# 1NC

## bell hooks

### 1NC Whiteness Focus Bad

#### the aff’s centering of whiteness as the focal point for our discussion creates a direct tradeoff with an analysis of imperialist capitalist white supremacist patriarchy – this interlocking system of overarching oppression infects everyone’s thinking, even the affirmative’s – for instance, the affirmative’s invocation of the ballot as a currency is a clear demonstration of a type of dominator thinking that obsesses over social standing based on the accrual of capital – the affirmative’s call for more bounty is pure commodity fetishism – a constant interrogation of those sorts of hidden mental assumptions is the only path to confront racism and other forms of domination

hooks 12, Distinguished Professor in Residence at Barea

(bell, Writing Beyond Race: Living Theory and Practice, pg. 9)

In order to talk openly and honestly about race in the United States it is helpful to begin with the understanding that it is white supremacist thinking and practice that has been the political foundation undergirding all systems of domination based on skin color and ethnicity. When describing the political system that we live within here in the United States, more often than not. I use the complicated phrase imperialist white supremacist capitalist patriarchy. This phrase is useful precisely because it does not prioritize one system over another but rather offers us a way to think about the interlocking systems that work together to uphold and maintain cultures of domination.¶ However, in talking and writing about these systems for more than thirty years, I have found that most citizens of the United States resist the notion that ours is a nation founded and colonized on a foundation of white supremacist thought and action. And yet, as a nation we have always had a public discourse about race and racism. And, when leaders of our nation have called for a national dialogue on these issues, there has been little resistance. The United States was colonized and founded by a white supremacist politics that necessitated endless thinking, writing, and discussion about race. White folks from all places and classes, speaking all manner of languages, migrated here in the hopes of creating a better, more prosperous, freer life for themselves. They, for the most part, collectively, accepted a national identity based on the fictions of race and racism created by white supremacist thought and action. Bonding on the basis of shared whiteness provides the foundation for a sense of shared meaning, values, and purpose. With the battle cry of preserving whiteness, imperialist colonization became the belief system that supported the mass murder of indigenous natives, the blatant stealing of their lands, and the creation of segregated reservations. Despite the presence of African individuals who came to the so-called new world before Columbus—as documented in Ivan Van Sertima's seminal work They Came Before Columbus— white supremacist thinking and action condoned the enslavement of black Africans, supporting their brutal exploitation and oppression.¶ Living as they did in close proximity with enslaved black folks, relying on them to serve obediently and subserviently, white dominators needed a psychological mode of colonization that would keep everyone in check, that would teach everyone their place in the race-based hierarchy that is the aim of white supremacist thinking and practice. At this point, notions of white supremacy were fluid and constantly changing to meet the needs of dominating white colonizers. When white supremacist logic decreed that all black folks were diseased and unclean, that train of thought then had to be shifted a bit to leave just enough room for it to be deemed acceptable for some black folks to cook for white owners and to care for their children. When white supremacist logic decreed that the brains of black folks were smaller than those of whites, thus rendering them intellectually inferior, and then well- educated black genius asserted itself, there had to be space made within the theory of white superiority for exceptions. Clearly, one of the awesome aspects of white supremacist logic has been its fluidity, its ability to adjust and change according to need and circumstance.¶ Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth century, dialogues about white supremacy were common. Few, if any, white folks would have found it odd for there to be silence on the subject. Yet talk of white supremacy in our society is deemed not only taboo, but also irrelevant. When addressed openly there is always a listener eager to insist that the term white supremacy has little meaning in the contemporary United States, that it is too harsh a reality to be relevant to discussions of race and racism.¶ When I speak with audiences about imperialist white supremacist capitalist patriarchy, the one piece of these interlocking political systems that individuals most resist acknowledging is white supremacy. And yet if we cannot as a culture accept the way white supremacist thinking and practice informs some aspect of our lives irrespective of skin color, then we will never move beyond race. Unlike race and racism, which does not overtly harm masses of folk in ways that causes direct damage, white supremacy is the covert ideology that is the silent cause of harm and trauma. Think of the black children, both rich and poor, who watch long hours of television that imprints their young minds with the notion that white is good and black is bad. All over the United States, parents who assume they have taught their families to be actively anti-racist are shocked when they discover that their children harbor intense anti-black feelings. This is just one example. Another example might be the interracial couple in which the white individual proclaims their undying love for a black partner but then later in conversation talks about their belief that black people are intellectually inferior. This is not an expression of conventional racial prejudice. It does however remind us that one can be intimate with black folks, claim even to love us, and yet still hold white supremacist attitudes about the nature of black identity.¶ Thinking about white supremacy as the foundation of race and racism is crucial because it allows us to see beyond skin color. It allows us to look at all the myriad ways our daily actions can be imbued by white supremacist thinking no matter our race. Certainly, race and racism will never become unimportant if we cannot recognize the need to consistently challenge white supremacy. When cultural studies emerged as a context where the issue of whiteness and white privilege could be studied and theorized, it appeared that a new way of thinking and talking about race was emerging. Even though scholars wrote much about white privilege, they did not always endeavor to show the link between underlying notions of white supremacy and white privilege. Overracializing whiteness then made it seem as though white skin and the privileges that it allows were the primary issues, and not the white supremacist ways of thinking and acting that are expressed by folks of all skin colors. It may very well be that the re-centering of whiteness has helped silence the necessary theories and practice that are needed if we are as a nation to truly learn how to be rid of racism.¶ Similarly, feminist focus on gender, which initially provided amazing insights into the nature of patriarchy and gave hope to those struggling to bring sexist exploitation and domination to an end, was soon usurped by a depoliticized focus on gender. We now have much published work that looks at race and gender but not from a standpoint that is feminist or anti-racist. This is a deeply disturbing trend. Among those of us who have spent our lifetimes critically thinking and writing about ways to transform both our individual lives and our society so that systems of domination can be challenged and changed, there is a growing mood of frustration and despair. We feel we are constantly deconstructing and laying the groundwork for alternatives without making the interventions in how folks live daily that are needed if our society is to be utterly changed.¶ Significantly, in the last ten years, there have been so many cutbacks at colleges and universities that the longed for diversity of faculty and staff not only is not happening, it is unlikely to ever happen. At many institutions, when jobs appear, conventional hierarchies of race and gender fall back into place. This reminds many critical thinkers of how important it is to encourage everyone to learn new points of view, to engage in unbiased thinking and teaching. The burden of learning new points of view should not have been placed solely on the shoulders of people of color. Intervention that helps us all better understand the way interlocking systems of domination work together is consistently needed. The motley collection of essays in Writing Beyond Race all emerge from my efforts to look at the ways race, gender, and class are written and talked about today. After the feminist and cultural studies heyday, where for a time so much new ground was broken and radical discussions of non-biased standpoints were made prominent, these discourses are suddenly no longer at the forefront of our consciousness. While the subjects of race, gender, and class are still talked about, they are more and more divorced from discussions of ending biases in standpoint, and so they risk becoming mere topics of inquiry with no relation to transformative learning or practical change.¶ In these essays I focus attention on issues of accountability, standpoint, and white supremacy. Specifically. I examine those cultural productions which give the surface appearance of addressing topics of race, gender, and class, while merely reinserting ideologies of domination. Not wanting to simply paint a bleak picture of where things stand, I address in several essays what allows us to bond across differences, placing emphasis on patterns of positive change. Most importantly, I am attempting to think and write beyond the boundaries which keep us all overracialized. To find a way to move beyond race is not only the goal of critical thinking, it is the only path to emotional longevity, the only true path to liberation.

