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# **Political Flip-flopping, Political Responsibility, Current Governance, and the Disenfranchised**

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## *Introduction*

This article discusses the implication of political flip-flopping which directly diminishes political responsibility. Political flip-flopping requires the incorporation of amnesia (deliberate forgetting) to simultaneously sustain dominance, privilege, and advantages on the one hand, while apportioning violence and disadvantages to already vulnerable citizens on the other. There is clearly an agitation around the U.S. regarding where almost everything stands. Positive precedence regarding rights, justice, and fairness appears to have little or no effect on current practices of political governance. Whereas election promises in 2016 spoke of re-enlivening specific versions of the American experience, the actual current governance posture in the U.S. appears to dismantle reasonable programs that were to guarantee rights, health, environmental protection, and other safeties. The 2016 elections re-divided the nation along bitter racial, economic, political, and religious lines. While vulnerable and disadvantaged populations received open threats and negation, the promises made to poor Whites, who for years believed they are not poor, vulnerable, or comparable to traditionally poor groups (Native and African Americans, and Latinos and Asians), were instantly reneged as the current administration assumed office. The administration flipped from promises to instantly empower billionaires and powerful corporate groups in its attempt to consolidate absolute control of economic and political advantages. In the tradition of neoliberal capitalism, the empowered billionaire class, now fully in control in Washington, DC, makes it possible for powerful corporate groups to demand control by way of privatizing everything, even including the Federal Aviation Authority (FAA) Air Traffic Control (ATC).

Nestled under the aggressive moves of massive and super-powerful corporations to take over the nation and turn most citizens into slavish, subservient, low paid laborers, is the 33% disapproval rate of the current president's leadership (Stafford, 2017). However, the interactive dynamics of such low quality leadership implicates policies and political responsibility which most citizens find distressing. This means that most citizens are aware of the negative impact of the current political and economic configuration driven by the political class. Moreover and unfortunately, the traditional

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racial group that has been disadvantaged since its coerced economic service as slaves, and its suffering under old and new Jim Crow laws (Alexander, 2012; DeVernay, 2016), is now being re-forced to accept insecurity, fear, and augmented insignificance. Because the U.S. positions itself as the global beacon of justice, the political class maneuvers under the complex radar of political flip-flopping and amnesia to empower specific groups over and against others. Political flip-flopping is a multidimensional tool used by the powerful and political class to accomplish a desired subjective agenda. In the 2016 elections, it was used to coerce votes from vulnerable and often less historically compromising citizens. Defined by minimal education, increasing poverty, as well as immutable religious, political, and economic positions, this group of citizens succumbed to electoral violent language and directed its anger (as they were told) on their fellow vulnerable citizens. Tricked to expect guaranteed change in their condition, the group overwhelmingly flooded the polls. Oddly, the covert use of political flip-flopping sustained by amnesia appears to also marginalize this group. Though white, in the eyes of the political class this group is after all just poor mass laborers with low skills and minimal education, who know no better. The implications of the indiscriminate uses of current federal powers appear to trump all poor citizens, empower specific groups over others, remove achieved and natural rights, dismantle environmental rules, and cause the re-initialization of incivility, racial and religious divisiveness, as well as empower harming behaviors that sow discord in the overall American experience.

*Political Flip-flopping*

Political flip-flopping and political responsibility are governance behaviors locatable within the history of U.S. political culture. Both practices have been mainstream within the dimensions of federal and state governance for years. However, both practices are consistently opposed to each other. Whereas political flip-flopping seeks constant social dissonance, political responsibility seeks social harmony in diversity. In the course of political experience, political flip-flopping has come to dominate social arrangements, while political responsibility has been weakened. Somehow, an oath taken to protect citizens' rights, dignity, and liberties, appears to endear the political class to mostly the group of citizens that guarantee their current and future economic survival. The political class realizes the power and privilege of holding political office in the U.S., so it uses political flip-flopping to delicately maneuver between the constituents who vote them into office and the super PACS and the extremely economically powerful corporate community who demand higher allegiance. Flipping from one group to the other when convenient is part of the increasing political prostitution that engages in the high appreciation of, and high respect and interest in, extremely powerful groups who supply monetary advantages, while encouraging the political class to pay minimal attention to the constituents who sanctioned them into political office. All of this makes political flip-flopping extremely advantageous.

