

2015

Mix with Care: An Intervention Against Multiracialism

Michael Prentice

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalwindow.vassar.edu/senior_capstone

Recommended Citation

Prentice, Michael, "Mix with Care: An Intervention Against Multiracialism" (2015). *Senior Capstone Projects*. Paper 455.

This Open Access is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Window @ Vassar. It has been accepted for inclusion in Senior Capstone Projects by an authorized administrator of Digital Window @ Vassar. For more information, please contact DigitalWindowAdmin@vassar.edu.

MIX WITH CARE:

**AN INTERVENTION AGAINST
MULTIRACIALISM**



A Carefully Worded Lament by:

Michael Prentice

For my mother

Table of contents

STAGE 1 - AN ANCESTRAL SIGH.....	1
STAGE 2 - THIS ISN'T OUR PARADE: THE MELANIN DEFICIENCY OF THE MODERN WORLD & THE CASE FOR AFRO-PESSIMISM	11
STAGE 3 - THE MAKINGS OF THE BOOGEYMAN: A SURVEY OF THE EVOLUTION OF AFRO-DIASPORIC IDENTITY.....	23
STAGE 4 - "All Ah We is Not One": On Contemporary Hybridity in the Caribbean	49
STAGE 5 - BLACK, WHITE, AND CONFUSED ALL OVER: MULTIRACIALISM IN THE UNITED STATES	64
STAGE 6 - A CONCLUDING MEDITATION ON "FUCK YOUR BREATH" AND OTHER LOST PASSAGES OF THE AMERICAN CONSTITUTION:	78
REFERENCES	84

STAGE 1 - AN ANCESTRAL SIGH

I begin this project with a heavy heart. It is seldom a celebratory occasion when meditating on the Black condition. In this age, the post-Ferguson era, diagnostic discussions have been generated incessantly, gauging and directing Black rage. In my studies and attempts to keep up with the day's mathematics, I am barraged by innumerable instances of Black death, corpses dumped onto front pages and headlines. Black death is a mundane subject, which is spoken on in ways that reflect the Fungibility of Blackness. Increasingly so, it has become difficult to articulate the truth of the Black condition, as well as fight to improve it. As a gesture of resistance, I want to take a minute to honor those who have come before me, to pause and deeply consider the possibility of a Black humanity. I am an amalgamation of the strength of my ancestors, and it is only through their struggle that I can intervene against the multi-racial project in this manner. To pay homage to them and the martyrs among my people, I open this meditation on the Black condition with my rendition of the Black national anthem:

Sigh.

In regards to dealing with the aforementioned spectacles of Black suffering, I turn to Hartman for guidance. Dr. Saidiya Hartman implores us to consider the difference between a witness and a spectator when striving to free the enslaved in her work *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making In Nineteenth Century America*. Hartman presents the case of John Rankin, a white man of the cloth so outraged by the aspects of slavery visible to him he made it his mission in life to document and inform all who would listen on its evils. Consider him a prototypical author of the 'sorrow porn' genre that has exploded among non-white scenes of suffering, a proto-'Feed the Children' campaign if you will. "By providing the minutest detail of macabre acts of violence, embellished by his own fantasy of slavery's bloodstained gate, Rankin hoped to rouse the sensibility of those indifferent to slavery by exhibiting the suffering of the enslaved..." (1997:18) Rankin becomes the conduit then to ask questions such as would such work ameliorate the aforementioned indifference, or prove it beyond reproach? Are Rankin's efforts only exacerbating the idea that Black sentience is inconceivable to the white subject? Is he reinforcing the "thingly" nature of the captive by reducing the Black body to evidence in the very effort to establish the humanity of the enslaved? (1997:19) The agony of the enslaved becomes the sole manner through which they can be recognized by the white voyeur. "Pain extends humanity to the dispossessed, and the

ability to sustain suffering leads to transcendence, on the other, the spectral and spectacular character of his suffering, or, in other words, the shocking and ghostly presence of pain, effaces and restricts Black sentience" to the point that the voyeur will come to not need to see the actual suffering to maintain the connection between the suffering and the enslaved. (Hartman 1997:20) Rankin is the proxy between the voyeur and Black suffering, more specifically his white indignation and imagination, thus becoming indispensable with his power to make Black suffering visible to other whites. (1997:20) At best, he displaces the suffering, instead of ameliorating it, and that is why an Afro-pessimistic take on the Black condition is a game changer. This burgeoning school of thought takes serious the idea that has been phantasmal through out many types of analysis on the Black condition that Black people are not failing contemporary measures of success and development, but are actively and continually being written out of those measures. With this framework, liberal reformations of plantation power relations can finally be put to rest, as we articulate the bare life of racism. Hartman, and others following in her footsteps, have revitalized the pursuit to illustrate how institutions of slavery and the like were not just side hustles of the modern era capitalists but were in fact integral to the unprecedented wealth and global presence the United States and other giants of the modern world enjoys today. In making this connection,

they lead us to the conclusion that efforts to integrate Afro-descendants into these institutions will always fail in the end due to a tacit and unacknowledged understanding that Black people are not human. This is the same understanding that allowed France to embrace liberty, equality, and fraternity for all men during their revolution while fighting to maintain their prized San Domingo slave colony. The same exact understanding undergirding the Christian missionaries forcibly inserting themselves into African countries preaching biblical doctrines of all men being God's children and loving thy neighbor while abetting in the colonial enterprise of murder, plunder, and psychological terror. It is the same damn understanding at work when the United States government condemns the violence of the Middle Eastern regimes against dissenters, while America police departments kill a Black citizen every 8 hours as of today in 2015. Black people are understood to be outside the idea of human, and this is integral to understand in order to conceive of a world where that is not so.

Whoever said 'the road to hell is paved with good intentions' must have been white, because their insider information was right. The ghost of Rankin is a specter that will haunt the rest of this work as an incisive example of what happens when one cannot conceive of the root logics of oppression. The crime of slavery was not merely physical abuse, yet that was the visible aspect that drives disciples of Rankinology to their respective course of action. In striving

toward the liberation / resurrection of Black persons, understanding the vital points of the system constricting and confusing resistance is fundamental. It goes without saying that there must come a time in the far distant future when the Black revolutionary can envision transcending the racial schemas of the European colonial as part of the larger aspiration toward justice for the colonized world. Thus the further one develops their racial identity as a Black intellectual, the more one sees that Black empowerment must be an intentionally self-destructive intellectual movement; one that liberates Black people from the very world as we know it. It is precisely this movement that Frantz Fanon refers to when he "propose[s] nothing short of the liberation of the man of colour from himself," which is to say, a liberation from the man of colour's very categorization as such – and, consequently, the systems that confer that categorization. (1967:10) We can experience this liberating movement through the development of a Black intellectualism; the antithesis to the faux modernity and its "humanism".

This antagonism sets the stage for a real discussion on multiracialism: an evil that, I contend invests Black people and others in enhancing and re-articulating the inept European racial schemas of yore. Multi-racialism in academia, activism, and culture in general, as will be outlined later, represents the ultimate conclusion of the integrationist narrative, and thus in opposition

to any liberating effort for Black folk. By focusing on the context of the United States and the Caribbean, I will demonstrate how many diasporic Africans invest themselves in formations that further invest them in being the fodder for the rest of the modern world to feast upon. Similarly, I will use terms like Creole, Mulatto, Mixt, and Multi-racial synonymously to emphasize the shared stake diasporic Africans in the US and Caribbean have in figuring this out. I will focus on the mulatto assemblage throughout this work, with few mentions of other forms of hybridity as per the Afro-Pessimist and anti-colonial framework I draw upon. The mulatto subject will come to highlight the incompatibility of that which is white and that which is monstrous. By focusing on the sheer incompatibility of the Negro and the modern world, and the brand of multi-racialism obfuscating this, I aim to strike at the root of the danger to Black people of remaining invested in contemporary anti-Black stratifications. As a result, I want to make clear that this is neither a introductory nor a exceedingly persuasive work, but rather a meditation in order to refine my ability to strike down and limit the treacherous potential of the multiracial. For if we cannot even name the problem, describe reality, as it is, the prospects for getting free look grim.

To do so I will:

1. Build a case for Afro-pessimism, to establish the ontological level at which the institutions of modernity depends on feeding off of Black livelihood.
2. I will survey a sampling of Afro-diasporic consciousness, tracing the journey from African to Negros to Blacks until Creoles, touching on various attempts to fit Black people into a white world. I will meditate on the impoverishment of non-European theory using the C.L.R. James' Black Jacobins and accompanying works to illustrate the blatant sham that is European humanism. This will also serve to further meld an Afro-pessimistic understanding with Black Atlantic geopolitics. This history will make apparent that integration is an ill-fated enterprise that has no place in discussions of Black liberation.
3. Then a discussion on competing ethnic narratives in the Caribbean, and the pacifying effects of Creolization on anti-colonial organizing. Here I will elaborate some of the attempts to forge a critical hybridity theory and put them in conversation with the same efforts trying to de-historicize the Black struggle.

4. Finally, will be a consideration of Multi-racial activism / cultural production in the United States, and the socio-economic class implications of a normative Mixt person. In this way I will put the de-politicization of racial stratification with concurrent projects involving gender and class in the United States

