashing a paycheck. Delivering. Driving. Eating. Golfing. Helping the homeless. Moving in. Moving out. Mowing the lawn. Napping. Redeeming a coupon. Selling bottled water. Selling lemonade. Shopping. Sitting at a cafe. Swimming. Talking on the phone. Wearing a backpack that brushes against a woman. Working. Working out.

An unremarkable list of everyday actions and interactions. Yet, when carried out by Black people, adults and children alike, they can provoke nonblacks, mostly but not only whites, to call the police, as they did in 2018. There is nothing special about the year 2018 or the decade of the 2010s, other than perhaps a growing public awareness that Black encounters with the police are all too frequently lethal, which should, but does not, deter such enlistment of state coercion. What are the alleged crimes that required police intervention? None, of course – "black people just going about their business." "And these are just the incidents that CNN has reported [in 2018]. There are no doubt many others," CNN acknowledges. From one angle, the phone calls and subsequent police contacts are instances of *racism* faced by Black people. But what is the alleged crime, if we were to abstract from the seemingly discrete incidents and consider them together? In its headline, CNN itself recognizes the underlying condition that necessitated policing and outlawing: "Living while black."ⁱ From this angle, Black life itself is the generalized threat. Threat to what and whom? The social life of nonblacks. More than and beyond racism, this is *antiblackness*.

American. Asian. Boy. Child. Citizen. Colonized. Criminal. Family. Girl. Human. Immigrant. Indigenous. Infant. Latinx. Man. Neighbor. Parent. Patient. President. Professor. Queer. Soldier. Student. Subaltern. Subject. Trans. Voter. Welfare recipient. Woman. Worker.

An unremarkable list of social categories and identities. Yet, when paired with and preceded by "Black," something remarkable happens. They become impossible, oxymoronic, frayed, redundant, unstable, overwhelmed, emptied, or otherwise incoherent. In the words of Hortense Spillers, they are "all thrown in crisis."ⁱⁱ For instance, take the category of *citizen*. The final word for the antebellum United States, *Dred Scott v. Sanford* (1857) spelled out the status of Black people in relation to citizenship:

The words "people of the United States" and "citizens" are synonymous

terms, and mean the same thing. They both describe the political body who, according to our republican institutions, form the sovereignty and who hold the power and conduct the Government through their representatives....[Black people] are not included, and were not intended to be included, under the word "citizens" in the Constitution....The right of naturalization...granted to Congress...is not a power to raise to the rank of a citizen anyone born in the United States who, from birth or parentage, by the laws of the country, belongs to an inferior and subordinate class....[T]he Constitution has drawn [the line of division] between the citizen race, who formed and held the Government, and the African race, which they held in subjection and slavery and governed at their own pleasure.ⁱⁱⁱ

Black people were not citizens who, for racism, were denied their due. They were not even merely excluded from citizenship, though they were; in this regard, they were not unique at the time, as most American Indians and all Asian and other migrants not deemed "white" were also excluded. Exceptionally, *Dred Scott* excluded Black people, whether enslaved or "free," from the *possibility* of citizenship. *Black citizen* was deemed and made categorically illegitimate, illegible, impossible. The incommensurability of *Black* and *citizen* was even reflected grammatically in the quotation above, in the disparate interrogative pronouns that followed "citizen race" (who) and "African race" (which).^{iv} At direct odds yet constitutive, *Black*, or *African*, defined and bounded *citizen* from without. Furthermore, it did the same for lesser, racially degraded forms of belonging: this ruling on Black people, itself and as precedent, served as the negative baseline for the positive, but less than full, valuation of rights for colonized and nonwhite migrant subjects.^v But what about now? Surely, in the wake of the first and second Reconstructions, Black people's foothold on citizenship must be, at last, secure. We disagree. As the opening paragraphs above suggest, Black people's "right to have rights" is perpetually, arbitrarily violated and always at risk of violation.^{vi} The "ever-present sense of impending doom that shadowed" the enslaved terrorizes and haunts Black life unabated.^{vii} More than and beyond racism, this is *antiblackness*.

The modern social world is foundationally antiblack. The recent wave of video-recorded police and vigilante killings and subsequent mass protests around the globe are but only the latest spectacular manifestations of this singular reality and of a wider public's belated, likely flickering, recognition of it. Policing, by the police or self-deputized citizens, is just one facet of an all-encompassing, centuries-

long phenomenon. From birth to death, from the most local to the most global, the position of Black people and Blackness remains fixed beyond the "pale of...Humanity."^{viii} The empirical evidence is overwhelming. What has been lacking are analytical tools that are up to the task of taking full measure of the terrifying enormity and depth of antiblackness. Even radical analyses of racism perpetually underestimate and misspecify. For the very category of *racism* proves inadequate.

In this article, we zero in on *antiblackness* and distinguish it from racism, including antiblack racism. Following Saidiya Hartman, we first place the analysis in the framework of the "afterlife of slavery" while acknowledging the understandable resistance to the idea that the contemporary post-Civil Rights Movement era is still the "time of slavery."^{ix} In the next two sections, we reflect critically on two paradigmatic texts, the sociological monograph *Who Is White?* by George Yancey and the widely influential manifesto "The Combahee River Collective Statement."^x In both cases, precisely because they strive to deal unflinchingly with what we identify as antiblackness but through the language of racism, we show that there is ultimately an unreconciled and unreconcilable incongruity. Extending our engagement with the Combahee River Collective Statement, we conclude by suggesting the need for a politics beyond even radical antiracism.

