## Edelman

### **2ac Edelman**

#### To win the negative must disprove the desirability of the aff

#### Burden of rejoinder—if the negative does not disprove the desirability of the aff, they have not effectively negated us and you have no reason to vote neg

#### Using pedagogical institutions to make prescriptions for change prevents docile acceptance of oppression. Evaluating the likely consequences of our prescriptions shapes successful social change.

Susan Carle, Law @ American University, 2005 (“Theorizing Agency.” 55 Am. U.L. Rev. 307 lexis)

Precisely because he believed in the power of human agency, Dewey devoted a great deal of his writing to developing prescriptions for change in response to the issues of his times. It is worth quickly surveying some of those prescriptions here because they help illuminate the relationship between Dewey’s theory of the self and his overall philosophic system. Dewey’s deliberative theory ties elegantly into his theory of democracy, which in turn displays an ascetically pleasing “fit”274 with his pedagogical vision. Dewey’s political theory is a large topic, to which he devoted much writing but to which I can give only passing attention. Suffice it to say that Dewey passionately believed in the virtues of democracy; indeed, Dewey scholars have described democracy as Dewey’s deepest preoccupation— the underlying passion that motivated him in his prolific output.275 Unlike philosophers such as John Rawls, however, Dewey uncoupled democracy from the institutions of Western capitalism, and was intensely critical of capitalism as he saw it developing in his lifetime. To Dewey, capitalism spelled economic inequality, which was anathema to his vision of democracy based in local deliberative processes.276 Dewey saw education as the process through which children would acquire the habits that would allow them to become members of a democracy, well equipped for the kind of reflective thought and deliberation that democracy required.277 Thus, education was for Dewey a fundamental method of social progress and reform.278 For this reason, Dewey, unlike most modern philosophers, gave pedagogy a central place in his philosophy. Dewey saw education as the scientific laboratory in which the ideas of pragmatism would be put to the test of experience.279 To Dewey, the ability to engage in good deliberative judgment—to exercise clear foresight on ethical as well as instrumental matters—was a habit that could and should be cultivated through education. Thus Dewey thought that education should not be a “succession of studies but the development of new attitudes towards, and new interests in, experience.”280 No relativist on matters concerning his own place and time, Dewey denounced the “inert stupid quality of current customs,” which “perverts learning into a willingness to follow where others point the way, into conformity, constriction, surrender of scepticism and experiment.”281 In lieu of teaching to new generations habits that represent such “enslavement to old ruts,”282 Dewey wanted to inculcate better habits—“flexible, sensitive” ones that could grow “more varied, more adaptable by practice and use.”283 These, in turn, were the habits Dewey identified as necessary for democracy to succeed. Here, the contrasts with Stanley Fish are stark. Fish, as we have seen, argues that teaching methods of critical analysis to students does not change practice outside the classroom.284 Practice in the world outside the classroom and the doing of theory proceed on two unrelated planes. Dewey, conversely, repudiated the separation of theory and practice as a false dualism, arguing that those who espouse theory for theory’s sake are in fact espousing “two kinds of practice.”285 Moreover, he argued, “[t]hose who wish a monopoly of social power find desirable the separation of habit and thought” because this “dualism enables them to do the thinking and planning, while others remain the docile . . . instruments of execution.”286 Thus, for Dewey, theory was a form of practice in the world that had great potential to fuel political and social change, and the decision to do and teach theory as a practice separate from political and social issues was a political decision with particular normative consequences—namely, the promotion of political disengagement and apathy.287

#### Reality and law are coproductive. Changing our thinking about law helps to reconstitute the material realities that we live in. The K implies an impossible immutable position outside law.

Jane Baron, Law @ Temple – Beasley School of Law, 2003 (“Romancing the Real.” 57 U. Miami L. Rev. 573 lexis)

Yet, imagine that what Gordon said were true. There would be an easily discernable point to doing what we legal academics (and isn't Schlag one of us?) do. If legal conceptions and the social world were connected in some way, then thinking about law would also be a way of thinking about the material world, and trying to change the way we think about law - for instance, to use my earlier example, trying to convince people that property need not be modeled on ownership but on obligation - would be a way of trying to change the material world. Questioning what legal doctrine foregrounds and backgrounds, n46 revealing "nested oppositions" in legal rules, n47 and all manner of similar analyses [\*587] of the patterns and structure of standard legal argumentation, including the kinds of analyses Schlag himself has so often performed (consider The Empty Circles of Liberal Justification n48), would, or could, at least potentially be useful; if we could see and make others see how we ourselves artificially "froze" reality, we could unfreeze it. n49 At the very least, we could begin to think about changing it because we would no longer be victims of belief in reality's immutability. n50 Twenty-plus years of engaging in various versions of this practice have revealed how much more complicated all this is than it originally seemed. From Stanley Fish we learned how silly it might be to envision standing outside one's own structures of belief in order to change them. n51 From feminists and critical race theorists we learned that "we" might not be "we," but multiple intersecting and overlapping "we's" with potentially differing interests and engagements. n52 From law and society folks we learned to question whether there was any relation between lawyers' and judges' ideas about law and actual social practices; if there was little relation to begin with, changes in legal consciousness (even if "we" could actually effect such changes) would be unlikely to have much impact on everyday behaviors. n53 None of this proves that legal change and social change are impossible, only that effecting social change through law is considerably more difficult and chancy than first had been thought. One could see, however, why it might be worth trying to solve (or work around) the problems: thinking about law would still be a way - perhaps now a more nuanced, humbled way - of trying to fix what was wrong with the world. This strategy would not work, of course, if "the world" is intractably out there, isolated from and immune to thought. That is exactly as Schlag presents the world in those excerpts and in the lists culled from them. The question is why, knowing better - that is, having no illusions about a pure factuality unmediated by perspective or shaping - Schlag would choose to portray "reality" that way.

