# 2nc example

# a2: blackness is inescapable

**Our Black ops are far more nuanced than an argument about escaping identity -- rather it is that Blackness as a static ontological category must be resisted -- Wilderson's attempt to describe Black ontology as an abjection historically linked to slavery is a pessimism from which voting negative succeeds in escaping -- if their vision of Black Studies is an endless articulation of slavery, ours attends to the way that Blackness is always escaping from static framing of its past -- whether those framings come from within the black scholarship community or outside -- our position of privilege is not relevant to how THEY have chosen to characterize blackness -- their framing is not productive for any sort of emancipatory politics, which means if they win that Blackness is terminally screwed, any risk that escape is possible means you vote negative -- this is the only path towards abolition\*\***

**Moten '7** Fred, Professor of English and African American Studies, Duke University "black optimism/black operation", Chicago -- working text for "Black Op" Source: [PMLA](http://www.mlajournals.org/loi/pmla), Volume 123, Number 5, October 2008, pp. 1743–1747 (5)

http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=3&cad=rja&ved=0CDQQFjAC&url=http%3A%2F%2Flucian.uchicago.edu%2Fblogs%2Fpoliticalfeeling%2Ffiles%2F2007%2F12%2Fmoten-black-optimism.doc&ei=1fE2UO65KuG8yAHpiIHYCg&usg=AFQjCNE8N66fQjQ7TP0PkJ0eYZDI6cNLvA&sig2=BUrcwC5Cfz5Ero2I14PBsg

I am gonna do something called "Black Ops." In addition to the notion of a black operation **I am also interested in something I would like to call black optimism, something that will illuminate the convergence of the condition of possibility and the end of politics** (something james would think as "the future in the present," **something King would discuss under the rubric of the "fierce urgency of now" where fierce urgency denotes not only pain but also pleasure**--I'm talking about an exigency that, above all, inheres in and radiates from, The Music). Eventually, and it's too much to go into here, this will open up some ways to link up some questions emerging out of Leibniz and extended by Russell and Deleuze and my old teacher Ann Banfield that will allow me to consider some interplay between blackness and the baroque and will, therefore, link up to the essay on Glenn Gould, Beethoven and filmic practice. Ultimately, there are some things I want to say about Gould and Cecil Taylor that will, I hope, allow an articulation of something, in relation each to the other, regarding the political history of the present. Obviously, what I'm contemplating will either be one hundred pages or ten very dense and poetic ones. Some aphorisms, some variations or, perhaps more precisely, some rhythmic figures, some heads invoking arrangement, as it were, or anarrangement. Black ops. Back Sites. What is it that now one has to forge a paleonymic (r)elation to black, to **blackness? The word persists, now, under erasure or eclipse, ceded to the state of law/exception. The word is begrudged, grungy, dingy, encased in a low tinge, always understood as being in need of a highlight it already has or that chromatic saturation that it already is. Resistance and (the auto-poetics of) organization (flight + inhabitation). optimism/monad/baroque/blackness Nomad and monad.