*Political Responsibility*

Conversely, political responsibility is the cornerstone of democratic behavior, protecting all citizens by guaranteeing equal access to all common resources (including law and policing), protecting economic behaviors and public spaces, and ensuring equal uses of public and natural resources (land, water, air, etc.). Political responsibility is not only a governance behavior, it is also a civil behavior nestled within citizens' interactive engagement with each other. Political responsibility, as Young (2011) understands it, is also part of the foundation of the responsibility for justice. This means that citizens and their political class are always focused on protecting each other's rights and securities while guaranteeing the framework upon which human solidarity is built. Unfortunately, the increasing disadvantageous nature of political responsibility is anchored in the fact that its practice and benefits yield no substantive monetary advantages to political practitioners other than what is due each citizen, and guarantees that adverse conditions that affect disenfranchised groups are resolved. In the U.S., the "elected" political class just keeps doing "its thing" without any attention to the cries and challenges of disadvantaged fellow citizens. The questions of redress of the justice and prison systems, reparations to Native and African Americans, inclusive and compassionate economics, and responsible just and fair labor laws are all echoes of the transformative justice initiated by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and for years the efforts of Dr. Chomsky. Ironically, these massive concerns are mostly academic discussions rather than efforts taken up by the political class to engage them as actual political practices in view of positive changes. In this scenario, citizens constructed as insignificant and undeserving are assigned minimal or no space in terms of distributive justice, or even the basic practice of political responsibility. Moreover, specifically for the political class, the practice of political responsibility has no high compensatory value to fill subjective coffers which the political class saves for rainy or retirement years.

#### *The Implications of Political Flip-flopping*

There is an interesting definition of political flip-flopping from Liasson (2008), which includes the simple behavior of politicians changing views. However, political flip-flopping is an ideological tool that is used to pursue subjective advantages while simultaneously rejecting disadvantages. In the hands of the political class, it is a much more powerful tool that is used to maintain continued social control with the sophisticated use of amnesia. More perniciously, the political class employs political flip-flopping to promote deliberate inclusive exclusion. Inclusive exclusion is the interplay between amnesia, posterity, and selected memory which guarantees rewards and benefits for some citizens and not others. In other words, linking political flip-flopping and amnesia generates obsessive and deliberate remembering of some citizens and the things relevant to their progress, while simultaneously and deliberately forgetting specific groups of citizens and anything relevant to their advancement. The political class, mostly members of the dominant group, is always aware of the harms its past and current behavior have wrought on vulnerable groups (Native Americans, African Americans, Latino Americans, some poor whites, and other minorities). To protect itself and its

posterity, the political class continues to flip-flop, also cleverly inserting amnesia at different points of U.S. history to guarantee against accusations of improprieties in the past, to sustain current advantages by insisting that it is evolving (Leibovich, 2015), and to secure future benefits. For instance, the political class and the dominant group fall silent as past and current textbooks limit or show no presence of U.S. diverse groups and their contributions to the American experience. Even though a few scholars try to reconstruct the contributions of various groups in the U.S., the damage has been done. Within the general population, the presence of amnesia is so widespread that it allows the political class, and those it chooses to protect and who choose to deride others, to flip-flop on any issue whenever they choose. Flip-flopping allows interminable and inaccurate statements about everything, including the U.S. Constitution, U.S. history, and socio-cultural contributions (inventing alternative facts) to justify all kinds of subjective interests and positions. Simply inventing alternative facts is one thing, but using them to exclude fellow citizens from opportunities, benefits, and quality of life is destructive but part of the continuing legacy to diminish resistance (see Fraser, 2015) and maintain political and economic flip-flopping in view of sustaining subjective advantages.

It follows then that political flip-flopping is characterized by several dimensions, the most obvious being the ability to evade conditions that put the dominant group and its political class in awkward positions, while simultaneously allowing them to slide into subjective advantages to protect themselves and their selected populations. A good example of a sophisticated flip-flopping is characterized by the behaviors of the current administration. The deliberate daily Tweets and construction of impossible and trauma-inducing scenarios are the classic flip-flopping away from actual political responsibility to all citizens. These specific flip-flopping actions detract from the responsible effort to focus on the crucial issue of racial divisiveness increasingly impairing the U.S. As media systems focus on the daily behaviors at the presidential office, they are less likely to pay attention to the efforts of well-meaning citizens to bring about respect, dignity, security, and equal treatment first to those massively disadvantaged, and then to all citizens. Consider that since the processes of creating adjustments and inclusion are legislative directives, which require Congressional debates in view of actions, racial profiling, racial harming, police brutality, mass incarceration specifically of African Americans and Latinos, and discriminatory hiring practices, are shoved onto the back burner.