#### Perm— reject the exclusion of women from combat and f society and f the future

#### Future link-- The plan is not a focus on the future but on the violence of the status quo—Ray card—status quo is a perpetual battle against women. Need to focus on changing that materially here and now.

#### Warren and Cady talk about how war is structured by patriarchal institutions—say that ongoing war will eventually end humanity, but IS NOT FOCUSED ON THE FUTURE.

#### Identity focus link—not us, we contest patriarchy but never forget the ways in which it is structured by and the way it structures heteronormativity.

#### We don’t inscribe identity – we argue that those who assume a female identity in the military should not ben discriminated against.

S. Laurel Weldon, PhD, University of Pittsburgh, USA, Associate Professor of political science at Purdue University, 2006 [“Feminist Methodologies for International Relations” edited by Brooke A. Ackerly: Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Science at Vanderbilt University, Maria Stern: Lecturer and Researcher at the Department of Peace and Development Research, Goteborg University, and Jacqui True: Senior Lecturer in the Department of Political Studies at the University of Auskland, New Zealand, 2006, Cambridge University Press, 2006, pg. 65-6 EmiW]

Standpoints are not innate but rather arise from a particular political situation, namely a situation of group hierarchy or domination. Standpoints are the perspectives of groups, not of individuals. Standpoint epistemology does not focus on individual differences in viewpoints, but rather on issues, values, or styles of discourse, that inform a group perspective. “Communities, and not primarily individuals, produce knowledge” (Harding 1993: 65). Asserting that groups share “standpoints” has raised charges of essentialism (Tickner 2001; Sylvester 1996b). Essentialism refers to the analytical mistake of attributing a fundamental underlying essence to a group that does not, in fact, exist. But asserting that a group shares a standpoint does not suggest that each person in the group has the same opinions or values, or that anything shared derives from the fundamental group essence or nature (cf. Harding 1998). Rather, standpoints are constructed collectively by group members. This means, for example, that feminist standpoints can be adopted by men, but they are developed when women - in all their diversity - interact, discuss, and indeed contest representations of “women,” “women’s interests,” and women’s identities. A standpoint, then, is expressed most fully in collective products: feminist publications, newspapers, conferences, and the like (Harding 1998).

#### Case solves the impact—the woman warrior deconstructs rigid gender binaries

Bennion-Nixon 10 Lee-Jane, Head of Programme, Film & TV Production, York University; “We (Still) Need a Woman for the Job: The Warrior Woman, Feminism and Cinema in the Digital Age” *Senses of Cinema* Issue 57; December 2010; http://sensesofcinema.com/2010/feature-articles/we-still-need-a-woman-for-the-job-the-warrior-woman-feminism-and-cinema-in-the-digital-age/

The continuing emergence of new warrior women indicates that debates about representation within feminist film and media studies remain relevant. As Hilary Neroni comments, “it is rarer to see a woman who can’t fight for herself, or help out in a fight, than one who can”. (11) For example, the advertising tag line for Elizabeth: The Golden Age (2007) reads “Woman Warrior Queen.” Below this text is an image of Elizabeth I dressed in armour. This striking image focuses the reader on the notion of a Queen at war. The film’s trailer also depicts Elizabeth (Cate Blanchett) in full armour, this time riding a white horse and addressing her army as they prepare for the battlefield. This type of advertising strategy suggests that the notion of women as national warriors is widely understood by a general audience. The figure of a violent, fighting, brave, heroic woman is not only culturally legible, it is familiar. This representation of ‘womanhood’ highlights changing ideas of what it means to be ‘woman’, marking a major shift in the way women can be portrayed in mainstream popular culture, and expanding the realms of what ‘woman’ can represent. (12)¶ The warrior woman also challenges our understanding of the conventions of gender representation. If, as Judith Halberstam argues, codes of masculinity conjure up “notions of power, legitimacy and privilege,” thereby “naturalising” relations between men and power in our western society, then the warrior woman questions this process. (13) The warrior woman offers a more progressive idea of what it is to be heroic and female to the collective imagination. She is a dynamic representation of a female figure that combines masculine and feminine traits. She is also a site of contention over what can be regarded as ‘acceptably female’. The female heroism of the warrior woman is both masculine and feminine which subverts cultural tendencies to represent gender categories in rigid, binary terms. I want to suggest that she signifies a ‘potent fusion’ (14) between feminine and masculine attributes in a female sexed body. She is recognizably female, even maternal, yet she is also a highly effective ‘soldier’ whose adept use of weaponry and technology or capacity for strategy and leadership is as good as any man’s. Furthermore, her feminine qualities do not inhibit her fighting prowess in any way, while her masculine traits do not diminish her humanity.

