# Location K / What About Mississippi?

## \_\_\_\*\*Neg

### FYI/Read 1st

How they work…

The Affirmative’s call to action is two-fold

a) That the federal government’s response in 2005 to Katrina was racist – it left many people out in the cold, starving and dying. The local governments who were the “First responders” in the situation failed to act as soon as they could have at the time. The response exploded racism.

b) The affirmative is key to stop this from occurring again – the 1AC inherency evidence claims that the question of another hurricane is not *if* but *when.* It sets up the ideal “fed key” warrant by saying that the local authorities will recreate the response in 2005

Reading through the 1AC, though, the question of “why” is never *really* answered though – why was the response so slow? Why was it so racist? Why were so many left out to die? Why was the initial emergency plan not sufficient? Why, if New Orleans *did not* get the worst of the storm, did they have the worst destruction? *Did* New Orleans have the worst destruction? Why is the focus on New Orleans uniquely key? And most importantly, (and this is a how, not a why) but *how* does the affirmatives “evacuation transportation” solve for all racism in the city? How does it solve for *any* racism in the city?

The Zizek urgency cards work really well here – he explains it like this:

The government (and many private companies, as well) use the call to act as a mobilizing factor to fix a problem. He uses the example of starbucks. Starbucks had an ad campaign that claimed that every cup of Starbucks coffee you bought saved a child’s life. The ad campaign did not allow the consumer time to think or ask questions – it merely presented them with a moral call to action. What this kind of ad campaign ignores, however, is the fact that oftentimes the child’s life you are saving would be a million times better *without* companies like Starbucks. Starbucks uses child labor to make their coffee, namely in Guatemala. So the fact that buying a cup of coffee from Starbucks saves a child’s life is really an oxymoron – it attempts to repair with its left hand what it destroyed with its right.

How is the New Orleans affirmative really that much different from this analogy? The affirmative never once answers the question that if the response in 2005 was so racist from the federal government, why can’t the local governments also be fixed? If the federal government was one of the biggest contributors to the problem when the hurricane struck, why on Earth would we trust them to dole out the solution to *their* problem?

There’s also a lot to be said about the fact that the affirmative *only* puts the infrastructure in New Orleans. What about Mississippi? What about Alabama? What about the rest of Louisiana? None of the people affected by Katrina in any of those places, who were equally as devastated by Katrina’s destructiveness, are helped by the plan. Doesn’t that seem pretty ethically reprehensible?

Also, there are *so many* cities that are vulnerable to natural catastrophes. Sure, what happened in New Orleans was awful. But the affirmatives way of setting up the 1AC kind of sets up a really good question – do we have to *wait* until those catastrophes strike to *later* fix the problem? Why not try and *prevent* what happened in New Orleans in *other* cities as well? New Orleans isn’t the only city in the entirety of the United States that needs help – ignoring the others that do means that we’re in store for another Katrina event – it might not be today, or tomorrow, but it’s logical that unless we fix the root of the problem, we won’t ever have a solution.

((Side note: that root could maybe be capitalism. Capitalism justifies us focusing our money on only cities that have an economic benefit – could link pretty hard to the affirmative considering the tourism that is currently booming in New Orleans))

Also. The affirmative does nothing to help the people in New Orleans – don’t lose sight of that. All it does it allows them to leave if another hurricane strikes. Many people haven’t returned to New Orleans because there isn’t enough housing. The plan doesn’t fix that. It doesn’t directly increase the value of people’s lives now, only ensures that they can get out later. How does that solve for racism?

I would be hitting this affirmative hard in CX

### 1nc

#### The story of Katrina is NOT the story of New Orleans – the affirmative creates invisible coasts by ignoring the effects on Mississippi and Alabama –– ignorance of the true of effect of Katrina legitimizes the continuance of suffering and a lack of political action

Purdy 5 (David, staff writer for the Sun Herald “MISSISSIPPI'S INVISIBLE COAST”, http://www.sunherald.com/2005/12/14/2416342/mississippis-invisible-coast.html)

As Aug. 29 recedes into the conscious time of many Americans, the great storm that devastated 70 miles of Mississippi's Coast, destroying the homes and lives of hundreds of thousands, fades into a black hole of media obscurity. Never mind that, if taken alone, the destruction in Mississippi would represent the single greatest natural disaster in 229 years of American history. **The telling of Katrina by national media has created the illusion of the hurricane's impact on our Coast as something of a footnote**. The awful tragedy that befell New Orleans as a consequence of levee failures at the time of Katrina, likewise, taken by itself, also represents a monumental natural disaster. But, of course, the devastation there, and here, were not separate events, **but one**, wrought by the Aug. 29 storm. There is no question that the New Orleans story, like ours, is a compelling, ongoing saga as its brave people seek to reclaim those parts of the city lost to the floods. **But it becomes more and more obvious that to national media, New Orleans is THE story - to the extent that if the Mississippi Coast is mentioned at all it is often in an add-on paragraph that mentions "and the Gulf Coast" or "and Mississippi and Alabama."** The television trucks and satellite dishes that were seen here in the early days have all but disappeared. While there has been no study to quantify the amount of coverage accorded to the plight of so many here or in New Orleans, it is obvious to any observer that the number of news stories on New Orleans is many times that of those focused on Mississippi. So, why does that matter? **It matters first as it relates to journalism's obligations to cover human beings whose conditions are as dire as those that exist here**. The depth of the suffering and the height of the courage of South Mississippians is an incredible story **that the American people must know**. But, in the shadows of the New Orleans story, the Mississippi Coast has become invisible and forgotten to most Americans. Could it be possible that the ongoing story of an Alabama teenager missing in Aruba has received more coverage on some cable networks than all of the incredibly compelling stories of courage, loss and need of untold thousands of Mississippians? Maybe a lot more coverage? The second reason that the coverage matters is in the realm of politics. If the American people and their elected representatives do not truly know the scope of the destruction here, and if they are not shown the ongoing conditions afflicting so many, then there are consequences which are playing out even this week in Washington, where Congress will act, or not act, to relieve the incredible pain that has reduced the condition of so many American citizens to Third World status or worse**. If the people do not know, they cannot care.** We believe if they are shown the extent of the devastation and the suffering, they and their representatives will respond. So **the coverage matters**. A lot. The problem, to some extent, is that you have to be here and see it for yourself to comprehend the utter destruction that is so much like Berlin or Tokyo after World War II. We would like to invite our news colleagues from across the nation to come and view the Coast with us. It is impossible to comprehend this disaster from afar. A television can display only a single screen of the damage. When you have driven mile after mind-numbing mile and viewed the complete nothingness where cities and homes and businesses once stood, only then will you begin to understand what has happened here. Then you will begin to wonder, where are all the people who used to live on this beautiful shore? What has happened to their families and all of those shattered lives? That is when you will understand that the story of Katrina in South Mississippi isn't over, it has only begun. On the third day after Katrina crushed us, this newspaper appealed to America: "Help us now," the headline implored. America answered with an outpouring of love and help. That response saved us then. Our plea to newspapers and television and radio and Web sites across the land is no less important today: Please, tell our story. Hear the voice of our people and tell it far and wide. We are here. Do not forsake us. We are no footnote.