#### Despite their best intentions, these forms of thinking make the affirmative’s method an unwitting accomplice in the perpetuation of imperialist capitalist white supremacist patriarchy – their focus on external movements distracts us from analyzing internal mental tendencies that pervade everyone’s thinking and continue the politics of domination and oppression – only an exorcism of imperialist capitalist white supremacist thinking from our minds can provide an opportunity for real social change

hooks 12, Distinguished Professor in Residence at Barea

(bell, Writing Beyond Race: Living Theory and Practice, pg. 19)

Again and again visionary thinkers on the subject of race encourage us to confront directly and honestly the way in which white supremacist ideology informs the lives of everyone in our nation to a greater or lesser degree. We can move beyond the us/them binaries that usually surface in most discussions of race and racism if we focus on the ways in which white supremacist thought is a foundational belief system in this nation. White supremacist thinking informs the consciousness of everyone irrespective of skin color. In more recent years cultural critics focusing on color caste hierarchies among black people/people of color, which deem fairer skinned people to be more beautiful than their darker skinned counterparts, remind everyone that this way of thinking and acting is a startling indication of how deeply engrained white supremacist aesthetics constantly shape identity and behavior. No white dominating authority has to be present for these practices of white supremacy to impinge on the lives of black people. In the daily lives of black folk/people of color, white supremacist thought and action permeate diverse cultures making it clear that the problem of racism is not solely a function of the actions of white folk. If everyone in our society could face that white supremacist thinking is the underlying belief system informing nearly every aspect of this nation’s culture and habits of daily life, then all our discussions of race and racism would be based on a foundation of concrete reality. Everyone could move away from the us/them dichotomies which promote blame and prevent us all from assuming accountability for challenging and changing white supremacy. Unless we make a conscious effort to change thought and action by honestly naming all the myriad ways white supremacy impinges on daily life then we cannot shift from a politics of hate and create a new foundation based on a revolution of love. A primary reason this nation refuses to offer an adequate political language to define racial politics lies with the insistence that this is the most democratic nation in the world, a place where freedom and justice for all is possible. Citizens of the United States had no diffculty naming the politics of white supremacy in South Africa because the extreme racial segregation and the concomitant violence deployed to protect the system of apartheid was overt and consciously supported by government and law makers. Here in the United States most folks want to believe that the United States has never had and does not currently have a politics of race based on the support and maintenance of racial apartheid. Yet all children in this nation are inundated from birth on into adulthood with white supremacist thinking and practice. And it is more insidious because it is often a hidden socialization. The most powerful covert teacher of white supremacy is mass media. Even parents who strive to teach their children to be anti-racist find they must be constantly vigilant as white supremacist attitudes and beliefs come from so many different sources. This became evident to Kathleen and James McGinnis. authors of the helpful and insightful book Parenting for Peace and Justice, when they became a more racially diverse family. Already the parents of two white boys, they adopted a brown-skinned Native American girl. When she was only one year old her five-year-old brother wanted to know. "Mommy, when Theresa grows up will she kill us?'? As they pondered where this idea came from they looked at the cultural images coming from mass media. Having worked consciously to create an anti-racist household, they realized their children were still being inundated by white supremacist thinking in school: "It was a startling indication to us of how deeply ingrained stereotypes, misconceptions, and fears can be, even at a very early age. Tommy, who at the time did not know any Indian people besides Theresa, had a very clear and very negative idea about what Indians do to people." In this case, as in all cases where very young children express racialized fear or hatred, there is an imprinting incident. While there is discussion of white children's negative imprinting around race, it is equally true that black children and other children of color may have similar imprints that come from either images they have seen or stories they hear. Most folks have heard about the doll study, where black children choose white dolls over dolls who look like themselves because they have learned white is better. There are even studies of negative racial imprinting which have looked at the messages about visual difference sent to babies, which indicate that white parents who see a person of color and respond by holding the baby tighter thereby transmit non-verbally that darker skinned people are to be feared. It seems likely that were studies showing black and brown parents to act in a similar way when in close proximity to a white person the imprinting experience might be the same. As long as this nation absolutely refuses to accurately name white supremacy then the roots of racism will remain strong. Ironically, even though feminist theory and cultural criticism have led to the study of whiteness and white privilege, very little of this work addresses the issue of white supremacy. When we engage a discourse that focuses on white supremacy it enables us to see ways individuals who gain no “privilege” by allegiance to white supremacist thought and action collude in the perpetuation and maintenance of this system. Here is another common racialized scenario involving children: a white girl child born blonde is constantly told by everyone she comes into contact with how beautiful she is and therefore worthy of more attention and regard than those considered less attractive. However, as the child ages, her hair begins to darken and as a consequence she is no longer the recipient of the hyper-regard shown to her as a blonde. Increasingly, she feels invisible; in some cases should would rather die than not continue her life as a blonde. Like her darker counterpart who seeks to lighten her skin with toxic bleaching cleaners, this little girl has learned that in a white supremacist context lighter is always better. In her book It’s The Little Things: Everyday Interactions That Anger, Annoy, and Divide the Races, African American journalist Lena Williams tells the story of a high-powered black friend who had purchased a house where the kitchen floor was decorated with old movie posters. Living with these images she was surprised when her four-year-old daughter announced: “Mommy, I don’t want to be black…Nobody likes black people!” Her evidence of this included the fact that there were no images of black folks in the movie posters. Her mother was astonished by this: “I hadn’t noticed that only white people were in the posters, but here was my four-year-old child – whose mommy was a lawyer and daddy a doctor – getting this message.” Williams includes this story in a chapter that discusses the way all the images that surround us, even though they may appear to be benign, often reveal the degree to which our lives are governed by an underlying ethic of white supremacy. In the growing body of critical work on whiteness there is more writing than ever before about race and aesthetics. Work that looks at the way in which the politics of white supremacy creates an aesthetic where the color and texture of hair determines value, setting standards where lighter, straighter, and longer hair equates with beauty and desirability. New work on hair like the book Big Hair informs us that only a small population of white people in the United States are born blonde and that the sad reality is that personal aesthetics rooted in white supremacist thinking can lead large numbers of white females to dye their hair blonde from their teens into adulthood. Nowadays there are segregated hair salons that specifically cater to white females desiring to be always and only blonde. Browsing any contemporary fashion magazine one sees that blondes predominate; they set the standards for what is deemed truly beautiful. While there is an ongoing discussion about the way in which white supremacist-based color caste systems create trauma in black lives, there is little discussion of the way in which these same standards create distress and trauma for white folks. Moviegoers can see a film like Chris Rock’s Good Hair and marvel at the torture and painful self-mutilation black females undergo to look “white” but do not document the torture white females face when they strive to acquire the right really white look. Even though everyone in this society is inundated with white supremacist aesthetics and will remain its victim unless we consciously choose against it, we are still encouraged to consider the issue of race as primarily a matter of black and white. Certainly it serves the serves the interest of dominator culture to promote a shallow understanding of race politics that consistently makes it appear that the issues of race in the United States solely rest on the status of darker skinned people. It may well be that the growing Hispanic population (which too is invested heavily in white supremacist aesthetics) will help push the discourse of race past issues of black and white and toward the issue of white supremacist thought and action. Every black person who talks about race has an experience where they have been interrogated about their focus on issues of black and white. Rarely does a person of color who is non-black acknowledge that the most intense forms of racial assault and discrimination in our nation have been directed primarily at black people. Professing this understanding and allegiance with black anti-racist struggles would do more to affirm challenges to white supremacy than competing for the status of who will receive more attention. The fact is when black people receive that greater attention from the dominant white society it is usually negative. Despite gains in civil rights a huge majority of white Americans and some non-black people of color continue to believe that black people are less intelligent, full of rage, and more likely to express anger with violence than all other groups. Even though negative racist stereotypes about Asian identities abound, there is no overwhelming consensus on the part of white Americans that they are incapable of intelligent rational thought. It is troubling that so many of the hateful negative stereotypes the dominant culture uses to characterize black identity are endorsed by non-black people of color. Their endorsement is an expression of collusion and solidarity with white supremacist thought and action. If all people of color and even our white allies in struggle were decolonizing their minds, challenging and changing white supremacy, they could see value in identification with blackness rather than feeling there must always be competition over who will receive the most attention from white folks. They would see clearly that the system of domination that remains oppressive and exploitative is ever ready to recruit and train as many black, brown, red, and yellow people are are needed to maintain the status quo. A thorough understanding of the complex dynamic of white supremacist thought and action would provide all citizens with a way to understand why this nation can elect a black man to be its leader and yet resist any system-wide efforts, both public and private, to challenge and change racial inequality. From the moment he entered the oval office, Obama’s actions have been continually subject to policing to ensure he does act in any way that brings particular benefits to African American citizens. Sadly, even though there have been wonderful advances in anti-discrimination-based civil rights laws and public agendas, there has been no profound effort to destroy the roots of racism. Instead we live in a society that claims via our government and public policy to condemn racial discrimination even as imperialist white supremacist capitalist patriarchy shapes our politics and culture. Even though we have a racially integrated workforce, however relative that may be, one wherein white folks and folks of color share common ground, working together without overt strife, individuals rarely meet outside the workforce and a veneer of peace is the norm. White folks and people of color continue to negatively assess one another even though their actual lived experience of interracial connection should provide cause for them to interrogate false beliefs and assumptions. One of the sad ironies of racism in the United States is that so many black people/people of color unwittingly collude in the perpetuation of white supremacy while denouncing racism and actively speaking out against racial injustice. Most black people/people of color rarely raise the issue of white supremacy even though the values it promotes are internalized by almost everyone. Throughout the nation’s history most racialized civil rights struggle has focused on the exploitation and oppression of black people by whites. And even though more militant anti-racist struggle, like the movement for black power, called attention to internalized racism, this awareness did not become the basis for a national restructuring of anti-racist political struggle. Instead, the issues that have been raised by a focus on internalized racism (color caste hierarchies, low self-esteem, self-hatred, etc.) came to be regarded as more personal, and therefore more psychological and not truly political. During much of the militant black power movement anger and rage were the emotions anti-racist advocates fixated on as essential catalysts for liberation struggle. That highlighting of anger as a basis for resistance was far more appealing as an organizing tool than the issue of internalized racism or even a focus on self-determination.