We are not a closed community but a political assemblage—their rejection of any collectivity renders all violence inevitable

Krishna ’93 [Sankaran, Dept. of Polit. Sci., Alternatives, 1993]

The dichotomous choice presented in this excerpt is straightforward: one either indulges in total critique, delegitimizing all sovereign truths, or one is committed to “nostalgic”, essential unities that have become obsolete and have been the grounds for all our oppressions. In offering this dichotomous choice, Der Derian replicates a move made by Chaloupka in his equally dismissive critique of the more mainstream nuclear oppression, the Nuclear freeze movement of the early 1980s, that according to him, was operating along obsolete lines emphasizing “facts” and “realities” while a “postmodern” President Reagan easily outflanked them through an illusory Star Wars program. (See KN: chapter 4)Chaloupka centers this difference between his own supposedly total critique of all sovereign truths (which he describes as nuclear criticism in an echo of literary criticism) and the more partial (and issue-based) criticism of what he calls “nuclear opposition” or “antinuclearists” at the very outset of his book. (KN: xvi) Once again, the unhappy choice forced upon the reader is to join Chaloupka in his total critique of sovereign truths or be trapped in obsolete essentialisms.This leads to a disastrous politics, pitting groups that have the most in common (and need to unite on some basis to be effective) against each other. Both Chaloupka and Der Derian thus reserve their most trenchant critique for political groups that should, in any analysis, be regarded as the closest to them in terms of an oppositional politics and their desired futures. Instead of finding ways to live with these differences and to (if fleetingly) coalesce against the New Right, this fratricidal critique is politically suicidal. It obliterates the space for a political activism based on provisional and contingent coalitions, for uniting behind a common cause even as one recognizes that the coalition is comprised of groups that have very differing (and possibly unresolvable) views of reality.

Moreover, it fails to consider the possibility that there may have been other, more compelling reasons for the “failure” of the Nuclear Freedom movement or anti-Gulf War movement. Like many a worthwhile cause in our times, they failed to garner sufficient support to influence state policy. The response to that need not be a totalizing critique that delegitimizes all narratives.The blackmail inherent in the choice offered by Der Derian and Chaloupka, between total critique and “ineffective” partial critique, ought to be transparent. Among other things, it effectively militates against the construction of provisional or strategic essentialisms in our attempts to create space for an activist politics. In the next section, I focus more widely on the genre of critical international theory and its impact on such an activist politics

#### Sexual assault link—we help get justice for victims of sexual assault

Garcia 13 Saudi, “Women in Combat: Military Must Prioritize Sexual Assault Prevention” *PolicyMic*; March 10, 2013; http://www.policymic.com/articles/29128/women-in-combat-military-must-prioritize-sexual-assault-prevention

The problem of rape in the military remains an issue that is entrenched in the misogynistic, hierarchical nature of the establishment. A positive effect of the lift in active duty combat roles is that the opportunity for more women to serve in the higher leadership and command positions will decrease the number of assaults that occur each year.¶ Despite policies indicating that expedited transfers and external mental health counseling are available, the reality of intimidation and punitive actions by the assailant (who are sometimes supervisors or higher ranking soldiers) results in low reporting rates. The cases that are reported can be easily ignored by higher command, who often side with the assailant. ¶ The legislative steps issued by Secretary Panetta will ensure that claims of sexual assault are handled by senior officers, but substantive change remains to be seen. Despite the legislature, women serving active duty tours will still be vulnerable in the battlefield if they are raped, coerced into silence, and threatened to be discharged once they break it. Without access to resources and unable to transfer, their mental health might deteriorate while serving long and difficult tours.¶ The mental health of the survivors of military sexual assault should not be an issue that is relegated to outside organizations, such as SWAN and the Military Rape Crisis Center. A step in this direction is the Ruth Moore Act of 2013. The Act was introduced in Congress this past February by Congresswoman Chellie Pingree (D-Maine) and Senator Jon Tester (D-Mont.) to ensure that service women are able to receive disability ratings from the Veteran Affairs Department. The Act would expedite military sexual assault survivor’s access to mental health resources.¶ A paradigm shift in the U.S. military would ensure that female combat soldiers are respected and allowed to perform their duties. A change in attitude about the value of the work of female soldiers, more women in higher command positions, and sweeping changes in the structure of basic military training can combat the sexist organizational. In the long run, this may lead to dramatic changes in the number of military sexual assault cases.