#### This turns the case – New Orleans is not the only vulnerable city – the affirmative’s tunnel-vision makes other catastrophes inevitable

Bloomer 5 (Meteorlogist, “Other U.S. Cities Prone to Natural Disasters”, <http://www.erh.noaa.gov/car/Newsletter/htm_format_articles/headlines/naturaldisaster_prep_mb.htm)//A> MV

The crisis that hit New Orleans at the end of August was an event emergency planners had been concerned about for many years. Much of the city is below sea level and when hurricane Katrina hit, the storm surge combined with rough seas caused breaks in the levee that flooded the city. The storm was well forecasted; however the magnitude of the disaster was greater than anything emergency responders had dealt with in the past. It left emergency planners asking how a response system could be organized to function much more efficiently in the event of another great disaster. One of the questions forecasters and emergency planners may be asking is “what kinds of disasters are other cities vulnerable to?” **New Orleans is not the only city vulnerable to large scale natural disasters**. Many other American cities are prone to a major natural crisis including the three great cities of New York, Chicago and Los Angeles. It may seem gloomy to think of the potential for great disasters, but maintaining an awareness of what the forces of nature can do will keep both emergency planners and the civilian population aware and prepared. I am going to take a look at some specific American cities and cite some foreboding concerns that each may need to consider. New York City is dangerously at risk for a serious coastal flood in the Long Island Sound. The occurrence of an extreme tide requires special conditions combining a very strong Nor’easter with an astronomical high tide. Very strong Nor’easters, the kind which produce wind fields around 70 knots in the open water, occur a couple times a year in the northeast. The Nor’easters that produce the highest storm surges in Long Island Sound take a track close to eastern Long Island producing a northeast wind. The force of the wind upon the water combined with an aquatic Coriolis force known as Eckman transport acts to push the waters at right angles to the wind field. This carries the water in toward the land resulting in a tide much above normal. Super astronomical tides most commonly occur either during spring nights at the time of the full moon or during fall days at the time of the new moon. The combination of a very strong Nor’easter taking the right track and an extreme spring tide are very rare, but could be catastrophic when they occur. The New York City subway system, and many coastal homes, could be submerged during an event of this kind. Being aware that an event like this is possible can help forecasters and emergency responders prepare well ahead of time. Plans to evacuate the New York City subway system and coastal New York and Connecticut should probably be put in place incase an extreme tidal flood ever occurs. Chicago is at risk for a great blizzard which could strand hundreds of thousands of motorists if it hit with the right intensity and at the right time. One of the scenarios for very heavy snow in Chicago would be a low center slowly tracking northeast into western Ohio. A storm in this position may result in a north northwesterly wind over southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois and a north northeasterly wind over Lake Michigan resulting in strong coastal surface convergence near Chicago. Sharp surface convergence combined with vigorous upper level dynamics could combine to generate very heavy snowfall of 2 to 3 inches an hour for several hours in metro Chicago. Snowfall of this intensity can accumulate on road surfaces faster than snow removal crews can clear the roads. This would cause traffic to come to a stand still stranding commuters for hours or even days and putting them at risk for hypothermia or carbon monoxide poisoning. Awareness of this scenario can put emergencies planners including forecasters and local officials in a position of readiness to close roads ahead of time should this ever occur. Boulder Colorado is at risk for a serious flash flood similar to the kind that hit Rapid City in 1972, Big Thompson in 1976 or Fort Collins in 1997. A large thunderstorm complex stationed over Boulder Canyon for several hours, producing close to a foot of rain, could send a surge down the narrow Canyon taking out much of downtown Boulder. Other potential natural disasters include earthquakes and tsunamis along the west coast, fires in California and the Rockies and great tornadoes in the plains. For many of these disasters, it’s not a matter of if they will occur, but when they will occur. Being aware of the risks can prepare cities ahead of time for their potential. New York City needs a very close and cooperative line of communication between the National Weather Service and the New York City transit authority. The transit authority has to have a plan for stopping the trains and getting people out to the streets above in hour’s notice of a flood. The City of Chicago and the cities of the northeast have to strategize a means for getting people off the roads before a blizzard. Boulder needs a flash flood warning system and an evacuation plan in the event of a flood. Preparation for a natural disaster must occur at many levels. Being aware of the risks that each city or location has is the first step. Having the forecasters and observing equipment in place to forecast and issue warnings is another important element. Aggressive communication of the warnings is essential for making sure that everyone who needs to be warned receives the warnings and is aware of how they need to respond. The infrastructure of the town or city should be designed to allow people to evacuate and responders to enter in a rapid and efficient way. There are many areas vulnerable to a variety of natural disasters. But being aware is the first step to being prepared.

#### Reject the affirmative as a critical act – as an educator; you have a responsibility to pursue the problems uncovered by Katrina. The omission of Mississippi is not neutral – the Katrina story must be approached through a frame that asserts the principles of social responsibility

Berger & Cochran 7 (Aimee, instructor of English at Texas Christian University, her studies include cultural studies, southern studies, and the rhetorics of popular culture and new media, and Kate, an assistant professor at Northern Kentucky University, teaches courses in American literature and English education, “COVERING (UP?) KATRINA: DISCURSIVE AMBIVALENCE IN COVERAGE OF HURRICANE KATRINA”, http://www2.widener.edu/~cea/361berger.htm)//AMV

