# Performance AC NovDec 18

\*portions of the 1AC in red were edited from the original poem

***ODE TO THE ONLY BLACK KID AT THE TOURNMANET (:45)***

**You, it seems,  
are the manifestation  
of several lifetimes  
of toil. *Brown v. Board*  
in flesh. Most days  
the classroom feels  
like an antechamber.  
You are deemed expert  
on all things Wilderson, Warren, Weheliye, Wynter**

**Hell, Aren’t you a slave too?**

**You are every-  
body’s best friend  
until you don’t give them your answers to afropess**

**Hip-hop lyricologist.  
Presumed K debater**

**Free & Reduced sideshow.  
Exception and caricature.  
Too black and too white  
all at once. If you are  
successful it is because**

**The K judge hacked for you  
If you fail it is because  
you were destined to.  
You are invisible until  
they don’t know how to answer black lit**

**that isn’t about your death. Here you are  
star before they render  
you asteroid. Before they  
watch you turn to dust.**

-Ode to the Only Black Kid in the class *Clint Smith is a doctoral candidate at Harvard University and has received fellowships from the National Science Foundation and the Callaloo Creative Writing Workshop. He is a 2014 National Poetry Slam champion and was a speaker at the 2015 TED Conference. His poems have been published or are forthcoming in American Literary Review, Harvard Educational Review, Mason’s Road, Off the Coast, and elsewhere. He was born and raised in New Orleans, LA.*

#### White politicians have been using tropes of black people in order to pass racist policies that further stigmatize and harm our communities writing us off as nothing more but neoliberal devices Jordan 14

Jordan, Taryn, "The Politics of Impossibility: CeCe McDonald and Trayvon Martin— the Bursting of Black Rage." Thesis, Georgia State University, 2014. Taryn D. Jordan is a PhD candidate in the Department Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia.   
https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/wsi\_theses/43 Keller JB

Similar to the nadir of reconstruction when Dubois asked the question, “What does it feel like to be a problem?” I find it useful to ask the same question during our neoliberal era. My preferred definition of neoliberalism is from scholar Stephen Dillon’s work in the article “The Only Freedom I Can See” where he describes the way neoliberalism functions in our lives materially, he states: Neoliberalism manages cultural, political and economic life to prioritize and maximize the mobility and proliferation of capital all costs. Neoliberalism attempts to “free” the market and private enterprise from constraints implemented by the state. This is accomplished by dismantling unions, public funding of social services (welfare, education, infrastructure and so on); environmental, labor, health and safety regulations; price controls; and any barriers to “free trade.” The neoliberal project is to disembed capital from any and all constraints. In addition, any state-owned institutions that control key industries like transportation, energy, education, healthcare, food, water and prisons are privatized in the name of efficiency, deregulation and freedom (Dillon 172). Dillon’s definition characterizes the influence of neoliberalism in everyday life by attempting to free the market of all entanglements, particularly those that are in place by the state to protect people from harm. The implication of neoliberalism’s harm stretches even further when it engages with black life; neoliberal politicians and ideologues are attempting to restrict and destroy institutional systems that the most vulnerable of the black community depend upon to gain entry into education, jobs, participate in civic life, or keep people housed and fed between jobs that have been eroded. The breakdown of these institutions render black people the ultimate neoliberal devices through a combination of the infiltration of crack cocaine in the 1980s into black communities combined with mass incarceration, and lack of access to jobs with a living wage. I use the term neoliberal device to gesture toward the circulation of controlling images of black people that function to move forward or expand neoliberal economic policy for everyone. I use the term device because one of its core meanings is “ a plan, scheme, or trick with a particular aim” (dictionary.com). The controlling images that make up a neoliberal device are tropes of blackness circulated through the media and popular culture. The tropes that function as neoliberal devices are the dangerous black thug, the welfare queen, and the third image I am adding to the list is the missing or dead/trans\* person—three bodies that the state has historically and presently practices techniques of control upon via various social, cultural, legal and political controls. Their emotions are inspired by the quotidian reminder that their bodies have been transformed/harvested into material for various legal and extra legal forms of capitalist circulations; in the process, they as people have been left behind and written off as excess, as other, and as non-being. What binds together these bodies in an unlikely alliance is their queerness as Cathy Cohen2 suggests but also their social death and possibility for material death.