** N gets a letter from M. **What’s the relationship between saying, “utopia is submerged in or in the interstices or on the outskirts of the present” and saying, “this is the best of all possible worlds” (a Leibnizian optimism) and saying, “the history of abolitionism is not the history of a set of wholly rhetorical exhortations, whether rational or ecstatic, but is, rather, the history of an infinite set or line of quotidian “escape acts”** (as Daphne Brooks might say) which operate at the level of rhetoric as well as the aesthetic and which, therefore, might include but need not be reduced to this or that particular instance of abolitionist rhetoric?” Laid back, spread out, stretched out, laid out. **Part of what’s necessary is the realization of an analytic that moves through the opposition of voluntary secrecy and forced exposure. What’s needed is some way to understand how the underground operates out in the open and, perhaps deeper still, as the open in something like the ways Agamben/Rilke/Santner have tried to approach. What’s the relation between the border/limit and the open? Between blackness and the limit/edge? Between a quite specific and materially redoubled finitude or being-limited and the open? What a certain discourse on the relation between blackness and death seems to try to get to—in the best (which is to say least tragically neurotic) instances of that discourse—lies, at least, in vicinity of this question.** Leibniz/Russell/Deleuze/Banfield: The monad and the thing. The blues as black op (undercover, off the books, in the service of resistance or rearguard, assassination or non-violent refusal while at the same time being not just violently commodified but, more precisely and viciously, of the commodity or, at least, of her trace): In honor of Chicago and of a vast range of sweet homes: between Robert Johnson and Leo Smith, Leland Mississippi, right between Greenville and Indianola, right on 61 Highway (the monad is nomadic, at least in her head). On the relation between blackness and the baroque, an irregular pearl, following from Deleuze’s thought regarding the relation between baroque and minimalism. Seeking out the state is all bound up with frowning on things. **Seeking out the state is not the same thing as looking after what does not escape. The fugitive escapes but she does not escape. Escape is not accomplished but is a thing(liness) we love. Seeking out the state is a kind of piety.** I worked in prisons. So did I. I talk with the spirits. I seek out the state. Puritanism hurtles towards secularism. An all too verifiable past, lives crowded with incident, smothered by precedent. One has a choice to face up to not having a choice. There is no unheard appeal. Poetry will have never been obscene having been a haven. Holding fast is not the opposite of running away, is not in between. The dismal swamp is a jam, an open waterway. Why seek out the state? Comfort under the state’s protection, which is a kind of brutality. **We appeal to the future we imagine. We imagine what we are. Blackness as appeal, as escape. We are always also walking in another world. My archive is a dehiscence at the heart of the archive and on its edge—a disorder, an appeal. My political desire scratches discontent**. On the very idea of the passage—what do Deleuze and Krauss mean by it? Where does it come from? From a long time ago, via Uncle Toliver and Equiano, working out the notion of ensemble, I try to speak of an “improvisatory whole” in relation to the barest beginnings of a more critically aware understanding of “passage”: what is the relation between passage in this context and those passages of sculpture of which Krauss and Deleuze speak? Deleuze invokes Tony Smith; Krauss is more inclined towards David Smith. Deleuze is specific in his invocation of T. Smith as a kind of precursor to his own extension of the monadology. He invokes those same passages in Smith that Fried derides. The improvisatory whole, the monad, the icon, the thing. Jazz, oratorio and baroque. Blackness and the baroque. What is exposure? What is an aesthetics of exposure? The bright side is the dark side, the black hand side, the west side, the south side, where they be talking about in the evening when the sun go down as if it has not nothing but something else, something other, to do with the *Abendland*. To look with love at things, to look as if you so broke, so baroque, that you can’t pay attention.