#### Women focus link—bad—never allows other possibilities for women.

#### If their link

#### The status quo is a violent imposition on bodies that are seen as negative, the aff is a response to that, not an attempt to make them useful.

#### The totalizing acceptance of negativity allows the violence of the status quo to continue—it does nothing material to prevent sexual assault.

#### There link argument that we make the negative ie. Women in the military, as something to be usefull to the social order is the opposite of edelmans argument. Edelman is saying that we should embras the association of negativity in order to spite the social structure. THE AFF DOES THIS, we spite the social structure of the military and see it as a violent imposition of heteronormative masculinity.

#### Divorcing the struggle against reproductive futurism from the political sphere makes a fatal mistake—their reading of politics and heteronormativity is backwards—their description only characterizes the Christian right which is best fought politically

**Brenkman** **2002** (John Brenkman, Distinguished Professor of English and Comparative Literature at the CUNY Graduate Center and Baruch College, 2002, Narrative, Vol. 10, No. 2, p. 190-191)

I have not tried to offer a more optimistic (or futurist) assessment of the gay struggle than Edelman, though he has construed my remarks in that way; his essay very pointedly conveyed a sense of the ongoing ordeal of gays in American society and a pessimism regarding inaction on the AIDS crisis, domestic partner rights, and anti-gay violence and the persistence of repressive restrictions on sexual freedom. I have also not challenged his criticism of the figure of the child as futurity, because I find it is very persuasive. So, too, Edelman offers a compelling interpretation of homophobia in his delineation of how this discourse figures the child as future in order to make the queer the figure of the death and jouissance, of the negativity, that haunts all (normalizing) fantasies of the sexual relation and sexual identity. What I have challenged is the claim that this discourse defines, or even dominates, the political realm as such. It is the discourse of conservative Catholicism and Christian fundamentalism, and even though it resonates in strands of liberal discourse, it represents an intense reaction, backlash, against changes that have already taken place in American the gay and lesbian movement. society, many of them as the direct result of feminism and the gay and lesbian movement. It is indeed important not to underestimate the depth and danger of this reaction, but it is a reactionary, not a foundational, discourse. The uncoupling of sexuality and reproduction is ubiquitous in American culture today as a result of multiple developments beyond the expansion of gay rights and the right to abortion, including birth control, divorce, and changing patterns of family life, as well as consumerism and mass culture; it may well be that the sheer scope, and irreversibility, all of these developments also intensifies the targeting of gays by conservative ideology and Christian fundamentalist movements. But that is all the more reason to recognize that the deconstruction of the phobic figuration of the queer is a struggle to be pursued inside as well as outside politics.

#### **Edelman’s metaphysic is grounded in Lacanian non-sense—their explanation of the social is baseless and there is no way to enact the alt**

Bateman 2006 (R Benjamin Bateman, doctoral candidate in English at the University of Virginia, Spring 2006, The Minnesota Review, online: <http://www.theminnesotareview.org/journal/ns6566/bateman_r_benjamin_ns6566_stf1.shtml>) Blue=reader’s digest version of Edelman

But his book falters as it comes increasingly to rely upon arcane appeals to Lacanian psychoanalysis (conspicuously absent from this book is a single reference to Foucault). Edelman's argument runs something like this: a stubborn kernel of non-meaning resides at the core of language, forcing each signifier to find its meaning in the next ad infinitum, thus preventing signification from ever completing itself or establishing meaning once and for all. This internal limit subtends and makes possible all meaning-making while simultaneously disrupting it. An unbridgeable gap, it marks the place of a recalcitrant, functionless, and socially corrosive jouissance—an excessive enjoyment over which language, society, and the future stumble. Heterosexual culture, anxious to name and contain this minatory abyss, casts homosexuals as it and into it. They are "…the violent undoing of meaning, the loss of identity and coherence, the unnatural access to jouissance…"(132).

One might fault Edelman, as John Brenkman has, for transposing a rule of language onto the order of being. But even if one takes his equation seriously, one must ask what is gained by actively occupying a structurally necessary role. In other words, if the Real must exist for the Symbolic to function, then the abyss will remain whether homosexuals agree to inhabit it or not. Edelman acknowledges this reality but argues that if homosexuals exit the abyss a new subaltern will be compelled to enter it. Better, then, to remain inside and mirror back to heterosexuality what troubles it most—meaninglessness, death and antisocial desire. Unfortunately, Edelman provides few details as to how we might accomplish this task, and his insistence elsewhere that the powers-that-be will clamp down with unmitigated force to repress and disavow the encroaching Real renders such a strategy less than appealing. At one point he encourages queers to pursue a more traditional politics alongside his radical recommendation (29), but he fails to acknowledge that if the former succeeds—and the dominant culture brings queers and/or their practices into its fold—then the latter's intended audience will no longer be listening.