#### AND we have no resistance against this within the political- Black candidates forced into a double-consciousness where they must assimilate to white of whiteness while still maintaining their identities or they risk being further alienated from the space Reid-Brinkley 12

Shanara Rose Reid-Brinkley, 2012, Mammies and Matriarchs: Feminine Style and Signifyin(g) in Carol Moseley Braun's 2003-2004 Campaign for the Presidency Dr. Shanara Reid-Brinkley is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Communication at the University of Pittsburgh, where she also serves as the Director of Debate for the William Pitt Debating Union. Keller JB

The 2003-2004 race for the Democratic presidential nomination began with a barrage of candidates, which did not bode well for the democrats' chances at beating George W. Bush in the 2004 pres- idential election. Considering the increased rhetorical saliency of diversity and representation, the nominees included a Jewish Amer- ican man (Joe Lieberman), an African American man (Reverend Al Sharpton), and an African American woman (Carol Moseley Braun). Senator Moseley Braun, the second African American to enter the race and the only woman, ran for the bid depicting President Bush as a violent, political leader that held America "hostage," contrasting herself as the calm, cooperative, and strong feminine alternative. Moseley Braun's rhetoric failed to produce a significant support base for the campaign and she conceded the race before the primaries. In an interview six years after the election, Moseley Braun said, "This is where being black and female comes in. Because black women have to work on being docile.... Because I missed some of the cul- tural cues, particularly with regard to both gender and race, I was not as sensitive as I should have been. And I paid the price for it."' Her inability to fit within appropriate frames of black femininity cre- ated a perceptual problem that made gaining support for campaign elections difficult. This chapter analyzes news media representa- tion as well as Moseley Braun's presidential campaign discourse to identify the frames that not only constrained her effectiveness as a black female candidate, but also the frames to which she had access to resist dominant images of black femininity. Moseley Braun used feminine style as a rhetorical strategy to create an appropriate per- formance of femininity that was intelligible to a broad and diverse support base. However, given that black political candidates may be deemed single-issue candidates if they explicitly engage race, Mose- ley Braun used feminine style as a rhetorical cover for the African American practice of signifyin'. Intersecting the analysis of gender with race, class, and sexuality highlights the limitations of femi- nine style research, which largely ignores the various interactions of identity-based ideology. In the following sections, I review the contextual considerations associated with an analysis of Moseley Braun's rhetoric. Then I engage contemporary rhetorical theory on feminine style, illustrating the limited nature of this theory, when conceptualized from a non-intersectional framework. In the analy- sis section, I identify three frames-the Good White Mother, the Modern Mammy, and the Black Matriarch-as performance frames that Senator Moseley Braun negotiated during her campaign. Before she ran for national office in 1992, Carol Moseley Braun served as an assistant U.S. attorney, a state legislator, and a county execu- tive. Running during the "Year of the Woman," and arguing that she would be the first black woman senator in history, Moseley Braun beat her white male opponent, Richard Williamson, in her first bid for a congressional seat. Despite her victory politically and histori- cally, Moseley Braun suffered a number of political scandals, includ- ing accusations of campaign money mismanagement and claims of a "mediocre" Senate record that led to her defeat after only one term in office.' Even though there had never before been an African American female member of the Senate, and she actually achieved a laudable Senate record during her years of service,4 she lost her Senate seat in 1998 to Peter Fitzgerald, the republican who outspent Moseley Braun and ran a vicious campaign, with the assistance of republican strategist Karl Rove. Following the loss, President Bill Clinton appointed Moseley Braun ambassador to New Zealand. On September 22, 2003, Moseley Braun formally announced her intention to seek the Democratic nomination for the presidency. Receiving support from notable women's organizations, including the National Organization for Women (NOW) and the National Women's Political Caucus (NWPC), Moseley Braun formulated