STAGE 2 - THIS ISN'T OUR PARADE: THE MELANIN DEFICIENCY OF THE MODERN WORLD & THE CASE FOR AFRO-PESSIMISM

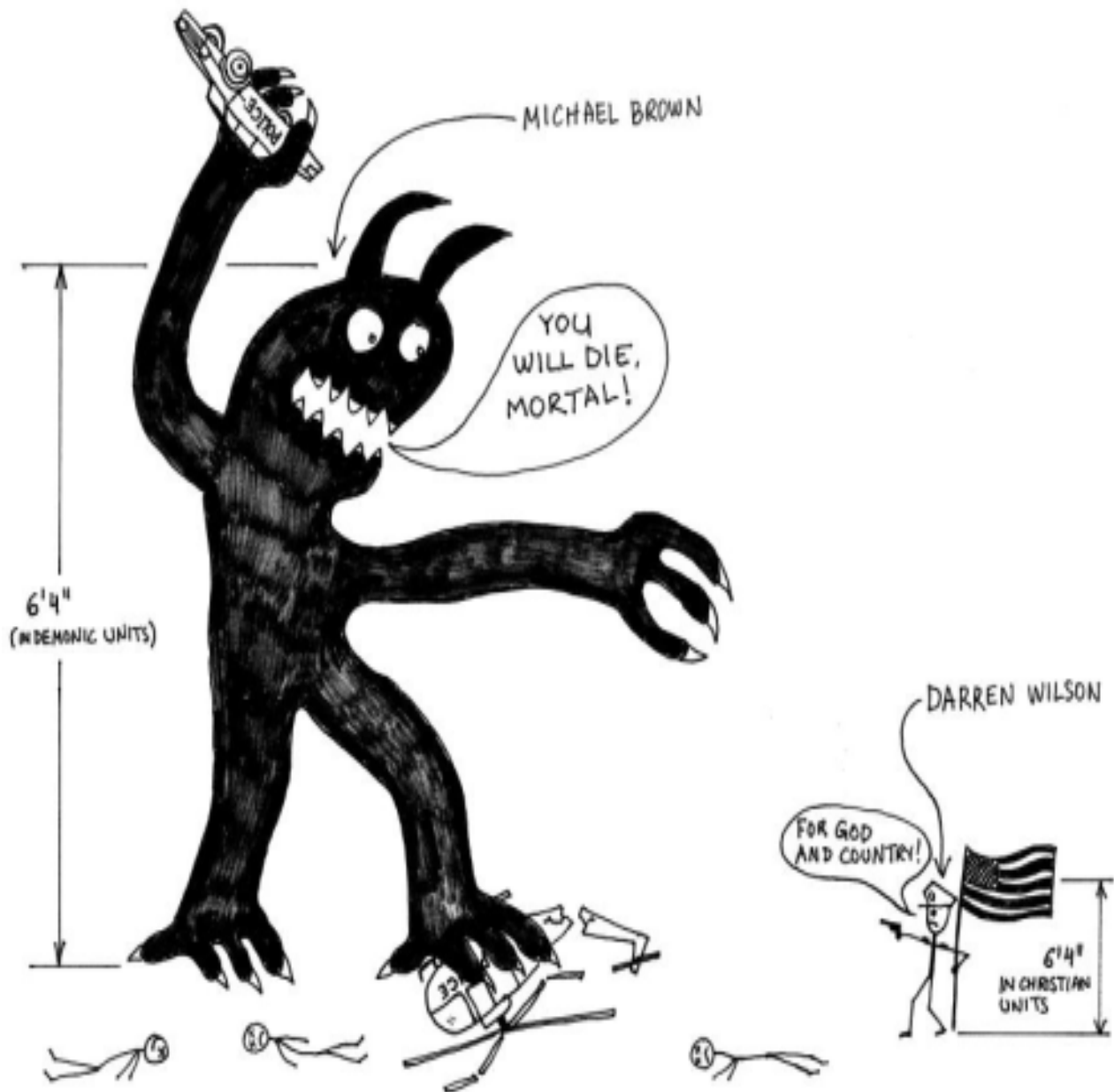
The crux of my argument will rely on the premises adopted by an afro-pessimistic framework, which I will recreate here. The Black experience, inasmuch as it can be singularly described as such, harbors the potential to reveal the underlying rationale of this world - a potential which Frantz Fanon observed when saying "O my body, make of me always a man who questions!" (1967:9) The racialized experience renders visible the evils of capitalism for all to see when Black bodies survive being reduced to chattel; it shows the insidious truth of Colonialism when the African progenitors of civilization are remade as that who are barbaric and savage. In being so categorically persecuted by modern infrastructure, Black people have a unique and oftentimes singular perspective regarding the repressive reality at work, which allows for them to "question" the value and validity of the existing state of affairs.

With many definitive aspects of modernity we see Blackness standing in opposition to the larger progress narrative being doled out in large, serving as a living testament to the foundational and functional sins of the status quo. The incompatibility of a modern philosophy such as human rights for example, is the most glaring

when something like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) is published by the same European powers who actively and concurrently maintained colonies across the African continent. Similar instances include the signing of the declaration of independence by some of Americas wealthiest slave owners, or the French revolution's claiming to embrace humanism and democracy while maintaining one of the most brutal plantation slave colonies to date. The narrative of modern progress is used to further dehumanize Black folk as being pre-modern or primitive, without taking into account how these relations were imposed by the Colonial. Thus the French revolutionaries are credited with being the romantic freedom fighters, as opposed to the Haitians who predated any authentic application of humanist principles. As such, Blackness becomes constituted in terms that render it antithetical to humanity since what is often hailed as "human progress" does not consider or contain the interests of Black people, often working exactly against them in discourses on development and geopolitical distribution of resources. Through this formulation, the Black subject is reduced to an object of colonial oppression -- not a sovereign subject who is able to reap its benefits.

Fanon describes this process of objectification and the psychic damage it incurs, saying "I came into the world imbued with the will to find meaning in things, my spirit filled with the desire to attain

to the source of the world, and then I found I was an object in the midst of other objects. Sealed into that crushing object hood.” (1967:9) Not only does this forceful condition incur a psychological shift, but also an ideological one. It is through such an ideological change that Black intellectuals begin to theorize against, rather than within, the operative and oppressive logics surrounding them. Jared Sexton provides a stellar analysis of this incompatibility in his analysis of Fanon’s infamous experience with the young French girl who shouts “Look, a Negro!” (2008:195). Fanon, desiring nothing more to be a man among men has his hopes brought to existential ruin and realized he would never be more than a Negro in the world he occupied. It was a devastating moment in which the lies of the modern world crumbled around him and he found himself a monstrous construction no matter his sensibilities, nor education.



An editorial of Darren Wilson's account of Shooting Michael Brown. "According to Darren Wilson this is what happened. No reason not to believe him." (imfabulous13 2014)

This tenet of the Afro-pessimist framework is imperative to understand when discussing conceptions of Blackness and the African

Diaspora because the ultimate realization of the goal of the Black person seeking to do more than survive is to dismantle society, as we currently know it. Cornel West writes that “Whiteness is a politically constructed category parasitic on Blackness” (1990:29) and through understanding even a cursory history of diasporic Africans (henceforth referred to as Afrocendents) in the United States and the Caribbean the conclusion is unavoidable. In the next section I will ruminate Black ichor extracted from the hulls of slave ships that was shaped into the cornerstones of modernity, but for now let us examine the Fungibility of Blackness as another aspect of the Afro-pessimistic framework.

Stephen Marshall uses the death of Trayvon Martin as an entry point to discuss the worthlessness of Black life to the anti-Black world. On discussing the presumed guilt of the 17-year-old boy, Marshall says “[it] constituted Martin’s peculiar vulnerability and this presumption has a political constitution. When Zimmerman saw Martin he saw criminality, understood as the commission of crime, an intension to commit crime, an escape from prior crime, or some combination of the three.” In this way, Trayvon would not need to commit a crime in a classical sense to warrant suspicion / execution, for it is the masters of society who actively decide what offends the sensibility of the civilized sphere. In this regard we come to understand the transgression of the hundreds of Black people



(James 2014)

executed for walking down the street, biking, playing loud music, among countless other potentially criminal activities. Achille Mbembe further helps us understand this particular vulnerability of Black folk in his discussion of Necropolitics. He describes a brief history of the topographies of cruelty, tracing the state power of death from Slavery until the Holocaust. Necropolitics is key to maintain political power through death, terrorizing subjects with

the fear that they may be the next spectacle used to drive the point. (Mbembe 2003) Thus the logic of lynchings connects to a larger system of state / hegemonic control of marginal populations. Consider in Act 1, Scene 1 of the theater production of *Toussaint Louverture: The Story of the Only Successful Slave Revolt in History* by C.L.R. James when Bullet, a French colonial official overseeing the Haitian colony, describes the punishment for an escaped slave.

"If that runaway is not found in the afternoon, at six o'clock I assemble my thousand slaves in the field. There, before everyone, he buries himself up to the neck. This is a case where honey and molasses will be smeared on his face...so the ants and flies will be at him almost immediately. Sometimes we allow the slaves to throw stones at him so as to put him out of his misery. I'll not allow that tomorrow" (James, Høgsbjerg and Dubois 2013)

It is on these plantations Mbembe argues the experiments of necropower happened, and were exported throughout the colonial world. In a fascinating turn, he also speaks to how death becomes a manner of resistance in this regard, for if one sheds the fear of death then what effect does the spectacle have on them? When the economy is predicated on exploiting Black labor, treating Blacks as property, death can be conceptualized as robbing slave masters in a twisted respect.

In light of this ruthless and abundant deployment of violence, the Afro-pessimist declares the ontological

WHEN U DEAD AND U REALIZE U
AINT GOTTA GO TO WORK NO
MORE CUZ U DEAD



incompatibility with a humanist world, and the world of the white man. Thus they only adopt a pessimistic attitude in the observance of the Black person's lot in a white dominated world, but ultimately in their call for a dismantling of the modern world hold an optimism for a better world.

This reason for dismantlement is simple: if we are to take seriously the historical record that traces Black social death as an

intrinsic part of mainstream socioeconomic life, then it follows that the only way to resurrect Black people from this lethal condition is through a complete systemic overhaul. This requires a historically and materially grounded analysis of modern power distributions in order to understand the sites of dominations that must be deconstructed in order to provoke a radical shift in society. With this, we arrive to the conclusion that to advocate for the improvement of the Black condition is to fight for both the abolition of race in tandem with modern society at large -- i.e. the systems that define and determine Black subjugation. This is different from how other people of color are regarded, since Blacks are incapable of enacting modernity, even if they wanted to. Samson Opondo speaks to this quite lucidly in his work *The New Violent Cartographies* when he writes:

“These development/security, horror/terror taxonomies are evident in attitudes towards Africans who are considered incapable of modernity and commit atrocities that are spatially confined given that Africans ‘victimize themselves,’ while hardcore Islam is seen as resistant to modernity and commits atrocities that are more mobile and diffuse in nature given that ‘hardcore Muslims’ are ‘prone to taking others along with them to the world beyond.” (Opondo and Shapiro 2012:102)

This distinction illuminates many of the underlying truths beneath the guise of POC solidarity, which seldom go examined in the common rush to equivocate. In order to combat the insidious tactics of the modern regulators of power, Black people must be centered and truly understood as the wretched of the earth that they are regarded as in order to generate an anti-modern, and therefore anti-colonial, framework.

Lewis Gordon writes “There is no way to reject the thesis that there is something wrong with being Black, beyond the willingness to be Black. Not in terms of convenient fads of playing Blackness but by paying the social cost of anti-Blackness on a global scale.”

(Sexton 2010:48) Which essentially boils down to saying when presented with an understanding of a world with Blacks at the bottom of the social hierarchy, if you do not stand with the oppressed to the point where you would bear their burden, then you subscribe to the postulate of Black inferiority; that Blacks are the inferior race among all. Meaning that the only ethical position is the bottom of the ladder, by choosing to be Black assertively, not reluctantly. In some respects we revisit the suicidal impulse of the Black revolutionary, for when faced with a choice of whether or not to be truly Black in this context, only those who choose death would assertively choose to occupy the position of the wretched of the earth. But alas, that is the trick, for there was never a choice to

begin with! Any political understanding that says otherwise neglects the fundamental reality of racial super imposition, namely that you are raced before you are recognized as a person. We are only given the choice to see how we are racialized, or to delude ourselves. The delusion of choosing your perch in the pyramid of racial power is a dangerous one, and one that recurs throughout multiracial thought and activism. It makes amenable the status quo because one is made to believe there is sufficient mobility, and thus there is no crisis. Any attempt to further invest us in the operative logics of race hinders the Black revolutionary from their goal. One concrete example of this is the advent of multiracialism that works to create new categories within the racial hierarchy for multiracial peoples. This creates more space within an already deadly system that reinforces the faux science within the biological reality of race. Multiracialism weaponizes select progeny of Black people (speaking specifically to the Mulatto condition) so that they themselves can diminish and degrade Blackness. Frank Wilderson identifies this trend as part of a larger project of not recognizing the human value of Black people. He writes "what gives it (Multiracialism) coherence is not what it says about itself, i.e. 'we are mixed race people', but what it says about what it is not: 'We are not Black'.

(Wilderson 2014) This fact will be key later on in the intervention, as we will come to see the many facets of hybrid assemblages in

different contexts that define themselves on so many different axes, and yet all unite to rebuke any residual ties to Blackness. For now, let us conduct a brief survey of Black political history.