### *Flip-flopping, Subjectivity, and Violence*

Whereas political responsibility is action that is tied to positive and inclusive results for the sake of citizens' well-being, political flip-flopping is a tool used at the politician's discretion to determine the best subjective condition for the self and those closest to the self. In 2016, the U.S. experienced a bitter reminder that race, class, gender, religion, and the strange admiration of exclusive nationalism were alive and well. The elections of 2016 showed the characteristic nature of flip-flopping. Politicians who

furtively signed up for the advancement of all citizens regardless of race and gender in previous years, suddenly flipped to side with a political party, a race, nationalism, and pretend religiosity. They conveniently flipped scripts in every community they visited to maneuver in such a way that protected their subjective interests in view of whoever won the election. Suddenly, the phrased code “make America great again” emerged to openly suggest that all citizens were not equal. In other words, certain citizens were not “real” Americans. President Obama was the leader of those individuals masquerading as Americans, and so the end of his presidency was a chance to shut down any progress those socially constructed undeserving groups had made. As well, President Obama (the first U.S. African American president) became the central figure of electoral vilifications. His tenure as U.S. president and all his work on national diversity and advancement were cast as African Americans and minority groups attempting to destroy the legacy of white rule and white control across the nation. In the early days of the current administration, using the best of the flip-flop ideology, it was quite clear that it thought, using the New Jim Crow (Alexander, 2012), it could discredit one specific African American super-star team member of President Obama’s administration, quickly falsely incriminate, and then take her out of political and social circulation.

Moreover, President Obama’s presidency was used to find fault with everything that has gone wrong in the U.S. since President Nixon’s administration. President Obama, an African American president, was now the “catch anger” used to agitate the poor and mostly under-protected and minimally educated white citizens, literally coercing them to head to the polls to re-enthroned a wealthy white male who flipped the script to promise jobs, better conditions, and control at all cost. The public policy and manifesto were the promise to repeal “Obama healthcare” and to build a wall to resolve U.S. immigration issues. That manifesto brought out massive, negative nationalism sentimentalized by addiction to segregation, racism, and homophobia. It is interesting that when Europeans migrate in droves (some documented, others not) into the United States, the immigration system is just fine, but when individuals other than Europeans (some documented, others not) migrate to the United States, calls by European Americans who feel threatened draw out political flip-flopping in both the political class and the dominant public.

Conversely, the pompous ideologies of the 2016 election campaign assumed incorrectly that good governance is the function of specific kinds of wealthy, white males, always in control of the United States. Good governance is actually the function of any ethical leader-human being who seeks the collective well-being of all citizens. “Make America great again” was the code for all who cared about a specific kind of wealthy whiteness and its political views to rally for action. Political responsibility was then flipped to carry a very different meaning (alternative facts). The new “political responsibility” presented to poor white citizens coerced them to vote a wealthy white male back into the presidential office for their own sake, safety,

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and protection. The call was unequivocally clear, and the votes were not to be for a white woman or just any white male linked to President Obama's administration. During the 2016 elections, political flip-flopping also emerged as an enhanced tool linked to violence, social manipulation, and social control.

*Flip-flopping U.S. Greatness*

The election of 2016 and the political elite sanctioned into the federal presidency and other federal spaces stand contrary to true political responsibility. The United States is "already great" and does not need to be "great again," but rather needs to be better by being creative, inclusive, and protective of all of its citizens and external populations that need helping hands. The "make America great again" phrase suggested exclusion exemplified by election promises to extremist nationalists incorrectly informed that they have been betrayed by poor and disadvantaged citizens and/or poor immigrants. Because flip-flopping eroded true political responsibility, dislocated white citizens were never told the truth that the political class and corporations' unbridled quest for profit by all means caused all of their misery. Poor and disadvantaged citizens, as well as undocumented immigrants, do not own institutions or the massive corporations and the lobbyists working on their behalf that plague the federal offices in Washington, DC. All poor people are at the mercy of these massive corporations, who shift and slide from one place to another to increase profit. When corporations shift and slide, people get laid off, and sometimes an entire community is abandoned because they see no value in hanging around there. The only "saving grace" corporations in poor rural white communities are Wal-Mart, McDonald's, and private prisons. The private prisons hire locals as wardens to guard poor and disadvantaged folks like themselves. The only difference is that the anger of their destitution and other illusions are transferred to the prisoners who are mostly African Americans, Latinos, and some whites.