#### **Just as dangerous as the oppressors is the mindset that they possess. By our very socialization in a culture of oppression and domination, all of our thinking is structured by the mindset of the oppressors. Intentional or not, the affirmative’s unwitting participation in these forms of thinking actively reduces the possibilities for effective resistance and political organization. Everyone committed to the fight for justice must confront this internal mental phenomenon – failure to reconsider and reshape our mindset ensures that our politics of resistance become a politics of repression.**

Friere 70

(Paulo, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, http://www2.webster.edu/~corbetre/philosophy/education/freire/freire-1.html) <this card has been edited to correct for gendered language>

But almost always, during the initial stage of the struggle, the oppressed, instead of striving for liberation, tend themselves to become oppressors, or "sub-oppressors." The very structure of their thought has been conditioned by the contradictions of the concrete, existential situation by which they were shaped. Their ideal is to be ~~men~~ human; but for them, to be ~~men~~ human is to be oppressors. This is their model of humanity. This phenomenon derives from the fact that the oppressed, at a certain moment of their existential experience, adopt an attitude of "adhesion" to the oppressor. Under these circumstances they cannot "consider" him sufficiently clearly to objectivize him -- to discover him "outside" themselves. This does not necessarily mean that the oppressed are unaware that they are downtrodden. But their perception of themselves as oppressed is impaired by their submersion in the reality of oppression. At this level, their perception of themselves as opposites of the oppressor does not yet signify engagement in a struggle to overcome the contradictions (2) the one pole aspires not to liberation, but to identification with its opposite pole. In this situation the oppressed do not see the "new man" as the person to be born from the resolution of this contradiction, as oppression gives way to liberation. For them, the new man or woman themselves become oppressors. Their vision of the new man or woman is individualistic; because of their identification with the oppressor, they have no consciousness of themselves as persons or as members of an oppressed class. It is not to become free that they want agrarian reform, but in order to acquire land and thus become landowners -- or, more precisely, bosses over other workers. It is a rare peasant who, once "promoted" to overseer, does not become more of a tyrant towards his former comrades than the owner himself. This is because the context of the peasants situation, that is, oppression, remains unchanged. In this example, the overseer, in order to make sure of his job, must be as tough as the owner -- and more so. Thus is illustrated our previous assertion that during the initial stage of their struggle the oppressed find in the oppressor the model of "manhood."¶ Even revolution, which transforms a concrete situation of oppression by establishing the process of liberation, must confront this phenomenon. Many of the oppressed who directly or indirectly participate in revolution intend --conditioned by the myths of the old order -- to make it their private revolution. The shadow of their former oppressor is still cast over them.