AFTERLIFE OF SLAVERY

W.E.B. Du Bois identifies the transoceanic enslavement of Africans as modernity's "most magnificent drama."^{xi} Yet the social sciences, born of the modern social world to study it, either ignore racial slavery or misrecognize it, most typically as a variety of coerced labor. How do we make sense of this unnoticed yet fundamental paradox? Against the most basic assumption underpinning these modern disciplines, we posit that the Social, the modern social world, is not common "ontological ground" for all.^{xii} A profoundly *antisocial* practice, enslavement exceeds the bounds of the Social, the social sciences' self-defined limits.^{xiii} As persuasively argued and demonstrated by Orlando Patterson, enslavement is the "permanent, violent domination of natively alienated and generally dishonored persons." The enslaved is "a social nonperson" or, alternatively, "a socially dead person."^{xiv} In other words, to be enslaved is to have no recognized social existence: in and against the Social but not of it.^{xv}

Taking the Social for granted as the universally shared ontological ground, social theories cannot but fail to see enslavement for what it is. As *Dred Scott* made clear, a social nonperson is not a type of dominated social person among others, and social death is not a form of social injury among others. Even relative to that of colonized, nonwhite migrant, or other oppressed modern subjects, the "life" of the enslaved is radically, incommensurably insecure. They have no legitimate standing in the social world, as they have no ground to stand on. They have no legitimate claims to power or resources, including their very "own" selves. Further, this state of abjection does not end with formal abolition. The "time of slavery" has yet to pass, according to Hartman.^{xvi} Rather, what follows in the wake of the "nonevent of emancipation" is the "afterlife of slavery."^{xvii} Antiblackness, part and parcel of racial slavery and its afterlife, perdures as an extreme antisocial condition of possibility of the modern social world.

In the final chapter to *The Philadelphia Negro*, a meticulous, now canonical, empirical examination of *postemancipation* Black life, Du Bois concludes:

And still this widening of the idea of common Humanity is of slow growth and today but dimly realized. We grant full citizenship in the World-Commonwealth to the "Anglo-Saxon" (whatever that may mean), the Teuton and the Latin; then with just a shade of reluctance we extend it to the Celt and Slav. We half deny it to the yellow races of Asia, admit the brown Indians to an ante-room only on the strength of an undeniable past; but with the Negroes of Africa we come to a full stop, and in its heart the civilized world with one accord denies that these come within the pale of nineteenth century Humanity.^{xviii}

What he claims about the nineteenth century, we affirm and extend to the twentieth and the twenty-first: with Black people and Blackness, we still come to a full stop, and in its heart the social world with one accord continues to deny that they come within the pale of Humanity. Racism takes place in the Social among the Human, while antiblackness continually casts Black people and Blackness out of those foundational modern categories whose very definitions derive from the violent expulsion.

To a great extent, "the position of the enslaved" remains "the position of the unthought."^{xix} However, owing to works by Hartman and other Black studies scholars, the position of the enslaved is now much more and better thought, and there is growing consideration, if not acceptance, of the singularity of the enslaved's

abjection and ontological exclusion from the Social and the Human. At the same time, although Hartman's history of the nineteenth century is clearly, by design, a "history of the present,"^{xx} much resistance or skepticism persists toward the idea that the present is still the time of slavery, that the end of chattel slavery and Jim Crow's neoslavery did not signal an ontological break.^{xxi} This article therefore trains its attention on the post-Civil Rights Movement era.

Grounded in the assumption that Black people, after much struggle, now occupy a legitimate, if still unequal, position as Human in the Social, contemporary theories and empirical studies of racism attempt to gauge and critique the inequalities that endure, and politics of antiracism strive toward greater equality. But such analyses and politics misrecognize and misrepresent. Insistent on the (potential) universality of the Social and the Human, they are incapable of considering the possibility that antiblackness is a quintessentially antisocial and antihuman condition of modernity.^{xxii} Remaining within the time of slavery, we aim to work through how, but also how differently, antiblackness is "the same predicament, the same condition" – "no longer enslaved, but not yet free" – and to reframe Black politics as necessarily and always engaging the fundamentally antiblack world as it is and projecting radically alternative conceptions of what it is to be human and live in society – humanity beyond the Human, sociality beyond the Social.^{xxiii}

FOUNDATIONAL ANTAGONISM

Viewed through the conceptual lens of racism, the social world, organized according to the principles and effects of global cisheteropatriarchal capitalist white supremacy, produces a continuum of privilege and oppression along a white-nonwhite axis.^{xxiv} At the extreme end of privilege, the white cisheteropatriarchal propertied man is the normative reference. It is the distance relative to this figure that determines one's advantages and disadvantages. While inflections of gender, sexuality, and social class all simultaneously impact the ways in which race is read and experienced, it is proximity to whiteness that generates privilege, in the same way that distance from this whiteness produces disadvantage.

An analytical and organizational tool to grasp and transform social practices and structures of racism, the prevailing people-of-color framework affirms that all nonwhites suffer specific but related forms of oppression. "Racism," states Ruth

Gilmore in a paradigmatic definition, "is the state-sanctioned and/or extra-legal production and exploitation of group-differentiated vulnerabilities to premature death, in *distinct yet densely interconnected* political geographies.."xxv People are displaced and rendered vulnerable according to socially constructed but deadly and concrete *differences* organized "into a hierarchy of human and inhuman persons that in sum form the category 'human being'."xxvi Racism does so by *interconnecting* such differences in geographies that are themselves necessarily subjected to related forms of violence and power.

From this perspective of racism, a specific, socially constructed, normative hierarchy is at play. It manifests in empirically evident social stratification and suggests an underlying agreement concerning degrees of Humanity and belonging according to which modern global society, or social space, is structured. Those who are marginalized and die prematurely at greater rates are those who are less valued as Human and fellow members of the Social. While often the most devalued, Black people nevertheless share a common human and social ontology that makes their experiences translatable and commensurable, if not commensurate, to nonblacks'. In spite of local exceptions identified by Michael Omi and Howard Winant and others, the basic racial division of white supremacy is between whites and nonwhites, and Black people unmistakably belong – analytically and politically – under the expansive people-of-color umbrella.xxvii