STAGE 3 - THE MAKINGS OF THE BOOGEYMAN: A SURVEY OF THE EVOLUTION OF AFRO- DIASPORIC IDENTITY

The conceptual blueprint drawn into a loose orbit around the intangible body of Afro-Pessimism is a conclusion built from a deep understanding of Black political history. It is cooled, hardened remnant of a fury so great and menacing in its potential to turn today's global village into a the next Pompeii. An intellectual of this predilection takes seriously the consistent failures of Black political movements of the past to enact modernity, and articulates the essence of the reasons that has and continues to make the Black incapable of modernity. The course of studies of Black political history at a PWI (private white institution) has groomed my practical expertise in the impoverishment of non-western theory. True to the sociological method I used to believe that Europeans not only forged the institutions of modernity, but also their critiques. Many Afro-pessimist scholars focus on invoking the history of the enslaved via slave narratives in order to reclaim and build off of the theory emergent from slave ships. I wish to continue that tradition by invoking a survey of the history of Afro-diasporic formations, and the repeated failures to get a seat at the proverbial table. In doing this, the political programs which

center such historically amnesiac ideologies such as capitalism or integration, for example, can be put aside in order to explore alternatives that cut down to the root logic of racism. In order to take serious the application of this ideology onto the discourse of multiracialism, it is imperative to see the historical tradition from which such a viewpoint has emerged. 'If Multiracialism is indeed the culmination of integrationist politick, what of it? Why does this association make it contradictory to racial abolition?' Let us conduct this survey in order to brutally hack these lingering questions to pieces, and flush them into the septic system of our ideological universe, where hopefully they may be composted into the fertile soil for future nourishment.

The history of the Haitian revolution is a stunning example of how the European's world is built against Blackness. Drawing from C.L.R. James we can see the many factors that contributed to birth of the first Black republic. Concomitantly showing how the many ways enslaved Africans used the shackles and the European tools of oppression in order to completely uproot the entire colony. James traces the advent of key players in the revolution, documenting their humble origins and how a former enslaved man would come to lead them toward victory against the greatest colonial powers of the era. Toussaint Louverture used the follies

of racial logic against the Europeans who time and time again failed to understand the full capacity of populations they exerted control over.

James chronicles how slaves used the vestiges of African derived culture in the form of Vodou and broken French in order to coagulate a collective consciousness in light of the Mulatto agitating for admission their own into modern society. He portrays the convergence of major historical events the slaves took advantage of, such as Britain's jealousy of the colony's wealth as well as the French revolution in order to beat the colonial in their own game of politics, war and treachery. The generals of the revolting Blacks expertly played on the envy of the Spanish and British for France's prized colony to secure arms and resources in order to establish themselves as masters of the island over the course of a decade. Toussaint Louverture emerges as the leader through circumstance, and yet falls victim to French treachery by believing in the envoy of Napoleon's intentions for peace to be sincere. Ultimately, it is the more pessimistic generals who lead the revolt in the wake of Toussaint's demise who are able to forge the independent black republic. (James, Høgsbjerg and Dubois 2013)

James underscores the developments of the Haitian Revolution with histories of the political developments in the metropole of the respective countries that threaten Haitian sovereignty. In this way we see how Haitian society inspired the French revolution, and evolved to become the antithesis of the Anti-humanism of Europe, those devils that would preach free trade but sabotage any rivals; Those who would dare esteem values such as liberty, fraternity and equality while accruing slave capital. The blatant disregard for wealth and property is glaring as slaves brought torches down upon their former prisons struck out against the capitalist logic of the modern world. The property of yesterday became the masters of the colony, persevering over both former masters **AND** their mulatto collaborators. In this way, the striving toward a genuine humanism in Haiti became oppositional to the foundation of the modern world.

James approaches the dramatization of the Black Jacobins with a culturally attuned Marxist praxis, because when one has the faculties to see through the dominant narrative about the only successful slave revolt in history, they cannot keep this from their people. Writing this historical drama as a play, that was then produced in the heart of one of the largest colonial empires was a political act of great magnitude. He was not content to let the history of his people sit in archives where

they could not be interacted with and helpful to those who need it the most. This begs the question of how much the British critics really understood the implications of the play, when they would later write glowing reviews of how outstanding the performances were. One might even be so bold as to ask the same question to the colonial spawn who traverse the halls of Vassar. Ultimately James exposes the cognitive dissonance in those who still struggle to situate Black folk as human, imbibing in the anti-humanist logic of Liberalism, using the first Black republic to expose modernity as the sham it truly is.

In this tradition, Edward Baptist obliterates the myth of the founding fathers of the United States, and takes back the narrative of enslaved Africans in the United States. Baptist looks toward the example of escaped slaves who struggled to be able to tell their own narrative and thus embarks to tell the half that has never been told. Baptist reinforces time and time again of the power of telling the story of your people and piecing together various narratives of slaves to tell a larger story of the history of the United States. Baptist artfully desecrates many of the myths that are told in US history classes, which constantly minimizes both the impact of slavery on the development of the modern world as well as the atrocities committed to build and maintain its infrastructure. By focusing

on certain key moments of US history, Baptist shows the reader how enslaved populations were essential in the westward expansion of the original thirteen colonies, navigating pressures from colonial empires, and fueling the industrialization of an empire in training.

One of the more powerful points Baptist makes is his recreation of the rationale for abolition. While many work to make the narrative seem like slavery was a side hustle of a young America, through Baptist's collected narratives we see how integral slavery was. He describes how "abolitionists had depicted slavery not only as a psychopathic realm of whipping, rape, and family separation, but also as a flawed economic system that was inherently less efficient than the free-labor capitalism developing in the North. Proslavery writers disagreed about the psychopathy, but by the 1850s they agreed that enslavers were fire and foremost not profit-seekers." (Baptist 2014:12) One can feel the chills of Rankin's ghost haunting those words. The abolition of slavery in America was motivated by the idea that exploited labor could be better capitalized on in an industrialize setting. It turns out they were wrong, and that productivity was less after the abolition of slavery. Yet consider how thoroughly white washed history has become since then when slavery is taught now, it is shown as a moral

breakthrough. A glimmer of hope so that Black people can maintain hope that this country too could be theirs, that was actually a glimmer of the jewels from the world's first venture capitalists.

In the course of discovering the narratives of the Founding Africans Baptist shows us the double crime of not only subjecting millions to chattel status but then the mass delusions that have been occurring in tandem to alter reality. To this day, I continue to hear

gratitude from descendants of enslaved folk when the civil war is discussed during Black history month. What an oxymoron, if the US state had any integrity they would name it white history month to



be honest about whose lie it truly is, but alas. Baptist artfully traces how the development of America was guided by the question of profit margins disguised in lofty Liberal ideals and forces us to ask in what other histories are we receiving half narratives? Consider the culture of resistance hypothesis, where enslaved people were assertive rebels who resisted so consistently, in many small ways that they managed to prevent whites from exploiting their labor. (Baptist 2014: 15) Baptist highlights the quasi-symmetry of this conception with post-Civil war plantation memoirs who maintained slavery was a nonprofit endeavor aimed at civilizing Africans (ibid)

Baptist cycles through many personal narratives of enslaved Africans to piece together an authentic history. I am still haunted by the vivid description of Charles Ball locked in a Coffle with other enslaved Africans. Many Black folk ask the question, when is our Moses going to come? When will our leader emerge from our ranks and lead us down the long road to freedom? Usually the bible is invoked but consider any vanguard in other histories. Now I realize that the talented tenth type fairy tale is not a story that is originally ours. Rather Africans in America became a large mass in the slave holds across the middle passage. This speaks to the Fungibility of Black life where there is no serious consideration for the individual Black person. In

the coffle they could not afford to believe in individualism, shuffling forward after emerging from slave holds. There is a quiet strength of Charles taking the lead of his Coffle, never emerging from the mass or being distinguished from other slaves, but lending his unique strength to set the pace and keep the rest of his group marching forth. I think about that as an alternative leadership model that emerged to meet the most basic needs of enslaved people. Thanks to Baptist's analysis of the historical double talk of the US narrative, I look back on every act of liberal white 'charity' that enabled my position here with a burning desire to seek out where the profit margins were, as is the time honored narrative.

On a broader scale within the diaspora, consider the African personality as one of the first widespread articulation of an Afro-diasporic consciousness. Edward Blyden, born of the Virgin Islands, is commonly referred to as the father of Pan-Africanism for propagating the ideas of the importance of the commonalities of Africans. As a response to the collective oppression they faced he coined this concept in a Freetown speech in 1893 saying:

"It is sad to think that there are some Africans, especially among those who have enjoyed the advantages of foreign training, who are so blind to the radical facts of humanity as to say, 'Let

us do away with the sentiment and be if possible in another Race...' Preach this doctrine as much as you like, no one will do it, for no one *can* do it, for when you have done away with your personality, you have done away with yourselves..." (1989:55)

Blyden goes on to speak of the inability of most Africans (largely those unable to ascertain foreign training) to do away with the reality of Race as they know it, and how it was essential to embrace being African as being apart of a Great race. Here we see the early movement to take back being African from being synonymous with backwardness, and savagery that was the common rhetoric during the Colonial era. The impetus for this reclamation comes after the 1885 Berlin conference when the language of civilizing Africa was employed as a justification to shift from isolated European forays into the continent developed into systemic looting.

Adekeye Adebajo argues that the proto-liberal moral platitudes of *a mission civilisatrice* was the rhetoric employed by the empires involved, using tools like racialized science and a Hamitic hypothesis based historical framework, to mask the looting of Africa. (2010:18) It was these widespread conceptions of the 'Dark Continent' that Pan-Africanists like Blyden combatted,

insisting on redeeming the African in the eyes of the European, and thus the world.

Similarly Negritude was another such iteration of the civilized African that evolved in the Francophone Africa. Black intellectuals in Paris (drawing inspiration from the Harlem Renaissance) staked a claim in Blackness in order to redeem it from the years of European degradation. At the time of its conception it was seen as a radical shift of racialized consciousness, as Sartre described it:

"The Black man who asserts his negritude by means of a revolutionary movement immediately places himself in the position of having to meditate, either because he wishes to recognize in himself certain objectively established traits of the African civilizations, or because he hopes to discover the



Savage Nupe
@youngdub774



 Follow

Black people been stereotyped as being lazy ever since we stopped working for free



RETWEETS
4,252

FAVORITES
3,164



10:56 AM - 28 Mar 2014

(Winston H. 2014)

Essence of Blackness in the well of his heart". (1965:19)

Thus Negritude bore a movement urging Black people to look deep into themselves, to gaze past the wicked magics of the European colonial bureaucracy, at both their collective histories and individual capabilities. This was one of the first international intellectual movements to take the label bestowed upon Africans and work to redeem Blackness, to attempt to prove to the world that Black people were capable of humanity as described by Europeans. Ultimately the goal of Negritude was impossible, in large part because the standards by which human value is measured were not just Euro-centric, but Anti-Black. The world as laid out by colonial powers was taken as a given, and Afro-diasporic intellectuals strove to Within such a formulation, Blackness was configured as antithetical to value, as a site of profound deficiency. We see intellectuals at the forefront of this movement urging universities in West Africa to stress the 'civilized' arts, to 999and their arts. In this way they can prove to both the colonized and colonizing the capability of the Negro. (Worger 2010:211) The foundation of an Afro-diasporic identity is soaked in race poison, as well as an enduring faith in the rational faculties of the European. Speaking to 'shared' cultural capital such as Christianity, reason, and

Enlightenment ideals, and common humanity no manner of appeal could render legible the value of Blackness.