### 1NC Victimization

#### the 1acs dualistic thinking promotes an us-them binary of white and non-white as a heuristic for thinking about racial issues – the method of black liberation prefigures a pervasive white enemy – this promotes a culture of blame that seeks to externalize responsibility for imperialist capitalist white supremacist patriarchy, locking in rigid identity categories that trap us in a past where certain subject positions are always victimized and others are always victimizing – this calcifies domination and oppression – our alternative moves beyond simple moralistic blame-laying in favor of complex analysis of how oppression manifests itself in all of our mindsets – this politics of accountability is comparatively more effective in addressing domination than a politics of blame

hooks 12, Distinguished Professor in Residence at Barea

(bell, Writing Beyond Race: Living Theory and Practice, pg. 43)

Clearly the future of diversity lies in creating greater awareness and greater critical consciousness about the importance of ending domination, of challenging and changing white supremacy. Riane Eisler urges in her partnership model that we shift from an us-versus-them attitude to a worldview where we place the “same standards of human rights and responsibilities provided by the partnership model to all cultures.” She contends: “In a world where technologies of communication and destruction span the globe almost instantaneously, creating a better world is a matter of enlightened self-interest.” Now more than ever we need to create learning communities that make learning the theory and practice of diversity essential aspects of curriculum. In my recent book Teaching Critical Thinking: Practical Wisdom, I call attention to the way in which issues of diversity both inside and outside the classroom are slowly being pushed back into the realm of silence and misinformation. As I wrote: “More than ever before, students need to learn from unbiased perspectives, be they conservative or radical. More than ever before, students and teachers need to fully understand differences of nationality, race, sex, class, and sexuality if we are to create ways of knowing that reinforce education as the practice of freedom.” Learning to challenge and change binary thinking – the us-and-them paradigm – is one way to create a foundation that can be sustained. Holding onto binary thinking actually keeps dominator culture in place, for one aspect of that culture is the projection outward onto an enemy, an “other,” whenever things go wrong, and this casting of blame in turns helps to promote a culture of vicitimization. When we are more energized by the practice of blaming then we are by efforts to create transformation, we not only cannot find relief from suffering, we are creating the conditions that help keep us stuck in the status quo. Our attachment to blaming, to identifying the oppressor stems from the fear that if we cannot unequivocally and absolutely state who the enemy is then we cannot know how to organize resistance struggle. In the insightful book Ruling Your World: Ancient Strategies for Modern Life, Mipham Rinpoche talks about learning to understand others rather than blaming them. He shares: “I remember my father and other of the older generation of Tibetan lamas saying that they did not blame the Communist Chinese for the destruction of Tibet. They felt that blaming the Chinese would not solve anything. It would only trap Tibetans in the past.” Similarly, any critical examination of the history of the civil rights struggle in the United States will show that greater progress was made when leaders emphasized the importance of forgiving one’s enemies, working for reconciliation and the formation of a beloved community, rather than angry retaliation. Casting blame and calling for vengeance was an aspect of militant movements for black power that have really failed to sustain the climate of unlearning racism previously forged by nonviolent anti-racist struggle. In the aftermath of sixties rebellion, the more black folks were encouraged to vent rage, to “blame” all white folks for race-based exploitation and domination, and to eschew any notion of forgiveness, the more an internalized sense of victimhood became the norm. Tragically, today many black folks are more despairing of any possibility that racism can be effectively challenged and changed than at other similar historical moments when white supremacist aggression was more overtly life threatening. Unenlightened white folks who proclaim either that racism has ended or that they are not responsible for slavery engage in a politics of blame wherin they disavow political reality to insist that black folk are never really victims of racism but are the agents of their own suffering. Dualistic thinking, which is at the core of dominator thinking, teaches people that there is always the oppressed and the oppressor, a victim and a victimizer. Hence there is always someone to blame. Moving past the ideology of blame to a politics of accountability is a difficult move to make in a society where almost all political organizing, whether conservative or radical, has been structured around the binary of good guys and bad guys. Accountability is a much more complex issue. A politics of blame allows a contemporary white person to make statements like, “My family never owned slaves,” or “Slavery is over. Why can’t they just get over it?” In contrast, a politics of accountability would emphasize that all white people benefit from the privileges accrued from racist exploitation past and present and therefore are accountable for changing and transforming white supremacy and racism. Accountability is a more expansive concept because it opens a field of possibility where in we are all compelled to move beyond blame to see where our responsibility lies. Seeing clearly that we live within a dominator culture of imperialist white supremacist capitalist patriarchy, I am compelled to locate where my responsibility lies. In some circumstances I am in a position to be a victimizer. If I only lay claim to those aspects of the system where I define myself as the oppressed and someone else as my oppressor then I continually fail to see the larger picture. Any effort I might make to challenge domination is likely to fail if I am not looking accurately at the circumstances that create suffering, and thus seeing the larger picture. After more than thirty years of talking to folks about domination, I can testify that masses of folks in our society – both black and white – resist seeing the larger picture.

#### This binary thinking reproduces white supremacist culture unwittingly and also actively adds to the pain and suffering of black folks by making whiteness an all-pervasive enemy that invades every aspect of their lives, making any positive affirmation impossible

hooks 12, Distinguished Professor in Residence at Barea

(bell, Writing Beyond Race: Living Theory and Practice pg. 194)

Our collective inability to accurately identify spaces where white supremacy does not damage individuals and or impinge on emotional well-being attests to its covert power. To move beyond race we must be selective about social space. Living in a predominately white community, where few adult black people reside. I often choose to isolate myself rather than engage a world outside my home where I cannot protect myself from the antics of folks who are not actively anti-racist. When I mention to white folks in the community that I have to be critically vigilant to ensure that the world around me consistently affirms my value, they are surprised. By creating an environment where systems of domination, in this case white supremacy, do not significantly diminish quality of life or emotional longevity, there is no chance that I or other nonwhite folks who make similar choices will overracialize our existence and fall prey to seeing black folks as always and only victims. Indeed, a primary goal of our critical vigilance is the refusal to be a victim. To refuse victimization we must exercise the healing power of the mind. In his work on decolonization, Ivan Van Sertima continually insisted that both our minds and our imaginations have been colonized. This colonization of mind and imagination has been one of the primary reasons many black folks remain wedded to white supremacist thought and practice. There are so few psychological texts, self-help books, and or mental health therapies that teach disempowered black folks of all classes how to discipline the mind. When anyone embraces victimization, they surrender control. They have given their minds over to a system of thought and practice that will keep suffering alive. When an individual sees themselves as always and only a victim, they are often beset by intense and powerful emotions. In his book The Art of Happiness: A Handbook for Living, the Dalai Lama teaches: "We also often add to our pain and suffering by being overly sensitive, overreacting to minor things, and sometimes taking things too personally. We tend to take small things too seriously and blow them up out of proportion, while at the same time we often remain indifferent to the really important things, those things which have profound effects on our lives and long-term consequences and implications." Certainly, when we ponder why so many young black folk, many of whom come from affluent families where they received emotional care, have poor self-esteem and destructive habits of being, we need look no farther than the mind. When any black person embraces the notion that the "white" world is an all- powerful constant enemy, they lose the will to live fully. Let's be clear that this thought is an aspect of white supremacist thinking. Without mental programs that help black people decolonize and discipline the mind there will be continued psychological confusion and suffering. Holocaust survivors, survivors of genocidal attacks all over the world have identified the role the mind can play in allowing us to be self-actualized, to be compassionate, to find inner strength, to be peaceful. It is no accident that many citizens of our nation have looked to different spiritual paths, such as Buddhism, to teach us how to eliminate negative states of mind. Buddhism has helped me move beyond all politics of blame. It has offered a spiritual path to awakening that enables me to connect compassionately with myself and with other sentient beings.