From the perspective of antiblackness, however, Black people and Blackness occupy a singular position. As James Baldwin explains, Blackness "has functioned in the white man's world as a fixed star, as an immovable pillar." So vital to white life is this fixation, in both senses, that if Black people were to "move[] out of...place, heaven and earth [would be] shaken to their foundations."xxviii Metaphysically necessary for the white man's world but from without, the Black nonsubject, in Frantz Fanon's memorable words, "has no ontological resistance in the eyes of the white man."xxix This is what Pecola, in Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*, sees in the white shopkeeper's empty gaze directed at her: "The total absence of human recognition." It is not specific to the store owner but a general condition: "Yet this vacuum is not new to her....She has seen it lurking in the eyes of all white people. The distaste must be for her, her blackness....it is the blackness that accounts for, that creates, the vacuum edged with distaste in white eyes."xxx Our contention is that

Baldwin's "fixed," Fanon's "no," and Morrison's "total" are sui generis and do not attach to nonblack subjects, even as they may and do experience all manners of combined oppressions – of race, gender, sexuality, class, colonialism, disability, nationality, and so forth. Having any, even minimal, ontological resistance in the eyes of the white cisheteronormative propertied man is an all-important difference from having none – a difference in kind that is continually misrecognized as a difference in degree.

Antiblackness does not secure only the "white man's world" in this way but the modern world tout court. Per Du Bois, the whole "civilized world with one accord denies that [Black people] come within the pale of...Humanity." As the continuum of Humanity spans from the "Anglo-Saxon" to "the brown Indians" but "with the Negroes of Africa...come[s] to a full stop," Black people make possible the continuum precisely because they are its constitutive, asymptotic other – the alleged nonbeings who delimit the world but are not of it.^{xxx} The Black nonsubject is constitutive of an asymmetrical social space of human positionalities from which they are excluded. Whites remain the paradigmatic, universal subjects, but nonwhite nonblacks also attain their ontological and social mass relative to their distance from Blackness.

To illustrate this asymptotic quality of Black positionality, let us consider a sociological example, one that stands out for its focus on Black distinctiveness. In *Who Is White?*, Yancey argues that, compared to the largest nonblack racialized groups in the United States, Latinxs and Asians, Black people are exceptionally rejected. Based on the findings of the 1999-2000 Lilly Survey of American Attitudes and Friendships (LSAF), of which he was a co-researcher, he acknowledges, in line with Omi and Winant, that Latinxs and Asians can experience more prejudice than Black people in certain specific contexts. However, as a general abstracted pattern, he finds that Black positionality clearly differs from those of nonblacks. For example, with regard to intermarriage and residential integration, not only whites but all nonblacks consistently exhibit the greatest resistance toward Black people.

This research supports the contention that social relationships between African Americans and other racial groups are qualitatively different than racial relationships between other racial groups, as the social rejection African Americans experience is more intense than that faced by other racial

minority groups....The evidence presented...indicates that there seems to be a consensus among the American racial groups as to the bottom social position African Americans possess, and that African Americans fail to assimilate because of rejection by nonblack groups.^{xxxii}

Blackness, not whiteness, is the fixed star of this world: "it is rejection of African Americans rather than acceptance of European Americans that shapes this hierarchical structure."^{xxxiii}

As with other texts that strive to deal unflinchingly with what we identify as antiblackness but through the language of racism, there is a certain misalignment throughout Yancey's book between the object position of Blackness and the conceptual lens deployed to make it coherent and discernible. From one angle, Yancey's analysis sits squarely and explicitly within the "social construction of race" perspective of racism.^{xxxiv} Further, its primary theoretical frame of reference within this perspective is *assimilation* – as mainstream as any in social science.^{xxxv} Derived from a survey of social attitudes, its evidence, too, is uncontroversially familiar and acceptable to mainstream social scientists, many of whom would agree that Black people face quantitatively more racism than other peoples of color and some of whom would even assent that the difference is not only quantitative but qualitative. And this is exactly what Yancey himself contends: "My argument is that African Americans generally have a level of alienation that is qualitatively greater than that of [Latinxs and Asian Americans] and because of this alienation do not possess the same ability to become incorporated into the dominant culture as nonblack racial minorities."^{xxxvi}

Yet what we – and, to a large extent, Yancey himself – take to be the actual object of his study is not racism but antiblackness, the ontological exclusion from the Social rather than merely a more intensive form of marginalization within it. On what bases do we make such an *ontological* claim based on his *social* research? We propose two. First, the *fixity* of Black positionality. The subtitle of Yancey's book is *Latinos, Asians, and the New Black/Nonblack Divide*, yet the posited Black/nonblack divide is not new because of the changing position of Black people, which remains firmly entrenched at the bottom, but because of the upward mobility of Latinxs and Asians and their identification with and adoption of "dominant" attitudes toward Black people. Comparing his data collected at the turn of the present century against history, Yancey detects no progress, not only relative to

whites but also to recently arrived nonwhite migrants and their children:

The overarching feature of African American history is slavery, and the American slave system set the tone for the future racism and alienation toward African Americans....Blacks live in a racial reality whereby their social status is fixed. It is fixed because they have historically experienced a degree of alienation that ties their racial identity more completely to the historical ravages of racism than for other minority groups.^{xxxvii}

Based on the past and the present, Yancey rejects the unfounded but ubiquitous optimism of an inclusive future for Black people: "a better prediction may be that blacks will never be able to totally overcome the powerful effects of the alienation they experience."^{xxxviii}

Second, the *incoherence* or *illegibility* of Black positionality in Yancey's social theory – that is, theory of the Social – suggests that it is a matter of social ontology, that the very social being of Black people is always already "thrown in crisis."^{xxxix} Evidencing Black people's external relationship to the Social and the Human, we argue that concepts and theories meant to index social domination and human suffering falter when they are applied to the plight of Black people.^{xl} Throughout Yancey's text, his *social* theory of race and racism strains against and ultimately cannot make sense of the extreme *antisocial* condition of antiblackness. Although the analysis is framed in the conceptual language of assimilation, its biggest takeaway is that assimilation, as theory as well as practice, utterly fails Black people. Assimilation theory thrives in today's social science, but it does so only because it quietly gave up its untenable universalism – "The melting pot is the world"^{xli} – and began to exclude Black people, disregarding and/or denigrating them. In other words, the viability of assimilation theory as a theory of the Social depends on reproducing the antiblackness of the Social that it studies.^{xlii}