#### Endorsing one state action doesn’t legitimize the state

Mervyn **Frost**, U of Kent, **1996**, Ethics in Int’l Relations, p. 90-1

A first objection which seems inherent in Donelan’s approach is that utilizing the modern state domain of discourse in effect sanctifies the state: it assumes that people will always live in states and that it is not possible within such a language to consider alternatives to the system. This objection is not well founded, by having recourse to the ordinary language of international relations I am not thereby committed to argue that the state system as it exists is the best mode of human political organization or that people ought always to live in states as we know them. As I have said, my argument is that whatever proposals for piecemeal or large-scale reform of the state system are made, they must of necessity be made in the language of the modern state. Whatever proposals are made, whether in justification or in criticism of the state system, will have to make use of concepts which are at present part and parcel of the theory of states. Thus,for example. any proposal for a new global institutional arrangement superseding the state system will itself have to be justified, and that justification will have to include within it reference to a new and good form of individual citizenship, reference to a new legislative machinery equipped with satisfactory checks and balances, reference to satisfactory law enforcement procedures, reference to a satisfactory arrangement for distributing the goods produced in the world, and so on. All of these notions are notions which have been developed and finely honed within the theory of the modern state. It is not possible to imagine a justification of a new world order succeeding which used, for example, feudal, or traditional/tribal, discourse. More generally there is no worldwide language of political morality which is not completely shot through with state-related notions such as citizenship, rights under law, representative government and so on.

#### Queer theory erases lesbians and perpetuates male supremacy

Jagose 96

Annamarie Jagose, Senior Lecturer, Dept. of English, University of Melbourne, Queer Theory, An Introduction, 1996, p. 116-117

Philippa Bonwick (1993:10) makes what has become the standard lesbian feminist objection to queer when she writes: 'Perhaps the most damaging aspect of the pervasive push to be queer is that it shrouds lesbians in an ever thicker cloak of invisibility ... Queer totally ignores the politics of gender. Using a generic term wipes out women again'. Bonwick here reiterates a common concern that queer politics will be insensitive to differences of gender within that allegedly inclusive category. Noting queer's 'universalising aspirations', Terry Castle (1993:12) attributes its recent popularity to the way in which 'it makes it easy to enfold female homosexuality back "into" male homosexuality and disembody the lesbian once again'. Sheila Jeffreys (1994:460) detects in queer a gay male agenda 'inimical to women's and lesbian interests'. Given that she finds gay men at the very heart of male supremacy, it is perhaps not surprising that she represents queer as an insidious attempt to reinstall lesbians in a structure of inequity in relation to gay men: 'Another way in which lesbians are being pulled back into cultural subordination to gay men is through "queer" politics' (Jeffreys, 1993: 143). Having described lesbian feminism as breaking away from the masculinist concerns of gay liberation, Jeffreys figures queer as a backlash phenomenon: what masquerades as a new descriptive model is merely an old one cunningly operating under a new name.

#### A discussion of gender must be an explicit part of their performance – otherwise it marginalizes gender as something to be tossed around and then ignored

Walter 96 [Suzanna Danuta Walter, Sociology Professor, Georgetown University, Summer 96, From Here to Queer: Radical Feminism, Postmodernism, and the Lesbian Menace (Or, Why Can't a Woman Be More like a Fag?), Signs, Vol. 21, No. 4, Feminist Theory and Practice pp. 830-869, http://www.jstor.org/stable/3175026]

There is great insight and merit in understanding gender and sexual identity as processes, acquisitions, enactments, creations, processes (and Butler is right to credit Simone de Beauvoir with this profound insight), and Butler and others have done us a great service in elaborating the dissimulating possibilities of simulation. But this insight gets lost if it is not theorized with a deep understanding of the limitations and constraints within which we "perform" gender. And without some elaborated social and cultural context, this theory of performance is deeply ahistorical and, therefore, ironically (because postmodernism fashions it- self as particularism par excellence) universalistic, avoiding a discussion of the contexts (race, class, ethnicity, etc.) that make particular "performances" more or less likely to be possible in the first place. It is not enough to assert that all performance of gender takes place within complex and specific regimes of power and domination; those regimes must be explicitly part of the analytic structure of the performance trope, rather than asides to be tossed around and then ignored.15

#### Edelman’s radical negativity precludes engagement with politics and papers over real oppression – Edelman’s theory is ultra-masculine

Floyd 12 [Kevin, Associate Professor of English at Kent State University, where he teaches courses on Marxism, queer studies, and twentieth-century U.S. literature and culture The Importance of Being Childish: Queer Utopians and Historical Contradiction1 SOURCEWorks & Days;Spring/Fall2012, Vol. 30 Issue 1/2, p323]

