

*“Go Back to Africa”:  
Afrocentrism, the 2016  
NFL Protests, and Ryan  
Coogler’s Black Panther  
(2018)*

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According to Stephen Howe, “for sheer weight, intensity, persistence of negative prejudice, maybe no human group has been so burdened by others’ attitudes as have Africans – invidious though such comparisons are. A mass of European literature over an extended historical period quite seriously posed the question whether Africans were human at all, and sometimes answered it negatively” (Howe 1998, 23). In spite of and, indeed, in response to such negative perceptions, since before the Civil War and after, the intellectual movements of Pan-Africanism, Negritude, and Afrocentrism worked to counter racial stereotypes about Africa, Africans,

and members of the African diaspora. One can trace assertions of African cultural nationalism in the West to pre-Civil War era African American intellectuals – like Martin Delany and David Walker – and later, beyond the west, to such Francophone African and Afro-Caribbean writers as Aimé Césaire and Léopold Sédar Senghor who established the Negritude literary movement of the 1930s, which asserted a rejection of European hegemonic assimilation in favor of a reclamation and elevation of “Africanness,” calling for the embrace of a Pan-African identity for those in Africa as well as the African diaspora. Howe asserts that while W.E.B. Du Bois may be seen, perhaps, “as the effective initiator of a political [Pan-African] *movement* . . . the most important early exponent of the idea was probably Edward Wilmot Blyden, born in St. Thomas . . . in 1832” (Howe 1998, 25).

It is the discourse that generates this particular “idea” of Africa and Africanness – the idea that posits both Africa and Africans as inferior to their European counterparts and the counter narrative that sees a mythical, pre-trans-Atlantic slave trade, wholistic African culture as superior, the “dramatic affirmation of Otherness, as declaration of cultural independence . . . from intellectuals of African descent,” (Howe 1998, 24) that most interests me in terms of the manifestation of that discourse in the contemporary United States. The concept of an imagined homogenizing shared cultural heritage worked to further the 19th Century “back to Africa”

movement, which urged members of the African American diaspora to return to ancestral homelands in Africa (to which, because of their ancestral forced removal during slavery, they had no access), even as that narrative flattened conceptions of African identity to a mythical ideal. Further, the production of mythic fictional Africas – whether negative, as those recently constructed by Donald Trump’s assertion that African nations are “shithole” countries, or positive, as posited in Stan Lee’s graphic novel *Black Panther* in 1966, at the height of the Civil Rights movement and reimaged by Ta-Nehisi Coates in the age of Trump – have worked to revisit and interrogate the way that citizens of the United States both imagine and often uncritically investigate our mediated understanding of Africa as inaccessible, mythical utopian homeland of the past and an enigmatic *and* often negatively connotated “third-world” of the present.

It is this space of tension and opposition in which I found myself as a postcolonial literature professor over the course of the 2017-2018 academic year. In the fall of 2017, I taught a course called “Literature and Resistance” in which my students examined how the mantra of “go back to Africa” has been weaponized against African American NFL players who took a knee during the National Anthem in protest of police brutality against African Americans. And in the spring, I taught a graduate seminar on African literature in which the class discussed the Afrofuturism of Ryan Coogler’s 2018 film

version of *Black Panther*, in which the narrative of “return” to Africa is explicitly deconstructed. In this essay, I want to discuss how the “back to Africa” mandate as manifest in the current political moment – as either an admonishment by racist white people (as against NFL players who protest) or embraced by African Americans as a strategy for reconnection with an ancestral homeland (as in *Black Panther*) – depends upon the acceptance of a bifurcated identity that negates the liminal space of hyphenated “African-American” identity.

Historically, the prospect of return and the workability (and veracity) of a Pan-African identity, despite the utopian socialism underlying both endeavors – have proven problematic, as evidenced by Marcus Garvey’s unsuccessful attempts during the 19th century to have African Americans return to Africa. As Marie Tyler-McGraw notes of African American “return” voyages to Liberia and Sierra Leone in the 1820s, “reversing the transatlantic voyage did not restore . . . African Americans to their native land because their native land was the United States” (Tyler-McGraw 1999, 200). Literary endeavors to represent the return to Africa, according to Fritz Gysin, “more often than not foreground the enigmatic quality of that endeavor,” and “the path of the return is frequently fraught with insurmountable obstacles but the ties of African American . . . characters to their African origins are much more ambiguous, precarious, and tenuous than some advocates of Afrocentrism would like us