\*\* **abolition of anti-blackness**

**We have to vacate the here and now for then and there- this thought experiment allows us to reimagine identity and opression structures**

**Muñoz** prof/chair of performance studies @ NYU **2k9** (José Esteban, Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity)

Conclusion *“Take Ecstasy with Me”* **WE MUST** **VACATE the here and now for a then and there**. Individual transports are insufficient. We need to engage in a collective temporal distortion. We need to step out of the rigid conceptualization that is a straight present. In this book I have argued that queerness is not yet here; thus, we must always be future bound in our desires and designs. The future is a spatial and temporal destination. It is also another place, if we believe Heidegger, who argued that the temporal is prior to the spatial. What we need to know is that queerness is not yet here but it approaches like a crashing wave of potentiality. And we must give in to its propulsion, its status as a destination. Willingly we let ourselves feel queerness’s pull, knowing it as something else that we can feel, that we must feel. **We must take ecstasy**. The title of this conclusion is lifted from indie pop stars the Magnetic Fields. Sung by the wonderfully languid Stephen Merritt, the band’s leader, the song and its titular request could certainly be heard as a call to submit to pleasures both pharmaceutical and carnal. And let us hope that they certainly mean at least both those things. But when I listen to this song I hear something else, or more nearly, I feel something else. A wave of lush emotions washes over me, and other meanings for the word *ecstasy* are keyed. The gender-neutral song’s address resonates queerly and performs a certain kind of longing for a something else. Might it be a call for a certain kind of transcendence? Or is it in fact something more? The Magnetic Fields are asking us to perform a certain “stepping out” with them. That “stepping out” would hopefully include a night on the town, but it could and maybe should be something more. Going back through religion and philosophy we might think of a stepping out of time and place, leaving the here and now of straight time for a then and a there that might be queer futurity Saint Theresa’s ecstasy, most memorably signaled in Lorenzo Bernini’s marble sculpture, has served as the visual sign of ecstasy for many 185 186 Conclusion Christians. The affective transport chiseled in her face connotes a kind of rapture that has enthralled countless spectators. It represents a leaving of self for something larger in the form of divinity. Plotinus described this form of ecstasy as God’s help to reach God and possess him. In Plotinus, God reaches man beyond all reason and gives him a kind of happiness that is ecstasy.’ In seminar XX, Lacan looks to Bernini’s sculpture as the most compelling example of what he calls the Other or feminine jouissance. 2 Ecstasy and jouissance thus both represent an individualistic move outside of the self. These usages resonates with the life of the term *ecstasy* in the history of philosophy. *Ekstasis,* in the ancient Greek *(exstare* in the Latin), means “to stand” or “to be out outside of oneself;’ *ex* meaning “out” and *stasis* meaning “stand” Generally the term has meant a mode of contemplation or consciousness that is not self-enclosed, particularly in regard to being conscious of the other. By the time we get to phenomenology especially Heidegger, we encounter a version of being outside of oneself in time. In *Being and Time* Heidegger reflects on the activity of timeliness and its relation to *ekstatisch.3* Knowing ecstasy is having a sense of timeliness’s motion, comprehending a temporal unity, which includes the past (having-been), the future (the not-yet), and the present (the making- present). This temporally calibrated idea of ecstasy contains the potential to help us encounter a queer temporality, a thing that is not the linearity that many of us have been calling straight time. While discussing the Montreal-based band Lesbians on Ecstasy, Halberstam points to their mobilization of queer temporality through their thought experiment of imagining lesbian history as if it were on ecstasy. Here they certainly mean the drug MDMA, but they also mean an ecstatic temporality As Halberstam explicates, their electronic covers of earnest lesbian anthems remake the past to reimagine a new temporality.4 The “stepping out” that the Magnetic Fields song’s title requests, this plaintive “Take Ecstasy with Me,” is a request to step out of the here and now of straight time. Let us briefly consider the song’s invitation, located in its lyrics. It begins with a having-been: “You used to slide down the carpeted stairs / Or down the banister / You stuttered like a Kaleidoscope / ‘Cause you knew too many words / You used to make ginger bread houses / We used to have taffy pulls.” After this having-been in the form of fecund romanticized childhood is rendered, we here the song’s chorus, which contains this invitation to step out of time with the speaker! singer: “Take ecstasy with me, baby / Take ecstasy with me’ When we first hear this invitation it seems like it is merely a beckoning to go back to this idealized having-been. But then the present (the making-present) is invoked in the song’s next few lines, lines that first seem to be about further describing the mythic past but on closer listening telegraph a painful instant from the present: “You had a black snow mobile / We drove out under the northern lights / A vodka bottle gave you those raccoon eyes / We got beat up just for holding hands.” Did the vodka give the song’s addressee raccoon eyes? Or was it the bottle deployed in an act of violence? Certainly we know that the present