In addition, the idea of greatness is eternally linked with political responsibility to all, and not specifically to some citizens. It is useful to point out that by the last quarter of the 1800s the U.S. began its gradual ascent to greatness. The U.S. Constitution was already 100 years old. The Buffalo Soldiers (African Americans) made a mark on the nation. The civil rights activists of the 1950s through the 1960s undergirded the U.S. with a responsible conscience to pursue the right justice. On the technological and economic realms, the Direct Current (DC) and Alternating Current (AC) war between Edison and Tesla raised the nation's profile on creativity. The development of the railroad system, the oil system, the Sears order catalogue, product manufacturing, the amazing massive armada (weapons, planes, ships, trucks, etc.) developed between 1942 and 1945 to stem Hitler's menace in Europe, the highway systems across the nation, and electronics and computing systems, all point to a nation of creative citizens who had finer tastes for constructive, political responsibility. That form of political responsibility which was aimed at liberating people from darkness

(electricity), from tyranny (allies against Hitler), gaining civil rights for all citizens, and making communication and transportation possible were the highlights of constructive, national transformation.

Despite these positive constructive changes, there were still individuals within the political class flip-flopping and instigating and insisting on the ideologies of difference, racial segregation, and dominance. Instead of seizing the opportunity in the 1800s of science and technology to construct a new society that was inclusive of all U.S. citizens, the U.S. unwittingly allowed itself to be steered in a dark direction where federal monies were used to shore up Jim Crow laws and racial segregation. These laws and ideologies were so addictive and blinding that, even though members of all racial groups in the U.S. contributed to the construction of the overall American experience (science, technology, war efforts, education, space, creative arts, music, etc.), the political class flipped the scripts and insisted that only white males were singled out as the quintessential doers and achievers. Despite these blinding ideologies, some citizens in the U.S. upheld a brilliant sense and version of political responsibility which was inclusive of seeking liberty and security for those oppressed, and encouraging of human solidarity among everyone. It is this version of political responsibility that realigns with the nature of human responsibility to each other.

#### *Human and Political Responsibility*

Responsibility to one individual or a specific group, though a form of responsibility, is nonetheless an incomplete notion of responsibility. Most people would argue that responsibility is an acknowledgement of an interest and action with regard to the things that are within one's power and to be accountable to them. This notion of responsibility also makes it possible for subjective and relative understanding of responsibility to accrue, insisting that responsibility is only to one's sense of interests and positions. For instance, in this sense an environmental activist would only be responsible for a particular interest and position and would not consider the connection of that issue to other humanity or the global context. This is also often common when considering police brutality. The police across the U.S. insist on the motto "to protect and serve" (unless this is yet another code for something else), but some police members, relying on the protection of the larger police system, brutalize the most vulnerable citizens they are supposed to serve and protect. When confronted with this deliberate harm, they flip the script and insist that they are carrying out their responsibility. So there is a disconnection in terms of assuming responsibility as a protector and servant of all citizens, but subjectively brutalizing some citizens by failing to equally include them in the universal experience of service and protection of everyone. Such understanding of responsibility is so limited that it drives a wedge through the efforts of human and political responsibility which calls for ethical behavior and solidarity with fellow human beings (Burggraeve, 1985; Chomsky, 2017; Young, 2011). The nature of human and political

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responsibility is much broader and encourages individuals to interact positive knowledge across contexts so that the human experience as well as journey is not isolated, brutal, and miserable. Human and political responsibility shapes inclusivity, diversity, as well as constructive responses for human and even non-human affairs (other animals, the environment, and so on).

As well, the expansive and transferable nature of human responsibility begins within the family, but does not prevent anyone from protecting a stranger's child about to unwittingly cross the street with on-coming vehicles speeding past. This same responsibility is important when thinking about the violence in some of abandoned U.S. urban communities. Imagine, for a moment, a street intersection with an adult individual standing next to a three-year-old and her 15-year-old brother who is distracted in a conversation with his peers. All of a sudden, the three-year-old sees her mother on the other side of the street. In that child's mind, all that matters is getting to her mother, and the danger of speeding cars is insignificant. Two clear choices are available. If the adult individual is not mentally and physically challenged, the first choice is to prevent the child from dashing onto oncoming traffic (protect and serve a fellow human being) until either the mother crosses over or the individual personally walks the child over to her. Consider the political responsibility lesson the child and everyone else watching the scenario unfold at that intersection learns and may eventually manifest later in life.