her campaign discourse to be persuasive to women voters specifically and to the American public in general. Given the early support from women's organizations and Moseley Braun's use of gender as a rhetorical strategy, it is important to analyze the significance of feminine style in her campaign discourse. To do so, I have gathered the speeches, debates, interviews, and Internet chats that feature Moseley Braun, many of which were transcribed on her campaign site. Other artifacts were drawn from transcripts of news televi- sian and radio available online. As the number of actual artifacts for this analysis is quite large, I will not describe the context for each speech; instead, I am interested in the discourses constructed nationally through Moseley Braun's rhetoric and the fact that cam- paign speeches are never limited just to the immediate audiences to which they are delivered. Karlyn Kohrs Campbell argues that women rhetors engage in the use of feminine style as a rhetorical strategy designed to create a space for women's participation in public deliberation.' Bonnie f. Dow and Mari Boor Tonn note that "the feminist agenda in rhetori- cal studies itself has been primarily liberal-feminist in orientation, a clear goal has been to revise the traditional 'great speaker' paradigm to include women rhetors.'" Contemporary rhetorical study of femi- nine style has been used to study women's rhetoric across various rhetorical situations, including the study of women candidates and elected public officials. Feminine style "produce(s) discourse that displays a personal tone, uses personal experience, anecdotes and examples as evidence, exhibits inductive structure, emphasizes au- dience participation, and encourages identification between speaker **and audience.** Analysis of feminine style as a rhetorical strategy has largely been limited to studying the public discourse of white, middle-class women. This is partly a function of the focus of such scholarship on speeches representative of "feminist social reform."' As such, feminine style is a particularly raced and classed theory of criticism. As the women's suffrage and women's liberation movements have proven of great historical import, it is the famous voices of these movements, and the white women engaged in national politics, that have received the most attention in feminist rhetorical scholar- ship on feminine style. Various studies of feminine style note the need for further study into the diversity of "feminine styles.'" Jane Blankenship and Deborah Robson suggest that such "study will be needed to fully address the salience of race, class, age, and ethnic- ity, etc., especially as it relates to women in politics."10 Although their article "focuses only on the commonalities ... found promi- nently placed in the discourse of women in settings of campaigns and governance,''11 the authors argue that they do not "suggest that all women, monolithically, speak alike; rather, the intersections of gender with race, class, etc., mean that a multiplicity of voices help constitute variations within the feminine style."12 More recently, Victoria Pruin DeFrancisco and Catherine Helen Palczewski in *Communicating Gender Diversity* argue that "it is important to make room for diverse feminist theories" in the study of communication.13 The authors note that there are multiple "fem- inine styles," with white, middle-class, straight femininity being but one version. However, the authors do not indicate that this par- ticular style is a citation of a privileged performance of a culturally normative femininity. As a reiteration of a privileged performance of white femininity, it is no wonder that the study of feminine style in communication studies has been largely limited to the study of white, straight, middle-class women.14 Campbell's germinal essay analyzing feminine style in the rhet- oric of Sojourner Truth, Ida B. Wells-Barnett, and Mary Church Ter- rell is one of the few rhetorical analyses of feminine style in black women's political rhetoric15 Campbell seeks to demonstrate that the theory of feminine style is explicative in studying diverse wom- en's rhetoric. However, a reading of Campbell's analysis demon- strates the limited utility of the theory when race is not galvanized as an intersectional tool of analysis. Given that most women of the time period who spoke publicly in support of women's suffrage were white and middle class, Truth's race and class difference from such women is a critical space of evaluating her use of feminine style as a rhetorical strategy. The purpose of Truth's speech is not just to dem- onstrate that women deserve legal and political representation, but also to define womanhood, so that black women