being described in the song is one in which we are “beat up just for holding hands” At this point we hear the lyrical refrain differently “Take ecstasy with me, baby / Take ecstasy with me:’ The weird, quirky pop song takes on the affective cadence of a stirring queer anthem. (A cover of this song by the electronic dance act chk chk chk did briefly become a dance-floor anthem.) Take ecstasy with me thus becomes a request to stand out of time together, to resist the stultifying temporality and time that is not ours, that is saturated with violence both visceral and emotional, a time that is not queerness. Queerness’s time is the time of ecstasy. **Ecstasy is queerness’s way**. We know time through the field of the affective, and affect is tightly bound to temporality. But let us take ecstasy together, as the Magnetic Fields request. That means going beyond the singular shattering that a version of jouissance suggests or the transport of Christian rapture. Taking ecstasy with one another, in as many ways as possible, can perhaps be our best way of enacting a queer time that is not yet here but nonetheless always potentially dawning. **Taking ecstasy with one another is an invitation, a call, to a then-and- there, a not-yet-here**. Following this book’s rhythm of cross-temporal comparison, I offer lesbian poet Elizabeth Bishop’s invitation to her staunch spinster mentor Marianne Moore to “come flying”: *Invitation to Miss Marianne Moore* From Brooklyn, over the Brooklyn Bridge, on this fine morning, please come flying. In a cloud of fiery pale chemicals, please come flying, to the rapid rolling of thousands of small blue drums descending out of the mackerel sky over the glittering grandstand of harbor-water, please come flying. The next few lines describe the river that the two poets would traverse, the multitude of flags they would behold on ships. Bishop refers to Moore’s signature three-cornered Paul Revere hat and her pointy black shoes, making the address all the more personal and highlighting Moore’s own queer extravagance. They would “mount” the magical sky with what Bishop calls a natural heroism. Our queer dynamic duo would then fly over “the accidents, above the malignant movies, the taxicabs and injustices at large:’ This flight is a spectacle of queer transport made lyric. Each stanza closes with the invitation to come flying. The last two stanzas are especially poignant for my thesis: With dynasties of negative constructions darkening and dying around you, with grammar that suddenly turns and shines like flocks of sandpipers flying, please come flying. Come like a light in the white mackerel slcy, come like a daytime comet with a long unnebulous train of words, from Brooklyn, over the Brooklyn Bridge, on this fine morning, please come flying.6 It is important to note that the poem’s last few lines announce the flight’s destination as not determinedly spatial but instead as temporal: “this fine morning:’ Kathryn R. Kent has written carefully about the complicated cross-generational bond between the two women that eventually led to a sort of disappointment when Moore’s mother (with whom she lived) became an overarching influence in her life and overwhelmed the identificatory erotics between the two great poets.7 (As I have maintained, disappointment is a big part of utopian longing.) Kent explains the ways in which Bishop’s work signaled a queer discourse of invitation that did not subsume the other but was instead additive. Two other queer ghosts who float over the bridge are Walt Whitman and Hart Crane, both of whom wrote monumental poems about the bridge and what it represented. Bishop and Moore were both conversant about that work and the queer intertext that was being rendered. One can perhaps also decipher the living presence of writer Samuel R. Delany hovering. He is the author of “Atlantis: A Model 1924,” a haunting story that meditates on his own family history as it is interlaced with Crane’s biography and his relationship with the Brooklyn Bridge.8 The point is that the poem itself is poised at a dense connective site in the North American queer imagination. The Brooklyn Bridge and crossing the river, arguably both ways, represents the possibility of queer transport, leaving the here and now for a then and there. Thus, I look at Bishop’s poem as being illustrative of a queer utopianism that is by its very nature additive, like the convergence of past, present, and future that I have discussed throughout this book. This convergence is the very meaning of the ecstatic. The poem, like the pop song, is also a unique example of the concrete utopianism for which I am calling. Bishop does not overly sugarcoat the invitation; she clearly states that there are “dynasties of negative constructions / darkening and dying around you:’ But this invitation, this plea, is made despite the crushing force of the dynasty of the here and now. It is an invitation to desire differently, to desire more, to desire better. ***Cruising Utopia* can ultimately be read as an invitation, a performative provocation. Manifesto-like and ardent, it is a call to think about our lives and times differently, to look beyond a narrow version of the here and now on which so many around us who are bent on the normative count. Utopia in this book has been about an insistence on something else, something better, something dawning**. I offer this book as a resource for the political imagination. This text is meant to serve as something of a flight plan for a collective political becoming. These pages have described aesthetic and political practices that need to be seen as necessary modes of stepping out of this place and time to something fuller, vaster, more sensual, and brighter. From shared critical dissatisfaction we arrive at collective potentiality.