As educators, we have a responsibility to pursue the issues Hurricane Katrina exposed, making use of Katrina as both subject matter and springboard. In addition to the uses that might be made of the Katrina narrative in the English classroom, such as development of literacies, and fostering engagement and critical voice, related fields and in fact the academic professions in general might benefit from taking a closer look at Katrina and the issues exposed. For instance, individuals, community groups, universities, nonprofit organizations, and established news outlets made extensive use of the Internet to broadcast the storm and its aftermath, showing how the new electronic media differs from traditional print and televised sources, both in the impetus and the range of information. As Douglas Kellner points out in Media Spectacle, �New multimedia, which synthesize forms of radio, film, TV news and entertainment, and the mushrooming domain of cyberspace become extravaganzas of technoculture, generating expanding sites of information and entertainment, while intensifying the spectacle form of media culture� (1). The multitude of blogs, bulletin boards, articles, interviews, and photographs available via the web each represent a particular point of view, use specific rhetorical strategies, and therefore are supremely useful as source material in media studies. Analyzing the framing of those points of view and their attendant rhetorical operations could prove to be productive in any course examining the role and function of media, and also useful in the English classroom to open discussions of multimodal text production and the rhetorics of new media. The field of cultural studies would also benefit from the media portrayal of Katrina. As this article has shown, the South's place in the social imaginary remains a repository of national shame. Portrayed either as invisible, as with Mississippi, or hypervisible, as with New Orleans, **the South is objectified both by race and class.** In fact, the national mythos of regions has always tended to conflate race and class: the wholly-white middle-class agrarian community of the Midwest; multi-ethnic groups ranging across classes in cities on the east and west coasts; and the antebellum vision of white aristocrats and black servants in the South. **Since Mississippi's white poor do not fit into the mythos, they were ignored.** And, as New Orleans's black poor were so victimized by the storm, they had to be vilified in the service of the national mythos via hyper-coverage of their supposed criminality. Finally, another valuable lesson we might take away from Katrina is the value of collaboration and community, as well as the dangers of territoriality and divisive internal politics. The Katrina story might best be approached analytically, conversationally, and pedagogically through a frame that contextualizes and asserts the principles of global social responsibility and empowers students, through acquisition of literacy and critical voice, to see themselves as actors on the global stage rather than as members of a passive audience. As we watched local and federal agencies fumble around, passing the buck and bungling operations in large part because of a �failure to communicate' and a failure of vision that would have placed interagency collaboration at the forefront, we might think about the ways in which we operate in similar �vertical conceptual silos� (Bitto 29), discipline-specific in our research, isolated in our classroom practice, many of us moving through campuses that house fragmented communities, increasingly corporatized and pushing toward competition as the norm, devaluing collaboration and interdisciplinarity except at the level of lip-service. We might see in the botched response to Katrina the failure of such models and turn an eye toward the strong response of community organizers and collectives in the post-Katrina Coast as not only heroes of a moment in time, but as models for our own practice and approach to our profession, inside and outside our classrooms.

### 2nc L Wall

#### Post-Katrina responses masked the destruction done to Mississippi and Alabama – the affirmative’s focus on the narrative of New Orleans reentrenches this exclusion

Tiner 9 (Stan, “Eye of the hurricane: Is Mississippi Coast invisible?”, http://onlineathens.com/stories/110109/opi\_511235719.shtml)

When the White House recently announced the president would be visiting New Orleans and the "hurricane damaged" areas of the Gulf Coast in mid-October, in accordance with a campaign pledge, our immediate thought was, "We better get ready." But since the initial notice was lacking additional facts, the Biloxi (Miss.) Sun Herald asked the White House press office directly if he would be coming to South Mississippi. The response was brief: "The president will be going to New Orleans." The president's decision, or that of his advisers and inner circle, to visit one place and not the other, underscores the persisting observation that South Mississippi has faded into obscurity, and that the consequence of four years of the Katrina narrative development is invisibility, even to the president of the United States. Invisibility means that literally an object cannot be seen, but it also can mean that because of perception or philosophical blindness, or lack of knowledge, a person or group, or a place, such as Mississippi, may be invisible. Ralph Ellison's powerful novel, "Invisible Man," is about an unnamed black man who believes himself to be socially invisible. He tries over the course of the book to understand his place in American society. He is an "un-person," and he is invisible because he is seen in the stereotypes that society has placed on his existence, and through the prism of those views he becomes invisible. Aimee Berger and Kate Cochran addressed some of the reasons for our invisibility in a 2007 College English Association Forum exploring news coverage of Hurricane Katrina and how it had affected New Orleans as well as the Mississippi Coast. Berger and Cochran frame their analysis of the coverage involving the two places by saying "... shaping the Katrina narrative is the dialectic of invisibility and visibility, which displaced and erased Mississippi, while rendering New Orleans hypervisible." They go on to say that as the cameras almost instantly shifted from here to there, the story portrayed New Orleans as "a most un-American city" chiefly populated by drug dealers, criminals and people who refused to leave. The omission of coverage here, they say, was related to our "unique place in the national imagination," a collective memory that focuses largely on poverty, high illiteracy rates and "general social backwardness." To many Americans the name "Mississippi" still evokes the past "and the murders of Medgar Evers, Emmett Till and Chaney, Goodman and Schwerner." The violent eruptions surrounding the admission of James Meredith to the University of Mississippi also are cited in the 2007 article. (The Forum article was published more than a year before the historic presidential debate at Ole Miss on Oct. 7, 2008, between Sens. Barack Obama and John McCain. Much of the coverage leading up to the debate recounted the problems involving race-relations in Mississippi. A good deal of attention was paid to the progress that has occurred here over the past several decades.) The lack of coverage about the Mississippi coast in Katrina's aftermath was related to the "**nation's reluctance to identify with Mississippi,"** the authors conclude. Whether for those reasons or others, "media coverage reveled in images and tales from New Orleans, (and) the Mississippi Gulf Coast was all but forgotten, rendered invisible by the media's rhetorical operations." Is there a political dimension embedded in this? Of course. Various commentators on the post-Katrina story have pointed to the ties that Republicans Gov. Haley Barbour and Sens. Thad Cochran and Trent Lott had with the administration then in power and suggest favoritism in the allocation of funding for recovery in Mississippi when compared to Louisiana. The contentious post-storm squabble between Mayor Ray Nagin and Gov. Kathleen Blanco, both Democrats, presented one image in Louisiana, while Barbour articulated quite a different rhetorical message, and from the beginning presented a calm and competent figure that represented almost perfectly the preferred self-image of Mississippians. Some also have concluded that a measure of that rhetoric was pointed across the state border when he said things like "our people weren't looking for someone to blame; they weren't whining, complaining. Our people are not into victimhood." Berger and Cochran regard this, and comments of other leaders in Mississippi, as an attempt on the part of the state "to construct a new space in the social imaginary. Instead of representing America's shameful qualities like racism and ignorance, Mississippi's public face is hopeful, gracious, grateful, humble, and its public voice bespeaks that all-American can-do attitude." This is quite true and there mostly has been a unified voice from the state throughout the post-Katrina period. The most notable off-message voice involves the disbursement of Katrina funds, especially those to be spent on behalf of housing for the poorest in the state. Advocates for those groups likely would assert they are the invisible among the invisible. In the years since Katrina, it is ever more obvious that Mississippi is being erased from the collective consciousness of many Americans as a place that suffered significantly from the storm. I will restate for any who might have forgotten: Taken alone, without any damage having occurred in Louisiana or elsewhere, Katrina's toll on the Mississippi coast would constitute the greatest natural disaster in American history. Berger and Cochran concur with that sense of neglect, saying "one fact remains consistently clear: No one wants to talk about Mississippi." We are left to wonder if President Obama's failure to acknowledge us with a visit to our Katrina zone is one consequence of our invisibility, resulting from the failure of the national media to tell our story. If that is the case, then my previous concern that history books won't contain the accurate story of Katrina has come true in only four years.