to believe” (Gysin 1999, 183). The narrative of return, whether real or depicted in works of fiction, is at once an important source of validation and pride in a past from which African Americans were forcibly severed because of the slave trade but also a problematic mandate based on an imagined and inaccessible homogenizing African identity. Further, even as Negritude and Pan-Africanism find their origins within the intellectual production of members of the African diaspora, the back to Africa movement was initially the invention of whites, like the church leaders who founded the American Colonization Society in 1816. Even though the aims of the Society were honorable and its members were opposed to slavery, the Society’s goal of “returning” African Americans to Africa was viewed with suspicion and resisted by many African Americans as a racist project: “free blacks shared [with the American Colonization Society] the assessment that they were suspended between degradation and honor, yet most did not concur with the solution offered” (Gysin 1999, 192) – a “return” to Africa.

These fraught and often-contradictory circumstances – the desire to embrace an imagined mythical African identity and the resistance to white authored narratives of African return – unfortunately continue to shape discussions of race in the United States, particularly in the wake of the 2016 presidential election of Donald Trump, a candidate who during the preceding eight years, challenged President Obama’s legitima-

cy on the basis of “birtherism,” the bogus claim that Obama was born in Africa – in Kenya – and not the United States. The 2016 decision of Colin Kaepernick, formerly of the San Francisco 49ers, to sit and then kneel during the National Anthem as a protest to police brutality resulted in both the support of many of his fellow NFL colleagues who chose to kneel as well, and his not being signed the following year. Kaepernick explained his action as follows: “I am not going to stand up to show pride in a flag for a country that oppresses black people and people of color.” He noted, “to me, this is bigger than football and it would be selfish on my part to look the other way. There are bodies in the street and people getting paid leave and getting away with murder” (qtd. in Wyche 2016). Subsequent protests by NFL players in 2017 drew consistent criticism from Trump, who conflated Kaepernick’s and other players’ peaceful protest of police brutality with disrespect for the flag, for the military, and for the country. During an incessant racist Twitter rampage over the course of the 2017 NFL season, Trump, according to P.R. Lockhart, “seized an opportunity to weaponize patriotism,” shifting the focus from racial profiling by the police to “ungrateful” players’ lack of patriotism (Lockhart 2018).

The NFL protests began when Colin Kaepernick, then quarterback for the San Francisco 49ers, took a knee during the U.S. National Anthem during the 2016 season. Kaepernick’s protest was in response to police bru-

tality against African Americans, but that original narrative was co-opted by President Donald Trump who, on Twitter and elsewhere, claimed that Kaepernick and other players who followed his example were disrespecting the flag, the military, and the country. What followed as the subsequent polarization of fans into camps for or against the players' right to protest, Trump's incessant Twitter drum beat of coded racist language – “ungrateful” serving as a contemporary enunciation of “uppity” – and of calls by African American leaders, intellectuals, and politicians to boycott the NFL when team owners began to bow to Trump's pressure to enforce standing during the anthem. I would have boycotted the NFL in 2017 if I hadn't already boycotted it for two other reasons, primarily because I hate football and secondarily because, even as I am aware of the fact that the NFL clearly has a race problem, it also has a long-standing gender problem, as evidenced by the slaps on the wrists that have historically been doled out to players who beat their wives and girlfriends<sup>1</sup>. That said, life generally following the election of Donald Trump generated some strange and unexpected alliances, and in the case of Kaepernick and likeminded players, I found myself siding with the players. Furthermore, this microcosm of specificity illustrated by Kaepernick's establishment of the NFL as flashpoint for racial injustice and protest in the contemporary moment highlights the way that the call to “go back to Africa” has re-entered the U.S. lexicon in ways that subvert the moral imperative,

however flawed, of that movement's original iteration – and how we, as educators and scholars, might utilize the NFL protests as a teachable moment about discourse and disruption in order to uncover how a peaceful protest in response to a history of institutionalized racism that began with the slave trade was displaced by a none-too-subtle white supremacist narrative of what it means to be a patriotic citizen in 21st century America.