**We are students performing distinct pedagogies – the affirmative chooses to embrace despair and hopeless – this prevents social change and destroys value to life. Vote negative to endorse hope – this is an ethical action that is a precursor to all forms of political change**

**Denzin** prof soc, comm, and humanities @ U Illinois urbana-champagne **2k3** (Norman, “Performing [Auto] Ethnography Politically” The Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies, 25:257–278, www.citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.167.4086)

HOPE, PEDAGOGY, AND THE CRITICAL IMAGINATION As an interventionist ideology the critical imagination is hopeful of change. It seeks and promotes an ideology of hope that challenges and confronts hopelessness (Freire, 1999, p. 8). It understands that hope, like freedom, is “an ontological need” (Freire, 1999, p. 8). Hope is the desire to dream, the desire to change, the desire to improve human existence. Hopelessness is “but hope that has lost its bearings” (Freire, 1999, p. 8). **Hope is ethical. Hope is moral.** Hope is peaceful and nonviolent. Hope seeks the truth of life’s sufferings. Hope gives meaning to the struggles to change the world. Hope is grounded in concrete performative practices, in struggles and interventions that espouse the sacred values of love, care, community, trust and well-being (Freire, 1999, p. 9). Hope, as a form of pedagogy, confronts and interrogates cynicism, the belief that change is not possible, or is too costly. Hope works from rage to love. It articulates a progressive politics that rejects “conservative, neoliberal postmodernity” (Friere, 1999; p. 10). Hope rejects terrorism. Hope rejects the claim that peace comes at any cost. The critical democratic imagination is pedagogical in four ways. First, as a form of instruction, it helps persons think critically, historically, sociologically. Second, as critical pedagogy, it exposes the pedagogies of oppression that produce and reproduce oppression and injustice (see Freire, 2001, p. 54). Thirdly, it contributes to an ethical self-consciousness that is critical and reflexive. It gives people a language and a set of pedagogical practices that turn oppression into freedom, despair into hope, hatred into love, doubt into trust. Fourth, in turn, this self-consciousness shapes a critical racial self-awareness. This awareness contributes to utopian dreams of racial equality and racial justice. The use of this imagination by persons who have previously lost their way in this complex world is akin to being “suddenly awakened in a house with which they had only supposed themselves to be familiar (Mills, 1959, p. 8). They now feel that they can provide themselves with critical understandings that undermine and challenge “older decisions that once appeared sound” (Mills, 1959, p. 8). Their critical imagination enlivened, persons “acquire a new way of thinking . . . in a word by their reflection and their sensibility, they realize the cultural meaning of the social sciences” (Mills, 1959, p. 8). They realize how to make and perform changes in their own lives, to become active agents in shaping the history that shapes them.

# ba card -- long cut

**Multiple examples of black optimism that turn their argument- wilderson’s approach dooms the black body**

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(Saër Maty, The US Decentred, Cultural Studies Review, volume 17 number 2 September 2011)