who have been tra- ditionally defined outside of the feminine standard can be included. For Truth, the use of her *female* body cannot be disconnected from her use of her body as also *black* to make a political argument. To focus on her rhetoric as an example of feminine style functions to elide the difference that her race and class make. In order to complicate this notion of feminine style, I argue that Moseley Braun spoke to African American discourse communities through the rhetorical strategy of "signifyin(g)," or "the African/ African-American practice of Signification."'6 Henry Louis Gates fr. notes that "Signifyin(g) is black double-voicedness; because it always entails formal revision and intertextual relation."17 In interactions with white America, African Americans have often had to speak out of "two mouths." They developed rhetorical practices designed to communicate with white people according to accepted norms of social interaction. "Double voice" as a rhetorical practice can refer to the rhetorical use of indirection in which the racial other depends on the shared knowledge of blackness being "brought to bear upon the manifest content of the speech act."18 Such a rhetorical strategy is dependent upon a simultaneity: training in black discourse com- munities, its values, beliefs, and sociolinguistic rituals, but also a mastery of the discursive practices of whiteness. Given the history of the enslavement and subjugation of black people in the U.S. con- text, it has been a critical strategy of resistance to develop language and communication strategies that would allow African Americans to convey information and messages while under the surveillance of whites. Although white audience members may often read the rhetoric of black people literally, black discourse can function to produce underlying messages designed to be heard by members of the discourse community, but also misdirect non-members from interpreting or attaching significance to the message. Given the recognizability of feminine style as a rhetorical strategy for women candidates, the "double voice" of feminine style can function as a strategy of misdirection to create a cover for African American sig- nification. As Gates argues, "Repetition, with a signal difference, is fundamental to the nature of Signifyin(g)."19 Because she was one of the highest-ranking black officials in the country during her tenure in the Senate and the first black woman elected to that position, Moseley Braun is an important sociopoliti- cal figure on the American political landscape. Her race and gender increased her public visibility. Thus, any hint of scandal surround- ing her campaign captured media attention. Before her election, Moseley Braun, and her siblings, were accused of taking a $28,000 Medicaid disbursement intended for their mother. Moseley Braun was required to pay the state back $15,000.2°Following her election to the Senate in 1992, an article in *Time* notes that after winning her seat, Moseley Braun rented an expensive penthouse apartment, bought a new SUV and a new wardrobe, and left for a month-long vacation with her fiance (Kgosie Matthews) and son.21 During her unsuccessful run for reelection to the Senate in 1998, the *St. Pe- tersburg Times* referenced"Allegations that Matthews and Moseley Braun improperly spent several hundred thousand dollars of cam- paign donations on luxury vacations, jewelry, and clothing."" A writer for *The Economist* wrote that it was "rumored" that Mose- ley Braun's fiance used campaign money "to cover Braun's personal credit card bills."23 During Moseley Braun's campaign for the presi- dency, the *Christian Science Monitor* noted: "From the start of the race, Moseley Braun was plagued by charges that her office was mis- managed; that she misused campaign funds, spending donated dol- lars on dresses and jewelry; and missed important Senate functions, like orientation."24 The financial issue concerning Moseley Braun's misuse of her mother's Medicaid disbursement was leaked to the press during her 1992 Senate campaign. If this problem had been her only financial hiccup, the senator may not have faced the political difficulties that developed in the 1998 Illinois Senate race and the 2004 presidential race. However, Moseley Braun was not just ac- cused of mishandling campaign funds, she was accused of purpose- fully misusing those funds for her own personal gain. Her personal gain was constructed as feminine as she violated the public trust by allegedly using campaign contributions to purchase clothes and jew- elry. However, her missteps were also constructed within ideologies of race, as Moseley Braun violated acceptable norms of performance for black women in her position.