### 2nc Zizek

**Demand for urgency is a product of hypocritical outrage meant to extend the privilege of global capitalism and blocks the ability to understand the root causes of violence**

**Žižek** 20**08** (Slavoj Žižek is a researcher at the institute for sociology at Ljubljana, July 22, 2008, “Violence: Six Sideways Reflections” pg 6-8)//ctc

Let’s think about the fake sense of urgency that pervades the left-liberal humanitarian discourse on violence: in it, abstraction and graphic (pseudo)concreteness coexist in the staging of the scene of violence—against women, blacks, the homeless, gays . . . “A woman is raped every six seconds in this country” and “In the time it takes you to read this paragraph, ten children will die of hunger” are just two examples. Underlying all this is a hypocritical sentiment of moral outrage. Just this kind of pseudo-urgency was exploited by Starbucks a couple of years ago when, at store entrances, posters greeting customers pointed out that a portion of the chain’s profits went into health-care for the children of Guatemala, the source of their coffee, the inference being that with every cup you drink, you save a child’s life. There is a fundamental anti-theoretical edge to these urgent injunctions. There is no time to reflect: we have to act now. Through this fake sense of urgency, the post-industrial rich, living in their secluded virtual world, not only do not deny or ignore the harsh reality outside their area-they actively refer to it all the time. As Bill Gates recently put it: “What do computers matter when millions are still unnecessarily dying of dysentery?" Against this fake urgency, we might want to place Marx’s wonderful letter to Engels of 1870, when, for a brief moment, it seemed that a European revolution was again at the gates. Marx’s letter conveys his sheer panic: can’t the revolutionaries wait for a couple of years? He hasn’t yet finished his Capital. A critical analysis of the present global constellation-one which no clear solution, no “practical” advice on what to do, and provides no light at the end of the tunnel, since one is well aware that this light might belong to a train crashing towards us-usually meets with reproach: “Do you mean we should do nothing? Just sit and wait?” One should gather the courage to answer: “YES, precisely that!” There are situations when the only truly “practical” thing to do is to resist the temptation to engage immediately and to “wait and see” by means of a patient, critical analysis. Engagement seems to exert its pressure on us from all directions. In a well-known passage from his Existentialism and Humanism, Sartre deployed the dilemma of a young man in France in 1942, torn between the duty to help his lone, ill mother and the duty to enter the Resistance and fight the Germans; Sartre’s point is, of course, that there is no a priori answer to this dilemma. The young man needs to make a decision grounded only in his own abyssal freedom and assume full responsibility for it."’ An obscene third way out of the dilemma would have been to advise the young man to tell his mother that he will join the Resistance, and to tell his Resistance friends that he will take care of his mother, while, in reality, withdrawing to a secluded place and studying . . . There is more than cheap cynicism in this advice. It brings to mind a well-known Soviet joke about Lenin. Under socialism, Lenin’s advice to young people, his answer to what they should do, was “Learn, learn, and learn.” This was evoked at all times and displayed on all school walls. The joke goes: Marx, Engels, and Lenin are asked whether they would prefer to have a wife or a mistress. As expected, Marx, rather conservative in private matters, answers, “A wife!” while Engels, more of a ban vivant, opts for a mistress. To every0ne’s surprise, Lenin says, “I’d like to have both!” Why? Is there a hidden stripe of decadent *jouisseur* behind his austere revolutionary image? N0-he explains: “So that I can tell my wife that I am going to my mistress, and my mistress that I have to be with my wife. . .“ “And then, what do you do?” “I go to a solitary place to learn, learn, and learn!” Is this not exactly what Lenin did after the catastrophe of 1914? He withdrew to a lonely place in Switzerland, where he “learned, learned, and learned,” reading Hegel’s logic. And this is what we should do today when we find ourselves bombarded with mediatic images of violence. We need to “learn, learn, and learn” what causes this violence.

**Urgent claims to stop violence distracts us from analyzing the root cause of the conflict**

**Žižek** 20**08** (Slavoj Žižek is a researcher at the institute for sociology at Ljubljana, July 22, 2008, “Violence: Six Sideways Reflections” pg 1-4)//ctc