These conceptions of Pan-African introspection paved the way for conceptions of Blackness outside of the parameters demarcated by whiteness, since eventually intellectuals were drawn to the inevitable conclusion that it was the white frameworks that were lacking, rather than Black value. With figures like the Black separatist Marcus Garvey, the discourse shifts from proving Black humanity to white people, to proving Black worth to Black people of the Diaspora. There is a departure from a movement to prove Black humanity within structures that purport to be universal, yet in reality have proven themselves to be anti-Black, toward a movement for Black sovereignty. Garvey expounds on this concept in 1922, writing on behalf of his UNIA movement that:

We are determined to solve our own problem, by redeeming our Motherland Africa from the hands of alien exploiters and found there a Government, a nation of our own, strong enough to lend protection to the members of our race scattered all over the world, and to compel the respect of the nations and races of the earth. (Martin 1976:41)

The projects to discover an authentic Pan-African personality that was not designed for the white gaze was well underway within the African Diaspora. Garvey advocated for Black

people to focus on building up their own resources, and be prepared to defend what is theirs by any means necessary. This movement placed Black people and their history at the center of an anti-colonial and at times anti-capitalist struggle to work toward an end of European (and later American) worldwide hegemony. However, the Antilleans have struggled greatly to figure out their place in the diasporic consciousness.

To better address this, consider the trajectory of the aforementioned Antillean born leader who was explicit about a Black supremacist ideology. Marcus Garvey was very explicit in his mission toward bettering the Black condition by any means necessary, and his UNIA movement provides a stark example to contrast the trajectory of advocates of Multiracialism. Garvey inspired Black people of the continent and Diaspora to demand more than equality, and strive toward sovereignty. After examining the programs of his organization and his own political development, we can see how his call for Black sovereignty was a radical shift from many of his contemporaries who called for various modes of assimilation. Garvey's revolutionary hope and belief in Black society during the height of the European colonialist project in Africa and the Caribbean, and Jim Crow America was a defining

characteristic that set him apart from many other Black leaders of the time.

Garvey's early life in Jamaica and his transition to organizing in the United States shaped a great deal of his diasporic advocacy. Growing up in St. Ann's Bay in, Garvey was a descendant of the Maroons, who were renowned for creating communities isolated from the slave regime. He took up apprenticeships that would eventually bring him to Kingston, where he would be immersed in the battle to dispel the hold European colonial powers had over Jamaica by means of the National Club. In 1910 he embarked on a journey to Latin America, with many other West Indians, for work until his formative trip to Europe in 1912. It was there he was first exposed to a great deal of truth about how the Colonial machine maintained itself at the expense of Black people worldwide. (Martin 1976: 6) Through this experience he learned how central Black suffering was to the way of the world, evidenced in his 1914 reflection back in Jamaica saying:

"For the last ten years I have given my time to the study of the condition of the Negro, here, there, and everywhere, and I have come to realize that he is still the object of degradation and pity the world over, In the sense that he has

no status socially, nationally, or commercially” (Martin 1976:7)

Here we see that Blackness becomes the underpinning of the white world in Garvey's experience, creating a bold expansion unto Negritudinal thought. In light of worldwide anti-Blackness, Garvey made it his mission to establish "a central nation for Black people...and a pledge to work for better conditions among Negroes everywhere”. (Martin 1976:9) Here, the focus is not debating the humanity of Black people to the pale non-believers, or creating strategies to get Black people close to nodes of power within white society. These thoughts would become foundational when Garvey goes to the US to generate support for his cause to advance the Black nation. In the UNIA's framework, there was no room for *the age-old division between* Blacks in the US, Caribbean and different regions of the world. Garvey highlights the dangers of integrating into the structures of white America, stressing that even the most esteemed servants of the state are not exempt from the racial logics of domination and murder. According to Garvey, Afrocentrists everywhere must come to see Africa as the space in which the condition of Blackness can be diagnosed and the ensuing social death treated. The colonial anxieties assailing Black populations in the Diaspora can be remedied by going back to Africa with the UNIA program.

Consider then this sampling of Black political agents in America. Ida B. Wells is an icon in Black history for her work to fight back against the epidemic of lynchings in the United States during the Jim Crow era. In her work *"On Lynchings"* Wells and her allies tirelessly document as many of the reported cases of lynchings throughout the South in order to raise awareness that Black people, so called citizens of the United States, were not being protected by the law or given fair trials. Armed with grisly photographs, interviews, and statistics she toured the country as well as at select destinations in Europe in order to raise awareness to these horrors. She documents her progressive attempts to appeal to larger institutions for help when local agencies fail, going from county, to state, federal, and finally international. (Wells 1969) Wells employs the tactic of Rankin (the aforementioned abolitionist priest) of using the spectacle of Black death to stir the heart of white Liberals on a larger scale. In this way the operating racist logics remain intact when we ask only not to be killed in such a grisly and public manner. What is more important than any critique of the effort of Wells' journalism is the question of what has been learned from the ground she has broken? How many appeals to the State / Bible / Declaration of Human Rights must have to be ignored before faith is lost?

We see the enduring hope in white institutions continue into the civil rights movement of the 1960's, fighting for both laws and law enforcement to protect Black civic participation in the United States. I will refrain from reproducing the oft-cited dichotomies of violence vs. non-violence in the hopes to curb the academy's appetite for intellectual Mandingo fighting, and only say that assimilative platforms are historically amnesic. Whether they are pacifist or militant strategies of assimilation they fall short of advancing the Black political condition. What is key to take away is that the political ground has already been broken in Afro-Diasporic activism, and yet many remain content to reinvent symptom-focused cures to a structural ailment. Multiracialism, as will be discussed, is the epitome of such an approach that disregards the history of the African and their descendants, and as such it is key to see the lining of Rankinology. Rankinology as previously discussed is a brand of consciousness on the Black condition so focused on abrasive symptoms that its followers work to solidify the logic of oppression by working toward a more palatable, and thus enduring anti-Blackness. We saw this in Hartman's recreation of the abolitionist priest who focused so much on the horrid spectacle of the 'tortured slave' (a redundancy if I ever heard one) that the discussion of the impoverishment of Black humanity went

undisturbed. This is also apparent in Baptist's discussion on the real logic behind the shift from plantation to industrial slavery. Legislated slavery was abolished in many cases (save the prison industry of course) yet the underlying belief of Black inferiority persisted, leading to the absence of Justice and the continuation of the exploitation of Black resources and labor. The liberal facade of the Western world is a lie and we need only consider Black history in order to understand this, and any political consciousness that does not incorporate that is a danger to the 21st century Negro. The memory of failed petitions, lawsuits, marches; legislation and other catalysts of civil society are the fuel that stokes the fires of Afro-Pessimism. In doing so, Black intellectuals can move past discussions of 'Should we take the Martin or Malcolm approach?' or 'Was it Toussaint or Dessalines who had it right?' and take our rightful place as those who can gaze past the tombs of all those political icons toward the futility of staking a claim on the western world. Black people today can see the limits of the nation state in a world where the permanent members Security Council of the United Nations wields wildly disproportionate power over other states. They can see the neocolonial debt schemes that subjugate the third world amidst conversations of a global village, just as Haitians saw the failings of the ideas of the French revolution

in the midst of their own. This is of course in no way to be read as a fault our ancestors for the work they did, but rather to really and truly learn from their strategies, and exorcise the ghost of Rankin from Black political consciousness. For example, Ida B. Wells asked why does Black life not merit state protection. We have our answer and yet fear its implications. She went from appeals to the southern states, to the federal government, and later the international community asking this question, among others, and yet we repackage this inquiry in naive, and now treacherous ways.

One political movement that makes this painfully clear is the movement against police brutality / extra - judicial violence. Earlier I discussed how Wells and her peers worked tirelessly to raise awareness for the plight of the victims of southern lynchings. What is worth stressing is that she toured England as well in order to garner support for her movement, making appeals to the European international community before the West had codified the United Nations before the Second World War. (Wells-Barnett 1969) In light of this, consider the NAACP's petition to the United Nations in 1947, some two years after its ratification to address the problem of police brutality in America. In "An Appeal to the World", some key figures in the NAACP such as W.E.B. DuBois, Earl B. Dickerson, William Robert

Ming Jr. and more drafted a document to the general body of the United Nations asking for redress for the human rights violations in the United States that so often lead said victims with no redress. It makes sense to make to pursue this avenue, as the idea of the Western powers proclaiming to respect a set of rights on the basis of humanity must have thrown many colonized peoples for a loop. DuBois professed that "It is not Russia that threatens the United States so much as Mississippi...[I]nternal injustice done to one's brothers is far more dangerous than the aggression of strangers from abroad." in an effort to strike out against the coming cold war narrative. They went so far as to argue that using New York as the United Nations headquarters would be a compromise on the new institutions own professed ideals due to the continuing racial apartheid in the United States. (Louis-Jaques 2012) This effort drew upon an earlier petition in 1946 from a petition from the National Negro Congress, portraying the desolate position of the American Negro driven from the polls of the south, disillusioned with the northern ghettos of the north without redress for their injustices. Sadly, but not surprisingly, the NAACP's document was ignored; as it called for redress against on of the premier powers enabling the convergence of national powers, the United States. Eleanor Roosevelt, one of the major advocates of the

‘Universal Declarations of Human Rights’ was an adversary of the petition.

“Although Eleanor Roosevelt, a member of board of directors of the NAACP, was also a member of the American delegation to the United Nations, she refused to introduce the NAACP petition in the United Nations out of concern that it would harm the international reputation of the United States. According to Du Bois, the American delegation had ‘refused to bring the curtailment of our civil rights to the attention of the General Assembly [and] refused willingly to allow any other nation to bring this matter up. If any should, Mr. [sic] Roosevelt has declared that she would probably resign from the United Nations delegation.’ The Soviet Union, however, proposed that the NAACP’s charges be investigated. On December 4, 1947, the United Nations Commission on Human Rights rejected that proposal, and the United Nations took no action on the petition.” (Dudziak 2000:45)

This was neither the first nor the last appeal of the American Negro for redress from the international community, a similar effort would follow suit in 1951 in the famous ‘We Charge Genocide’ petition in which 153 racially motivated killings were documented and presented to the General Assembly using

the language of the holocaust to relate the gravity of the incremental Black genocide, only to have the issue ignored yet again. The oppression of the American Negro was rendered nothing more than an embarrassment for the United States' liberal persona for antagonists of the West to poke at for public relations points.

