NON-CARTESIAN SUMS
BUT WHAT ARE YOU REALLY?

I. THE CRITIQUE

A. Where to now?

B. An Attack

1. Descartes isn't called the father of modern philosophy for nothing.
2. Charles Mills has a few questions for Daddy.

A. Recall the Modern Period

1. Major figures: Descartes, Berkeley, Hume, Kant and pretty much all the philosophy that has been done since then.
2. Characterized by:
   - **a) AN INCLUSION OF ALL EDUCATED PEOPLE IN THE PHILOSOPHICAL CONVERSATION.**
   - **b) THREE WORDS TYPIFY THE BASIC MODE OF THE MODERN PHILOSOPHICAL PROJECT: REASON, NATURE AND PROGRESS**
3. Reason:
   - **a) THERE IS A MOVE TO FOCUS ON "REASON" AS OPPOSED TO RELIGION**
   - **b) INVESTED INSTEAD IN A DEDUCTIVE SYSTEM OF TRUTHS THAT COULD GIVE INFORMATION ABOUT THE WORLD**
   - **c) SUBJECTIVE FACTORS—LIKE EMOTION AND RELIGION—ARE ELIMINATED**
   - **d) OBJECTIVITY—ABSENCE OF BIAS—IS ATTAINED**
   - **e) SEEK UNIVERSAL, NECESSARY, IMPERSONAL TRUTHS**
     1) This means that the truths holds no matter what your religious commitments, no matter what the circumstances of the world.
     2) The truths are necessary because it is commonly believed that once personal bias is removed and universality is achieved the truth of the matter could not possibly be any other way.
4. Nature:
   - **a) THE SCIENTIFIC MOVEMENT OF THE RENAISSANCE TAKES COMMAND OF THE CULTURE**
   - **b) THE WORLD IS UNDERSTOOD AS A MACHINE**
   - **c) THE WORLD IS UNDERSTOOD AS DYNAMIC SYSTEM WITH AN INTELLIGIBLE STRUCTURE THAT CAN BE EXPRESSED THROUGH MATHEMATICS**
5. Progress:
   - **a) THE FEELING OF THE TIME IS THAT WE AS INDIVIDUALS AND AS A SPECIES ARE IN A FORWARD MOMENTUM**
   - **b) WE WILL HAVE GREATER KNOWLEDGE AND BETTER LIVES THROUGH INVESTIGATIONS THAT WILL ENRICH OUR KNOWLEDGE AS WELL AS OUR INDIVIDUAL LIVES.**
6. This conception of the world still exists today.

B. Let's Revisit

1. Inclusion
   a) **NOT EVEN CLOSE**
   b) **NOT WOMEN, PEOPLE OF COLOR, THE ILLITERATE, THE POOR, NON-CHRISTIANS, GAY, GYPSYS AND ON AND ON AND ON**
2. Reason
   c) **REMOVE SUBJECTIVE FACTORS — LIKE RELIGION OR EMOTION**
      1) Unseat God as the definitive factor for all knowledge and understanding
         (a) This only works if nothing arises to takes its place
         (b) Science did.
         (c) It did not just become a tool for pursuing knowledge
         (d) It became the new "G_d"
         (e) A dominate force in determining what is and isn't knowledge
      2) Emotion was equated with subjectivity (rightly) and bias (why)
         (a) While it is true that emotion is necessarily a subjective response
         (b) It is not so clear that it is necessarily a biased one.
         (c) My caring and my investment in an issue cannot in and of itself make me unfit to rationally consider that issue.
         (d) If it did, it seems no one could ever
   d) **OBTAIN OBJECTIVITY**
      1) What is objectivity?
      2) Even if you are a white guy you have a perspective
         (a) However to a large degree this was assumed and "made" false.
         (b) The white, male, heterosexual, Christian, class privileged perspective becomes the idealized "norm"
      3) Once this perspective becomes normalized every other perspective becomes "biased" by comparison.
   e) **UNIVERSAL, NECESSARY, IMPERSONAL TRUTHS**
      1) If they are not truly objective…
      2) If they replace one bias with another…
      3) Then, by definition, this goal cannot be met.
3. Nature
   a) **AGAIN WE SEE HERE THE NEW DOMINATION OF SCIENCE REPLACING THE OLD DOMINATION OF RELIGION**
   b) **WHY SHOULD WE BELIEVE THAT ALL THERE IS TO KNOW ABOUT THE WORLD IS OBSERVABLE BY OUR MEAGRE SENSES?**
4. Progress
   a) **HERE IS THE MOST HYPOCRITICAL OF ALL THE GOALS OF MODERNISM**
   b) **PROGRESS IS PROGRESS FOR A FEW: MEN, THE WHITE,**
   c) **EVERYONE ELSE IS GETTING JUST THE DREGS OF PROGRESS**
   d) **EVEN TODAY MILLIONS OF PEOPLE IN THE WORLD DO NOT BENEFIT FROM ALL OUR "ADVANCES"**

e) **THE CONCERN IS THAT ONLY A FEW WERE MEANT TO.**

f) **WHILE WE PROGRESS TECHNOLOGICALLY; OUR SOCIAL/POLITICAL/MORAL LIFE HAS STAGNATED.**

II. LET'S BEGIN WITH THE COGITO, THE CARTESIAN SUM

A. Did you buy it?

1. P. 8: Plight of individual knower torn free from the sustaining verities of the dissolving feudal world, which had provided authority and certainty, and entering tentatively into the cognitive universe of an (as yet unrecognized) revolutionaizing individualist capitalism, where all that is solid melts into air.
2. What if that isn't you?