MODALITIES OF POLITICAL STRUGGLE

Based on the foundational antagonism that we posit, what are the implications for political thought and practice? The basic idea that we develop is as simple as it is bound to be controversial: Whereas a world without racism requires deep transformations in social structures and human subjectivities, a world without antiblackness necessitates entirely new conceptions of the Social and the Human, which is to say a radically different world altogether. To imagine that new world

without antiblackness, we follow Fanon's credo, "I should constantly remind myself that the real *leap* consists in introducing invention into existence."^{xliii} Invention entails the proposition that while *antiracism* can generate positive recalibrations in the ways we relate to each other and how institutions function, it ultimately fails to address the root cause of inequality and antagonism between Black and nonblack peoples, between Blackness and the world. Because it does not, indeed cannot, consider the possibility that antiblackness is foundational to what Baldwin refers to as the "Western system of reality,"^{xliiv} antiracism leaves untouched one of the basic premises of the modern world: the abjection and ontological exclusion of Black people and Blackness. Rather, it operates under the assumption that racism, or white supremacy, impacts all peoples of color in related (if distinct), commensurable (if incommensurate) ways and that our modern sociality and institutions are reparable, redeemable, perfectible.

To reflect on how progressive political struggle is conceptualized and put into practice, particularly as it concerns relations between Black and nonblack peoples, we turn to radical-revolutionary Black feminism. Specifically, we think with "The Combahee River Collective Statement," the Black feminist socialist manifesto that centers the experiences of working-class Black lesbian women, originally published in 1977. A truly groundbreaking intervention, it continues to orient leftist social analysis and collective action, perhaps more now than ever. It informs much of Black critical diasporic thought and politics of the last half century, including the recent marked increase in the number of Black women and queer folx elected to various positions in Brazil and the United States, the institutionalization of Black studies, and the current Movement for Black Lives.^{xlv}

Precisely because the Combahee River Collective (CRC) manifesto aims to be uncompromising in its analysis and vision, there is, as in Yancey's sociology, a certain unresolved tension between the not-yet-articulated paradigm of antiblackness it nonetheless gestures toward and the people-of-color paradigm of racism it constructs and complicates – between a set of arguments about the specificity, centrality, and uniqueness of Black women's experiences and another about the analytical and political imperative to find commonalities between Black and nonblack peoples.

The CRC Statement maintains an unapologetic rootedness in Black

experiences and provides a theoretical blueprint for examining mutually constitutive forms of oppression. This framework is also a political orientation, as we shall see below. The Black experiences that inform the CRC Statement are primarily those of working-class lesbian women. The statement's emphasis on interlocking forms of oppression is tantamount to what has come to be known as intersectionality, although the latter term is usually attributed to Kimberlé Crenshaw.^{xlvi} In the manifesto's first paragraph, the CRC declares,

The most general statement of our politics at the present time would be that we are actively committed to struggling against racial, sexual, heterosexual, and class oppression, and see as our particular task the development of an integrated analysis and practice based upon the fact that the major systems of oppression are interlocking. The synthesis of these oppressions creates the conditions of our lives. As Black women we see Black feminism as the logical political movement to combat the manifold and simultaneous oppressions that all women of color face.^{xlvii}

These opening formulations establish two central guiding principles. The first is that the specificities of Black women's experiences are the product of a constellation of simultaneous factors, each impacted by and affecting all others: racism, patriarchy, heteronormativity, class exploitation, among others. This mutual constitution is one of the most generative and influential insights of the CRC. It forces us to move away from single-issue analyses and to instead consider processes of exclusion and exploitation that are inextricably related. The CRC makes a compelling case for the always already combined nature of oppression, one that is irreducible to and indeed exceeds, in quality and intensity, discrete social forces. To account for such mutually constitutive formations of domination, we should therefore speak of cisgendered and classed racism, or raced and classed cisheterosexism. In her work, bell hooks offers a persuasive example of this conceptual approach, as she frequently employs an analytical framework that considers at once "imperialist white supremacist capitalist patriarchy."^{xlviii}

An inversion of the first, the second orientation expands out, implicitly but powerfully, from the intersectional specificity of (queer working-class) Black women's experiences toward an intersectional universality. Methodologically, the CRC's claim is that, even though Black women's lifeworlds and theorizations are at the core of the statement, all social subjects experience the simultaneous multiplicity of oppressions that "creates the conditions" of their lives. Here, of course, is implied that

relative privileges also constitute such uneven conditions. Rarely is one entirely oppressed or entirely privileged. In sum, interlocking systems of oppression – and privilege – impact each and every one of us.

Politically, the universalist claim becomes apparent in a proposition appearing later in the statement. Echoing the philosophy of Claudia Jones, who remarked that "Negro women – as workers, as Negroes, and as women – are the most oppressed stratum of the whole population,"^{xix} the CRC reasons, "If Black women were free, it would mean that everyone else would have to be free since our freedom would necessitate the destruction of all the systems of oppression." Given their unique positionality – "being on the bottom," as Michele Wallace asserts – Black women experience the compounded forms of oppression in more intense, varied, and exceptional ways.ⁱ Black women's standpoint is thus marked by distinctive experiences of domination and engenders collective epistemological insight into those entanglements. Black women's standpoint constitutes ground zero from which interlocking systems of oppression can be challenged.ⁱⁱ Because these systems that singularly mark Black women's lives also impact nonblack women and men in related but distinct ways, to contend with Black women's oppression is, necessarily, to confront the totality of social hierarchies.

Because the CRC Statement's emphasis is first and foremost on the particular experiences of Black women, it seems that we are operating, if partially, from the perspective of antiblackness: the condition of "being on the bottom" is unique and indeed reveals the essential logic of the entire matrix of oppressions. Black women's standpoint is both a source of unparalleled suffering and of unmatched collective insight and theorization. Specific angles of vision, grounded in collective consciousness and legacy of struggle, not unlike that of the Black Radical Tradition, afford epistemic privilege that is capable of unveiling the internal mechanics of oppression and of engineering multiple forms of resistance.ⁱⁱⁱ We thus arrive at an interesting formulation concerning the universalist character of the CRC Statement: *the incommensurable experiences of gendered, classed, and queer Blackness provide the epistemological ground from which to craft a general theory of society that implicates Black and nonblack peoples.* It posits a radical singularity at the service of a far-reaching analytic on domination and social transformation.