If there is a unifying thesis that runs through the bric-a-brac of reflections on violence that follow, it is that a similar paradox holds true for violence. At the forefront of our minds, the obvious signals of violence are acts of crime and terror, civil unrest, international conflict. But we should learn to step back, to disentangle ourselves from the fascinating lure of this directly visible “subjective” violence, violence performed by a clearly identifiable agent. We need to perceive the contours of the background which generates such outbursts. A step back enables us to identify a violence that sustains our very to fight violence and to promote tolerance. This is the starting point, perhaps even the axiom, of the present book: subjective violence is just the most visible portion of a triumvirate that also includes two objective kinds of violence. First, there is a “symbolic” violence embodied in language and its forms, what Heidegger would call “our house of being.” As we shall see later, this violence is not only at work in the obvious - and extensively studied - cases of incitement and of the relations of social domination reproduced in our habitual speech forms: there is a more fundamental form of violence still that pertains to language as such, to its imposition of a certain universe of meaning. Second, there is what I call “systemic” violence, or the often catastrophic consequences of the smooth functioning of our economic and political systems**.** The catch is that subjective and objective violence cannot be perceived from the same standpoint: subjective violence is experienced as such against the background of a non-violent zero level. It is seen as a perturbation of the “normal,” peaceful state of things. However, objective violence is precisely the violence inherent to this “normal” state of things. Objective violence is invisible since it sustains the very zero—level standard against which we perceive something as subjectively violent. Systemic violence is thus something like the notorious “dark matter” of physics, the counterpart to an all-t00visible subjective violence. It may be invisible, but it has to be taken into account if one is to make sense of what otherwise seem to be “irrational” explosions of subjective violence. When the media bombard us with those “humanitarian crises” which seem constantly to pop up all over the world, one should always bear in mind that a particular crisis only explodes into media visibility as the result of a complex struggle. Properly humanitarian Considerations as a rule play a less important role here than cultural, ideologico-political, and economic considerations. The cover story of Time magazine on 5 lune 2006, for example, was “The Deadliest War in the World.” This offered detailed documentation on how around 4 million people died in the Democratic Republic of Congo as the result of political violence over the last decade. None of the usual humanitarian uproar followed, just a couple of readers’ letters- as if some kind of filtering mechanism blocked this news from achieving its full impact in our symbolic space. To put it cynically, Time picked the wrong victim in the struggle for hegemony in suffering. It should have stuck to the list of usual suspects: Muslim women and their plight, or the families of 9/11 victims and how they have coped with their losses. The Congo today has effectively re—emerged as a Conradean “heart of darkness.” No one dares to confront it head on. The death of a West Bank Palestinian child, not to mention an Israeli or an American, is mediatically worth thousands of times more than the death of a nameless Congolese. Do we need further proof that the humanitarian sense of urgency is mediated, indeed overdetermined, by clear political considerations? And what are these considerations? To answer this, we need to step back and take a look from a different position. When the U.S. media reproached the public in foreign countries for not displaying enough sympathy for the victims of the 9/11 attacks, one was tempted to answer them in the words Robespierre addressed to those who complained about the innocent victims of revolutionary terror: “Stop shaking the tyrant's bloody robe in my face, or I will believe that you wish to put Rome in chains.“ Instead of confronting violence directly, the present book casts six sideways glances. There are reasons for looking at the problem of violence awry. My underlying premise is that there is something inherently mystifying in a direct confrontation with it: the overpowering horror of violent acts and empathy with the victims inexorably function as a lure which prevents us from thinking. A dispassionate conceptual development of the typology of violence must by definition ignore its traumatic impact. Yet there is a sense in which a cold analysis of violence somehow reproduces and participates in its horror. A distinction needs to be made, as Well, between (factual) truth and truthfulness: what renders a report of a raped woman (or any other narrative of a trauma) truthful is its very factual unreliability, its confusion, its inconsistency. If the victim were able to report on her painful and humiliating experience in a clear manner, with all the data arranged in a consistent order, this very quality would make us suspicious of its truth. The problem here is part of the solution: the very factual deficiencies of the traumatised subject’s report on her experience bear witness to the truthfulness of her report, since they signal that the reported content “contaminated” the manner of reporting it. The same holds, of course, for the so-called unreliability of the verbal reports of Holocaust survivors: the witness able to offer a clear narrative of his camp experience would disqualify himself by virtue of that clarity.‘ The only appropriate approach to my subject thus ‘seems to be one which permits variations on violence kept at a distance out of respect towards its victims.

### 2nc Turns Case/Root Cause

#### The omission of Mississippi in the narrative of Katrina avoids the root cause of the problem – the state embodies the most regrettable characteristics of the US – racism, violence, poverty, and ignorance

Berger & Cochran 7 (Aimee, instructor of English at Texas Christian University, her studies include cultural studies, southern studies, and the rhetorics of popular culture and new media, and Kate, an assistant professor at Northern Kentucky University, teaches courses in American literature and English education, “COVERING (UP?) KATRINA: DISCURSIVE AMBIVALENCE IN COVERAGE OF HURRICANE KATRINA”, http://www2.widener.edu/~cea/361berger.htm)//AMV