I have suggested that Edelman’s argument that “queer” should identify itself with the negativity of the death drive is a secretly utopian argument, that to embrace reproductive futurism’s figuration of “queer” as the destruction of the actual is also to embrace a figuration of utopia. But this brings us back to the relation between utopia and politics. The opposition in Edelman’s analysis between the signifier “queer” and the signifier “politics” could not be more absolute; for Edelman, “queer” and “politics” are in structural and irreconcilable contradiction with each other. We might critique Edelman’s argument for a kind of formalism, for abstracting both “queer” and “politics” in the mutual exclusivity he posits between them (a formalism Marxist intellectuals, it needs to be said, sometimes seem to replicate, as dismissive of queer thought as they imagine queer thought to be of Marxism). Or, recalling Balakrishnan’s remark quoted above, we might instead construe this radically ahistorical argument as a symptom of the damaged life we still inhabit, of an historical situation the time of capital makes difficult even to grasp as an historical situation. Thinking the death of the social, thinking utopia, is of course a radically totalizing way of thinking. The difficulty of the delicate balance between totalization and nontotalization in Adorno is that he refuses the subjective capacity to grasp totality fully in thought, even while insisting that value, “the lattice of socialization,” as Minima Moralia puts it, represents an objectively and violently total system which threatens to erase individual particularity altogether. One of Minima Moralia’s best-known formulations, “the whole is the false,” to this extent carries two meanings: subjectively, the conceptual whole is false; but the objective totality of capital is also false (MM 50). Edelman’s performance of totalization, in contrast, presumes omniscience, transcendence, the very vantage Adorno programmatically rejects (even as he also insists that it can never be entirely eluded).21 What Edelman claims for his analysis is an unproblematized bird’seye- view of the social as such (which only Lacan, apparently, can throw into relief), a clear, anything but individual vantage on its defining logic, as if his own analysis were not situated within that same totality – much less conditioned and limited by history which, as far as he is concerned, can hardly be said to exist. For Edelman, the structural totality oriented toward a narcissistic future is false, but the conceptual totality is true. And it is precisely this presumption of omniscience in Edelman which sets his claims apart most emphatically from Muñoz’s, where, to the contrary, utopia takes the form not of pure, abstract negativity, but of performative and aesthetic gestures from within urban spaces in which the historical, he suggests, can still be glimpsed, spaces increasingly erased by neoliberalism’s temporal and spatial logics. Muñoz returns us to earth – though the political implications of this return are less clear than the historical ones, as I will suggest. His book is nothing if not an archive of those sexual and social practices that have begun to vanish from view as the sexually revolutionary energies of the fifties and sixties have given way to their containment by privatization and the fetish of gay rights. He elaborates a contemporary urban terrain of practice at once aesthetic and social, a practice of queer world making, which he reads in Blochian terms as “laden with potentiality,” underscoring the socioeconomic, governmental, and racist violence routinely visited on those practices within the neoliberal city. Here the utopian is anything but abstract and conceptual; it emerges practically, “from below,” and under threat. Muñoz’s critique of Edelman turns precisely on the abstract character of Edelman’s analysis. In No Future, as Muñoz puts it, queerness is “a singular abstraction that can be subtracted and isolated from a larger social matrix;” specifically, “queer” is in Edelman both white and “crypto-universal” (CU 94). Pointing out, in what has become one of the most widely referenced formulations in recent queer studies, that “racialized kids, queer kids, are not the sovereign princes of futurity” (CU 95), Muñoz finds in everyday queer practices glimpses of a Blochian “‘not-yet’ where queer youths of color actually get to grow up” (CU 96). He explicitly identifies with queer youth of color – informing us that he was once one himself – and unfolds a critique of neoliberal urbanism from this point of view. His explicitly Blochian analysis is in this respect also implicitly Adornian: the child is most salient here as a figure not for an airtight, utterly predictable future, but for a precarious standpoint from which that future might begin to look less predictable. The violence of Giuliani’s New York City manifests itself in this account in a range of ways – in the infamous zoning ordinances, for example, which, serving the interests of real estate speculators, have also begun to shred the delicate social infrastructure of queer world making. It is also exemplified, of course, by the police: Muñoz recounts a demonstration in Washington Square Park, in the wake of Matthew Shepard’s murder, to which the state responded, as usual, with one of neoliberal urbanism’s defining imperatives, dispersal: “the state understands the need to keep us from knowing ourselves, knowing our masses” (CU 64). Utopian practices emerge in this account from within economically, infrastructurally precarious queer worlds of color in particular, bars like the now defunct Magic Touch in Jackson Heights, in which Muñoz locates those indispensable practices of interracial and interclass “contact” eloquently described by Samuel Delany.22 It is not too strong, in this context, to refer to this contemporary governmental dispersal of forms of queer sociality as “disappearance” – the verb as well as the noun – with all its brutal