The ideological explanation of racism is a tool of the capitalist system to distract from the socio economic causes of racism in order to uphold the myth of market equality

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The political economy of race, in short, is systematically suppressed by the ruling ideology. The common sense of "race" trivializes it as a cultural "stigma" that blocks the free play of market forces and produces unfair "discrimination" in the job market that, if left to itself, gives all an "equal opportunity". By turning racism from an economic to a cultural matter, the common-sense view of race diffuses the issue into a private matter of individuals—that is, there is racial discrimination because there are racist people; a circular logic that fails to explain what it claims to. This privatized view of race as discriminatory ideas, however, reflects the rule of a society that enshrines private property as the motor of economic life and normalizes the exploitation of the majority who are therefore forced to produce profit for the few just in order to survive. In other words, the common-sense of race in capitalism silently accepts and normalizes the unequal class relations that systematically contradict the ideal of "equal opportunity" and produce racism today: in an economy based on private control of the social means of production, competition is the rule and racism is a tool for increasing profits because it justifies unequal wages and undermines the unity of workers in the face of their exploiters. This class-consciousness of race is suppressed under the false consciousness that if left to itself the market frees the people from discriminatory ideas and gives everyone a chance to benefit equally: i.e., that the market is "colorblind". The common-sense that race is a matter of ideas that contradict the principles of the free market is a not so subtle ruse to deflect attention from the socio-economic causes of racism in capitalism onto class its cultural effects and serves the interests of the few who alone actually benefit from racism in the world of wage-labor and capital. The cultural debate over the racism of the Republicans, the speculation of whether such and such politician is or is not racist, makes racism a matter of the ideas and beliefs of individuals so as to instill faith in the underlying relations that systematically breed racism today. The Republicans are racist in practice because they are the party of capital. What the Republicans want is what the capitalist bosses want: to roll back all legislation and attack all social norms that in practice serve to strengthen workers' collectivity in the face of capital, especially those that serve the most disadvantaged workers. Their tax policy shifts the social wealth to the few who are already wealthy and away from social programs that would benefit working people. They seek to privatize education so that only the already economically privileged can afford a quality education (Bush's attack on affirmative action policies is not about defending "meritocracy", he himself benefited from quotas that privilege rich alums, but about getting rid of policies that serve to benefit disadvantaged workers). On "jobs" they support the creation of more prisons and a bigger state bureaucracy that will serve the military buildup and in which workers are not protected by unions or legislation. On health care they give more power to the private sector, the insurance lobby and drug companies, whose main priority is profit and not the health care of the people. The ruling party is the dictatorship of capital. It is racist in practice despite whatever "human face" they put on these practices because their policies attack the material benefits of the most oppressed workers, mainly African-Americans and Latinos. The Republicans are the ruling party and racist in practice because they represent the interests of capital in crisis, which can no longer afford the reformist social policies of the past because they cut too deeply into the falling profit margin of big business. It is the deepening of the post-WWII crisis of profitability that explains the contemporary politics, both foreign and domestic, of the US--the debates about what style of rule the Republicans need to stay in power is a cynical alibi for the miserable social conditions they wish to see in place so as to cheapen the value of labor power around the world and increase the rate of profit. The party of capital is doing what the capitalist class has always done at times of crisis: scapegoat the most vulnerable workers for the ills of the capitalist system so as to divide the working class against itself. While the Republicans are now attacking affirmative action and health care, the Democrats under Clinton championed the most brutal rollback of social services ever undertaken in an "industrialized" country. Contrary to the discussions of who is "less" racist and who "might" vote in support of working class interests, what the workers in the US need to be told is that nobody is secure in a world constructed in the interests of profit and that they only undermine their own collective power by going along with policies that only make more and more people desperate enough to work for the barest minimum of subsistence. It is this class-consciousness of the contemporary that most of all is suppressed by the cultural construction of race in the ruling discourses. People are instead taught to see "race" as purely a cultural matter when in actuality race is class in a world divided between capital and wage-labor.