To begin, it is clear that the U.S. president has no concept of or respect for Africa or its diverse populations; he cannot be bothered to learn the names of African countries, calling Namibia “Nambia” during a meeting at the U.N. in September 2017: “Nambia’s health system is increasingly self-sufficient,” he noted (qtd. in Taylor 2017). Further, his picture of Africa and Africans is a one-dimensional stereotypical trope based on media images of privation and disease, as was apparent when, in June of 2017, he “reportedly grew enraged . . . over the number of visas awarded to travelers from certain countries, grumbling that 15,000 Haitians who entered the United States in the preceding months ‘all have AIDS’ and that the 40,000 Nigerian visitors would never ‘go back to their huts’ in Africa” (Mark 2017). And in January of 2018, Trump asked lawmakers, “why are we having all these people from shithole countries come here?” (Dawsey 2018), in reference to protections currently offered to immigrants from Haiti, El Salvador, and African countries. Trump asked as well why

the United States cannot bring more immigrants from Norway, a predominantly white country. In addition to Trump's expressed desire for Nigerians to "go back" to their African huts, there have been repeated calls (by white people) for black people in the U.S. to "go back to Africa" since Trump's election. In 2017, St. Petersburg mayoral candidate Paul Congemi told a political opponent that reparations for slavery have been made in the form of the election of Barack Obama. He continued to rail against African American voters by saying, "My advice to you, if you don't like it here in America, planes leave every hour from Tampa airport. Go back to Africa. Go back to Africa. Go back!" (Wootson, Jr. 2017).

I want to make clear that the admonition that one should go "back" to a place to which one has never been erases a legacy of slavery that spanned centuries and constituted the forced removal of millions of African peoples from a "relatively short stretch of the African coast": "more than 85 percent of Africans coming to the New World left from four . . . regions, all adjacent to each other. . . from Rio Assini in West Africa to just south of Benguela in Angola" (Eltin 1999, 25). To suggest that peoples of African descent "go back" situates their arrival in the United States in the present and disregards the lack of agency of enslaved people in their leaving Africa centuries ago. Such a directive implies a multitude of choices – to leave Africa, to stay in the United States, and to "go back" to Africa – where none exist. And such

contemporary instances are increasingly common. After a Trump election rally scheduled in Chicago was called off due to violent clashes in March 2016, African American protestor Jedadiah Brown told the gathered audience, “I was told to go back to Africa” (“Trump Protestor” 2016). In December 2016, just after Trump won the presidential election, Nikita Whitlock, running back for the New York Giants, was the victim of a home invasion during which the perpetrators left racist messages scrawled on the walls of his apartment; among them, “go back to Africa” (Boren and Payne 2016). Trump’s speeches prior to his election often centered on racist statements, and his defense of white supremacist marchers in Charlottesville, Virginia as “fine people” in August 2017 further emboldened acts of overt and often violent racism against minorities; the next month, Mississippi second grade teacher Cammie Rone posted a racist rant on Facebook in which she stated that “if blacks in this country are so offended, no one is forcing them to stay here. Why don’t they pack up and move back to Africa where they will have to work for a living. I am sure our government will pay for it! We pay for everything else”. Despite claiming that her profile was hacked and that she only posts about “cows, recipes and home improvements,” (Miller 2017) Rone was fired for the sentiment.

If these are the negative and racist manifestations of the discourse of African return, then Ryan Coogler’s *Black Panther* (2018) attempts a reclamation of the overtly

racist back to Africa narrative, even as it makes clear that the narrative of return is problematic and deeply unsatisfying. In its depiction of Wakanda, a fictional African country never colonized by western powers, the film jabs at the edges of colonization; Killmonger's (Michael B. Jordan) statement that "the sun will never set on the Wakandan empire," and Shuri's (Leticia Wright) calling Everett (Martin Freeman) "colonizer" are cases in point. And the film makes explicit reference to the trans-Atlantic slave trade and its legacy, when Killmonger asks that T'Challa (Chadwick Boseman) "bury me in the ocean with my ancestors" at the end of the film. Further, the film offers a truly pan-African cast: many of the actors are African American, but others are from Ivory Coast, Giana, Kenya, and Ghana. The Afrofuturist Wakanda, the "tech-forward, eco-conscious, never-before-colonized country," (Ford 2018) is a society that is depicted on film via elements of various African cultures, including Ruth Carter's costuming, which was inspired by the "hand-dyeing, and beading techniques of the Tuareg, Zulu, Maasai, Himba, and Dinka peoples," and

the impeccable Ghanaian-inspired tailoring of Oswald Boateng, as well as Ikiré Jones's florid textiles, which reimagine Nigerian culture through high Renaissance art. South Africa's MaXhosa by Laduma, with its futuristic knitwear based on graphic Xhosa prints, and the peculiar silhouettes and color clashing of Duro Olowu—the Nigerian designer who dressed Michelle Obama—add an avant-garde

edge. Together, the styles channel the dandified elegance of Congolese *sapeurs* and the transgressive spirit of the Afropunk festival to express the characters' wide range of personalities. (Ford 2018)