The larger point I am making here is that there is a limit for how many times civil society can tell the Negro that they are a mongrel race, outside of such considerations such as human rights, before we should listen. Yet in 2014 we see Chicago youth activists breathing life into bringing the plight of Black people to the forefront of international affairs with the death of Dominique Franklin at the hands of a Chicago Policeman. Starting an organization of the same name as the petition, a delegation of inner city youth, in tandem with other organizations, was sent to Geneva, Switzerland to make their case at the 53rd UN Committee Against Torture, culminating in the following recommendations:

- *“Ensure that all instances of police brutality and excessive use of force by law enforcement officers are investigated promptly, effectively and impartially by an independent mechanism with no institutional or hierarchical connection between the investigators and the alleged perpetrators*

- *Prosecute persons suspected of torture or ill treatment and, if found guilty, ensure that they are punished in accordance with the gravity of their acts.*
- *Provide effective remedies and rehabilitation to the victims.*
- *Provide redress for CPD torture survivors by supporting the passage of the Ordinance entitled Reparations for the Chicago Police Torture Survivors. Regarding Taser use by police, UNCAT also expresses concern “about numerous, consistent reports that police have used electrical discharge weapons against unarmed individuals,” including “Dominique [Damo] Franklin Jr. in Sauk Village, Illinois.”” (We Charge Genocide 2014)*

There are a plethora of similar examples of families of victims of modern lynchings appealing to the UN and receiving similar recommendations with out a change of the material reality. In the cases of the executions of Michael Brown, Eric Garner, and the like has received obligatory statements of sympathy, but as was the case with Rekia Boyd, no action. This is of course not to say they *should* take actions, considering the



(sashii 2015)

temperamental disposition with its other unpopular platforms such as its Israel support and the war on Iraq, the US has been ready to withdraw its support from the UN on many occasions. The option of sanctioning or organizing armed intervention in the US is a daunting prospect to say the least, yet the charade remains! The illusion continues to drain the energy from Black community organizers that if they just get enough publicity, if

they appeal to a high enough power, the promises of civil society will prevail. However faced with a history of the flagrant and continuous commitment to disregard Black life, we must take the Afro-pessimistic position seriously that these displays of Anti-Blackness are not some abhorrent, outlier of history but rather an integral and common part of history of the world as we know it. A commission to make the case for Black life sent to an organization like the UN, whose history is saturated in making sure white people never had to face the colonial, anti-Black logics that were the concentration camps, is doomed to fail when placed in the context of history. Thus any discourse that brings the level of analysis on race to the interpersonal level is another iteration of Rankinology that allows the necropolitical projects go under examined / theorized. With this frame of reference roughly established, I turn my analysis to the contemporary discourses on post-Black racial appendages. What are diasporic intellectuals doing with this history? How are they trying to theorize the progeny of the Boogeyman?

stage 4 - "All Ah We is Not one": on contemporary Hybridity in the caribbean

The project of the elevation of the Mulatto subject at the expense of the Black has long withstanding historical roots. Within the African Diaspora one can observe how especially in Caribbean contexts 'the most ethnically diverse region in the world', a similar narrative played out of those who would identify as anything but Black. This is not to focus on regulating how people identify themselves, but rather to highlight the underlying significance of yet another iteration of a refusal to acknowledge the existential crisis Black folk present to the world. When a doctor diagnoses an illness like pneumonia, through symptoms likes coughing and a fever, the appropriate reaction is not to focus on curing the symptoms any more than is necessary to understand the disease. Similarly, I will survey some critical hybridity theorists to demonstrate the ways Afro-diasporic people are being compelled to invest in a world predicated on their demise. If the Negro is incompatible with the white world, then you either have to change the Negro, and compel them to be something else or change the world. As we will later see, this is a false choice. Black people can no more choose their place in the racial hierarchy than when they were first relegated to be the wretched of the earth. The illusion of choice remains in our mind, as a select few are chosen to exert mobility

through racial oppression. As the Antilles is predominantly made of exogenous populations forced from their native lands, the question of identity and nativity is definitive of the Antillean experience. In light of the systemic oppression of colonialism, the repression of cultural manifestation and the imposition of the psychosis that is white supremacy, how do Antilleans define themselves, especially after independence?

The term 'Creole' is widely believed to come from the Portuguese term *crioulo*, which was used to describe a settler in a non-native setting. It would later be incorporated into Spanish as *criollo* and then into French as *créole* (Harper n.d.) used to describe a sort of transplanted nativity, the European who has incorporated an aspect of the exotic setting they found themselves in. These settings in the 17th century onward were the frontiers of their respective empires, the arms and legs of the aristocracy who sent them to cultivate the raw resources to fuel European societies. As colonial domination spanned the centuries the concept of creole changed to describe the increasingly obfuscated relationships between colonizer and colonized, distinguishing between the purer elites of Europe who did not have to soil themselves doing the frontier work of empire, and those of varying lower socio-economic means who made their fortunes overseeing the exploitation of various indigenous populations. In this divide we see an early conception of the creole as those who are part civilized, and part savage. Consider the narrative of the downtrodden British colonists in America who would later refuse their

second-class positioning and stage their bourgeois revolution against the European aristocracy that looked down upon them. This story has an overbearing similarity to that of the Australian penal colony, whose constituents would fight on the basis that they are just as white and civilized as any European, as with the Dutch Boers settlers of South Africa when confronted with competing British forces. The figure of the creole (and its respective cultural equivalents) has historically been the nativizing narrative for European settlers who sought to cement their claim on foreign soil.

As colonial nationalities coagulated, the figure of the hybrid was relegated to a position of ethno-racial import, as opposed to socio-economic. We see for example the hundreds of categorizations of a mulatto in French controlled San Domingo in the 18th century. Later on in the early 19th century, creole becomes a term to refer to African exogenous populations predominantly in the Caribbean, distinguishing the non-Black populations from the nativized Blacks. A prominent author born in the Caribbean, Jean Rhys, personally struggled with this tension, and her story can be seen as exemplary of 20th century deployment of the creole to distinguish Black bodies instead of white ones. Rhys is most famous for her contribution to the Caribbean tradition of rewriting the European literary canon to include Antillean subjectivities. In *Wide Sargasso Sea*, she breathes life into the shadowy figure of the oft forgotten Bertha from *Jane Eyre*, detailing her life before her marriage with Rochester in

Jamaica. The protagonist, similar to Rhys herself, struggles with an increasingly antiquated white creole identity, feeling isolated and vulnerable amidst the growing tides of decolonization. Rhys was born in 1890, in Dominica, to a family who owned the Geneva plantation that she would later administer after her father's death until it was burned to the ground in 1937. "Rhys identified with the Black community in her childhood, and indeed throughout her life, although she came to realise that her world could never align itself with that of her nursemaid, and other Black mentors. She envied the Black community its vitality and often contrasts the sterility of the white world with the richness and splendour of Black life." (Honeychurch 2004) Rhys was thoroughly rejected by the Black population of Dominica during her youth, leading her to wrestle with whether white creoles have a place in the emerging Antillean postcolonial narratives of identity. In *Wide Sargasso Sea*, Bertha is confronted by this cultural identity crisis when her house is burned down and her former Black servant girl throws a rock to her face. The shock and awe of the colonial descendent toward the anti colonial rage of the Antillean Negro shakes both Rhys and her protagonist to the core, leading them both to drift toward Britain for the sake of their livelihoods. The struggle of Rhys to find an ethnic sense of belonging as an off-white person shows up throughout Bertha's narrative and in the works of many of Antillean authors. Yet, again it is the fundamental material reality that Rhys comes from a background of plantation wealth, which is well known to

be at the expense of Dominica’s Black population. The irony of expecting camaraderie with one’s former victims is one that saturates the oxymoron of the figure of the ‘white creole’.

Creole has evolved from an understanding of Europeans sullied by the work of maintaining plantations, to a term that distinguishes enlightened Afrocentrists in the Caribbean. In the Mid 20th century, Fanon writes on how the proximity to whiteness elevates the Antillean from the African, additionally showing how the creole is a figure striving for elevation within the racial caste system instead of challenging it. Fanon writes: “I have known, and I still know, Antilles Negroes who are annoyed when they are suspected of being Senegalese. This is because the Antilles Negro is more ‘civilized’ than the African, that is, he is closer to the white man; and this difference prevails not only in back streets and on boulevards but also in public service and the army.” (1967:15) This was a widely believed after WWII that the Antillean was a redeemable, docile creature compared to the west African who was “more savage” due to their distance from the white man. To close this distance, those in a Francophone Caribbean setting such as Guadalupe or Martinique for example, stressed cultural capital like ‘proper’ pronunciation of French, using institutions like public education on the islands to forbid youth from speaking the local creole language. This alienation is also supported in what roles each group of

Afrocentrists played in fighting for the French during WWII. In his reflection on how his contingent had to clear out a machine gun nest, Fanon notes "The Senegalese were ordered to attack three times, and each time they were forced back. Then one of them wanted to know why the *toubabs* (European natives, but in this case Negropean would be more accurate) did not go into action... yet many Antilles Negroes see nothing to upset them in such European identification; on the contrary, they find it altogether normal. That would be all we need, to be taken for niggers! The Europeans despise the Senegalese, and the Antilles Negro rules the Black roost as its unchallenged master". (1967:15) The metric of the civility of a Black person was measured in how well they could imitate whiteness. This is a key understanding because the Antillean never achieves whiteness, as they still serve to fight in a war that had no direct bearing on them, and upheld neo-colonial administrations that imposed insurmountable debt upon many island nations. They still experience the existential crisis Fanon later writes about as they become increasingly marginalized from their own people, with their disdain for Pidgin French, and other remnants of an African personality. In tandem with the inevitable object hood faced by even the most decorated Negroes when immersed in the European metropolises, the imitation of whiteness never has surpassed just that. In this

manner Fanon urges Black people of the Caribbean to consider the psychological damage incurred when Blacks done these white masks.

Yet the illusion of mobility remains as the ongoing project so solidify an authentic Caribbean culture continues. In many ways the West African influence persists throughout the Caribbean, and one example of this cultural production within the Caribbean is Creole religions. With an analysis of the discourse surrounding Creole religions, one can see a similar trend of hybridity theory in minimizing its African origins; functioning to relegate the African

personality of Caribbean peoples as a artifact of an age long past.

Slaves who held onto as much of the Yoruba religious system as they could adapt to the context they were transplanted into, solidifying them into religious systems such as Obeah, Regla Lucumi / Santeria, Vodou, and others. In this manner, enslaved peoples adapted their



Cooper N.D

West African culture to their unique geo-political positioning. We see for example how in Cuba, under Spanish rule, Regla Lucumi blends Catholic dogma with Orisha spiritualism in order to provide a sense of community, guidance, and healing for communities actively being robbed of their culture. That process in particular reflects the flexibility in how slaves were allowed to observe Catholicism, and thus incorporate the Orishas (West African Gods) into their practice. Yet, the drive to carve an original identity always has its tensions, in figuring out when do West African slaves and their descendants in Jamaica, for example, become Jamaicans? How does one make an authentic and sovereign identity in the wake of the psycho-cultural poison disseminated by the colonialists?

Creolization has arisen as an response to the struggle to manufacture an authentic identity, which can coagulate the uprooted Afrocentric communities. Despite it being a term used originally to distinguish settlers from slaves / natives, it later has become a gesture toward the elastic notions of hybridity in the Caribbean, in racialized manners as well as others. The Antilles became defined by the many ways in which different, usually oppositional, identities mix. From the rise of the mulatto elite and collaborators, to the tensions between exogenous groups descended from either slaves or indentured servants, to the 'syncretism' of West African derived religions with Christianity; this is a definitive theme throughout the

region. These distinct developments all point to the trend of hybridity theories in the context of white supremacy becoming a project to distance Afrocentrists from the Blackness of their material reality, further obscuring any hope of racial abolition. This trend is patently visible not just in these historical developments, but in the academic scholarship that describes them.