Katrina provides “simultaneously a radical narrative moment in the elaboration of global hierarchies of life and death and a radical political moment” (Rodriguez 148, emphasis his), and so affords unique opportunities for those of us who share an understanding that the space of the English classroom, the writing classroom in particular, is one in which to foster, among other things, political, cultural and civic literacies in tandem with critical voice. Analysis of the Katrina narrative is both pedagogically effective and socially responsible, a way to engender a radical literacy that might become a basis for change and social transformation, empowering students toward critical voice, rewarding them with a sense of agency and deeper engagement with the world beyond the classroom. Primary among the rhetorical operations shaping the Katrina narrative is the dialectic of invisibility and visibility, which displaced and erased Mississippi while rendering New Orleans hypervisible. Cameras quickly turned away from the tragic spectacle of Mississippi to focus almost solely on New Orleans, which emerged in the discourse as a most “un-American” city, populated by drug dealers and criminals, people who inexplicably refused to leave. A symptom not only of a national preoccupation with visual spectacle and the reliance on easy dichotomies, **the omission of coverage on Mississippi indicates a larger issue of the state's place in the national identity.** Mississippi occupies a unique space in the national imagination. It is frequently cited as a place of economic depression, with high rates of illiteracy and general social backwardness, rivaling West Virginia and Arkansas for last place in a variety of state rankings. Mississippi is often remembered for civil rights abominations represented in the murders of Medgar Evers, Emmett Till, and Chaney-Goodman-Schwerner; or in James Meredith's contentious admission to the University of Mississippi; or in the 2001 vote to retain the state flag, with its corner design of the Confederate Battle Flag. In this way, Mississippi functions as a repository for national shame, isolating and holding many of the U.S.'s most regrettable characteristics: racism, violence, poverty, and ignorance. This generalized view of Mississippi reflects Castoriadis's theory of the social imaginary, the collections of institutions, traditions, and myth that “renders possible any relation of object and image” (Thompson 664), based on the Lacanian notion of the connection between the real and the imaginary residing in the specular image. Moreover, Lacan's imaginary connotes idealization and narcissism as the imago represents the “Ideal-I” (Lacan 2). The specular image or rather, the dearth of images of Mississippi put forth by the media during Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath portray the nation's reluctance to identify its “Ideal-I” with Mississippi. While media coverage of the storm reveled in images and tales from New Orleans, the Mississippi Gulf Coast was all but forgotten, rendered invisible by the media's rhetorical operations. Many major news outlets seemed to ignore Mississippi entirely, focusing their lengthy pieces on New Orleans, but in addition to this surface invisibility, Mississippi is erased from the Katrina narrative through a variety of rhetorical operations that conflate Katrina with New Orleans. For instance, an article in Rolling Stone about the telethon for Hurricane Katrina survivors, “McGraw Leads Katrina Aid” (8/31/05), says that the telethon “will feature appearances by musicians and celebrities with local ties to the areas damaged by Katrina.” However, the only celebrities mentioned are Tim McGraw, Harry Connick, Jr., and Wynton Marsalis, all of whom are linked to New Orleans and are pointedly referred to in the article's opening line as “Louisiana natives.” Although McGraw's wife, country singer Faith Hill, a Mississippi native, also performed, she is not mentioned, nor is Mississippi. The final paragraph of the three-paragraph article provides a quotation from New Orleans mayor, Ray Nagin, and a reference to Lousiana governor, Kathleen Blanco, further foregrounding New Orleans and enhancing the sense that Katrina and New Orleans are basically synonymous. Countless examples like this one demonstrate the ways in which the dominant discourse subtly reinforces the idea that Katrina was a tragedy for New Orleans specifically. Through such rhetorical operations, “Gulf Coast region” becomes synonymous with New Orleans. Stan Tiner's front page editorial in South Mississippi's paper, the Sun Herald, printed on December 14 of 2005, expresses dissatisfaction with the media coverage of Mississippi during Katrina. He writes: “The telling of Katrina by national media has created the illusion of the hurricane's impact on our Coast as something of a footnote.” Tiner criticizes the media on two counts: 1) “as it relates to journalism's obligations to cover human beings whose conditions are as dire as those that exist here,” and 2) as the coverage will influence political actions, specifically in terms of Congressional aid. He closes the piece with a request to all media outlets: “Please, tell our story. Hear the voice of our people and tell it far and wide.” The Sun Herald is, to date, the only medium in which consistent coverage of Katrina's effect on the Mississippi Gulf Coast is published. In the weeks following Katrina's landfall, the New York Times published two articles pointing out that Mississippi was left out of the storm story, although they do not follow up with stories focused on Mississippi in their later coverage, nor is this story about Mississippi's absence from the discourse itself a story about Mississippi. To note the absence of Mississippi from mainstream media coverage does not in fact enhance the visibility of Mississippi as subject, but rather merely points to its invisibility without then moving to render the stories of Mississippi into discourse. In “Coastal Cities of Mississippi In the Shadows”, Campbell Robertson wrote: If the levees had held in New Orleans, the destruction wrought on the Mississippi Gulf Coast by Hurricane Katrina would have been the most astonishing storm story of a generation. Whole towns have been laid flat, thousands of houses washed away and, statewide, the storm has been blamed for the deaths of 211 people, a toll far higher than those from Hurricanes Andrew, Hugo, and Ivan. But as it is, Mississippi “like the Pentagon on September 11, 2001” is coping with an almost unimaginable catastrophe, largely overshadowed in the news media's attention and the national consciousness, in this case by the disaster in New Orleans. Two weeks later, Sewell Chan wrote “Portrait of Mississippi Victims: Safety of Home Was a Mirage,” in which he documented the projected destruction for Mississippi: “As the detritus from the storm is cleared, the death toll could grow. The Army Corps of Engineers estimates that the hurricane left 18 million to 20 million cubic yards of debris in Mississippi alone, the equivalent of 200 football fields piled 50 feet high, and that it would take eight months to clear the roadways.” While one account focuses on Mississippi as a problematic absence, and the other takes Mississippi as its subject, the bulk of the discourse that develops the Katrina narrative, through its rhetorical operations as well as through more obvious linkages created by titles, headlines, ledes and focal subjects, positions New Orleans as the central setting of the narrative. While a few local media outlets such as WWL and WLOX did broadcast footage from coastal towns in Mississippi, the most prevalent image shown on national television was of a wrecked casino splintered across a stretch of road. Perhaps that is one reason why Mississippi was rendered invisible while New Orleans' tourist industry secures for the city a nostalgic place in the social imaginary and capitalizes on the city's history to hold in the foreground the Idea of New Orleans as an international rather than a southern city, the Mississippi Coast is a vacation spot most often frequented by southerners, who self-deprecatingly call it the “redneck Riviera.” Although towns like Biloxi, Gulfport, and Pascagoula used to entice tourists with beaches, seafood and quaint imagery of bygone days, more recently their attraction has manifested in the floating riverboat casinos that now obscure the coastal vista and provide the predominant identifying image of Mississippi 's devastation. This image of Mississippi-as-shattered-casino certainly dovetails with traditionally Marxist theories of the spectacle. In The Society of the Spectacle, Guy Debord identifies the spectacle as �the sole agent and effect of the culture of advanced capitalism� (Warner 9). If the Mississippi Gulf Coast's capital resided entirely in the casino trade, it is no wonder that New Orleans�itself a kind of commodified city�received the lion's share of media attention. However, the spectacle extends beyond capitalism: �The spectacle is not a collection of images; rather, it is a social relationship between people mediated by images� (Debord 2). Therefore, the spectacle represents a kind of passivity engineered through specular commodification, in which viewers identify with the image as the image becomes commodified and thereby more ingrained in the social imaginary. According to Andrew Ross, in No Respect: Intellectuals and Popular Culture: �the power of the �spectacle' depends upon its success in addressing and intersecting with deeply felt everyday needs and anxieties, and its articulation of an incomplete circuit of desire is one in which we recognize ourselves and which we therefore want to complete by acknowledging its power� (qtd. in Warner 735). The lack of images, or spectacle, for the Gulf Coast might then also be accounted for in the resistance of the observer to identify with Mississippi. Aside from capitalist concerns or the resistance of identification, another reason for the lack of attention given Mississippi by mainstream media is a perceived lack of drama in the images of its devastation. Michael Newsom, for the McClatchy Newspapers via blackamericanweb.com, noted: �Mississippi 's Hurricane Katrina story fell victim to the media's craving for the �sexy' story and to the national public's hunger for dramatic footage of rescues from rising levee waters rather than the destruction of a coastline.