Further, Wakandan text was inspired by Nsibidi script from southeast Nigeria, and the all-female army of the Dora Milage was inspired by the female fighting forces from 17th century Dahomey, which is currently the Republic of Benin (Chutel and Kazeem 2018). The film's homage to an Afrofuturist vision of pan-African culture and identity is provocative and compelling, even as, with the character of Killmonger, the film complicates and problematizes the pro "back to Africa" narrative.

*Black Panther* opened nationwide in 2018 and outsold more pre-release tickets than any other super hero movie in history, and has been heralded as "revolutionary," "a movie about what it means to be black in both America and Africa—and, more broadly, in the world" (Smith 2018). Wakanda was potentially based, according to Chadwick Boseman, who plays Black Panther on screen, on a fictional version of "the Mutapa empire of 15th-century Zimbabwe" (Ito 2016). According to Nicolas Barber, with *Black Panther*, "Coogler and his team had a more radical vision in mind – more radical, indeed, than that of any previous Hollywood studio blockbuster," and he notes that the film succeeds in its radical intentions: "Ask yourself: when was the last time any feature

film, whether or not it was made by a Hollywood studio, posited that an African country might be the happiest, most prosperous and most scientifically advanced place on Earth?”. Barber recognizes the prevalence of strong female characters and suggests that “Coogler has taken every genre in which black characters are traditionally sidelined, and then, with considerable flair and boldness, he’s combined those genres and put black characters right at their heart. The one genre which he doesn’t quite nail, ironically, is the superhero genre” (Barber 2018). My take is slightly different. Despite the fact that the internet is awash with articles like Barber’s that describe the movie as “radical,” as Jeffrey C. Pasley notes, “the superhero concept has always been liberal, rather than radical at heart,” (Pasley 2003, 265) and that definitely seems to be the case with this movie, even as the film certainly engages with contemporary politics with regard to race, gender, and capitalism. Still, because it is a super hero movie, it necessarily employs so many of what I think are tired tropes of the genre: tortured good guys and clearly bad bad guys, patriarchy (despite the strong female presence in this film), and, in the character of Everette, a white male savior. Even this movie didn’t escape that one. My sense is that the film gets the super hero genre right, but it does so at the expense of being truly radical.

In many ways, *Black Panther* follows nearly plot point for plot point the narrative trajectory of every other super hero movie ever made – starting with Richard Don-

ner's 1978 *Super Man* starring Christopher Reeve: background story, which establishes the place from which our hero originates, a dead father (for whose death the hero is often somehow responsible or for which the hero feels responsible. In the case of Patty Jenkins's *Wonder Woman*, it is a dead mother, but that movie is clearly the exception), the battle with the shadow self, which the hero initially loses but then returns to ultimately win, and the subsequent establishment of the "new way forward" narrative. But the new way is never really new, which is why super hero narratives are never revolutionary and radical; in the case of *Black Panther*, the new way is marked by the re-establishment of the aristocracy, temporarily toppled by the inner-city "thug" Killmonger, Malcolm X's "by any means necessary" to T'Challa's cautious pacifism. Killmonger is the truly radical character, and as the radical character, he has to die – even though he is the one who is *right*, the one who seeks justice for centuries of oppression. As Frantz Fanon notes, as Malcolm X recognized, and as Audre Lorde echoed when she asserted that one cannot dismantle the master's house with the master's tools (Lorde 1983, 94-101), "in its bare reality, decolonization reeks of red-hot cannonballs and bloody knives," and decolonization "can only succeed by resorting to every means, including, of course, violence" (Fanon 2004, 3). For Killmonger, the return to Africa is about fortifying an arsenal for the liberation of members of the African diaspora abroad; it is not about leaving the present for some imagined idea

of an inaccessible past. T'Challa refuses to yield to Killmonger's demands and when, at the end of the film, he asks a wounded Killmonger to join him in his non-violent and non-activist isolationist leadership, Killmonger says he would rather die: "bury me in the ocean with my ancestors who jumped from the ships, because they knew death was better than bondage". The Middle Passage marks the space of the liminal, the space of unhomeliness and negation of the self; that Killmonger wants to be buried at sea constitutes the return narrative as a fiction, one marked by lack of access to ancestral African homelands as well as a desire to escape the oppression and displacement of life in the United States. As always, it seems, the narrative of return is deeply dissatisfying.