The second choice is to assume self-responsibility and simply let the child dash across (tough luck, the child is learning the hard way). The child may or may not get hit, but either way, the adult individual walks away satisfied that staying away from other people's business is the best option. If the child were actually hit by an oncoming vehicle, no one can accuse the individual of a crime or for not taking action. This is where human and political responsibility become confused with subjective preferences that detract from protection and service. This is similar to the behavior that led to the abandonment of inner city residents. Instead of protecting and serving them, empowered by the dominant group and political class, the criminal justice system singles them out as the architect of their own problems. The political responsibility script is flipped to now signify that inner city violence and behaviors warrant massive incarceration as a form of responsibility to the larger society. Flip-flopping scripts to codes such as "war on drugs" and "three strikes and you're out" blames disenfranchised victims and will, of course, never resolve the larger problem of hate, negation, hideously unethical behavior, citizens' mistreatment of each other, gun proliferation because no one trusts anyone, and violence of all varieties in the U.S. Oddly enough, subjective and relative responsibility also allows corporations to increase their profit seeking behaviors by moving to privatize everything including public spaces and prisons, deregulating environmental protection rules, and simply never agreeing to be responsible for all citizens but themselves and those who play along with them, the political class. The end result of subjective and relative responsibility dislodged from human



solidarity is that citizens abandon each other, and profit-seeking outmaneuvers human quality of life and experience. In profit-seeking scenarios, only mass menial labor and suffering (teaching, factory workers, lawyers, technologists, military, police, prison guards, etc.) would exist to sustain and furnish insatiable all capitalist agendas (Leech, 2012) and revenues, leading to the complete erosion of human and political responsibility.

The nature of human and political responsibility is inclusive, and does not set aside one group to be unduly vilified and punished while another group hides behind and rejoices in the pain of those driven to oblivion. It is specifically unethical to assume that subjective responsibility is actual political responsibility by any governance group in the U.S. or any nation for that matter. At the national context, the nature of human and political responsibility becomes a universal process, where everyone is held and treated at the same level. It is contrary to the nature of human and political responsibility to use the color of skin and/or ethnicity under similar conditions, to apportion longer or shorter penal sentences. That legal behavior (which has been ongoing in the U.S.) shuts down the inclusive benefits of political responsibility. Even when conditions cause most people to want to treat an individual differently because of an actual violation of a social norm, such treatment ought to be proportionate and equalized under the rules of universalizability (Benn, 1967; Pojman, 2006). This means that responsibility to citizens in a society is premised under the U.S. Constitution with the promise of equal treatment under just laws. In the condition where the violation of social peace occurs, just or fair sanction is only directed at the individual or individuals specific to the issue or incident, and not a recipe to continually punish an entire group. For instance, after the Second World War, the Germans were not and are not today being continually punished for the behavior of Hitler. Conversely, African Americans who fought to help shut Hitler down were subjected to Jim Crow laws then, and are still continually brutalized, harmed, excessively incarcerated, and denied fair and equal opportunities in the U.S. (DuVernay, 2016).

Interestingly, the nature of human and political responsibility has several elements: awareness of the self in a social context and in the world, awareness of the other, admiration of the other, seeking solidarity with the other, contribution to the other's well-being, cautioning of the other, positive collaboration with the other, sanctioning the other (holding each other accountable), and grieving with the other. Each of these elements allows for a wider and a more healthy sense of solidarity within the context of political responsibility. Despite the incidentals of skin colors, gender, and religion, human and political responsibility is usually connected to work and actions that are liberating and supporting of each other. This means that no one is to be omitted or excluded from local, national, or international benefits.

#### *Political Responsibility to Citizens*

Positive political activities are acts of courage. Political representatives serve all citizens and not only those who elect them, or worse,

the corporate lobbyists who exercise power and control over them. Occasions of flip-flopping occur because there is a severance of political responsibility to citizens, and an alliance of politicians with the interests of powerful corporations. This alliance is precisely what Chomsky (2017) speaks about in the principles that point to corporations making and dictating national policies. Increasingly, the political elite get into office with the knowledge that they are not going to fully represent the citizens who elected them or the interest of all citizens across the board. The political class acts as if they are responsible for the people's mandate, even using codes phrases such as "the American people" and "my constituency", while only really being beholden to powerful corporations who paid for their elections, pay for their posterity, and who now want something in return. This is the classic flip-flop, where citizens are fooled to think that these individuals have their agenda at heart. Unfortunately, once in political office, the political class flips to follow only the subjective rules of the powerful corporations who drive policies (Chomsky, 2017) in ways that fit their whims, leaving some people better-off, and many others worse off.