� Certainly many of the images associated with the hurricane's effect on New Orleans�stranded families on rooftops handing babies to personnel in rescue helicopters; the chaotic scene at the Superdome with its disheveled mobs milling listlessly; National Guard troops wearing riot gear and armed with rifles rolling down the streets in tanks�are profoundly dramatic indeed. Beyond the drama, though, these were images that fit the racialized neoliberal frame through which we so often look. The dominant stream of images (re)presented us with what we expected to see: the (predominantly black) poor awaiting rescue, literally waiting for a hand up (into helicopters, boats, military vehicles, etc.); the degraded conditions of those herded into and held at the Superdome; the militarization of the city in response to the supposed and rumored criminality of those who were too poor to escape the flooding city. Such coverage exemplifies Erving Goffman's definition of the media's use of the frame in his 1974 book Frame Analysis to create a narrative of social reality, shaping images and facts to transmit meaning. One new media source that, through its relative diversity and immediacy sidestepped the homogenizing of the visual landscape of the tragedy and so was able to tell Mississippi's story was the Internet. In photographs, articles, blogs, bulletin boards, and interviews, a multitude of web sites documented Mississippi's experience. In an article for the USC Center on Public Diplomacy, Shawn Powers noted that [T]he crisis may mark the first of its kind in that Internet technologies have been the critical medium for information dissemination in the aftermath of Katrina. As much of the chief communications and media infrastructure crumbled, media organizations began to rely on the Internet to continue to report the news. Moreover, the Internet provided citizens with a new communication medium that facilitated exchanges of information without having to rely on traditional media sources. The result has been an unprecedented amount of detailed information and candidness that is widely accessible throughout the world. These sites offer eyewitness accounts, a variety of images, links to news stories, and access to relief for victims of Katrina. Not only was the inconceivable destruction Mississippi suffered omitted from most national media, so too was its recovery. While various media outlets reported on Katrina relief for New Orleans by celebrities like Rosie O'Donnell, Sandra Bullock, the Celebrity Poker Tour, Comic Relief 2006, Nicolas Cage, P. Diddy, George Clooney, Oprah Winfrey, John Travolta, and innumerable others, only a few celebrities have mentioned or visited Mississippi. Almost one year after landfall (7/17/06), People magazine documented a relief visit to Mississippi by Tim McGraw and Faith Hill (herself a Mississippi native); six months prior, the magazine published a piece about tennis star Anna Kournikova (1/9/06) visiting the Mississippi Coast. In the article, she is quoted as saying: � Mississippi seems to have been lost in all of the chaos surrounding New Orleans, but I can tell you that the people of the Mississippi Gulf Coast have not lost their spirit. They have rallied around each other to bring back their communities stronger than ever.� But aside from these notables, few others have taken note. Kournikova's description recalls that of President George W. Bush, when he visited the ravaged Coast. On September 2, 2005 , the President took a walking tour of Biloxi, after which he made remarks and answered questions. He said: �You know, there's a lot of sadness, of course, but there's also a spirit here in Mississippi that is uplifting.� In March of 2007, he returned to Biloxi and said, �I can remember the looks on your faces when I first came down here during the incredible destruction�right after the destruction of Katrina. You know, there was something about the spirit of Mississippi, though, that made it clear to me that there was no doubt that progress was going to be made�And I've come back again because I'm inspired every time I come here to see progress and the spirit alive.� A few moments later, he added, �And it's important for the check writers, the taxpayers of the United States, to know that progress is being made with their money and that the people of Mississippi appreciate the fact that the country came to help when they needed help. It's a neighborly thing to do.� Those statements�both about Mississippi's �spirit� and its mandate for gratitude�have been abetted by other public officials, too. In an August 2006 interview with the National Journal, Mississippi Governor Haley Barbour was asked why, given that geographically Mississippi suffered more widespread damage than Louisiana, Mississippi was recovering more quickly. Barbour's response sounds much like President Bush's previous statement: �First and foremost is the spirit of our people. Our people weren't looking for someone to blame; they weren't whining, complaining. Our people are not into victimhood. They began doing immediately what needed to be done, and that's been their spirit throughout.� There is an obvious comparison being made here, indicated by the repetition of �our people,� as if to set �our� clearly apart from some Other, some �them� or �their.� It is not a stretch to read here a thinly-veiled criticism of Louisiana, New Orleans, and particularly Mayor Nagin's response to Katrina; Barbour has been quoted elsewhere as calling the New Orleans aid package �very excessive.� Also clearly in play in such remarks is the racialized neoliberal frame that enables easy invocation of the welfare queen and gangsta stereotypes. Later in the interview Nagin comes up more explicitly as a contrast to Barbour, a former lobbyist and Chair of the National Republican Committee, in terms of political savvy and connections. In another article for the National Journal, Kellie Lunney notes �While Mississippi benefits from good political standing in Washington, state and local leaders are careful not to appear needy; instead, they are eager to cultivate Mississippi's can-do attitude.� The political rhetoric and media rhetoric cohere to erase Mississippi 's need, instead focusing on its meritorious �spirit�: it seems that, just as the majority of the country resists identifying with Mississippi, Mississippi resists identification with New Orleans, and utilizes a distinctly neoliberal vocabulary and rhetoric in which to do so. While Nagin, Senator Mary Landrieu, and other officials pointed out the failure of the federal government to both protect and rescue its citizens in New Orleans and demanded adequate recompense for the disaster, the Mississippi delegation adopts a more humble posture. Their federal assistance was agreed to out of the public eye, without voluble recrimination for the delay in aid. Their stories, when presented, are those of individual acts of courage or of communities pulling together, stories neatly packaged in a neoliberal rhetoric of meritocracy. Although Dr. Ben Marble, an ER doctor from Mississippi, did confront Vice President Dick Cheney at a news conference, criticizing the administration's response with the succinct phrase �Go fuck yourself, Mr. Cheney� (an ironic nod to Cheney's own comment to Senator Patrick Leahy on the Senate floor) and thereby earned one of a very few spots about Mississippi in Spike Lee's four-hour documentary When the Levees Broke: A Requiem in Four Acts, the majority of the publicized accounts of Mississippi recovery have instead reflected gratitude (qtd. in Bialik). One of the ways in which Mississippians have expressed that gratitude is in the opportunity to rebuild coastal cities anew. Since Katrina, Mississippi 's motto has been �Building Back Better Than Ever� (Lunney, �A Tale�). Former Gulfport Mayor Brent Warr has said of rebuilding his town, �We have the opportunity to make it an absolutely unique place. God has come in and wiped the slate clean for us� (qtd. in Robertson). During the President's visit to Biloxi four days after the storm, he said, �But the people have got to understand that out of this rubble is going to come a new Biloxi, Mississippi. It's hard to envision it right now. When you're standing amidst all that rubble, it's hard to think about a new city.� And, despite the current crisis with insurance companies, cost-prohibitive revised building specs, and inflated property values, most reports from Mississippi 's coastal towns continue to emit optimism. It seems that Mississippi is trying to construct a new space in the social imaginary. Instead of representing America's shameful qualities like racism and ignorance, Mississippi's public face is hopeful, gracious, grateful, humble, and its public voice bespeaks that all-American can-do attitude. The positive image of its gratitude and humility, though, seems married to Mississippi 's negative image, or at least is just as one-sided as its negative image. That is, just as Mississippi is not the nation's lynching tree, neither is it the magnolia. All too often in the attempt to separate from negative portrayals of ignorant rednecks and subjugated blacks, the pendulum swings wide in the other direction. For instance, in a lengthy article in the New Yorker, Peter J. Boyer positions Mississippi's Katrina disaster historically, contrasting his own experience as a Gulfport teen who lived through Hurricane Camille in 1969 and within the broader context of the Coast's cultural formation from the time when Biloxi was the capital of French Louisiana. In his effort to tell Mississippi 's story, he uses phrases like �on the coast of Faulkner's Mississippi,� �the coast's moonlight-and-magnolias veneer,� and entitled the article �Gone With the Surge.� Although Boyer does try to faithfully portray Hurricane Katrina's effect on the Gulf Coast, his willingness to ride the pendulum into the idealized image of Mississippi renders his article problematic. Amid all of the confusion following Hurricane Katrina's landfall on August 29, 2005 , one fact remains consistently clear: no one wants to talk about Mississippi. Whether because of its shameful place in the social imaginary; its failure to qualify as spectacle for economic, identification, or dramatic reasons; its subsequent posture of humble gratitude or the fact that its invisibility provides a space in which New Orleans, more easily contained by the dominant frames, can dominate, the devastation suffered by the Mississippi Gulf Coast has been all but omitted from the media spotlight. While occasional articles vacillate between the negative and positive images of the state, the real problem is that the real Mississippi continues to be invisible.