The condition of possibility for a universalist analysis is thus a coming to terms

with, and an analytical translation of, the distinctiveness of Black experiences and positionality. When the statement veers toward nonblack experiences – in what can be characterized as a move toward the theoretical perspective of racism and multiracial alliances – it does so informed by an established and robust understanding of the singularity of Black women's lifeworld. The term "women of color" in the last phrase of the last sentence of the block quotation above is an indication of this analytical shift: the sentence – "As Black women we see Black feminism as the logical political movement to combat the manifold and simultaneous oppressions that all women of color face" – literally begins with Black women and ends with women of color.ⁱⁱⁱ In an interview with Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, Barbara Smith, one of the main authors of the statement, asserts that the use of the phrase "women of color" was deliberate: "In those days, the term 'women of color,' or 'people of color' was not used....I didn't hear it until the early eighties....We considered ourselves to be third world women. We saw ourselves in solidarity with third world people around the globe. And we also saw ourselves as being internally colonized."^{iv}

The intentionality in the invocation of "women of color" gives added meaning to the concept of "interlocking" forms of oppression. "Interlocking" refers to how different systems of oppression combine with one another, producing compounded, specific forms of oppression not reducible to its parts. But once "women of color" is introduced, "interlocking" also suggests that experiences of *all* nonwhite women, including Black women, are necessarily linked and related. It is not only systems of oppression that are interlocking; so too are the various experiences that are the product of the ways those systems operate differently for differently situated social groups. To stress "women of color," "people of color," and "Third World people" is to postulate and emphasize the interlocking political destiny of all nonwhites. The CRC's vision is that of Du Bois's insurgent "dark proletariat...of workers who are yellow, brown and black" but further complicated and radicalized by gender and sexuality.^{iv} No doubt, this political idiom is *the* lingua franca of scholars and activists on the left today.

At this juncture, we part ways and propose a divergent reading of the CRC Statement. We appreciate and fully agree with the statement's first principle of recognizing and centering Black women's singularity. However, in our view, Black

women's positionality and experiences relative to the social world are not only singular but also evince historical fixity and ontological incommensurability that perpetually generate theoretical incoherence. Intersectionality surely obtains, but the intersectional positionality and experiences of Black women are not of the modern social space – the Social among the Human – and therefore do not register legibly on any social maps (i.e., social theories). The intersectional positionalities and experiences of nonblack women of color, who have at least minimal ontological resistance, do exist in that space, however oppressively, and do figure on those maps, however faintly. Antiblackness is the irresolvable difference. Revolutionary Black feminism is indeed the logical political movement, not to combat the manifold and simultaneous oppressions that all women of color face but, of necessity, to take on the antiblack world from which Black women are excluded.^{lvi} In other words, yes, "if Black women were free, it would mean that everyone else would have to be free" – not because Black women confront the same "systems of oppression" but because their "freedom would necessitate the destruction" of the world.^{lvii}

HORIZONS OF TRANSFORMATION

What is the political project that would potentially free Black women and thereby everyone? The CRC Statement makes a case for socialism:

We realize that the liberation of all oppressed peoples necessitates the destruction of the political-economic system of capitalism and imperialism as well as patriarchy. We are socialists because we believe work must be organized for the collective benefit of those who do the work and create the products, and not for the profit of the bosses. Material resources must be equally distributed among those who create these resources.^{lviii}

Moving beyond socialism's primary concern with class exploitation, the CRC's framework engenders a recalibration that demands attention on racial and gender oppression: "We are not convinced that a socialist revolution that is also not a feminist and antiracist revolution will guarantee our liberation." As Black socialist feminists, the collective embraces a politics of inclusiveness according to which their praxis, based on "a nonhierarchical distribution of power within our own group and in our vision of a revolutionary society," extends to all women of color, "Third World, and working people."^{lix}

In this last section, we reflect on the productive tensions in the CRC's politics.

In particular, we expand on what it means for Black people when a socialist, multiracial effort is conceptualized. We begin with insights from Alicia Garza, a co-creator of #BlackLivesMatter whose activism centers on domestic work and antiblack state violence. In an interview with Taylor on the CRC Statement's enduring significance, Garza expresses frustration at the repeated difficulty she has encountered in many organizing initiatives, namely, focusing on Black people: "And being here in the Bay where I've organized for a long time, I was really struggling with my own political community around why it was okay just to talk about Black people. I know that your shit is fucked up too, *but can we just talk about Black people? And it was a real struggle.*"^{ix}

Garza's appraisal reveals the degree to which the framework of people of color has become dominant and entrenched in progressive circles – a heterodox orthodoxy that disallows centering Black people and issues. Breaches of this protocol are frequently and rather forcefully met with accusations of playing "oppression Olympics." The recognition of Black people's unique experiences is, of course, one of the pillars of the CRC Statement, yet this most important progressive text also stresses the need for multiraciality in analysis and politics. Garza's dissatisfaction indicates that whereas the second half of the Black feminist manifesto – the half that stresses multiracial dialogue, analytical frameworks, and political alliances – was willingly accepted and canonized by many progressive multiracial formations, the first half, concerning Black singularity, has been given far less consideration.