Thus, after years of economic appropriation by the wealthy class (Chomsky 2017; MacLean, 2017; Mayer, 2016), it is now clear that political responsibility to citizens has been driven out of the federal capital and its legal institutions. In the place of political responsibility, cunning tactics diminish citizens' democratic rights and privileges. Citizens are coerced to constantly negate each other, and are inundated with "alternative facts" indiscriminately constructing alienating scripts to diminish the larger pursuit of justice and fairness. In normal circumstances, the political class's mandate is to work against such national negativity, driving an agenda of political responsibility for all citizens. That effort includes the basic practice of ensuring that political representation always sustains impartial application of all just laws and rules of engagement so that all citizens equally receive common opportunities, rewards, and benefits. In the aggregate of all things considered, responsibility to being just and fair to all is actually a vibrant part of political responsibility (Young, 2011).

#### *Amnesia, its Use, and Insertion*

The history of slavery in the U.S., its harms, and its unidirectional benefit to its perpetrators/offenders is an excellent example of the power of flip-flopping and amnesia combined. Those responsible for slavery in the U.S. refuse to apologize for all the harms they caused. When those harmed complain and seek justice in the form of reparation, perpetrators and generations after them remember one thing, they remember to forget. They remember amnesia which was inserted at the very beginning of slavery. The slave owners understood that their use of Africans was someday going to create a problem for them and their posterity, so as they fought against abolitionist; they also insisted on denying that what they did was a crime against humanity. They guaranteed within the structure of flip-flopping and amnesia that since all whites benefited from slave labor, they must protect themselves against future demands for reparations and incrimination. Any

demand or charge must be denied on the basis that “Negroes” must always in posterity be considered inferior to whites. It is customary to hear current generation of whites say that slavery occurred because of the time in history, and that Africans sold themselves into slavery, and that Africans would have enslaved whites were the script reversed. The current generation always concludes that it is not responsible for something that happened long ago, and neither should it be blamed or held accountable for the behaviors of their forefathers. Ironically, the same current generation enjoys tremendous benefits from the massive systems that were first initiated through unpaid slave labor.

After 1865, with the abolition of slavery in some parts of the U.S., many freed slaves who were now the descendants of hundreds of years of slavery found themselves without resources and access. They had been estranged from their homes in Africa, and could not get back there even if they wanted. A few compassionate members of the political class championed discussion that led to the enactment of a subsistence process where freed slaves would be anchored by land agreement. Eventually, this federal designation of 40 acres and a mule would slide and be flip-flopped into sharecropping, tactically violating their right to even the smallest resource that may have made their lives self-sustaining.

That notwithstanding, some African American free slaves who received land became very self-sustaining and successful, but some elements within the political class poisoned the direction of progress and forced onto the scene a set of laws, the “Jim Crow laws” that would begin in 1868 all through to 1968 to curb such progress and integration. In some very direct ways, the political class had flip-flopped to reverse the gains of African Americans at this time. It remembered to keep them down as “Negroes” but forgot (constructed amnesia) their role in having helped build the economy of the U.S. They were dumped as low class citizens in separate but equal conditions. The dominant population was empowered by the political class to focus on the separate rather than the equal aspect of the laws, preventing access, increasing legal and other consequences, and sanctioning lynching, incarceration for fictitious crimes, and exclusion from shared public and private spaces.

Moreover, Hitler’s war of death to many and promise of enslavement to those who survived brought out the worst and the best of the European populations. As for the U.S., the call for action against Hitler was answered by all citizens, whites, blacks, Native Americans, Asians, Latinos, and all other Americans. Whereas these groups all served distinctly and helped to end the war, African Americans specifically distinguished themselves in several theaters, including the battle of the Bulge, and spectacularly as the Tuskegee Airmen. Oddly, their survival of the war and return home was a different matter as they were still subjected to various harms and abuses under Jim Crow laws. Flip-flopping and amnesia allowed the political class and the dominant population to refuse to recognize their war efforts. Instead, they

were subjected to exclusion, dehumanization, lynching, and lesser jobs and other opportunities.

There are so many other examples of flip-flopping and amnesia (too many to list here) that harm the vulnerable and disadvantaged populations of the U.S. Consider the era of the space race. It was not widely known, if known at all, that the “human calculators,” a group of African American women who were segregated from their white colleagues (mostly men) made it possible for the U.S. to enter the space race (Shetterly, 2016). However, the dynamics of flip-flopping and amnesia tipped the scale so that nothing these women did was openly available to the public. It was clear that publicizing that African American women helped pave the way for the space race would have been tragically embarrassing to the white male ego. A previous public humiliation of Hitler and his Arian sprinters by Jesse Owens, An African American, in the 1936 Olympics in Berlin was enough. NASA at the time, sustained by the political class, swept the achievement of these African American women under the rug, and promptly forgot about them, but remembered to flip scripts which excluded them and elevated white males (Shetterly, 2016). Over the years, except for a recent movie and one or two mentions, no effort for actual public recognition or remembering occurred, all in an effort by the political class to exclude them as visible role models for African and other Americans that may have found them inspirational.