A. Philosophy preceding and continuing with Descartes did not deal with women or people of color well.

1. Two Levels of Invisibility
   a) **WOMEN WERE A CONSTANT PRESENCE IN THE LIVES OF PHILOSOPHERS; THEIR INEQUALITY HAD TO BE EXPLAINED. THEIR INTELLECT, THEIR RATIONALITY WAS DISGUISED BY THE DOMINATION OVER THEM.**
   f) **PEOPLE OF COLOR WERE NOT AN ISSUE; THEIR HUMANITY IN TOTAL WAS HIDDEN BY THE DOMINATION OVER THEM.**
3. Subperson
   a) **TOOL**
   b) **PROPERTY WITH A SOUL**

C. Normalizing

1. The invisibility creates a space for normalcy
2. The ideals and the views of one are taken as the ideals and views of all.

III. RACE

A. Metaphysics — what kinds of things are we

1. Does Race make a difference
   a) **IF RACE PREVENTS YOU FROM BEING ABLE TO BE A CARTESIAN SELF**
   b) **IF BEING BLACK MAKES YOU AN ELLISONIAN SELF**
2. The Body?
   a) **DOES RACE AND GENDER MAKE THE BODY MORE PROMINENT IN YOUR EXISTENCE?**
   b) **IS THE CARTESIAN CLAIM THAT THE MIND IS MORE EVIDENT THAN THE BODY, PART OF HIS CONCLUSION THAT THE MIND, THE INTELLECT IS THE CENTER THE SOURCE OF UNDERSTANDING**
3. Personhood/Personal Identity.
   a) **IF OUR BODY IS CENTRAL TO OUR EXISTENCE**
   b) **DOES THAT AFFECT THE KIND OF THINGS WE ARE?**
   c) **DESCARTES BELIEVE THAT THE SOURCE OF OUR IDENITY WAS THE SOUL**
   d) **BUT THIS HAS TO EXIST INSULATED FROM ALL OTHER ASPECTS OF OUR IDENTITY.**

B. Is there race?

1. Objectivism — Race exists independent of our choices, desires, and beliefs.
   a) **REALISM — RACE EXISTS INDEPENDENT OF HUMAN BELIEF; THERE ARE NATURAL HUMAN RACES AND THE DISTINCTIONS ARE MORE THAN MORPHOLOGICAL; THEY ARE DEEP.**
   b) **CONSTRUCTIVISM — RACE IS INDEPENDENT OF ANY PARTICULAR AGENTS' ACTUAL JUDGEMENTS; THOUGH NOT OF A HYPOTHETICAL SET OF IDEAL JUDGEMENTS — CONSTRUCTED TO PRESERVE A HIERARCHICAL SOCIAL SYSTEM.**
      1) Materialist — The reality of race stems from for example economic factors, i.e. race is a tool to divide workers and distract them from their genuine enemy Marxism.
      2) Idealist — The reality of race stems from culture or a set of sources working together .
2. Anti-objectivism — Race has no independence; it exists only in as much as we sustain it.
   a) **SUBJECTIVISM — RACIAL DESIGNATIONS ARE ARBITRARY AND THUS WE CAN CHOOSE OUR RACE. RACE IS A VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATION.**
   b) **RELATIVISM — RACE CAN BE CHANGED BY THE VOLUNTARY EFFORTS OF A COMMUNITY.**
   c) **ERROR THEORY — RACE HAS NO BIOLOGICAL (EVERYONE EXCEPT REALISTS) AND NO SOCIAL REALITY.**
3. Criteria for Racial Identity
   a) **BODILY APPEARANCE**
      1) Skin color
      2) Skull measurement
      3) Hair texture
   b) **ANCESTRY**
      1) Were your parents _____?
      2) If your parents were both, was anyone in your family _____?
   c) **SELF-AWARENESS OF ANCESTRY**
      1) Did you know your parents were?
      2) Did you know someone in your genealogy was?
   d) **PUBLIC AWARENESS OF ANCESTRY**
      1) Do we know your parents were?
      2) Do we know someone in your family was?
   e) **CULTURE**
   f) **EXPERIENCE**
   g) **SUBJECTIVE IDENTIFICATION**
      1) What do you think you are?