Reflecting on the CRC Statement and on the compulsory multiraciality of much political organizing, Garza articulates aspects of the antiblackness perspective:

This framework of multiracial organizing is so sloppy because it allows us to not take responsibility for the ways that we also perpetuate systems. Like anti-Blackness is the fulcrum around which white supremacy works, right? And so it's not that Brown folks are not impacted. It's not that...We're getting killed *disproportionately*, and we should be thinking about [this] rather than competing, we should be thinking about how we can talk about different ways that we're targeted because we're not targeted the same way. And inasmuch as they are related, the idea of who is a criminal is based on Black bodies.^{lxi}

Here, Garza identifies the fundamentally excluded yet critically central nature of Black positionality in the constitution of modern human subjectivity and sociality:

antiblackness is the fulcrum of white supremacy, and not only are Black people targeted as criminals, which "Brown folks" also experience, but the very category of the criminal derives from antiblackness. This insight leads to a practical-political corollary: Black autonomy. Rather than a negation of the CRC, which was at its core a Black women's autonomous organization, Garza's narrative places her political practice and analysis as part of that legacy. Speaking of the political context in the Bay Area of the 2010s, she remarks,

We didn't have a space for Black organizers. Every Black organizer that I knew was organizing in a multiracial organization in which Black people were severely underrepresented....I think one way that it helped to shape this particular landscape was that Black folk actually came together. And our chapter is almost like an umbrella of different organizations and Black leadership from inside those organizations. You know? It transformed people's organizations because folk were like, "Well, now the Black people are doing some shit together."^{lxii}

Garza's recognition of antiblackness engenders a transgenerational linkage between the CRC Statement and the current international Movement for Black Lives that is both explicit and implicit. The explicit connections manifest in the ways the broad umbrella of the Black Lives Matter movement mobilizes around the following concepts: Black autonomous theorization and forms of collective organization; interlocking forms of oppression with an emphasis on Black queer and trans lives and perspectives; and the need to engage civil society, establish multiracial alliances, and challenge all forms of exclusion.

No less critical, the implicit connections stem primarily from the shared understanding of Black people's singular positionality in the constitution of the modern world's foundational categories of the Social and the Human, as Garza's thoughts on *criminal* exemplify.^{lxiii} A consideration of antiblackness allows us not only to grasp such intergenerational epistemic and political traditions but also to raise a few questions for further reflection. We pose them not as correctives, or even recommendations, but as an attempt to engage deeply with these critical perspectives of Black women and the accumulated wisdom of survival and invention they express.

First, if these various currents of Black thought and politics underscore the uniqueness of Black experiences in relation to nonblack peoples, how does such an

emphasis impact the theory and practice of multiracial analytical frameworks and political alliances? It seems to us that they are possibilities, or consequences of the stress on Black lives rather than necessary preconditions. Of utmost importance in these Black analytics and politics is the carving out of epistemological, individual, and collective spaces and possibilities in which Black people, Blackness, and its various dimensions of gender, sexuality, social class, nationality, and ability are the undivided foci and guiding orientations. Such spaces of possibility are fertile grounds for invention.

"The real *leap* consists in introducing invention into existence," as Fanon's reminder to himself reminds us.^{lxiv} Invention is not predictable. It is not engineered. Rather, as David Marriott suggests, "because it is a radical transformation, [it] is not reducible to economy or strategy, and therefore...yet another form of political calculation."^{lxv} Much like the uprisings of 1992 in Los Angeles, 2014 in Ferguson, 2015 in Baltimore, and 2020 in various parts of the United States and abroad, such unmanageable events require that we suspend formulaic predictions of how, when, why, and to what ends transfigurative possibilities happen. For Kwame Ture, one of the authors of the classic political text *Black Power*, the 1992 L.A. rebellion revealed the deep shortcomings of Black Power's reformist playbook, including its emphasis on formal politics and multiracial alliances.^{lxvi} Such uprisings unveil how the Black Radical Tradition and its revolutionary potential necessarily, though unpredictably, emerge out of Black spaces of possibility and invention.

Second, socialism appears in the CRC Statement as a desired outcome of collective struggle informed by Black analytics. The statement makes important modifications to European versions of socialism, subordinating it to the elimination of interlocking systems of oppression, principally those based on race, gender, and sexuality. The focus on socialism suggests a critique of a political-economic structure that negatively impacts Black and other oppressed groups, but how, if at all, does the recognition of antiblackness modify this focus? In other words, is socialism, even one that is attentive to intersectionality, able to locate and impact, much less eliminate, antiblackness?

In a telling passage on the regime of slavery – which is increasingly, and rightly, seen as having been integral to capitalism but often, and wrongly, perceived as wholly subsumed by it – Saidiya Hartman writes,

The rape of Black women existed as an unspoken but normative condition fully within the purview of everyday sexual practices, whether within the implied arrangements of the slave enclave or within the plantation household.... In this case [the omission of the crime of rape against the enslaved in slave laws], the normativity of sexual violence establishes an inextricable link between racial formation and sexual subjection. As well, the virtual absence of prohibitions and limitations in the determination of the socially tolerable and necessary violence sets the stage for the indiscriminate use of the body for pleasure, profit, and punishment.^{lxvii}

Meditating on the historical and ongoing unpunished rape of Black women, Hartman and others bring to light how Black women's oppression, during slavery and its afterlives, far exceeds the profit motive.^{lxviii} Further, *rape* as a social category loses semantic coherence relative to Black women, as antiblackness at once overwhelms and evacuates the concept – always rapable and unrapable. Indeed, Hartman points to fungibility as the imposed central logic affecting Black people – Black women in particular – rendering bodies interchangeable and disposable. Made fungible, (un)rapable, and constantly under threat of violence, Black women's experiences suggest that the modern world's interlocking and simultaneous antiblack oppressions far surpass so-called primitive accumulation, exploitation, and alienation of capitalism.