#### AND - Black debaters experience a sense of double consciousness that drives them away from debate, feeling as if they have to assimilate into the white culture that is debate in order to be successful Dillard-Knox 14

Dillard-Knox, Tiffany Yvonne, "Against the grain : the challenges of black discourse within intercollegiate policy debate." (2014). Electronic Theses and Dissertations. Paper 2161. Tiffany is the Director of Debate [University of Louisville Malcolm X Debate Program](http://louisville.edu/debate/) Bachelor of Arts in Communication, University of Louisville (2001) Master of Arts in Pan-African Studies, University of Louisville (2014) https://doi.org/10.18297/etd/2161 Keller JB

The following year, some of these same debaters had to move up to the most competitive level of Debate, varsity, and found their successes dwindle away. At this level, the changes that Dr. Warner had implemented thus far of increasing the number of Black participants in Debate and coaching these students to simply run arguments that came from a racial perspective, were inadequate motivating factors to retain Black students. Students were leaving because of judge bias and a sense of forced assimilation. Both Peter Loge and Brenda Logue in their analysis of debater retention conclude that there is an approximately forty percent involvement by minorities at the novice, or beginners level of competition. However, these numbers drop around ten percent for women and minorities as they become eligible for the open division, which is the most advanced level of competition. Jack Rogers (1997) conducted a study to examine judges‘ perceptions of ability in eight key areas with regard to competitors‘ gender, race and debate division. The purpose was to measure bias within the dominant culture group that favors competitors that reflect similar dominant ―in-group identity and marginalizes the participation and success of competitors from subdominant ―out-group‖ cultures. The dominant culture that he refers to is that of white males. He concluded that there is a ―strong positive bias on the part of white male critics towards what they perceive of as positive behavior exhibited by white, male competitors (p.18).‖ Rogers goes on to state that this bias is supported by a strong correlation between male competitors‘ behavior and the positive behaviors associated with competition at the open level. Therefore, not only is the activity comprised of mostly white males, the image of a successful debater in turn aligns with the goals, values, practices, and traditions of white males. Shelton K. Hill (1997) conducted a study that examined Black student motivation to participate in intercollegiate Debate. The biggest factor in student motivation was the notion of forced assimilation. He identified four areas of cultural differences between Black students and white students, using the Afrocentric versus Eurocentric paradigms: collectivism versus individualism, subjectivity versus objectivity, communicative differences, and difference in cognitive styles. The difference in cognitive styles, as articulated by Hill, is that Blacks often prefer intuitive reasoning over inductive and deductive reasoning. As a result of these differences, Hill argued, ―African American debaters are faced with a decision to yield to the written and unwritten demands of debate competition, or hold to the demands of African American culture (p. 229) This forced choice is an example of the concept W.E.B. Du Bois (1903) identified in his classic text, Souls of Black Folk, as double-consciousness. This sense of double-consciousness arises from the debaters being forced to choose between the normative cultural traditions of an American institution and Black cultural traditions in cases where these two cultures do not align with one another. Du Bois describes double-consciousness as follows: It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one‘s self through the eyes of others, of measuring one‘s soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness,— an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder. The history of the American Negro is the history of this strife — this longing to attain self-conscious manhood, to merge his double self into a better and truer self. In this merging he wishes neither of the older selves to be lost. He does not wish to Africanize America, for America has too much to teach the world and Africa. He wouldn't bleach his Negro blood in a flood of white Americanism, for he knows that Negro blood has a message for the world. He simply wishes to make it possible for a man to be both a Negro and an American without being cursed and spit upon by his fellows, without having the doors of opportunity closed roughly in his face (p. 8-9).

#### This topic calls for the recognition of bodies in a public light. This topic is grounded from a position of privilege- the assumption that the option for privacy exists for all bodies excludes black and brown candidates who have their lives on display. Forced to conform to normative procedures while also staying true to the person they are. Whiteness demands that we separate our body from our politics while simultaneously forgetting that they’re the ones who made that impossible in the first place.

#### This manifests itself within the debate space. Whiteness polices me into following the “rules of debate.” Disclose or be exposed. Be topical or get dropped. Don’t perform. Don’t emote. Don’t talk about your oppression in that way. The topic is a call for my body. This space is a call for my body. Blackness is always excluded here. Whiteness gets to determine what blackness means, non–black debaters stealing our narratives, stealing our writing, stealing our stories, and you don’t even let us exist in the space to defend ourselves. The very people you CRAVE TO TALK about in every AC advantage, every K alt , YOU have rendered incompatible with this space

#### Thus the ROB is to vote for the debater who best performativly and methodologically disrupts antiblackness in the debate space through affective dialogue

#### The ROJ is to be an accountable educator- judges have an obligation to promote healthy and safe discourse for ALL students in the round. As a judge ONLY YOU have the power to hold students accountable for their actions in rounds. ONLY YOU have the authority to condition the community’s practices

#### Black girl walks into the tournament

#### Black girl is alone here

#### Black in a sea of white faces

#### Black means defending my actions, my words, my speech, my strats, because they’re assumed problematic. Black kids get demonized in this space. I can’t call out my white peers for saying the n-word or calling me slave without being labeled