A few pages into Red, White and Black, I feared that it would just be a matter of time before Wilderson’s black‐as‐social‐death idea and multiple attacks on issues and scholars he disagrees with run (him) into (theoretical) trouble. This happens in chapter two, ‘The Narcissistic Slave’, where he critiques black film theorists and books. For example, Wilderson declares that Gladstone Yearwood’s Black Film as Signifying Practice (2000) ‘betrays a kind of conceptual anxiety with respect to the historical object of study— ... it clings, anxiously, to the film‐as‐text‐as‐legitimate‐ object of Black cinema.’ (62) He then quotes from Yearwood’s book to highlight ‘just how vague the aesthetic foundation of Yearwood’s attempt to construct a canon can be’. (63) And yet Wilderson’s highlighting is problematic because it overlooks the ‘Diaspora’ or ‘African Diaspora’, a key component in Yearwood’s thesis that, crucially, neither navel‐gazes (that is, at the US or black America) nor pretends to properly engage with black film. Furthermore, Wilderson separates the different waves of black film theory and approaches them, only, in terms of how a most recent one might challenge its precedent. Again, his approach is problematic because it does not mention or emphasise the inter‐connectivity of/in black film theory. As a case in point, Wilderson does not link Tommy Lott’s mobilisation of Third Cinema for black film theory to Yearwood’s idea of African Diaspora. (64) Additionally, of course, Wilderson seems unaware that Third Cinema itself has been fundamentally questioned since Lott’s 1990s’ theory of black film was formulated. Yet another consequence of ignoring the African Diaspora is that it exposes Wilderson’s corpus of films as unable to carry the **weight of the transnational argument he attempts to advance**. Here, beyond the US‐centricity or ‘social and political specificity of [his] filmography’, (95) I am talking about Wilderson’s choice of films. For example, Antwone Fisher (dir. Denzel Washington, 2002) is attacked unfairly for failing to acknowledge ‘a grid of captivity across spatial dimensions of the Black “body”, the Black “home”, and the Black “community”’ (111) while films like Alan and Albert Hughes’s Menace II Society (1993), overlooked, do acknowledge the same grid and, additionally, problematise Street Terrorism Enforcement and Prevention Act (STEP) policing. The above examples expose the fact of Wilderson’s dubious and questionable conclusions on black film. Red, White and Black is particularly undermined by Wilderson’s propensity for exaggeration and blinkeredness. In chapter nine, ‘“Savage” Negrophobia’, **he writes: The philosophical anxiety of Skins is all too aware that through the Middle Passage, African culture became Black ‘style’ ... Blackness can be placed and displaced with limitless frequency and across untold territories, by whoever so chooses. Most important, there is nothing real Black people can do to either check or direct this process** ... Anyone can say ‘nigger’ because anyone can be a ‘nigger’. (235)7 Similarly, in chapter ten, ‘A Crisis in the Commons’, Wilderson addresses the issue of ‘Black time’. Black is irredeemable, he argues, because, at no time in history had it been deemed, or deemed through the right historical moment and place. In other words, the black moment and place are not right because they are ‘the ship hold of the Middle Passage’: ‘the most coherent temporality ever deemed as Black time’ but also ‘the “moment” of no time at all on the map of no place at all’. (279) Not only does **Pinho’s more mature analysis expose this point as preposterous** (see below), **I also wonder what Wilderson makes of the countless historians’ and sociologists’ works on slave ships, shipboard insurrections and/during the Middle Passage,8 or of groundbreaking jazz‐studies books on cross‐cultural dialogue** like The Other Side of Nowhere (2004). Nowhere has another side, but once Wilderson theorises blacks as socially and ontologically dead while dismissing jazz as ‘belonging nowhere and to no one, simply there for the taking’, (225) there seems to be no way back. **It is therefore hardly surprising that Wilderson ducks the need to provide a solution or alternative to both his sustained bashing of blacks and anti‐ Blackness**.9 Last but not least, Red, White and Black ends like a badly plugged announcement of a bad Hollywood film’s badly planned sequel: ‘How does one deconstruct life? Who would benefit from such an undertaking? The coffle approaches with its answers in tow.’ (340)

# a2: perm

Permutations are only a reason to vote negative in this debate -- when there is no plan presumption flips, which means if they win that doing both is possible it de-justifies the entirety of the 1AC -- you should vote against them for making this argument

Their hard ontological descriptions make fatalism inevitable - and high

Bâ (teaches film at Portsmouth University (UK). He researches ‘race’, the ‘postcolonial’,  diaspora,  the  transnational  and  film  ‘genre’,  African  and  Caribbean cinemas  and film festivals) 11

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Anti-pessimistic black progressivism may have problems but it is vital to check against the violence of white privilege -- their nihilism becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy

Miah quoting West in 94

(Malik Miah, Cornel West's Race Matters, May-June, http://www.solidarity-us.org/node/3079)

In the chapter, “Nihilism in Black America,” West observes “The liberal/conservative discussion conceals the most basic issue now facing Black America: the nihilistic threat to its very existence. This threat is not simply a matter of relative economic deprivation and political powerlessness -- **though economic well-being and political clout are requisites for meaningful Black progress**. It is primarily a question of speaking to the profound sense of psychological depression, personal worthlessness, and social despair so widespread in Black America.” (12-13) “Nihilism,” he continues, “is to be understood here not as a philosophic doctrine ... it is, far more, the lived experience of coping with a life of horrifying meaningless, hopelessness, and (most important) lovelessness.” (14) “Nihilism is not new in Black America. . . . In fact,” West explains,”the major enemy of Black survival in America has been and is neither oppression nor exploitation but rather the nihilistic Threat -- that is, loss of hope and absence of meaning. For as long **as hope remains and meaning is preserved, the possibility of overcoming oppression stays alive.** The self-fulfilling prophecy of the nihilistic threat is that without hope there can be no future, that without meaning there can be no struggle.” (14-15)