We could say that the CRC, as well as Hartman, Lélia Gonzalez, Beth Richie, Dorothy Roberts, and Christina Sharpe, points toward an antiblackness in which Black women are under the constant and exceptional threat of gratuitous violence, dishonor, and natal alienation – via incarceration, separation from family and community.^{lxix} This constant and fundamental threat, which constitutes the very definition of slavery, and neoslavery, is related to but not reducible to the mechanics of capitalism for it emanates from what Garza alludes to above: modern categories of the Social and the Human, and their dimensions of gender and sexuality, that require the expulsion of Black people from their realms.^{lxx} "The Black," Patrice Douglass writes, "can be everything and nothing simultaneously. Blackness is gendered through violence that structures it outside humanity and defines the perimeters of what it means to be for the Human and its discontents."^{lxxi}

How, if at all, does socialism offer an adequate antidote to antiblackness? How, if at all, can socialism guarantee Black people's entry into, much less their

legitimate standing in, the world? More specifically, how, if at all, do the counterhegemonic strategies Gramsci outlined to be played out in civil society, including multiracial political alliances seeking state power, offer possibilities for an anti-antiblack world?^{lxxii}

Finally, if we are to seriously engage Sylvia Wynter's call for "alternative genres of the human" and thus seek invention – that is, existential territories beyond given antiblack formations of social ontology – should we not train our critical gaze past or against, rather than within, accepted wisdom on the workings of institutions and political strategy?^{lxxiii} Once we engage the concept of antiblackness, we attain a terrible and defined sense of the constitutive logic that structures planetary sociality. Once we consider invention, we are inevitably faced with the infinite and necessary work of abolition, an all-encompassing abolition. Abolition of this world.

NOTES

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- ⁱ Brandon Griggs, "Living While Black," *CNN.com*, December 28, 2018, <https://www.cnn.com/2018/12/20/us/living-while-black-police-calls-trnd/> (retrieved January 21, 2021). Some items of the first paragraph are direct quotes, while others are slightly edited.
- ⁱⁱ Hortense Spillers, *Black, White, and in Color: Essays on American Literature and Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 221.
- ⁱⁱⁱ *Dred Scott v. Sanford*, 60 U.S. (19 How.) 393 (1857) at 404-405, 417, 420.
- ^{iv} Note, too, the concluding phrase, "at their own pleasure." On the law, antiblackness, and pleasure, see Farley (2005).
- ^v Moon-Kie Jung, *Beneath the Surface of White Supremacy: Denaturalizing U.S. Racisms Past and Present* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2015), ch. 3.
- ^{vi} The notion of "right to have rights" is, of course, Hannah Arendt's (*The Origins of Totalitarianism* [New York: Harvest, (1951) 1976], 296).
- ^{vii} Orlando Patterson, "Preface, 2018," in *Slavery and Social Death* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018), ix.
- ^{viii} W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Philadelphia Negro* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, [1899] 1996), 387.
- ^{ix} Saidiya V. Hartman, *Lose Your Mother: A Journey along the Atlantic Slave Route* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2007), 6; "The Time of Slavery," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 101:4 (2002): 757.
- ^x George Yancey, *Who is White? Latinos, Asians, and the New Black/Nonblack Divide* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2003); The Combahee River Collective, "The Combahee River Collective Statement," in *How We Get Free: Black Feminism and the Combahee River Collective*, ed. Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor (Chicago, IL: Haymarket Books, [1997] 2017), 15-27.
- ^{xi} W.E.B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1935). This and the next two paragraphs draw from João H. Costa Vargas and Moon-Kie Jung, "Antiblackness of the Social and the Human," in *Antiblackness*, ed. Moon-Kie Jung and João H. Costa Vargas (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2021), 1-14.
- ^{xii} In *Logics of History: Social Theory and Social Transformation*, William Sewell Jr. distills a lifetime of interdisciplinary work across the social sciences and renders explicit what is usually implicit: "The social is the complex and inescapable ontological ground of our common life as humans" (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2005, 369).
- ^{xiii} On "extreme antisocial situations," see George Steinmetz, "Social Fields, Subfields and Social Spaces at the Scale of Empires: Explaining the Colonial State and Colonial Sociology," *Sociological Review Monographs* 64:2 (2016): 98-123. We capitalize the Social and, later, the Human to specify their modernity.
- ^{xiv} Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982), 5, 7, 13.
- ^{xv} By the modern era, the social death of slavery had become for Europeans "a fate worse than [physical] death and, as such, was reserved for non-Europeans," Africans singularly above all (David Eltis, "Europeans and the Rise and Fall of African Slavery in the Americas: An Interpretation," *American Historical Review* 98:5 [1993]: 1409).
- ^{xvi} Hartman, "The Time of Slavery," 757.
- ^{xvii} Saidiya V. Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and the Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).
- ^{xviii} Du Bois, *The Philadelphia Negro*, 386-387.
- ^{xix} Saidiya Hartman and Frank Wilderson, "The Position of the Unthought." *Qui Parle* 13:2 (2003):183-201.
- ^{xx} Of *Scenes of Subjection*, Hartman says, "I think of the book as an allegory; its argument is a history of the present." On *history of the present*, see Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Pantheon, 1977); David Garland, "What is a 'History of the Present'? On Foucault's Genealogies and Their Critical Preconditions," *Punishment & Society* 16:4 (2014): 365-384.
- ^{xxi} On neoslavery, see Douglas A. Blackmon, *Slavery by Another Name* (New York: Doubleday, 2008).
- ^{xxii} Vargas and Jung, "Antiblackness of the Social and the Human."
- ^{xxiii} Hartman and Wilderson, "The Position of the Unthought," 192; Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*, 206.