The shift from an Afro-centric to an Afro-complacent narrative is most visible with how Creole religions are considered in contemporary scholarship, which lauds the syncretic framework. This is a model that tells the history and practice of Creole religions, and their adaptations to colonial religions as a quirky accident that befuddled yet tenacious slaves stumbled upon. In discussing multiculturalism and Syncretism, Andres Perez y Mena says this:

Syncretism is a model of analysis that denies the enslaved a consciousness of their predicament in the New World. Yet, there is a distinct history to the use of the syncretic model of analysis of African religions in the New World. This religious syncretic formula continues as we go into the twenty-first century, and it remains the sterile tool used by Eurocentrists for the analysis of Afro-Latin religiosity. (Perez Y Mena 1998:15)

Perez Y Mena uses multiculturalism as a tool to deconstruct the latent racism within old school iterations of syncretism, which posits that the mixing of Judeo-Christian and Yoruba type practices was an unconscious process spear headed solely by the penetrative logics of

settlers. Rather, he posits his more nuanced view that slaves in Spanish colonies, for example, actively drew parallels between Christian icons and Yoruba Orishas in order to maintain as much of their pre-enslaved identity as possible while resisting the colonial project on many other fronts. (1998:20) The essential difference being, did the slaves adopt the mixture of beliefs to manipulate the perceptions of the overseers or was this symbolism forced upon them. He goes on to say "Some among the Cuban intelligentsia hold to a syncretic paradigm which views the Africans as unconscious of their predicament and the Spanish State as capable of manipulating their 'naïveté' (1998:24). We can take it the step further from this analysis if we change our historical scope, and can then extrapolate the consequences of doing so to larger themes of cultural narrative in the Caribbean. The Negrophobic conception of the African as a simple brute who was not self-aware saturates syncretic discourse, beginning the narrative of a dynamic, self-conscious Antillean with conceptions of a multicultural Caribbean. With the proposed shift in the conception of Creole religions, I posit that multiracialism cannot account for the historic power differentials between competing ethnic groups. The Creolized narrative of 'E Pluribus Unum' does not center Blackness and the reclamation of that which is African derived. Thus the celebration of the enlightened hybrid subject is in theory and

practice moving Antilleans away from the work of valuing Blackness, and thus fundamentally challenging conceptions of race.

Yet despite the best efforts of many radical Black intellectuals of yore, the Caribbean has become a melting pot, in which many Black people have been tricked into thinking Social death can be transcended on the interpersonal level if one adopts a more 'positive' attitude. In Trinidad & Tobago for example, a "microcosm of the world's peoples" (Wood & Ryan 1974:3) one can observe the modern consequences of multiracialism. Ivar Oxaal observes how mid 20th century Anthropologists were pleasantly surprised to find a steady decrease West African religiosities. They would write "Contrary to all our expectations...the remote community where we worked proved to be without Shango (The West African deity of virility) worship -- without, indeed, any more Africanisms than would be found in almost any rural community in the southern United States." (Oxaal 1982:10) The African roots of the Black population have become a far removed concept as Trinidad leads the Caribbean in efforts of industrialization and modernization. Oxaal attributes this transformation of identity to when colored peoples were given access to approved sites of power, such as the colonial administration, higher education, and the like. In the colonial / colonized minds, Blacks are the ones who are kept out of high society, if one can accrue enough social capital than they can transcend their race. One

of the major processes that took place was the "Creolization in which the diverse cultural strains of lower class Negroes tended to become mixed together to create a 'native' folk culture." (Oxaal 1982:44) In Trinidad, this process coincided with the coerced migration of East Indian indentured laborers who became an oppositional identity for this new Creole entity. The advent of multiracialism in Trinidad is but a symptom of the larger processes of industry and maintaining a European way of life in a former colony. Petroleum and natural gas deposits in Trinidad made it a valuable colony, especially during the 20th century Intra-European wars, and as a result of colonial exploitation of Trinidadian natural resources, the island is one of, if not the most, industrialized island in all of the Antilles. The feel good narrative of 'all ah we is one' is a recent iteration of the liberal colonial marketing strategy to politically soften populations who are being exploited, but marketed as 'the ones who made it' to their colonized peers in other nations. After beseeching the British crown for independence, the first prime minister of Trinidad & Tobago, Eric Williams proclaimed, "There can be no Mother Africa for those of African origin...The only mother we recognize is Trinidad and Tobago, and mother cannot discriminate between her children" (Puri 2004: 48)

The African roots of Afrocentrists are consistently obfuscated in the attempt to become something greater than a Negro. Shalini Puri critiques this underlying logic in her discussion of hybridities gone

wrong in her book *The Caribbean Postcolonial: Social Equality, Post-nationalism, and Cultural Hybridity*. One instance she describes is on her discussion of Gloria Anzaldua’s consideration of mestizo supremacy in her renowned work *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. Anzaldua describes the borderland as “a vague and undetermined place created by the residue of an unnatural boundary... Los atravesados live here: the squint-eyed, the perverse, the queer, the troublesome, the mongrel, the mulato, the half-breed, the half-dead...” going on to speak of being Mexican as a state of soul, rather than citizenship. (Puri 2004:23) Puri discusses this notion of hybridity as leaving many modes and purposes of border crossing unexamined, and truncating the possibility of transnational assemblages. Puri goes on to note that Anzaldua privileges the Indian heritage of her people, while for example not including Afro-Mexican people in her vision of a mestizo world. Jared Sexton takes this reading a step further when put in conversation with José Vasconcelos’ *La Raza Cosmica*. Sexton deliberately makes it clear not to conflate the visions of these authors, they both clearly write against the idea of purifying darker races toward an Aryan standard of America. Rather they conceive of a vision of mestizos inheriting the earth. Vasconcelos writes:

“The lower types of the species will be absorbed by the superior type. In this manner, for example, the black could be redeemed, and step-by-step by voluntary extinction, the uglier stocks will give way to the more handsome. Inferior races,

upon being educated, would become less prolific, and the better specimens would go on ascending a scale of ethnic improvement, whose maximum type is not precisely white, but that new race to which the white himself will have to aspire with the object of conquering the synthesis.” (Vasconcelos and Jaén 1997:32-3)

Here we see the dream of a voluntary genocide of the racial monoliths, both Black and white among others, as a favorable alternative to the colonial variety. One sees this logic recycled in claims that multiracial babies will end racism, and we ought but breed out the separation of races in order to stop white people from acting on their prejudices. These brands of caramel eugenics demonstrate the dangerous territory hybridity is if you are Black. Ella Shohat in “Notes on the ‘post-colonial’” acknowledges that:

“A celebration of syncretism and hybridity per se, if not articulated in conjunction with questions of hegemony and neo-colonial power relations, runs the risk of appearing to sanctify the fait accompli of colonial violence...As a descriptive catch-all term, hybridity per se fails to discriminate between the diverse modalities of hybridity, for example, forced assimilation, internalized self-rejection, political cooptation, social conformism, cultural mimicry, and creative transcendence.” (Shohat 1992:109-10)

Basically saying that an analysis that does not consider the past and continuous distributions of power is a mode analysis that is not capable of challenging the status quo, let alone liberate people. Yet Puri maintains that a critical and thoughtful hybridity is necessary, and believes that the real question has never been hybridity or not,

but rather which type of hybridity is worth theorizing? In this way, might not we look at the Afro-diasporic collective a type of hybrid? The many settled Afrocendents with common roots who all yet languish under various modes of anti-Blackness? Let us explore the possibility of the Black hybrid later on after a discussion of Multiracialism in the United States.

STAGE 5 - BLACK, WHITE, AND CONFUSED ALL OVER: MULTIRACIALISM IN THE UNITED STATES

Growing up as mixt in the United states can be confusing, for both mixt folk as well as concerned onlookers. Experiencing or partaking in any number of narratives about the trials and tribulations of mixt folk in America will clue you into themes around exotification and isolation that recur. After a long history of one drop rules, paper bag and pencil tests, mixt folk in the United states have struck out for their own categorization, refusing to be a portion of anything but instead become their own brand new categorization. Mixt activists forgo Black and white to instead become golden in an attempt to give a mocha-latte-colored middle finger to mono-racial populations and their marginalizing schemas. In the past 20 years or so there has been a reinvigorated fascination with breaking out of the old fashioned racial identity boxes into newer, more streamlined boxes of the 21st century. The population of self-identified multiracial people has actually declined in the United States judging by Census data since 2000, when it first became an option to identify as such. (Elam 2011:29) In lieu of a population boom, how else might we explain the explosion of literature and discussion trying to create a normative multiracial idea? Michele Elam attests to the explosion of products catered to the unique needs of mixt folk in the US from guides to raising mixed children, a 'Mixed-Race People History Month',

and even a damn ‘Bill of Rights for Racially Mixed People’. (Ortiz 2012) We see the effects having multiracial as a state sanctioned category, despite centuries of laws prohibiting miscegenation, in the increased attention towards marketing an acceptable mulatto.

Bill of Rights *for* *People of Mixed Heritage*

I HAVE THE RIGHT...
 Not to justify my existence in this world.
 Not to keep the races separate within me.
 Not to justify my ethnic legitimacy.
 Not to be responsible for people’s discomfort with
 my physical or ethnic ambiguity.

I HAVE THE RIGHT...
 To identify myself differently than strangers
 expect me to identify.
 To identify myself differently than how my parents
 identify me.
 To identify myself differently than my brothers and
 sisters.
 To identify myself differently in different
 situations.

I HAVE THE RIGHT...
 To create a vocabulary to communicate about
 being multiracial or multiethnic.
 To change my identity over my lifetime--and more
 than once.
 To have loyalties and identification with more
 than one group of people.
 To freely choose whom I befriend and love.

© Maria P. P. Root, PhD, 1993, 1994

Many have seized the chance to entrench the figure of the multiracial as a separate population from mono-racial, needing their own psychological treatments and brands of shampoo. (Elam 2014:35)

Most of the growing expertise on mixt folk reifies the ideas seen in the bill of rights above, centering the choice of the individuals above all. One would be hard pressed to see something as more American than this individualistic, a-cultural, ahistorical atomizing document (in the form of a Bill of Rights no less!). It is undeniable that there is a rush to fill in this identity niche in academia, activist circles, and product aisles. Consider the new Journal of Critical Mixed Race Studies (CMRS), founded in 2011, petitioning to form an association centered in DePaul University. Their stated goal is to “emphasize the mutability of race and the porosity of racial boundaries in order to critique processes of racialization and social stratification based on race”. (Criticalmixedracestudies.org 2015) Near the same time, before the 2010 census, the Association of Multiethnic Americans (AMA) waged an effort to get the right for mixt folk to mark one or more on the races on the census.

I’ve found this to be the premier example of what multiracial activism has looked like, the fight for representation and to have their exalted racial status recognized, especially by Black people. In describing the consequences of this box fetish, Elam describes an example of the toll this brand of activism can take on Black folk in stating, “[i]n 2000 a ‘community empowerment zone’ in a mostly Black neighborhood in Tacoma, Washington – targeted for economic improvement based on racial demographics– was threatened by the sudden increase in

those identifying more than one race for the census. Overnight, those who had been Black became mixed, and the empowerment zone faced potential dissolution.” (Elam 2011:38) In seeking to strike out against American racial categorization, they re/enforce the logic as if there ever was such a thing as racial purity in any race. Those behind the AMA effort are fighting for another socially constructed category, just as fraudulent as the originals, in order to solidify a new niche in various markets that will weaponize the progeny of Black folk to weaken racial solidarity. It has been estimated that somewhere around 80% of people of African descent in this country are racially mixed, mono-racialism has always been a lie.

In the quest for representation, to establish a new and respected identity in the land where one drop rules, one of the biggest problems facing mixt people today is the problem of being forced into a racial category that does not fully accommodate the fullness of their heritage. An example of this is Jayne Ifekwunigwe’s adaptation of Adrienne Rich’s notion of ‘compulsory heterosexuality’ into ‘compulsory Blackness’. Root, the author of the aforementioned bill of rights, argues that mixt people are “oppressed” by Black folk because ‘multiracial people experience a squeeze of oppression as people of color by people of color, mostly through racial coercion.” (aka the insistence that the mixt people in question are, in fact, Black). Here Black people are the oppressors, forcing the Black and white racial

schema of yore on a young, hip, Technicolor generation (for reasons unsaid). Black people are equated with hetero-patriarchal institutions, reimagined as a tyrannical and archaic class preventing mixt liberation just as much as the white dominant class. (Elam 2011:87) This is the true danger of multiracialism, after centuries of the exploitation of Black bio-power, the social death, their own damn children internalize and propagate this new age historical amnesia. In a desperate attempt to snatch at the illusion of a an alternative to social death, mixt folk give themselves into further developing a new age racial schema, further investing us all in this noxious social hierarchy. They flee from the chance to be ethical in an anti-Black world, and to return to Gordon's idea on being assertively Black as the mode of resistance.