### 1NC Alternative

#### our alternative is to a process of love designed towards becoming persons of integrity through a constant process of interrogating personal responsibility for domination and imperialist capitalist white supremacist patriarchal thinking. this is directly competitive with the affirmative’s method and a comparatively more effective strategy – love is a prerequisite to real societal transformation.

hooks 12, Distinguished Professor in Residence at Barea

(bell, Writing Beyond Race: Living Theory and Practice, pg. 197

In theologian Henri Nouwen's book With Open Hands, he includes a section on "Prayer and Revolution." which ends with the declaration: "God. give me the courage to be revolutionary ... Give me the courage to loosen myself from this world. Teach me to stand up free and to shun no criticism ... Make me free, make me poor in this world, then I will be rich in the real world, which this life is all about. God. thank you for the vision of the future, but make it fact and not just theory." In keeping with Nouwen's insistence that we move always from theory to practice. Writing Beyond Race is subtitled Living Theory and Practice. This subtitle is meant to evoke for the reader an awareness that there is an experiential practice that the forthcoming ideas and theory are meant to bring forth. Theory, then, becomes a map that if followed will guide us in the direction of liberatory terrain. This is especially true of theory that aims to heighten our awareness of the ways living in a culture of domination governed by a politics of imperialist white supremacist capitalist patriarchy impacts all our lives.¶ Psychotherapist Arno Gruen reminds us in his book Betrayal of the Self that domination, the will to exert power and control over others is "antithetical to human nature and ... causes not only the 'betrayal of the self' but of almost all that is morally and politically evil or reprehensible in the world. The quest for power and control (and the corollary tendency to overvalue abstract thought) dehumanizes us, causing internal disassociation and denying us access to such elementary human urges as love and empathy." This wounding of the psyche affects both dominator and dominated. Particularly. I want to focus on the psychic impact of white supremacist domination on the minds and imaginations of black folk. Certainly white supremacy as an ever-constant form of domination in our society demands that black people split of parts of themselves to function in a society that covertly and overtly requires its citizens to live in obedience to unspoken beliefs and habits that help maintain fictions of racial difference. To live a life that is not in collusion with white supremacist thought and actions black folks must choose active resistance. To live as people of integrity we must remain ever critically vigilant. The Webster dictionary defines integrity as "the quality or state of being complete, wholeness." A simple way to understand integrity is to know that it is present when there is congruency between what we think, say, and do. All too often the politics of white supremacy and its concomitant notions of race and racism lead black people and everyone else to engage daily in habits of being that lack integrity. Think of the many white folks who say they are not racist who then proceed to consciously create lives where they have little or no contact with people who are of a different race. At a seemingly progressive college where I am sometimes in residence, a white male student openly flaunts his belief that black people are of inferior intelligence and white people superior. In the small predominately white town where I live, folks, white and black, will say they are not racist but then explain that they are against interracial marriage. Since from childhood on, we are all inundated with the thinking of white supremacy, it should not surprise anyone that black people/people of color often share with their white counterparts' irrational assumptions, beliefs, and prejudices based on stereotypical notions of racial difference.¶ Since all citizens of our nation are subjected to some form of indoctrination that socializes us to embrace, however unconsciously, aspects of white supremacist thought and action, however relative, we must consciously choose to acquire the necessary critical consciousness that empowers us to think and act differently, to resist. Resistance to white supremacy, to racism, requires constant critical vigilance because in every aspect of our society white supremacy is normalized. Therefore we (irrespective of racial identity) can only move beyond the prejudicial beliefs and assumptions racism offers us by applying strategies of decolonization—that is, strategies aimed at strengthening our awareness of the true reality beyond domination and providing us with an oppositional liberating worldview. We change our minds and hearts by changing our habits of thinking and being. Internalized white supremacy and racism prevent everyone from achieving emotional well-being: this is especially the case for black people who lack critical consciousness. As long as most black folks are emotionally crippled by internalized white supremacist thinking, they are trapped in split-mind enacting behaviors that reinforce patterns of racist stereotypes even as they may voice anti-racist sentiments.¶ Even though it is not a popular topic, given the mainstream success of some individual black folks, internalized white supremacist thinking and behavior daily assault the psyches of unaware black folks, preventing them from achieving optimal well- being. In particular, white supremacist aesthetics, especially as they pertain to body image, promote the cultivation of a diminished sense of self-worth. Black children watch television for more hours than their white counterparts. Who can know how many messages they receive in just one day communicating that black is bad and white good? A commonly accepted expression of internalized racism that most black folks passively accept is the assumption that anyone who has fair skin and females who have long straight hair have more value and worth and are more likely tosucceed. Looking through all the Jet magazines published in 2011. it is possible to count the number of black females who have short hair and or natural hair on two hands.¶ Many unaware white folks standing on the outside looking in often express the opinion that black people are too obsessed with race and racism. Yet their standpoint is merely a reflection of white privilege—one that allows them to remain in denial of the impact hardcore racist socialization has on black people. Certainly, white folks remain in control of the television media, which is easily the most accessible propagandists mouthpiece for white supremacy. And it is even easier for unenlightened white folks to remain ignorant of the myriad ways white supremacist thinking socializes black folks to believe that race is the most important defining aspect of black identity. Hence it is almost impossible for those black folks who internalize these beliefs to simply move beyond race.¶ However, we can choose to live in ways that offer us a different life focus. The most vital strategy for changing anyone's fixation on race is full-on engagement with the practice of love. Enslaved religious black folks found their way to a liberation theology that affirmed their right to resist bondage and the relegation to second- class citizenship laying claim to humanizing values in the midst of dehumanization and holocaust. Contemporary black folks must work to follow their example. We must work to decolonize our minds so that we can think and act freely. All black folks who would decolonize our minds so that white supremacist thinking and action has no place in our lives must pay close attention to self-actualization. We must dare to love. We must recognize love as the transformative practice that will free our minds and bodies.¶ I began to write about love when I saw clearly the ways low self- esteem kept many black folks mired in self-hate. Lecturing all over the world, I found through conversations with folks who had decolonized their minds that they often began this shift because of deep feelings of love. It might be love for another person or love of justice. Significantly, it was always love that created the motivation for profound inner and outer transformation. Love was the force that empowered folks to resist domination and create new ways of living and being in the world. Indeed, in the first book of my love trilogy, All About Love, I stated again and again that "anytime we do the work of love we are doing the work of ending domination." In this work I tell readers that love is a combination of five factors—care, commitment, knowledge, responsibility, and trust. Lecturing. I would tell readers to imagine that they want to bake a cake but they lack essential ingredients. Simply put. without all the essential ingredients working together they cannot achieve the desired end. The same is true of love. Without the essential ingredients working together we cannot fully engage the practice of love. All too often in our society folks equate care with love. This misunderstanding of the nature of love allows them to think that they can be loving even as they are engaged in acts of self-betrayal, even as they hurt and even abuse individuals with whom they are involved emotionally. Love and abuse are antithetical. We cannot abuse someone and insist we love them. Abuse is always about abandonment. We cannot dominate someone and insist we are being loving. And most importantly, if we are self-loving, we do not allow ourselves to be dominated. Healthy self-affirmation and self-esteem will always give us the personal strength to set appropriate boundaries.