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What constitutes a teachable moment with regard to such dissatisfaction and in the wake of so much racist provocation inherent in contemporary calls by whites for African Americans to "go back to Africa"? After Dylan Roof shot and killed nine African American churchgoers in Charleston, South Carolina in 2016, a group of a scholars/activists created the Charleston Syllabus (C. Williams, K. Williams and Blain 2016) as a way of compiling primary and secondary readings for educators and the general public in order to provide context and to help guide civil discussion surrounding the event. Following the example of the Charleston Syllabus, the UVA Graduate Coalition put together a Charlottesville Syllabus to pro-

vide resources for teaching and understanding the white supremacist march that took place there in the summer of 2017 (UVA Graduate Coalition 2017). So in an upper level English course called Literature and Resistance that I taught in the fall of 2017, my students constructed an NFL Syllabus<sup>2</sup> in order to analyze and contextualize the discourse generated by and about the NFL protests that began with Colin Kaepernick in 2016. This was a project in which my students examined the discourse generated by Kaepernick's initial act of resistance, and during which each student was assigned a topic related to the event, tasked with researching that topic and finding two primary and two secondary sources about it. Each wrote a brief summation and analysis of that topic. To quote Paul Bové, in the chapter on "Discourse" in *Critical Terms for Literary Study*, discourses "produce knowledge about humans and their society," and an analysis of discourse aims to "describe the surface linkages between power, knowledge, institutions, intellectuals, the control of populations, and the modern state" (Bové 1995, 55-56) as these intersect in systems of thought, and as represented in texts. We come to an understanding of specific circumstances, peoples, events, and cultures through the media and through art. The narrative that we construct—and that we challenge—is the result of multiple, often contradictory, ways of reading events.

The final syllabus consists of two sections, "The History," which is made up of the subsections of "The

National Anthem,” “The First Amendment to the Constitution,” “The Invented Tradition of Standing for the National Anthem,” “Colin Kaepernick,” “The History of the NFL,” and “A Previous Controversy: The Redskins.” The second section, “The Discourse,” examines the way that the narrative of the protest was disseminated by such entities as Donald Trump, the mainstream media, comedians and late-night television hosts, and musicians, as well as how social media interpreted, analyzed, and challenged those narratives on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. One of my students (Hurley 2017) discovered that the third verse of the National Anthem included the lyric, “No refuge could save the hireling and slave from the terror of flight or the gloom of the grave,” which ostensibly refers to African American slaves who fought for the British during the Revolutionary War on promises of freedom after the war ended. As a result of this verse, many African Americans recognize “Lift Every Voice and Sing,” written in 1900 by James Weldon to commemorate Lincoln’s birthday, as “the Black National Anthem.” My students also learned that Kaepernick’s activism was informed by deep reflection and scholarship: according to another student, he “attended a summer course on the subject of black representation in popular culture at UC Berkeley. He was given help and support to be informed on these subjects by people like his girlfriend Nessa, who is more open about her feelings on the subject of the Black Lives Matter movement and, through recommen-

dations from her and his professor Ameer Hasan Loggins, read books related to the issues” (K. Smith 2017).

Further, in a subsequent in-class conversation, we discussed the fact that in the summer of 2017, Kaepernick travelled to Ghana; he embraced the rhetoric of “going back to Africa” and travelled to the continent. On July 4, he wrote a post on Instagram:

...in a quest to find my personal independence, I had to find out where my ancestors came from. I set out tracing my African ancestral roots, and it led me to Ghana. Upon finding out this information, I wanted to visit the sites responsible for myself (and many other Black folks in the African Diaspora) for being forced into the hells of the middle passage. I wanted to see a fraction of what they saw before reaching the point of no return. As Kaepernick notes, “I spent time with the/my Ghanaian people, from visiting the local hospital in Keta and the village of Atito, to eating banku in the homes of local friends, and paying my respects to Kwame Nkrumah's Memorial Park. I felt their love, and truly I hope that they felt mine in return” (Gleeson 2017).