City structuring is a result of capitalism only challenging capitalism can change the nature of the city

(Kimberly DeFazio, English Department at the University of Wisconsin, Jan/feb2002 redcritique.org/JanFeb02/Urbanposttheoryclassandthecity.htm)

The modern city is the product of capitalism; it is a place of commodification—a place where workers and machines are placed together in one part of it to produce wealth, which is then appropriated by the owner who lives in another part. (Pre-capitalist "cities," for the most part, operate by the economics of the "country"—they are not spaces of "commodification"; they are places with markets, not market places.) Both the traditional studies that have focused on the urban aesthetic and the radical left studies that have dwelled on the city as a social space, have tried to account for the fault lines of the city by diverting attention from "class." My argument in this essay is that all other city-practices (the architecture, the urban planning, . . .) are secondary to the primary economic function of the city. The global relations of wage-labor, between those who work for wages and those who appropriate the surplus labor of others, form the underlying class structure of the city, which can only be grasped through a dialectical understanding of the relation between the "concrete" (the local effects of wage labor) and the exploitative structures that give rise to it. I contest the dominant post-al readings of the city, put forward by such theorists as Edward Soja, Michel de Certeau and Anthony King, because in diverting attention from class and on to secondary effects (such as textual and cultural "difference"), they construct a post-causal city—a city of Foucauldian "events"—in which the urban "concrete" is analytically severed from the structures that produce it. And, as is the case with all epistemological strategies which sever cause from effect, the political consequence is a deeply conservative one: it is to occult the possibility of transforming existing relations of economic inequality. Dominant urban theory is, in short, an alibi of global capital. The "city" has become an urgent social question in globalization because cities worldwide have become the most explosive site of social contradiction. As the most concentrated sites of social production and therefore of population, they are the spaces in which devastating poverty and unemployment, lack of healthcare and educational resources, unaffordable and inconvenient public transportation, etc., exist for the majority, along side capital accumulation among a tiny cosmopolitan few, who enjoy lavish gated communities, expert medical care, extravagant physical fitness centers, and the privatization of all city spaces for the exclusive use and benefit of the wealthy. These contradictions exist in the cities of the North and the South, and they have only been exacerbated with the development of what is called "globalization." Cities, in short, manifest what Marx and Engels in the Communist Manifesto call the "simplify[cation of] the class antagonisms: Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other: Bourgeoisie and Proletariat" (474).

A totalizing view of capitalism is critical for analyzing and fixing the problems of urban structuring and racial inequality

(Kimberly DeFazio, English Department at the University of Wisconsin, Jan/feb2002 redcritique.org/JanFeb02/Urbanposttheoryclassandthecity.htm)

What I am referring to in my paper as urban "post-theory" are the various strategies by which dominant theory de-conceptualizes and de-totalizes the city in order to crisis manage the contradictions of class society by blurring the lines of social inequality. Following the postmodern attack against the "totalitarianism" of metanarratives, post-theory is a theory against "theory" as a means for grasping the local in relation to the totality of social relations. It substitutes for "totalizing" materialist theory a theory of "difference"—that is, a meditation on the "specificity" and "indeterminacy" of local differences, which are assumed to exceed systematic explanation. Exemplary of urban post-theory, which substitutes an indeterminate and elusive "complexity" for a rigorous materialist conceptual analysis, is Edward Soja's Postmetropolis, which I am using in this essay as my tutor text. Soja argues that "the contemporary urban social order can no longer be defined effectively by such conventional and familiar modes of social stratification as the class-divided Dual City of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat" (265) and as such what is necessary is to discover the "differences" and "heterogeneity" within the existing global relations. As Soja makes clear: "older polarities have not disappeared. . .[but] a much more polymorphous and fractured social geometry has taken shape" in cities (265). What is necessary to note here is that post-al urban theory does not deny that (class) binaries still exist. Rather class is "complicated" through a deconstructive logic of hybridity, which underwrites Soja's text. Following the protocols of postmodernism, Soja includes class in a constantly shifting "series" of identities—what he calls a "polymorphous" "geometry", which cannot be "contained" by any binary logic (265). On the conceptual logic of hybridity, which as Soja explains, "literally inject[s]" one binary term into another "and vice versa" (199), Soja's text "includes" class, to produce an in-between space which is a space of inclusive differences—that is, a "class" without distinction and without antagonism. The suggestion here is that an emphasis on "difference" is more "inclusive", more democratic than binary logic. But a reading of class which displaces class antagonism is aimed at completely displacing the explanatory value of class as a relation to the means of production—that is, the Marxist theory of class in which one's class position is not a subjective or imagined relation, nor a question of "lifestyle" determined by "consumption" practices, but rather determined objectively by whether one must sell her labor in order to survive, or whether one owns the means of production and therefore profits from the labor of others. The ideological effectivity of the hybrid "third space" of indeterminacy is that it analytically blurs the boundaries between the exploiter and exploited. Social structures are suspended in the post-al theoretical imaginary and urban politics becomes a site of political ambivalence, play and oscillation beyond the antagonism of labor and capital: a supplemental city (what de Certeau refers to as "a gigantic rhetoric of excess"). In such a space, there can be no decisive theory of social relations, and therefore no decisive position from which to combat social inequality. The "complication" of class, in short, is a means of dissimulating the contradictions of global capital, by positing a new "complex" and "complexifying" urban order—urban in-between-ness. I will return in more detail the relation between the assertion of "difference" and the abandonment of struggles for equality later on. But first it is necessary to examine the theory of the "concrete" that is being privileged under the name of "hybridity," "difference" and "particularity," and why this notion of the concrete is viewed as enabling for social struggles—so enabling that it can replace "equality" as a social priority. This question of the concrete is important moreover because the emphasis on the "concrete" informs all of cultural theory today. So, what is meant by the "concrete"? The underlying assumption of post-theory, as I have suggested, is that theory erases specificity and difference; to "reduce" urban life, for instance, to matters of "race" or "class" is to suppress the (in-between) differences of urban life—which is more effectively understood, from this position, on its own particular terms. This is another way of saying that the concrete is understood to exceed conceptuality—the concrete is an excessive particularity, which cannot be contained by any theory; in fact it "resists" conceptuality. It is for this reason that post-theory rejects Marxism as too "general," "totalizing," and "abstract". But one needs to ask: does urban post-theory exceed the very "abstractions" it claims to oppose? Is Soja's "specificity" of "inbetween-ness" really an example of a concrete "beyond" theory?