¶ To make self-love primary as a black person in white supremacist culture is a choice that automatically engages one in counter-hegemonic political resistance. Sadly, many black folks are unable to love because the power of internalized racism invites constant betrayal of the self. Again, when parents allow black children to consume hours and hours of television shows that both covertly and overtly carry the message that black identity is negative, they place their child at risk. Despite good intentions, they are not establishing a positive foundation for personal growth. Parents may verbally offer positive ideas about blackness but their voices cany little weight in the face of a larger media that claims to represent reality. This is just one example of the way in which black people are forced to live schizophrenic lives, always maintaining a dual consciousness.¶ Many of the ways in which black people are socialized to always have a split mind concern body image. Since the mainstream culture of white supremacy and the white privilege it puts in place over-determines standards of acceptable body images, of beauty, black folks may condemn racism on one hand and on the other hand be striving to meet the standards developed by a racist mindset. Recently, popular culture's focus on black female obsession with possessing long straight hair has exposed the underlying low self-esteem that more often than not fuels this obsession.¶ Significantly, there is no great abundance of theory that speaks to the struggle that must take place—both on the interpersonal psychological level and on a political level—for black folks to build healthy self-esteem. A core issue black people face is whether or not to act in collusion with the existing white supremacist culture or to resist by choosing to actively create an alternative worldview that upholds honest self-evaluation and positive personal growth. To be people of integrity, to not engage in endless everyday acts of self-betrayal, black folks can choose to love. That choice will automatically negate engagements with white supremacist thinking and practice. In his insightful book Love and Betrayal, therapist John Amodeo explains: "We live with integrity by discovering the values that are dear to us and periodically asking ourselves if we're living according to those values as best we can.... A life of integrity also asks us to question our beliefs and standpoints." To live with integrity black folks must be willing to be critically vigilant.¶ Clearly, when racial segregation was the norm and black people faced daily outright racist discrimination and constant harassment, it was easier for everyone to resist ideologies of white supremacy. It was only through acts of anti-racist resistance that black folks could hope to gain civil rights and access to a better life. Critical vigilance I na world of racial apartheid was needed as the circumstances black people faced were so often life threatening. When racial integration offered more ways for black folk to thrive within the existing culture of domination, that critical vigilance began to fall away. Assimilation into the existing social structure rather than counter- hegemonic resistance became the order of the day.¶ Racial de-segregation did not mean that the underlying philosophical structures of white supremacist thought were radically changed. In reality to maintain this system those structures became pronounced. Integration with no real change in the underlying structure of white supremacy placed black folks in positions of extreme emotional vulnerability. To work for white people, to be deemed acceptable by that dominating group, black folks were compelled to look and act in ways that did not threaten white power and privilege. This is the social reality that lays the groundwork for black folks' poor mental health. It encouraged the cultivation of a schizophrenic mindset. It is this split that Harlem Renaissance poet Paul Laurence Dunbar proclaims in his famous poem "We Wear the Mask," which begins with the lines "we wear the mask that grins and lies."¶ Given the psychological dilemmas black folks face in a culture of white supremacist domination, there should be an abundance of theoretical and self-help literature aimed to lay the groundwork for the building of healthy self-esteem and healthy self-love. Yet it is rare in our culture to find work that critically examines the psychological impact of self-betrayal on the psyches of black folks. When black people spend our lives wearing a mask to survive and succeed in the culture of white supremacy, we do violence to our authentic selves. We cannot know who we really are.¶ This split mind promotes the growth of an exaggerated focus on race and racism in black life. It creates the groundwork for the cultivation of an identity based solely on seeing oneself as always and only a victim. John Amodeo contends that we become people of integrity by moving toward wholeness "as we take the initiative to look honestly at ourselves and come to know ourselves as we really are." Becoming stuck in victim consciousness creates a paralysis of the will that inhibits personal growth. Without a foundation of healthy self-esteem we cannot become people of integrity. Amodeo reminds us that "integrity refers to a life orientation in which we are committed to becoming more self- aware and appropriately responsive to others. Rather than blaming others ... we trade in our role of victim for the role of self- responsible adult who culls the learning inherent in all life experience ... however unpleasant this may be." Challenging and eliminating an ethos of victimhood is essential for black self- determination and self-actualization. Choosing to love is one way we resist any notion of being a victim. Actively loving, one refuses victim consciousness. The practice of love always demands of us constant recognition of our own essential worth and value.¶ To value ourselves rightly we are called to move beyond race.¶ We are called to recognize that ethnicity, that skin color, are but one fragment of a holistic identity. To overemphasize or dwell pathologically on this one fragment blocks self-awareness and self- understanding. To know ourselves beyond race, beyond the tenets of white supremacist logic, we must always embrace the wholeness that is the necessary foundation if we are to live with integrity. By embracing the transformative power of love we accept the fullness of our humanity, which then allows us to recognize the humanity of others. Within that recognition we can engage a practice of loving kindness, forgiveness, and compassion. In With Open Hands, Henri Nouwen shares that "compassion is daring to acknowledge our mutual destiny so that we might move forward all together." Mutuality is formed through a shared understanding of what it means to love.¶ To engage the practice of love is to oppose domination in all its forms. To love will necessarily take us beyond race, beyond all categories that aim to limit and confine the human spirit. Domination will never end as long as we are all taught to devalue love. In her book The Age of Miracles, visionary thinker Marianne Williamson urges us to choose to love. She shares this insight: "Miracles occur naturally in the presence of love. In our natural states we are miracle workers because love is who we are. Talk about personal transformation—the journey from fear to love is not a narcissistic exercise ... it's the most necessary component to our re-creating human society and affecting the course of history." To fully embrace the transformative power of love, we would need to have the revolution of values Martin Luther King called for before his untimely demise.¶ If we were to gather all the cultural criticism and critical theory on the subject of white supremacy, whiteness, race, and racism, in this huge body of work, we would find little or no focus on love. Yet all our deconstructive explanatory theory is meaningless if it is not rooted in the recognition that the most fundamental challenge to domination is the choice to love. Love as a way of life makes it possible for us all to live humanely within a culture of domination as we work for change. The radical nature of love is that it is profoundly democratic. Irrespective of our status and station in life we can choose love: we can choose to leave dominator thinking behind.¶ Love moves us beyond categories and therein lies its power to liberate. Free to love, we are free to be our authentic selves. We are free to take the path that leads us away from domination toward new lives of optimal well-being. We are free to think, to write, to dream, to live beyond race.