It is because of this I write on this matter with such a heavy heart, and do no pre-occupy this discussion with weighing in on how mixt people should identify on an individual basis. When given the choice between working the fields or working within the house, we should hardly waste our time reprimanding those who choose the comforts of working within the house, distanced from the most terrible of the plantation system. We should however be cognizant to acknowledge that no lateral social movement of slaves on the plantation should be seen as liberatory, or even resisting the function of the plantation. I contemplate this as someone with a great

stake in this discussion as well, having been bedazzled by the idea of forgoing traditional formations of race in order to strike out and be a special snowflake all my own. At my high school, a Private White Institution in central Massachusetts, formations of depoliticized identity ran rampant. In our rush to perform the liberalism we had been inculcated with, my peers and I in the diversity club created all sorts of new races, genders, and sexualities in order to claim our own particular oppression that needed to be recognized and theorized without a basis on our material reality. It is a given that we were only taught white washed curricula that diminished the histories of slavery and colonialism, enabling our extra-curricular pursuit to find ourselves. I invoke this personal anecdote to transition to speak to the age of depoliticized identities. These harmless formations of identity focus on the individual interactions between people in lieu of a conversation on how larger structures manufacture marginalization. Thus we see the advent of privilege discourse, mass gender dysphoria, and the emergence of the 'golden' race, all of which de-emphasize a historical / cultural understanding of marginalized identities in favor of consciousness raising on the interpersonal level.

In addition to new markets that open up with new demographics, the age of accessorized oppression contributes to the reason why developing the American multiracial has received so much attention. In

this way, we see racial formations follow the path of the neutralization of gendered consciousness. Consider how feminist liberatory struggles of yore for better economic opportunity, reproductive justice, and the dismantling of rape culture, to name a few, have been shelved in order to protect and ensure the right for males to be recognized as women. Due to the earlier acceptance into the mainstream venues of discourse, the co-optation of feminism offers us a future insight for the potential fate of conversations around Black liberation if multiracial theory has its way. Compare the agents of atomization for Feminism, those of the Liberal feminist persuasion, with those Mixt activists. We see the individualization of both movements advocated for by a select, often privileged, subsection of the socially conscious demographic in question who can be marketed to a mainstream audience easier than the rest. Not dissimilar from the methodology behind CIA back coup-de-tats around the world, the corporate subsidization of this minority fills in for popular support or grounded theory, spurring on conflicts and divisions in a population that might have been a threat to the dominant hegemony. The Hilary Clintons who can warmonger, and plunder foreign markets just as good as any man, who at the same time contribute to the vulnerability of vast populations non-white women around the world and still remains a feminist icon. The effectiveness of this counter revolutionary tactic lies in that the respective movement must halt in order to play

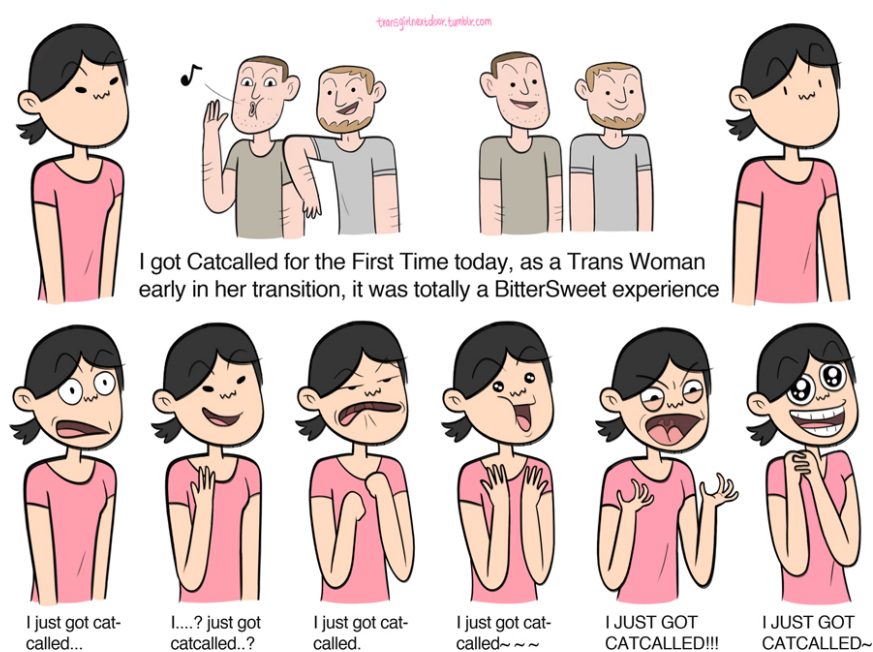
out its existential identity crisis, or else risk allowing the toxins to canonize themselves as part of the respective movement. I would not fault the minority groups used as a front for being used in the course of hegemonic upkeep, the deluded mixt folk, Al-Qaeda, The Palestinian authority, or the disciples of Laverne Cox, as that would detract from the structural focus I diligently strive to maintain. In considering for example of Genderism has brought conversations around liberatory feminism to a halt, I posit that unless an intervention is made against the current trajectory of multiracialism, Black social consciousness will be forced to center the advancement of the multiracial, building onto and maintaining their own subjugation.

The dispute between Radical feminists and Genderists publicly emerged in the 1970's, during the heyday of what's commonly known as the second wave. RadFems, as they will hence be known have advocated that there is a need to center bio-political conceptions of sex in their activism. Meaning that the categorizations of woman / female is a category that condemns over half the population to a number of oppressive constraints, and justice must be pursued on that axis for gender abolition to be realized. Summed up by Robin Morgan at a West Coast lesbian conference in 1973:

"I will not call a male 'she'; thirty-two years of suffering in this androcentric society, and of surviving, have earned me the title of

‘woman’; one walk down the street by a male transvestite, five minutes of his being hassled (which he may enjoy), and then he dares, he *dares* to think he understands our pain? No, in our mothers’ names and in our own we must not call him sister” (Goldberg 2014)

The Genderist believes that gender is an internally derived identity, which is immutable as long as the individual believes in it. I will not go through lengths to recreate the debate through history, only say that at this point the chief target of Genderists are RadFems who refuse to acknowledge trans women as women. RadFems theorize this drive for males to be considered as women as an autogynephilic drive coupled with male entitlement under patriarchy. Ray Blanchard describes autogynephilia as an erotic compulsion rather than a gender identity. “The core is, it’s really exciting for guys to imagine themselves with...females breasts and a vulva” (Goldberg 2014). RadFems



are targeted as enforcing the gender binary because they see organize based on the material reality under patriarchy, and threatened with violence by males regularly for exhibiting their 'trans phobia'. I employ quotes when deploying that term only because I strongly believe these beliefs do not stem from a fear of those who are trans but rather a fear of those who are male. As a result of the successful deployment of anti-oppression rhetoric that enjoys a widespread, mainstream support never achieved by the likes of anti-Porn, pro Third world solidarity, or anti-sex work organizers, is the routine shutdown of RadFems conferences and gatherings. Looking at a college like Vassar, we can see how effectively the discourse of Genderists have deployed their own theoretical framework of cis-sexism and are centering liberal feminist discourse on those who were born as male. Citing the statistics of the rampant murder of Trans women in the US, the call remains to normalize and accept Trans women in all women identified spaces. However due to the growing anti-intellectualism that comes with atomized politics, further scrutiny is usually not allowed in these discussions. For example, what is the significance of the fact that in 2012, over half of the deaths of Trans women were Black, even though Black people represent near 14% of the population? (Giovanniello 2013) Why are the Black Trans women and Black (cis) men the most disproportionately vulnerable populations to murder? What could be the connection in this demographic that is linked by the real

and ever present threats to their lives? While these questions and opportunities to organize collect dust, contemporary Genderism enshrines the age-old tradition of males threatening females with violence, while at the same time convincing young men and women that they are advancing the cause of feminism. We are at the precipice where (cis) women are being increasingly obsolete in the feminist movement.

A similar transition is occurring in multiracialist discourse in the United States with the articulation of mono-racial privilege, compulsory Blackness, and ethnic rape. (Elam 2004:34) When one is not pressured to ground their analysis in larger histories, and given a large enough platform, some crazy shit can happen. The theoretical weapons to turn Black people into racial oppressors have been created, and it is up to disenchanted Black folk to intervene. Consider the stakes of Genderism as discussed earlier. For a white trans woman, the risks of violence are the lowest, and are most often self-inflicted, thus organizing prioritizes demands to be accepted into women's affinity spaces, general recognition, and greater access to transitioning healthcare. The logic of the mixt up activist and the Genderist converge with the question of the trans-ethnic. Carlos Flores challenges his readers to think about if they could take a Scandinavian seriously, using the same individualistic sense of identity politics, if they were to say they identify with the Sub-

Saharan African experience, and demand to be recognized as such, going through the surgical motions to make their external appearance reflect this. As of now, trans-ethnicity is not in vogue and is dismissed right away as some trifling misunderstanding of the political reality of race. But can you dismiss it without dismissing the logic of Genderism? (Flores 2015) When faced with the oncoming choice in liberal feminist circles of either accepting both, or rejecting both applications of this logic, I suspect the former will occur aided by the ground broken by multiracial discourse. Again I must stress this should not be seen as a critique of an individual's choices, but rather a serious consideration of what is at stake in these rifts created in social justice movements. There are multitudes of ways to explore and challenge oppressive schemas of yore without neglecting the reality of one's place in the America caste system. Elam presents the possibility of the multiracial Black in the post *Souls of Black Folk* era of Black consciousness. One that recognizes the heterogeneity of Blackness, and remain committed toward working toward Black liberation. Similar to the earlier consideration of a Hybrid Black, this type of "Blaxploration honors a hybridity that is 'in service to' and 'on behalf of' Black needs and ends" (Elam 2011:45) Similarly, some of the most cutting edge trans-critical critiques out in the cyber world come from transsexual feminists constantly questioning the pressure on the gender dysphoric to transition and demand inclusion on

spaces not meant for them. There is the potential critical hybrid constructs without neglecting the material reality, and on the other hand there is the potential for contemporary iterations of the mixt supremacist logic in *The Cosmic Race*. In organizing to advance the cause of marginalized identities, it is key to remember that while these social constructs are invented by the ruling class, their effects are tangible. The inclusion of new racial categories under white supremacy are meaningless, they will be accommodated and subjugated accordingly, and thus it is only through and abolition of race will mixt folk every find a place they truly belong.