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- xxiv bell hooks, *We Real Cool: Black Men and Masculinity* (London: Routledge, 2004); Howard Winant, *The World is a Ghetto: Race and Democracy Since World War II* (London, UK: Basic Books., 2002).
- xxv Ruth Wilson Gilmore, "Race and Globalization," in *Geographies of Global Change: Remapping the World*, ed. Ron Johnston, Peter J. Taylor, and Michael Watts (New York: Wiley-Blackwell, 2002): 261; emphasis added.
- xxvi Ruth Wilson Gilmore, "Fatal Couplings of Power and Difference: Notes on Racism and Geography," *The Professional Geographer* 54:1 (2002): 16.
- xxvii Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States* (New York: Routledge, 2015), 130.
- xxviii James Baldwin, "My Dungeon Shook: Letter to My Nephew on the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Emancipation," in *James Baldwin: Collected Essays* (New York, NY: Library of America, [1962] 1998), 294.
- xxix Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Charles Lam Markmann (New York: Grove Press, 1967), 110.
- xxx Toni Morrison, *The Bluest Eye* (New York: Vintage International, [1970] 2007), 48.
- xxxi Du Bois, *The Philadelphia Negro*, 386-387.
- xxxii Yancey, *Who Is White?*, 83.
- xxxiii *Ibid.*, 72.
- xxxiv *Ibid.*, 10.
- xxxv Though not discussed here, our critique extends beyond mainstream social theories to all social theories, including the most radical varieties. See Moon-Kie Jung, "The Enslaved, the Worker, and Du Bois's *Black Reconstruction: Toward an Underdiscipline of Antisociology*," *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity* 5:2 (2019): 157-168; Vargas and Jung, "Antiblackness of the Social and the Human."
- xxxvi Yancey, *Who Is White?*, 15.
- xxxvii *Ibid.*, 44, 47.
- xxxviii *Ibid.*, 159.
- xxxix Spillers, *Black, White, and in Color*, 221.
- xl Vargas and Jung, "Antiblackness of the Social and the Human."
- xli Robert E. Park, "Our Racial Frontier on the Pacific," *The Survey* 56:3 (1926): 196.
- xlii Jung, *Beneath the Surface of White Supremacy*, ch. 4; "The Enslaved, the Worker, and Du Bois's *Black Reconstruction*," 166n25.
- xliii Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 229; emphasis in original.
- xliv James Baldwin, "The American Dream and the American Negro," in *James Baldwin: Collected Essays* (New York: Library of America, [1965] 1998), 714.
- xlv Diane Fujino and Matef Harmachis, eds., *Black Power Afterlives: The Enduring Significance of the Black Panther Party* (Chicago, IL: Haymarket Books, 2020); Barbara Ransby, *Making All Black Lives Matter: Reimagining Freedom in the Twenty-First Century*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2018); Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, ed., *How We Get Free: Black Feminism and the Combahee River Collective* (Chicago, IL: Haymarket Books, 2017).
- xlvi In this regard, Demita Frazier, one of the key members of the Combahee River Collective, recounts, "I have to talk to the young woman – Kimberlé Crenshaw...who says that she coined the term intersectionality. I always laugh when I read that because I remember the day we were sitting at the woman's center in Cambridge, drafting our probably third or fourth draft of the statement, I said 'you know, we stand at the intersection where our identities are indivisible.' There is no separation. We are as Black women truly and completely intact in our paradox, and there's nothing paradoxical about oppression" ("Demita Frazier," in *How We Get Free: Black Feminism and the Combahee River Collective*, ed. Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor [Chicago, IL: Haymarket Books, (1997) 2017], 123).
- xlvii "The Combahee River Collective Statement," 15.
- xlviii *We Real Cool*, 134.
- xlix *An End to the Neglect of the Problems of the Negro Woman!* (New York: National Women's Commission, Communist Party USA, 1949), 4.
- l "The Combahee River Collective Statement," 22-23.
- li Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment* (New York: Routledge, 1990).

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- lii Collins, *Black Feminist Thought*; Cedric Robinson, *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); Satya P. Mohanty, "The Epistemic Status of Cultural Identity: On Beloved and The Postcolonial Condition," in *Reclaiming Identity*, ed. P.M.L. Moya and M.R. Hames-Garcia (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).
- liii "The Combahee River Collective Statement," 15.
- liiv "Barbara Smith," in *How We Get Free: Black Feminism and the Combahee River Collective*, ed. Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor (Chicago, IL: Haymarket Books, [1997] 2017), 44-45.
- lv Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction*, 16.
- lvi On liberal, radical, and revolutionary Black feminisms, see Joy James, *Shadowboxing: Representations of Black Feminist Politics* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), 79.
- lvii "The Combahee River Collective Statement," 22-23.
- lviii *Ibid.*, 19-20.
- lix *Ibid.*, 20, 26, 27.
- lx "Alicia Garza," in *How We Get Free: Black Feminism and the Combahee River Collective*, ed. Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor (Chicago, IL: Haymarket Books, 2017), 160-161; emphasis added.
- lxi *Ibid.*, 163-164; emphasis in original.
- lxii *Ibid.*, 165.
- lxiii Vargas and Jung, "Antiblackness of the Social and the Human."
- lxiv *Black Skin, White Masks*, 229; emphasis in original.
- lxv "No Lords A-Leaping: Fanon, C.L.R. James, and the Politics of Invention," *Humanities* 3 (2014): 518.
- lxvi Kwame Ture, "Afterword," in *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation in America*, by Kwame Ture and Charles V. Hamilton (New York, NY: Vintage, 1992).
- lxvii *Scenes of Subjection*, 85.
- lxviii Lélia Gonzalez, "A Categoria Político-cultural de Amefricanidade," *Tempo Brasileiro* (1988), 69-82; Beth Richie, "Exploring the Link between Violence against Women and Women's Involvement in Illegal Activity," in *Research on Women and Girls in the Justice System: Plenary Papers in the 1999 Conference on Criminal Justice Research and Evaluation – Enhancing Policy and Practice through Research* (Washington, DC: Department of Justice, 2000), 1-14; Dorothy Roberts, *Killing the Black Body: Race, Reproduction, and the Meaning of Liberty* (New York, NY: Pantheon Books, 1997); Christina Sharpe, *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016).
- lxix *Ibid.*
- lxx Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*; Joy James, ed., *The New Abolitionists: (Neo) Slave Narratives and Contemporary Prison Writings* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005).
- lxxi "Black Feminist Theory for the Dead and Dying," *Theory & Event* 21:1 (2018): 115; emphasis in original.
- lxxii Frank Wilderson III, "Gramsci's Black Marx: Whither the Slave in Civil Society?," *We Write* 2(1): 1-17.
- lxxiii Sylvia Wynter and Katherine McKittrick, "Unparalleled Catastrophe for our Species?," in *Sylvia Wynter: On Being Human as Praxis*, ed. by Katherine McKittrick (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015), 9-89.