# 1NR

## bell hooks

### Permutation

#### **even if you only conclude that the 1ac made an “oversight” in failing to mention the interlocking nature of oppression, you should still vote negative – that very omission is evidence of their thinking being structured by imperialist capitalist white supremacist patriarchy**

Medina 11 – prof @ Vanderbilt

(Jose, Toward a Foucaultian Epistemology of Resistance: Counter-Memory, Epistemic Friction, and Guerrilla Pluralism, Foucault Studies, No. 12, pp. 9-35, October 2011)

In the second place, by undoing established historical continuities, a counter- history reflects and produces discontinuous moments in a people’s past, gaps that are passed over in silence, interstices in the socio-historical fabric of a community that have received no attention. This is what we can call, by symmetry with the previous point, the principle of discontinuity. Foucault describes it in the following way: This counter-history “also breaks the continuity of glory.” It reveals that the light—the famous dazzling effect of power—is not something that petrifies, solidifies, and immobilizes the entire social body, and thus keeps it in order; it is in fact a divisive light that illuminates one side of the social body but leaves the other side in shadow or casts it into darkness. A counter-history is the dark history of those peoples who have been kept in the shadows, a history that speaks ‚from within the shadows,‛ ‚the discourse of those who have no glory, or of those who have lost it and who now find themselves, perhaps for a time—but probably for a long time—in darkness and silence.‛14 A counter-his- tory is not the history of victories, but the history of defeats. As Foucault remarks, it is linked to those ‚epic, religious, or mythical forms which “formulate the misfortune of ancestors, exiles, and servitude;‛ it ‚is much closer to the mythico-religious discourse of the Jews than to the politico-legendary history of the Romans.‛15 While an official history keeps entire groups of peoples and their lives and experiences ‚in darkness and silence,‛ a counter-history teaches us precisely how to listen to those silent and dark moments. But how do we learn to listen to silence? In an earlier essay, ‚What is an Author?,‛16 Foucault offers helpful remarks about how to fight against the ‘omissions‛ and active oblivion produced by discursive practices, that is, how to listen to lost voices that have been silenced or coopted in such a way that certain meanings were lost or never heard. Foucault is particularly interested in those forms of silencing produced by a discursive practice which, far from being accidental, are in fact foundational and constitutive. Those are constitutive silences, for the discursive practice proceeds in the way it does and acquires its distinctive normative structure by virtue of the exclusions that it produces, by virtue of those silenced voices and occluded meanings that let the official voices and meanings dominate the discursive space. Omissions and silences are foundational, a constitutive part of ‚the origin‛ or ‚the initiation‛ of a discursive practice. For that reason, the fight against those exclusions requires ‚a return to the origin‛: If we return, it is because of a basic and constructive omission that is not the result of accident or incomprehension.” This non-accidental omission must be regulated by precise operations that can be situated, analyzed, and reduced in a return to the act of initiation.17 Foucault distinguishes this critical ‚return to the origin‛ from mere ‚rediscoveries‛ and mere ‚reactivations‛: a rediscovery promotes ‚the perception of forgotten or obscured figures;‛18 and a reactivation involves ‚the insertion of discourse into totally new domains of generalization, practices, and transformation.‛19 By contrast, an attempt to transform a discursive practice deeply from the inside by resisting its silences and omissions requires a ‚return to the origin.‛ This critical return involves revisiting the texts that have come to be considered foundational, ‚the primary points of reference‛ of the practice, and developing a new way of reading them, so as to train our eyes and ears to new meanings and voices: we pay ‚particular attention to those things registered in the interstices of the text, its gaps and absences. We return to those empty spaces that have been masked by omission or concealed in a false and misleading plenitude.‛20 Foucault emphasizes that the modifications introduced by this critical return to the origin are not merely ‚a historical supplement that would come to fix itself upon the primary discursivity and re- double it in the form of an ornament which, after all, is not essential. Rather, it is an effective and necessary means of transforming discursive practice.‛21 If rediscoveries and reactivations of the past are crucial for extending discursive practices, a ‚return to the origin‛ that unveils omissions and silences is what is required for a deep transformation of our meaning-making capacities within those practices. The ability to identify omissions, to listen to silences, to play with discursive gaps and textual interstices is a crucial part of our critical agency for resisting power/knowledge frame- works. Lacking that ability is a strong indication of one’s inability to resist epistemic and socio-political subjugation, of the limitations on one’s agency and positionality within discursive practices. And the ability to inhabit discursive practices critically that we develop by becoming sensitive to exclusions—by listening to silences— enables us not to be trapped into discursive practices, that is, it gives us also the ability to develop counter-discourses. Indeed, being able to negotiate historical narratives and to resist imposed interpretations of one’s past means being able to develop counter-histories. Becoming sensitive to discursive exclusions and training ourselves to listen to silences is what makes possible the insurrection of subjugated knowledge: it enables us to tap into the critical potential of demeaned and obstructed forms of power/knowledge by paying attention to the lives, experiences and discursive practices of those peoples who have lived their life ‚in darkness and silence.‛

### Performance

#### Speaking in terms of interlocking oppressions is performance of the alternative

Hooks 12, Distinguished Professor in Residence at Barea

(Bell, Writing Beyond Race: Living Theory and Practice, pg. 43)

When I first began to use the phrase imperialist white supremacist capitalist patriarchy to characterize the interlocking systems that shape the dominator culture we live within, individuals would often tell me that they though it was just too harsh a phrase. In the past ten years, when I’ve used the phrase at lectures, more often than not audiences respond with laughter. Initially, I though this laughter was an expression of discomfort, that the true nature of our nation’s politics were being exposed. But as the laughter followed me from talk to talk I began to see it as a way to deflect attention away from the seriousness of this naming. Time and time again critical theory has taught us the power of naming accurately that which we are challenging and hoping to transform. But one way to silence accurate naming is to make it appear ridiculous, too strident, too harsh. Rarely am I asked the value of calling attention to interlocking systems of domination. Yet when we examine the cultural circumstances that provided the groundwork for facscism in the twentieth century (looking particularly at the roots of fascism in Germany, Spain, and Italy), we find similar traits in our nation (i.e., patriarchial, nationalistic, racist, religious, economic power controlled by a minority in the interests of wealth, religion, etc.). In fascist regimes, teaching populations to fear “terrorism” is one way the system garners support. Concurrently, dissident voices challenging the status quo tend to be silenced by varied forms of censorship. Most recently in our nation, the use of media to suggest that anyone who criticizes government is a traitor deserving of condemnation and even arrest effectively silences many voices. Meaningful resistance to dominator culture demands of all of us a willingness to accurately identify the various systems that work together to promote injustice, exploitation, and oppression. To name interlocking systems of domination is one way to disrupt our wrongminded reliance on dualistic thinking. Highlighted, these interlocking systems tend to indict us all in some way, making it impossible for any of us to claim that we are absolutely and always victims, calling attention to the reality of our accountability, however relative. When we are accountable, we eschew the role of victim and are able to claim the space of our individual and collective agency. For many folks, especially those who are suffering exploitation and/or oppression, that agency may seem inadequate. However, asserting agency, even in small ways, is always the first step in self-determination. It is the place of hope.