The logic of the aff is that of retrofit that ultimately reinforces capitalism and dooms the disabled to a slow death

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I said that the steep steps are an apt metaphor for capitalism – well, let me suggest that the retrofit is a logic of late capitalism. That is, the retrofit points up the inadequacy of capitalism’s ability to deal with various crises of its own making and other long-term structural problems. The retrofit is also a logic of fast capitalism – fast capitalism is the tendency of capitalism to extract surplus value with as little investment as possible for the greatest possible return, while adding as little to the real economy as possible, often by means of financial speculation and the quickening of production to the point of making next-to-nothing. This fast capitalism can be seen as the necessary consequence of capitalism. Like fast capitalism, the retrofit marketizes philanthropy and charity – and the industry of temporarily correcting or normalizing disability is massive, one of the largest and fastest growing industries in our modern world, encompassing global pharmaceutical and biotechnology corporations, as well as architects and lawyers and even educational “specialists.” Filtered through fast capitalism, the retrofit offers only a quick and temporary fix to critical socio-political and economic conditions, and it does so with solutions which, as we know, often offer next-to-nothing of practical use. In terms of rights and access for those other bodies that our society has deemed marginal, the retrofit as a logic of late capitalism might actually ensure what Lauren Berlant calls “slow death”: “a zone of temporality [...] of on goingness, getting by, and living on, where the structural inequalities are dispersed, the pacing of their experience intermittent" (759). Slow death through “accommodation” and the supplemental logic of the retrofit would not be a way of “defining a group of individuals merely afflicted with the same ailment, [rather] slow death describes populations marked out for wearing out " (760). “Slow death” might seem a bit maudlin or dramatic, but that shouldn’t deter us from investigating exactly what it means and how it applies. Slow death, to me, seems to be the chronology of accommodation. And, inversely, the faster the capitalism, the more difficult it becomes to recognize the pace and impact of the wearing out, as it gets spread across geographies

Universal design gets co-opted by neoliberalism to expand the reach and power of the market

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It is highly possible that a concept such as Universal Design could simply become a proxy system for demanding the flexibility of bodies, increasing the tenuousness of social and physical structures, re-branding our intellectual work, constantly moving the target for technological innovation as flows of information are made ever more proprietary, and placing the privilege of “design” in the hands of a narrowing and exponentially profiting few. UD seems especially prone to the false promise of expanding – neo-liberalism promises an expanding world, more jobs, greater access to more and more technology and information. But what expands is truly just the market; this expansion is often false, supplemental, derivative; the benefits of this expansion are only ever financial, they flow upwards rapidly, and the benefits that do trickle down do so ever more slowly if they trickle down at all, while risk is transferred downward by the truckload.