STAGE 6 - A CONCLUDING MEDITATION ON "FUCK YOUR BREATH" AND OTHER LOST PASSAGES OF THE AMERICAN CONSTITUTION:

In his book *Privilege: The Making of an Adolescent Elite at St. Paul's School*, Shamus Khan goes through lengths to talk about how the new elite is being trained, as well as the characteristics that comprise their cultural curriculum. Khan studies students at one of the most prestigious private high schools in the United States for a year to understand the characters being cultivated there. He reflects on three major lessons instilled in the next generation of elite that will inform my analysis. The first is that hierarchies are natural and they can be treated like ladders, not ceilings. This means that students learn to emphasize hard work and talent when explaining their good fortune. "This framing is reinforced by a commitment to an open society—for only in such a society can these qualities explain one's success...learning to climb requires interacting with those above (and below) you in a very particular way: by creating intimacy *without acting like you are an equal*". (Khan 2011:5) (Emphasis mine) The second lesson is that students learn from experience. There is a shift from the logic of the old elite, in which who you are, is not as significant as what you've done. 'Privilege is not something you are born with; it is something you learn to develop and cultivate'. The final lesson is that privilege means being at ease, no matter what the

context. Students are taught to become culturally omnivorous, embracing the open society; they show a kind of radical egalitarianism in their tastes. Ironically, exclusivity in one's experience marks the losers in the hierarchical, open society. The limited (exclusive) knowledge, tastes, and dispositions mean they have not seized upon the fruits of our newly open world. Khan opens the main body of his work with a haunting revelation that I will replicate.

"Throughout the twentieth century, the battles against inequality were battles of access: could women, blacks and other excluded groups be integrated into the highest institutions and positions in our society? These battles were largely won. Yet the results have not been what we imagined. The promise of the open society was not just more access but more equality. The promises have proven to be a fiction. Twenty-first century America is increasingly open yet relentlessly unequal. Our next great American project is to find a way out of this paradox." (Khan 2011:21)

Having access to elite institutions like Vassar or the school Khan writes of has not stemmed the tide of the growing inequality that has come to characterize the United States. Openness and equality do not go hand in hand. In 1951 blacks made up about 0.8 percent of students in elite colleges, whereas today they make up about 8 percent of Ivy League students. The Columbia class of 2014 for example, is 13 percent black, proportional to the national black population. The same kind of trend can be seen with other races and with women outperforming men, creating a college gender gap in their favor. Access is being generated on unprecedented levels, yet so is economic inequality. For

example, from 1967 to 2007 the average US income increased about 25 percent. The income of the richest 5 percent increased about 68 percent on average. The top 1 percent saw their income increase by 323 percent, and the richest 0.1 percent received an increase of 492 percent to their earnings. The statistics go on. The ranks of the top economic tiers are being more diverse, and yet more distant from the general demos.

In this way, I contend that the multiracial is an exemplary figure among the new elite; the full bio/logical conclusion of integrationism in the United States, which shepherds the American Negro toward a willful genocide. As contemporary lynchings become ever more so the spectacle in vogue, Black people are confronted again with the decision to work toward destroying the world, or themselves. If there is one take-away from this endeavor, it is that central incompatibility. For to allow it to be obscured by the bread and circus of the state (and its allies) is to be resigned to a fate of confusion as unknowing slaves and do not have the tools to stave off social death, or even worse, to pine for it.

Considerations of access, and the redemption of the United States, let alone the Western world, must be put aside in favor of a more comprehensive solution that cuts against the operating logics of this country. This is not an easy consideration to weigh. I say this

as someone who knows full and well that I have a white heritage as well as a Black one. Yet to allow a fact like that to urge me toward identifying as mixt would be to disregard the disproportionate power amongst my kin. I am too aware that the side of my family tree that basks in shade is the side that has social death presupposed upon them. I have a responsibility to fight for Black liberation, shouldering the burden of the White anti-humanism that saturates this land, if I aspire to be ethical in an anti-Black world. Thus, to every mulatto assemblage, the consideration of being a multiracial person or a light skint Black person is a serious one. For of course we must recognize the amenities of having lighter skin, the immediate recognized proximity to whiteness, but in doing so we must consider the redeemability of the house Negro. The choice between a sweet illusion and a bitter reality decorates the walls within the plantation. Jermaine Cole meditates on this in a short film titled "G.O.M.D.". As a fellow lightskint Black man, he depicts himself as a slave working within the respective master's house, supervising the work for the rest of the house slaves. While faced with the prospect of a White woman lover, and a comfortable work life in the shade, he laments his alienation from his own people. When an opportunity to secure the keys to the estate comes upon him, he is inspired to secure arms for his people and lead them to revolt. He uses his extensive knowledge of the White family to his advantage, due to their

perception of him as harmless. As a result of his betrayal of the White folk, they succeed and steal off into the night. This figure of the light skint is the converse of the multiracial, as they are secure in their understanding of the operative logic of racism, whereas the multiracial only obfuscates and thus safeguards it.

REFERENCES

Adebajo, Adekeye. 2010. *The Curse Of Berlin*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Ajayi, J.F. Ade. 1989. *UNESCO General History Of Africa, Vol. VI*. 1st ed. University of California Press.

Anon. 1965. 'Black Orpheus'. *The Massachusetts Review* 6(1):13-52.

Baptist, Edward E. 2014. *The Half Has Never Been Told*. Philadelphia: Perseus Book Group.

Cooper, Laurie. N.D. *Face Reality (Male)*. Retrieved April 6, 2015 (<http://www.blackartdepot.com/collections/artist-laurie-cooper-art-gallery/products/face-reality-male-by-laurie-cooper?variant=417317045>).

Criticalmixedracestudies.org,. 2015. 'Critical Mixed Race Studies'. Retrieved March 14, 2015 (<http://criticalmixedracestudies.org/>).

D'agostino, R., and D. Pino. 2015. 'CAPTURE OF SLAVES / Slave Coffle, Western Sudan, 1879 81.Jpg'. *Negroartist.com*. Retrieved April 8, 2015 (http://www.negroartist.com/Capture%20of%20Slaves/pages/Slave%20Coffle,%20Western%20Sudan,%201879%2081_jpg.htm).

Douglass, Frederick. 1855. *My Bondage And My Freedom*. 1st ed. New York: Auburn: Miller, Orton & Mulligan Press. Retrieved March 11, 2015 (<https://ia600507.us.archive.org/21/items/mybondagemyfree00doug/mybondagemyfree00doug.pdf>).

Dudziak, Mary L. 2000. *Cold War Civil Rights*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

Elam, Michele. 2011. *The Souls Of Mixed Folk*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press.

Fanon, Frantz. 1952. *Black Skin, White Masks*. New York: Grove Press.

Flores, Carlos D. 2015. 'The Absurdity Of Transgenderism'. *Public Discourse*. Retrieved April 6, 2015 (<http://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2015/02/14305/>).

Giovanniello, Sarah. 2013. 'NCAVP Report: 2012 Hate Violence Disproportionately Target Transgender Women Of Color'. *GLAAD*. Retrieved March 15, 2015 (<http://www.glaad.org/blog/ncavp-report-2012-hate-violence-disproportionately-target-transgender-women-color>).

Goldberg, Michelle. 2014. 'What Is A Woman?'. *The New Yorker*. Retrieved February 15, 2015 (<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/08/04/woman-2>).

H, Winston. 2014. "*Black People Been Stereotyped As Lazy Ever Since We Stopped Working For Free*". Retrieved March 10, 2015 (<https://twitter.com/TuckOnTheRise/status/458005380560613376>).

Harney, Stefano, and Fred Moten. 2013. *The Undercommons*. Wivenhoe [u.a.]: Minor Compositions.

Harper, Douglas. n.d. "'Creole'". *Online Etymology Dictionary*. Retrieved March 22, 2015 (<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/creole>).

Hartman, Saidiya V. 1997. *Scenes Of Subjection*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Honeychurch, Lennox. 2004. 'Jean Rhys Biography'. *University of the West Indies*. Retrieved March 22, 2015 (<http://www.open.uwi.edu/sites/default/files/bnccde/dominica/centre/Jean%20Rhys%20Bio.htm>).

James, C. L. R, Christian Høgsbjerg, and Laurent Dubois. 2013. *Toussaint Louverture*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

James, Wesley. 2014. *Scars And Stripes*. Retrieved March 9, 2015 (<http://caffeinesbian.tumblr.com/post/104613504890/wildwesjames-wildwesjames-today-i-am>).

Khan, Shamus Rahman. 2011. *Privilege*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

Louis-Jacques, Lyonette. 2012. 'Black History At The United Nations'. *News.lib.uchicago.edu*. Retrieved April 5, 2015 (<http://news.lib.uchicago.edu/blog/2012/02/26/black-history-at-the-united-nations/>).

Marshall, Stephen H. 2012. 'The Political Life Of Fungibility'. *Theory & Event* 15(3). Retrieved February 19, 2015 (http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/theory_and_event/v015/15.3.marshall.html).

Martin, Tony. 1976. *Race First*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press.

Mbembe, A. 2003. 'Necropolitics'. *Public Culture* 15(1):11-40.

Opondo, Samson Okoth, and Michael J Shapiro. 2012. *The New Violent Cartography*. Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

Ortiz, Adam. 2012. 'Revisiting Dr. Maria Root'S Bill Of Rights For People Of Mixed Heritage'. *Multiracial Network Blog*. Retrieved February 14, 2015 (<https://multiracialnetwork.wordpress.com/2012/09/10/revisiting-roots-bill-of-rights/>).

Oxaal, Ivar. 1982. *Black Intellectuals And The Dilemmas Of Race And Class In Trinidad*. Cambridge, Mass.: Schenkman Pub. Co.

Puri, Shalini. 2004. *The Caribbean Postcolonial*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Rogers, Melvin L. 2014. 'Introduction: Disposable Lives'. *Theory & Event* 17(3).

Retrieved February 18, 2015
(https://muse.jhu.edu/journals/theory_and_event/v017/17.3S.rogers.html).

Sashii, Ms. 2015. Retrieved May 3, 2015 (<https://instagram.com/p/2OvsP7odPj/>).

Sexton, J. 2010. 'People-Of-Color-Blindness: Notes On The Afterlife Of Slavery'. *Social Text* 28(2 103):31-56.

Sexton, Jared. 2008. *Amalgamation Schemes*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Shohat, Ella. 1992. 'Notes On The "Post-Colonial"'. *Social Text* (31/32):99.

Silva, Mista. 2015. Retrieved April 31, 2015
(<https://twitter.com/MistaF2DSilva/status/593384278634946562>).

Spillers, Hortense J. 1987. 'Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe: An American Grammar Book'. *Diacritics* 17(2):64 - 81.

Transgirl Next Door,. 2014. *Catcalls*. Retrieved March 15, 2015
(<http://transgirlnextdoor.tumblr.com/post/95662262474>).

Twitter user imfabulous13,. 2014. *According To Darren Wilson This Is What Happened. No Reason Not To Believe Him..* Retrieved March 9, 2015

(http://According to Darren Wilson this is what happened. No reason not to believe him.).

Vasconcelos, José, and Didier Tisdell Jaén. 1997. *The Cosmic Race*. Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Wells-Barnett, Ida B. 1969. *On Lynchings*. New York: Arno Press.

West, Cornel. 2015. 'The New Cultural Politics Of Difference'. in *Out There: Marginalization and Contemporary Cultures.*, Russel Ferguson, Martha Gever, Trinh T. Minh-ha and Cornel West ed. by . Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.

Wilderson III, Frank B. 2014. "'We're Trying To Destroy The World': Anti-Blacness & Police Violence After Ferguson'.

Williams, Robert F. 1998. *Negroes With Guns*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press.

Wood, Donald, and Selwyn D. Ryan. 1974. 'Race And Nationalism In Trinidad And Tobago: A Study Of Decolonization In A Multiracial Society'. *International Journal* 29(3):508.

Worger, William H, Nancy L Clark, and Edward A Alpers. 2010. *Africa And The West*. New York [etc.]: Oxford University Press.

y Mena, Andres I. Perez. 1998. 'Cuban Santeria, Haitian Vodun, Puerto Rican Spiritualism: A Multiculturalist Inquiry Into Syncretism'. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 37(1):15.