### Role of White People

#### it is important that we address our own subject positions in this space as non-black males – we believe that the competition of debate can be a space for collaboration across differences of race, gender, and class – we believe debate can be a site for a constant process of interrogation that challenges mental assumptions and tendencies of dominator thinking that lie within all debaters, regardless of subject position – this dialogue embraces that there is no singular path to liberation and creates a multitude of valuable strategies to challenge racist dynamics within society

hooks 12, Distinguished Professor in Residence at Barea

(bell, Writing Beyond Race: Living Theory and Practice, pg. 86

Collaborating with diverse thinkers to work toward a greater understanding of the dynamics of race, gender, and class is essential for those of us who want to move beyond one-dimensional ways of thinking, being, and living. My collaboration with philosopher Ron Scapp is one of the relationships of solidarity both in friendship and intellectual endeavor that enables us to have a more expansive view of the world and the culture we live within. Both Ron and I see our teaching as always connected to struggles for social justice. We have relied on one another for support, critique, and innovation in our life and work. We turn toward one another for critical feedback, whether it is a discussion of the role of imagination in teaching or more personal decisions like career changes and the struggle to with the right livelihood. Both Ron and I believe that it is through dialogue that we best struggle for clearer understanding of dominator culture and the particular dynamics of race, gender, class, and sexuality which emerge. Our ongoing dialogue repeats and expresses what we do in the classroom. It is a constant effort to sustain critical consciousness about what we do, how we do it, and why. Linking our academic positions to social justice both in and outside the classroom has meant that we exist in a liminal space within the academy; we both belong and are simultaneously outsider to academia. So much of what we do is constantly seen as suspect and interrogated by those in power who are more invested in the status quo. At a time when many people refer to a need for dialogue, especially dialogue that promotes diversity, we seek to ensure that there is a link between theory and practice. All too often we find in academic circles that colleagues do little more than pay lip service to the hard work involved in maintaining the type of connection that requires ongoing radical openness and commitment to change. To remain critically vigilant, Ron and I engage a philosophical approach to dialogue. What this means is that we deploy the strategies of dialectical exchange, which emphasizes considering and reconsidering one’s position, strategies, and values. Even though Ron and I have worked with ideas in collaboration for almost twenty years, we still occupy very different locations within the hierarchies of race, class, and gender. This has given us an opportunity to move across boundaries and push past the obstacles which ordinarily preclude intimate intellectual bonding across differences. Both of us are frequently “called out” by the other person; asked to stand back and engage in rigorous self-critique; to look realistically at the ways we inhabit a different world. Concurrently, we also identify what we share that is common to us. Despite much that is dated in his discourses of critical pedagogy, Paulo Freire continues to serve as a guide for our progressive efforts to redefine education as the practice of freedom. In *Learning to Question: A Pedagogy of Liberation*, he reminds us that when we step outside the constraints of our individual daily life and enter into diverse cultural spaces and standpoints, we must always be ready to “give honest answers” to questions that typically prevent mutual understanding across difference from emerging. In our conversation in *Teaching Community: A Pegagogy of Hope* we emphasized the importance of establishing and maintaining trust, which means understanding that what is essential to us is creating a dialogue between our differences that enriches us both. We continually focus on the issue of trust because the most common complaint we hear from people of color about whether they feel able and willing to strive for solidarity across differences is their fear that white people cannot be trusted, especially privileged white males. And it is equally true that racist conditioning has socialized many white people to be suspicious of people of color, especially when we refuse to stay confined within the limits of racist notions of self and identity. What Ron and I have learned is the constant reevaluation and reaffirmation of our bond is that trust is not static, that it must be constantly re-enforced by the actions we are willing to take both to own the importance of our bond and to protect it. In Ron’s work, he is often challenged by skeptical individuals who feel he is not living out the commitment to ending domination that he professes in his published collaborations with me. What they fail to understand is that there is not a singular map for how we enter struggles to educate for freedom. Our collaborative effort to challenge and embrace each other is an ongoing expression of critical resistance yet it must necessarily reflect our differences, the unique locations we inhabit. And it will necessarily assume different forms. Ron continues to work at an institution in a major large city, while I have relocated and work at a small Christian need-based college in my home state of Kentucky. While Ron has continually worked to subvert the privileges that could easily be his within imperialist white-supremacist patriarchy by using his power in a manner that actually undermines structures of domination, he never pretends that there are not slippages and moments where he continues to benefit from the very system he critiques. This is why our collaborative project of ongoing critical thinking together is crucial as we strive to maintain our commitment to working for freedom for everyone and, as we struggle to maintain integrity within systems that do not value dissenting voices. My career choices have led me further and further away from full-time college teaching. Yet, even7 major vocational decision I have made has been seriously examined by the two of us. Frequently, because of Ron's position on race and gender privilege (he has worked within institutions as a high level administrator), he often understands better how the system works and also what can be done to subvert it. Without my comradeship with Ron, I might not have remained in the university. At my darkest hours, when I felt systematically attacked within academic institutions, when I believed that my only hope of sane survival was to leave the academy, Ron set forth the arguments for why it was important for me to continue teaching. He highlighted the ways my presence is as much a teaching tool as the work because it embodies the practices of engaged pedagogy. He is ever ready to call attention to the positive way students and teachers apply my work, the ways it acts as an intervention affirming what Freire calls the effort we must make to "maintain hope even when the harshness of reality may suggest the opposite." Concurrently, Ron is much more likely to enter academic environments where he could compromise his integrity and receive more positive attention and reward. His efforts to maintain radical commitment are constantly buttressed by our critical dialogue and by the constant engagement with progressive students who challenge and critique him. Our mutual dialogue is both public and private. Our effort has been to translate our vision of solidarity into reality so that we can provide a model to everyone that solidarity across difference is not only possible but necessary. We see that teachers and students look at what we have done and what we do as witness and testimony. It is a concrete indication of all that is possible as we put in place the anti-racist, anti- sexist paradigms that can transform all our lives and provide us with hope that a different future is possible. We believe that the critical pedagogy we have enacted has been a small part of the cultural revolution that has made it possible for an African American to become President of this struggling democracy. Ron's willingness to engage in useful collaboration also serves as a model for the way in which critical thinkers represent a voice for change. Envisioning a future of global peace and justice, we must all realize that collaboration is the practice that will most effectively enable everyone to dialogue together, to create a new language of community and mutual partnership.