One final example of vicious flip-flopping and amnesia comes from the Reagan era where specifically African Americans were denied as legitimate citizens, and incarceration penalties were increased just based on any insignificant behavior. As if whites were not heavily on drugs, the “war on drugs” was reserved for African Americans and “just say no” was supposed to be the key for survival. In the meantime, white drug-takers, or whites who possessed and sold drugs, never received the kinds of brutal and harsher sentences that African Americans experienced. Once again the political class forgot that this is a vulnerable population that needs protection and genuine political service; instead, it remembered the inferiority model (Negroes must always be inferior to whites) and flipped the script to unleash the newly empowered law enforcement on African Americans. From the Reagan era through the first Bush era (war on drugs), the Clinton era (“three strikes and you’re out”), through the second Bush era (war on drugs and terrorism), the increase in amnesia against African Americans, and other minorities created direct increased benefits for whites (ownership and work in private prisons, police jobs, lawyers, court judges, probation and prison workers, and many of the corporations that use prisoner labor) (DuVernay, 2016). Each of the successive administrations empowered law enforcement and judges to be less compassionate. They were coerced to adapt more destructive options specifically against African Americans. Forgetting (amnesia) that African Americans are fellow citizens, flip-flopping scripts to redefine “law and order” and “war on drugs” focused on harming them and increased their prison population to close to half of all those incarcerated in the U.S. (DuVernay, 2016; Alexander, 2012). Ironically, as academics present the issues of police

and court brutality and mass incarceration to the government, proponents of flip-flop and amnesia ideologies defend this behavior and the current status quo as responsibility to the larger communities and to the nation.

*Current Federal Powers, Flip-flopping, and Amnesia*

There are several flip-flopping activities occurring within the current governance system (see Klein, 2017). It is common knowledge that powerful corporations moved jobs overseas or to places they felt would better sustain profitability (see Fraser, 2015; MacLean, 2017; Mayer 2016). Throughout, 2016 election scripts insisted that Mexico, China, and then immigrants (documented or not) take U.S. jobs, and that China, Mexico, and a host of other nations were taking advantage of the U.S. in terms of trade. Relying on the power of amnesia, the political class, undergirded by powerful corporate groups, flipped the minds of poor and out-of-work whites to look elsewhere for the cause of their misery. Though made poor and jobless by the one to two percent of the wealthy who own close to 50% of all U.S. assets, poor whites were flipped against all minorities and immigrants, some of whom were also painted as terrorists. Here, flip-flopping with amnesia neglects the multiple internal terrorisms of home-grown and disenchanting individuals (racist and hateful groups, open and subtle racial discrimination with regard to jobs, promotion, etc., law enforcement and court brutalities, and the flight and abandonment of fellow citizens in decrepit urban and rural communities). Instead of engaging in the best practices of ethical political responsibility to all citizens, the current political class flipped the national script to shore up more adverse conditions for already vulnerable populations. Policing is an excellent social service and protective occupation, but when the political class flips the script and shores it up with violent/militaristic language, it encourages some of its hateful members to hide under policing protection and engage in abusive practices while blaming vulnerable citizens for barbarism. Adding amnesia to flip-flopping, the political class easily forgets about the history of the dominant group's violence in the U.S. Instead, it encourages the continuation of blaming and harm of the same vulnerable populations who were injured and damaged in the past.

Also, when Barack Obama was president, he was criticized for using executive orders to do positive things, such as the DACA protection. But now, the current uses of federal powers to enact Executive and other orders appear designed to create more destructive impact on vulnerable minority communities. Travel bans, the order rescinding environmental laws, and pulling out of the Paris accord are all direct flip-flops that carry more harm for disadvantaged populations within and outside of the U.S. (see Klein, 2017). Some responsible judges, as well as other politically responsible individuals who stand up against these orders, are either publicly dehumanized and ridiculed or fired from their jobs. Within this context, the deliberate refusal to accept individuals who focus on political responsibility, and minorities and international partners as legitimate human beings allows the uncanny flipping of scripts to favor the agenda of the ruling and political class (see MacLean, 2017; see also Lofgren, 2016).