When he was a student at Howard University, *Black Panther's* Chadwick Boseman, like Kaepernick, also travelled to Ghana. Further, when he got the role of T'Challa, Boseman asked his father to take a DNA test from AfricanAncestry.com and discovered genetic linkages to

the Yoruba of Nigeria, the Limba and Mende of Sierra Leone, and the Jola from Guinea-Bissau (Eells 2018, 37). And Coogler's codename for the film was Motherland because "we were making a film about what it means to be African. . . . It was a spirit that we all brought to it, regardless of heritage" (qtd. in Eells 2018, 35). The rhetorical construction of going "back" implies, as it always has, a false supposition that African Americans can return to the place of their ancestral origin, or more specifically, to their place of birth. Further, to go "back to Africa" indicates that Africa is a singularity; to "go back to Africa" is to return home to a homogenous culture and landscape, but in the racist contemporary moment of the United States, for Kaepernick, Boseman, Coogler, and others who "go back," the story is also one of strength and healing, a story about a specific African location that can be shared with others. The discourse generated around such positive experiences of "return" work to fill in centuries of lost history for African Americans even as they also offer a corrective to racist and ignorant perceptions of African countries as "shitholes."

After France won the 2018 World Cup in July, while hosting the *Daily Show* Trevor Noah claimed that "Africa won the world cup." French Ambassador Gerard Araud wrote Noah a letter in response, stating that "nothing could be less true" and argues that even though many of the players' parents were born in African countries, the players are citizens of France, who are "proud of

their country,” and he further notes that their various backgrounds are testament to France’s rich diversity. Noah corrects him, refusing the ambassador’s attempt at erasing France’s imperial legacy: “I’m not trying to be an asshole, but I think it’s more a reflection of France’s colonialism”. According to Araud, “there is no hyphenated identity” in France, as is the case in the U.S. Noah addresses the Ambassador’s position by stating that he understands that racists in France do what racists in the United States do: they “use the fact that these players are of African descent to shit on their Frenchness. So they go, ‘you’re not French. You’re from Africa. Go back to where you came from.’” Noah then asks “why can’t they be both” African and French, and claims that what he loves about America is that “people can celebrate their identity in their Americanness,” a position that allows them to experience the “duality of the two worlds” (“Between the Scenes: The Daily Show” 2018).

Perhaps Noah’s assertion is somewhat idealistic, particularly in an historical moment in the United States when increasingly racist rhetoric seems to deny African Americans their Americanness in its insistence that they go back to Africa. In her 2015 book *The Bright Continent: Breaking Rules and Making Change in Modern Africa*, Nigerian American journalist Dayo Olopade writes “it amazes me how little the world thinks of Africa. I mean this in terms of time and reputation,” and her work offers a corrective to outdated negative ste-

reotypes and grand mythologies: “the continent needs to be seen and heard, not imagined and then ritually dismissed” (Olopade 2015, 4-6). In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, “exploring the possibility of leaving the United States made apparent the two opposing yet intertwined strands in African American thought: a radical and complete African separatism, which was yet thoroughly American in its vision” (Gysin 1999, 193). In many ways, Coogler’s film is both a utopian homage to such an imagined society as well as a commentary on the racist legacy that clamors for an impossible return to the Motherland by the displaced African American whose legacy is forced removal from it, and Kaepernick’s decision to “go back” and share his experience in rich detail is a reclamation of an identity denied to him when he was effectively ostracized and unsigned by the NFL. One way that Africa can exist beyond the imaginary is to fully engage with the historical legacy that has generated the present manifestation of the back to Africa narrative in all of its current iterations: Africa as a concept is always a fiction shaped by the outsider’s experiences and cultural baggage, and the narrative of return (depending upon who is telling it) can be a racist mantra, an ambivalent middle passage, or an empowering experience.

## NOTES

1. For more on the NFL's domestic violence issue, see Deborah Epstein, "I'm done Helping the NFL Players Association pay lip Service to Domestic Violence Prevention," Washington Post, June 5, 2018, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/im-done-helping-the-nfl-pay-lip-service-to-domestic-violence-prevention/2018/06/05/1b470bec-6448-11e8-99d2-0d678ec08c2f\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.a82ff9156874](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/im-done-helping-the-nfl-pay-lip-service-to-domestic-violence-prevention/2018/06/05/1b470bec-6448-11e8-99d2-0d678ec08c2f_story.html?utm_term=.a82ff9156874).

2. Literature and Resistance, "The NFL Syllabus," Medium, Dec. 3, 2017, <https://medium.com/@ellesmythy/the-nfl-syllabus-c4eff918bfc3>.

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