implications. Writing of the period in which Giuliani claimed credit for a drop in crime rates, Muñoz writes that “walking through the East or West Village, Chelsea, Brooklyn, or neighborhoods in Queens, queers have become very accustomed to seeing posters with the pictures of some queer person, often a queer person of color, who has been murdered or has ‘disappeared’” (CU 63). The utopian is defined here not by its abstract negativity, but by its practical inseparability from damaged life. In a discussion of Kevin Aviance, Muñoz proposes the ways in which this famous black drag performer “affirms the racialized ontology of the pier queen” (CU 74). Aviance’s flamboyant gestures evoke, that is, not only the homo fabulousness that has always been legible as a utopian gesture in Bloch’s sense; these gestures also evoke those vogueing contests one could once discover near the piers at the end of Christopher Street, where queer youth of color have tried to create a world for themselves – spaces that have begun to vanish in the last ten to fifteen years, as new condominiums and security forces have appeared in their place, explicitly appealing to gay clients and effacing the storied queer history of the piers, even as it has turned that history into yet another marketing ploy.23 (Progress!) Muñoz proposes seeing not only “celebration” in Aviance’s movements, but also “the strong trace of black and queer racialized survival” (CU 80). Again we encounter the indispensability of childish imagination; Aviance’s utopian enactments register a damaged present. Aviance, indeed, evokes the marginal sociality of the piers in those significantly less marginal spaces that cater to white gay men: on a stage high above a sweaty, dancing, largely white and tenaciously macho all-male crowd, he performs “gestures [which] connote the worlds of queer suffering that these huddled men attempt to block out but cannot escape, and the pleasures of being swish and queeny that they cannot admit to in their quotidian lives” (CU 79). Muñoz’s archive is one of utopian practices which carry positive content and which have also learned to be fully prepared for disappointment, for failure. Here, as in Bloch, hope is the practical consciousness of a relationship to the future which is inseparable from anxiety, from danger.24 Muñoz in this way defamiliarizes Edelman’s temporality of repetition, following an Adornian logic, insisting on the discontinuity that conditions continuity, on the indeterminacy and irreducibly historical character of the “not yet.” Utopia is exclusively the death of the present only if that present is fully positive, self-identical; but for Muñoz, the present, which we may well apprehend as self-identical, we are nonetheless to comprehend in terms of lack: “Queer cultural production is both an acknowledgement of the lack that is endemic to any heteronormative rendering of the world and a building, a ‘world making’ in the face of that lack” (CU 118). In Muñoz, “something’s missing”25 – something we can catch Blochian glimpses of if we attend to damaged, utopian practices the spatial and temporal logics of neoliberalism threaten to make “no longer conscious.” Edelman, by contrast, would have us believe that nothing is missing, that there really is no alternative: what is missing is precisely nothing, what is missing is only the abstract negativity of the actual’s total destruction. And if this abstract destruction is the point at which Edelman’s Lacan seems to absorb Edelman’s Adorno – negativity once again made equivalent to deconstruction, Adorno once again pulled into the service of deconstruction – this same death drive is also Edelman’s utopia, in spite of his efforts to contain the latter within a logic of sameness. This is also the point, as I have argued, at which Adorno will not be absorbed, the point at which the restless dialectic turns No Future’s identification of Lacan and Adorno into its non-identification with itself. Muñoz, meanwhile, highlights what Edelman manages in spite of himself to miss, that the future’s mere repetition of the present is anything but inevitable, that the future promised by a certain neoliberal temporality, a certain enforcement of more of the same, of speculation as such (about the future value of marriage licenses, for example), is a future that erases history, a future to which that temporality wants to take only some of us, those of us it wouldn’t just rather lock up. It is a future that “disappears” the history Muñoz wants us to remember, as it “disappears” the children he wants us to remember. This is the ultimate importance of Bloch for Muñoz: he shares with Bloch a willful insistence on the “not yet,” a determination to see an apparently neutralized political present as “laden with potentiality,” to find political hope in the face of abundant evidence of its absence, in the face of privatization, lockdown, “security.” If the queer youth of color with which Muñoz identifies can be construed as potential points of resistance, these points of resistance are also, he suggests, already vanishing. Muñoz may then seem, finally, as pessimistic about the political as Edelman; he insists that “queer idealism may be the only way to usher in a new mode of radicalism that can perhaps release queer politics from its current death grip” (CU 172) – the historically specific death grip, for example, of the Human Rights Campaign. We might even say that a pessimism about political practice, and a preference for the critical potential of idealism, is something else he shares with Adorno. But if queer politics are impossible here as well, they are also indispensable, and so vanishing points of resistance will be retained urgently as memory, as ideal, as a way of thinking the history that cannot be experienced. If Muñoz’s forthright idealism seems on the one hand to grant Edelman’s formal separation of “queer” from “politics,” he also insists that this separation is the product of a history we are by no means doomed to repeat.

