



numerous legal and regulatory changes that have been put in place that many would argue have devastated the American middle-class. More on this line of thought later . . .

Black natural law privileges the insights that black people bring to discussions about law and justice by taking seriously both reason and emotion, and as Prof. Lloyd notes, offers a better way to approach politics, not only for blacks, but for everyone. To paraphrase Prof. Lloyd loosely, black natural law recognizes the mixture of reason, emotion, and imagination that more honestly describes the human experience and makes it more obvious how unrepresentable human nature truly is.

But that is only the first part. What this recognition leads to is collective action and organizing to achieve justice, a deeper understanding of how individuals are shaped by their membership in groups, a more serious respect for certain capabilities and capacities of the human person, and a sharper way of assessing, for instance, just or unjust laws.

In the US context, black natural law is an antidote to the anodyne, hyper-individualist expressions of the American experience so common in American public discourse—the somewhat naïve and emotionally empty tale of constant progress, inexhaustible strength, and exceptionalism that acknowledges:

- No struggle



still resonant and intelligible to many around the world. For instance, I think black natural law would offer a very compelling critique of the plight of the undocumented migrant and stateless refugee.

There is a clear issue around the justice of a system of global benefits that offers those with wealth or those born in wealthy nations a privileged position of comfort and security through birthright or purchased citizenship. The role the undocumented play in propping up that system through their labor in the shadows deserves deeper exploration. This is not to mention war, political corruption, ethnic and religious violence, and the accelerating effects of climate change as reasons for human displacement. What should we do?

The binary assessment of legal versus illegal immigrant cannot do the work necessary to address these concerns. We need to think beyond what we know currently. Black natural law might offer a means for bringing in the emotion, the imagination, and ultimately, the organizing, that we will need to truly understand what is at stake as our world is transformed by more and more people on the move.

My thanks, again, to the Boisi Center for this wonderful event, and to Prof. Lloyd for this thoughtful book. I enjoyed the opportunity to read it and it was a privilege to part of this conversation.