### 2nc a2 Perm

The perm simply perpetuates the focus on New Orleans at the expense of others’ suffering – they fall into the same traps as the media

The Associated Press 06 (“Some Katrina Victims Say They’re Feeling Ignored” Reading Eagle)

Gulfport. Miss. – Nicki Henderson could have gotten angry because Hurricane Katrina damaged her Biloxi home, but instead a simple news story about dislocated dolphins from her area made her blood boil. Henderson spotted this headline. “New Orleans Dolphins Find New Home,” in an article she

g read on the Internet. She knew the dolphins actually came from a hurricane-ravaged marine park in Gulfport, not New Orleans. The headline writer’s error reinforced her belief – shared by many on Mississippi’s Gulf Coat- that New Orleans has gotten a disproportionate share of the news coverage and the nations attention in the after-math of the storm. There is a growing sense that the catastrophic damage along Mississippi’s 70 –mile stretch of coastline is being treated as a footnote to the story in New Orleans, which was also ravaged by flooding. Worse, some say the lack of media attention could hamper the recovery of an area that had experienced an economic resurgence in the past decade thanks to billions of dollars invested by casino and hotel companies. “I am terrified the American people are going to forget about us,” Henderson said. On Dec. 14, theSun Herald in Gulfport devoted its entire front page to an editorial head-lined “Mississippi’s Invisible Coast,” that argued the region is fading into a media obscurity. Next to the editorial was a geographic toll on the region: $125 billion is estimated damage, 236 dead, 65,380 houses destroyed. Louisiana’s death toll stands at 1,078. More than 6,000 homes in New Orleans and neighboring St. Bernard Parish may have to be demolished. The piece ended with a plea to the national media to tell the story of the entire coast. “In the shadows of the New Orleans story, the Mississippi Coast has become invisible and forgotten to most Americans,” the editorial read. Sun Herald publisher Ricky Mathews said more coverage would give Mississippi residents a sorely needed morale boost. “They need to know they haven’t been forgotten,” Mathews said. Other Louisiana residents are also feeling overshadowed by New Orleans. Larry Hooper, 63, has been living on a campground since Katrina destroyed his home in Empire about 60 miles from New Orleans. “Our town was wiped off the map,” he said. “We feel as left out as the people in Mississippi and Alabama because of all the New Orleans reporting.” Rem Rieder, editor and senior vice president of the American Journalism Review said New Orleans has gotten an over-whelming share of headlines. “It did become the focal point of national attention,” he said. Mathews said he worries Mississippi will not get its fair share of federal aid, private investment and help from volunteers. ‘The government can help is get our important infrastructure rebuilt, but it’s the private investment that’s going tot ell the story, long term,” he added. Congress has approved tens of billions of dollars for recovery and rebuilding on the Gulf Coast. Only time will tell how the money is divided, but news coverage “does have an impact on what Congress does.,” said Biloxi native Jack Nelson, former Washington bureau chief for the Los Angeles Times. “When it’s off the screen of the media.” Nelson said, “it’s off the screen of the federal government.”

### Misc – CP

#### Text: The United States Federal Government should renew racial equality as a national goal, improve fair housing laws, and increase federal funding for affordable housing

#### Counterplan solves poverty and racism –

Snyder 8 **(Larry, President Catholic Charities USA, “Poverty and Racism; Overlapping Threats to the Common Good”, http://www.catholiccharitiesusa.org/Document.Doc?id=614)//AMV**

Racism is not natural. White privilege does not just happen. It is important to stress the human agency behind white privilege for two reasons. First, human agency makes white privilege an ethical reality for which there is moral responsibility and accountability. Second, **because human agents created and maintain racial injustice, human agency can also challenge, modify, and dismantle it**. This is the basis for our call to action. We reaffirm the policy proposals we advocated in our prior 2006 statement for the elimination of poverty. These centered on creating more livable wage jobs, raising the wages of existing low-paid jobs, and investing our common wealth in social welfare policies for low-income families and individuals. Here we focus on those additional measures needed to address the poverty which is racially caused or aggravated. Public Policy Proposals A Renewed Commitment to Racial Equality as a National Goal and Priority Martin Luther King, Jr., lamented that during his life most white Americans were not sincerely committed to genuine equality but to mere “improvement.” He observed a fundamental ambivalence whereby the white majority wants to condemn blatant acts of injustice, and yet preserve their position of social dominance. He concluded that the majority of the dominant culture is suspended between two opposing attitudes: “They are uneasy with injustice, but unwilling yet to pay a significant price to eradicate it.” 56 King’s insights resonate with our own conviction that what is hailed as “racial progress” is too often a covering over and not a fundamental change in race relations. Our reflection leads us to conclude that our national commitment to racial equality has been half-hearted, at best. Thus**, we call for a new commitment to the project of genuine racial equality. We believe that the proposals we advocate below will contribute to this goal.** Yet, until the reality of white privilege is forthrightly acknowledged and addressed, genuine racial equality will be unattainable. Therefore, we call upon scholars, activists, theologians, and pastors to help all Americans to deepen our understanding of white privilege and the ethical challenges it poses for a nation struggling to commit itself to genuine racial equality. **Improved Fair Housing Laws** As noted above, segregated housing remains one of the most stubborn and persistent manifestations of racism. Racially segregated neighborhoods too often suffer social abandonment, creating inferior housing stock that severely curtails economic advancement. Yet the cause of fair housing seems to have drifted off of the national radar and is no longer a pressing priorA Call to Action: Confronting Racism to Eliminate the Threat of Poverty Poverty and Racism: Overlapping Threats to the Common Good ity. We strongly advocate the stricter enforcement of fair housing laws and for more adequate funding of those agencies charged with administering, monitoring, and enforcing existing laws against racial discrimination in obtaining the residence of one’s choice. We advocate greater accountability and transparency in the mortgage industry and more effective oversight of lending agencies to ensure equal access to the funding necessary to obtain housing financing. Increased Federal Funding for Affordable Housing Given the historic exclusion of communities of color from the opportunities to accumulate financial assets, many find themselves at a disadvantage when seeking competitive rates for financing a home. We therefore advocate for increased federal support in building more affordable housing and expanding other opportunities for people of color to purchase their own homes. At the least, the government should provide opportunities for communities of color to enjoy the same benefits provided to white Americans during the 1940s and 1950s. Basic fairness demands that just as these groups were actively excluded from federal mortgage guarantees in the past, they now deserve to be intentionally included today