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Other flip-flop scenarios receive brief mention here because of their impact on political responsibility. For instance flip-flopping on NATO, Syria, Russia, North Korea, and China are impractical for cohesive national governance. Cutting deals, before and after elections, with foreign entities, and flip-flopping to deny these interactions call into question a deeper concern about enacting useful political responsibility. Trusting that amnesia will do its job and that most citizens will promptly forget election promises and all past and current destabilizing behaviors, federal political positions are tactically filled with wealthy and specific kinds of individuals (the environment, education, justice department, etc.) who are skilled in flip-flopping on promises to poor citizens.

The rules against nepotism have also been flipped so that no one can do anything about it. The flipped script makes it okay for wealthy and powerful white males to behave as they wish. Ironically, President Obama never flipped any rules to bring his family members into the mix of politics, business, and government. More disturbing is the further flipping of scripts away from anyone focusing on nepotism. Instead, citizens are being misinformed and coerced to accept that dismantling President Obama's health care system is an actual national priority. In this regard, alternative facts have become a way of delegitimizing the truth and any media group that does not play ball and agrees with current governance agenda. Flip-flopping with regard to the media is used in two ways. It is used to discredit minorities, specifically African Americans, so that they are portrayed to the nation as dangerous entities. But when the media goes after wealthy and powerful white male behavior, then the media is a problem and the script is flipped to discredit it, and in some cases interaction with certain media groups is shut down. The most disturbing flip-flopping occurs when considering federal and Supreme Court judges. Always flipped along partisan lines, the political class focuses not on judges who stand for justice for all, but nominates individuals whose practice and behavior align with their partisan, ideological, and subjective interpretation of the law. They use scripts like "the best", "impeccable credentials", and so on to entice citizens, but these are flipped scripts to disguise the underlying subjective agenda.

*Implications on Race and the Disenfranchised*

Racial intolerance is, of course, the nemesis of the United States. Since the nation's early beginning, one group has basically insisted that its humanity is more valuable than that of others. It is not clear why this group behaves this way, but its past is packed full of abuses, violence, harms, and dehumanization of its fellow citizens. Today, those in current federal political power appear to exhibit the same abusive and dehumanizing behaviour by continuing the legacy of harming their fellow citizens. Somehow this behavior is viewed as something good that requires celebrating. It is unfortunate that the unnecessary insistence in 2017 on re-enlivening racial animosity, which also impacts hiring, housing, police interaction with minorities, promotions, healthcare, and educational and other opportunities, is a hindrance to the

progress already made on race relations and overall political responsibility across the nation.

*Conclusion: Lessons of History, Carelessness, or Transformation*

Based on this discussion of political flip-flopping and amnesia in U.S. and its intersection with current governance behavior, two directions of transformation are possible but may not guarantee the elimination of flip-flopping and amnesia. The pervasiveness of amnesia and the massive discriminations across the U.S. documented by various research groups are part of the lessons that ought to be considered in view of national transformation. Generally, when these facts are revealed, the political class and many members of the dominant group always act surprised and pretend that they have no knowledge of such discriminatory practices in their workplaces. The current administration has simply strengthened this behavior and may have shifted the U.S. backwards a few decades. Of course, even though flip-flopping is widespread, the nature of amnesia as the attendant element of flip-flopping is much more hidden, and requires more historical and critical works to unmask its pervasive and harmful nature. Snyder (2017) points to the problem of tyranny and some significant lessons that may be useful from the 20th century. The usefulness of these lessons connects the subjective to the collective in view of human solidarity.

The other more interesting concern for collective political responsibility is throwing the requirements of justice back at those white folks who claim that they are all for diversity, inclusion, the protection of rights and dignity, and the advancement of all citizens. African Americans paid with their lives and blood on several levels—first as slaves to jump-start the economy of the U.S., then as abandoned individuals who were re-enslaved as sharecroppers or domestic and field hands during Jim Crow (1865-1968), and then as death and prison commodities picked off at the will of the dominant population to fill up private prisons. Through some of their leaders, young, daring African American men, they gave the U.S. civil rights, affirmative action, and American conscience, redefined justice to embrace its impartial nature, and paved the way for countless other minority groups to have voices to seek and appropriate their own liberations while celebrating the freedoms of others. If white folks who claim to be compassionate, generous, and true justice lovers are genuine in their interests, then they need to start a massive civil rights movement to liberate their own people from the negative behaviors that have consistently driven the flip-flop and amnesia ideology for decades, and the persistent automatic default that consistently dehumanizes African Americans, and all other minorities that have really done no harm to them, but seek only to live in a nation where justice and peace is the premise of political responsibility to all citizens.

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