#### “Too aggressive”

#### “Too Kritikal.”

#### “Too Black”

#### “Too Loud”

#### Gosh, Can’t you run something OTHER than Race?

#### Thus, I affirm a reclamation of blackness in debate through a method of black rage. I don’t have to stay complacent in the ways debate silences and oppresses me. I am a disruption of the debate space Jordan 2

Jordan, Taryn, "The Politics of Impossibility: CeCe McDonald and Trayvon Martin— the Bursting of Black Rage." Thesis, Georgia State University, 2014. https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/wsi\_theses/43 Keller JB

Black rage is akin to a large burning room with the sounds of bullets leaving the chamber of a rifle ready to burst—explode at any time. Black rage is beats on a drum—a reverberation of sounds echoing through metal; black rage is electric. Black rage is a feeling that arises in response to the realities of blackness experienced in the everyday lives of black people. Rage however in of itself as a feeling borders upon the boundaries of psychological meaning, the bursting of the psyche, which could also be accompanied by the possibility of violence. Rage differs from anger in nuance; I prefer rage to anger due to the possibility of violence within the affect, rage as a feeling is both felt within the psyche as well as felt in the body. Research respondents describe physically feeling rage in the throat down through the bowels and describe experiencing a temporary loss of self or of the body—leaving one to feel as though an extreme amount of time has passed when it has only been minutes or seconds (Respondent #2). Further black rage is incredibly powerful because it is the very emotion that one is not supposed to reside within. Black indignation is strictly forbidden, policed, and circulates on the register of the stereotype due to the prevailing respectable notion that peace and inaction are the only way to respond to white supremacy and/or the possibility of death. Religious leaders, politicians, and police officers live in constant fear of black rage because rage in response to black death or black social death can keep one alive as evidenced in the case of CeCe McDonald or mobilize thousands of people across the globe to take radical action in response to the acquittal of George Zimmerman for the death of Travyon Martin. The power of black rage can shift the trajectory of political movements, which is proven by movement work from the past. Black Nationalism birthed from rage and frustration when the status quo of peaceful protest, the political strategy of the civil rights movement, focused upon turning the other cheek. When Stokely Carmichael chanted “black power” “black power” at the March Against Fear in 1966, he said it while pumping his fist in the air and with an earnest look on his face. A new movement was born in the wake of rage that emerged from the feeling and reality of black non-being. Thus black rage becomes political when intertwined with the material realities of both social and material death.

#### AND Black rage solves- Black rage encompasses the possibilities for blackness and other oppressed bodies. My rage is an affective dialogue that bridges the gaps between marginalized bodies Jordan 3

Jordan, Taryn, "The Politics of Impossibility: CeCe McDonald and Trayvon Martin— the Bursting of Black Rage." Thesis, Georgia State University, 2014.  
https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/wsi\_theses/43 Keller JB

I found that rage is incredibly useful; it operates on multiple levels, for individual rage can be a form of self-love by way of self protection as it was in the case of CeCe McDonald. CeCe’s use of black rage had the ability to collectivize her struggle affectively and pull in the struggles of other non-beings to highlight the atrocities of the white supremacy and trans\* misogyny simultaneously disrupting the trans\* women death narrative. On a mass scale when connected to black death, as it was in the Justice for Trayvon March and Rally in Atlanta Georgia, research respondents described black rage as a force, an energy—an affective sense of elation alongside feelings of anger and of being distraught. In protest space the force of black rage filled in the gaps between different non-beings, allowing for an affective feeling of individuals’ liberation being bounded up together. In other words, black rage brought about something that could be called situated solidarity—a phrase that captures the complexity of a form of solidarity centered on analysis dealing with the complexities of power relations between bodies in space. Avoiding the pitfalls of notions of solidarity that can elide the relative privileges among group members, the term situated solidarity both points to an interrelated solidarity that is situated—mindful of one’s own social location and relation to axes of power for non-beings—and that gestures to possible long-term forms of kinship through affective political rupture. Black rage at the Justice for Trayvon Martin March and Rally made research respondents feel as through something else in Atlanta was possible. That something else was the taste and the smell of what a new world in the shell of the old could be—a space of collectivity and a sense of cohesion and togetherness that defies neoliberal forces of separation and isolation. Black rage in both case studies proves to be an affective weapon that can produce the material conditions and the social relations for a new world to emerge.