#### Their use of the “f” word is an independent reason to vote negative—it normalizes sexual violence and makes a culture of domination inevitable

Schwyzer ‘9

Schwyzer, Prof of Gender Studies, 9 [community college history and gender studies professor, DPhil, Berkley (Hugo,  “Penetrate” v. “Engulf” and the multiple meanings of the “f” word: a note on feminist language, 4 November 2009, http://hugoschwyzer.net/2009/11/04/penetrate-v-engulf-and-the-multiple-meanings-of-the-f-word-a-note-on-feminist-language/]

In every women’s studies class I’ve taught here at PCC, and in many guest lectures about feminism I’ve given elsewhere, I use the “penetrate” versus “engulf” image to illustrate a basic point about the way in which our language constructs and maintains male aggression and female passivity. Even those who haven’t had heterosexual intercourse can, with only a small degree of imagination required, see how “envelop” might be just as accurate as “enter”. “A woman’s vagina engulfs a man’s penis during intercourse” captures reality as well as “A man’s penis penetrates a woman’s vagina.” Of course, most het folks who have intercourse are well aware that power is fluid; each partner can temporarily assert a more active role (frequently by being on top) — as a result, the language used to describe what’s actually happening could shift. Except, of course, in our sex ed textbooks and elsewhere, that shift never happens. **If the goal of sex education is to provide accurate information to young people before they become sexually active, we do a tremendous disservice to both boys and girls through our refusal to use language that honors the reality of women’s sexual agency.** We set young women up to be afraid; we set young men up to think of women’s bodies as passive receptacles. While changing our language isn’t a panacea for the problem of sexual violence (and joyless, obligatory intercourse), it’s certainly a promising start. As another part of my introductory lecture on language, I talk about “fuck”. I first dispell the urban legends that it’s an acronym (I’m amazed at how persistent the belief is that the word stands for “for unlawful carnal knowledge” or “fornication under the consent of the king”; I have students every damn year who are convinced the word is derived from one of those two sources.) I then ask at what age young people in English-speaking culture first encounter the word. Most of my students had heard the word by age five or six; many had started using it not long thereafter. I then ask how old they were when they realized that “fuck” has multiple meanings, and that its two most common uses are to describe intercourse and to express rage. There’s a pause at this point. Here’s the problem: long before most kids in our culture become sexually active, the most common slang word in the American idiom has knit together two things in their consciousness: sex and rage. If “fucking” is the most common slang term for intercourse, and “fuck you” or “fuck off” the most common terms to express contempt or rage, what’s the end result? A culture that has difficulty distinguishing sex from violence. In a world where a heartbreakingly high percentage of women will be victims of rape, it’s not implausible to suggest that at least in part, the language itself normalizes sexual violence**.** I challenge my students. I don’t ask them to give up all the satisfactions of profanity; rather I challenge them to think about words like “fuck” or “screw” and then make a commitment to confine the use of those words to *either* a description of sex (“We fucked last night”) *or* to express anger or extreme exasperation (“I’m so fucking furious with you right now!”) but not, not, not, both. Rage and lust are both normal human experiences; we will get angry and we will be sexual (or want to be) over and over again over the course of our lives. But we have a responsibility, I think, to make a clear and bright line between the language of sexual desire and the language of contempt and indignation. Pick one arena of human experience where that most flexible term in the English vernacular will be used, and confine it there. Words matter, I tell my students. **We’re told over and over again that “a picture is worth a thousand words” — but** we forget that words have the power to paint pictures in our minds of how the world is and how it ought to be. The language we use for sexuality, the words we use for rage and longing — these words construct images in our heads, in our culture, and in our lives. We have an obligation to rethink how we speak as part of building a more pleasurable, safe, just and egalitarian world.

Their binarization of legal and extra-legal actions make any possibility other than the status quo impossible—legal solutions are necessary and good

Orly Lobel ‘7 -- Professor of Law @ University of San Diego, “The Paradox of Extralegal Activism Critical Legal Consciousness and Transformative Politics” Harvard Law Review, Vol. 120, 2007

At this point, the paradox of extralegal activism unfolds. While public interest thinkers increasingly embrace an axiomatic rejection of law as the primary form of progress, their preferred form of activism presents the very risks they seek to avoid. The rejected “myth of the law” is replaced by a “myth of activism” or a “myth of exit,” romanti- cizing a distinct sphere that can better solve social conflict. Yet these myths, like other myths, come complete with their own perpetual perils. The myth of exit exemplifies the myriad concerns of cooptation. For feminist agendas, for example, the separation of the world into distinct spheres of action has been a continuous impediment to meaning- ful reform. Efforts to create better possibilities for women to balance work and family responsibilities, including relaxing home work rules and supporting stay-at-home parents through federal child care legisla- tion, have been couched in terms of support for individual choice and private decisionmaking.173 Indeed, recent initiatives in federal child care legislation to support stay-at-home parents have been clouded by preconceptions of the separation of spheres and the need to make one- or-the-other life choices. Most importantly, the emergence of a sphere- oriented discourse abandons a critical perspective that distinguishes between valuing traditional gender-based characteristics and celebrat- ing feminine difference in a universalist and essentialist manner.174 Not surprisingly then, some feminist writers have responded to civil society revivalism with great skepticism, arguing that efforts to align feminine values and agendas with classic republican theory of civil so- ciety activism should be understood, at least in part, as a way of le- gitimizing historical social structures that subordinated women.175 The feminist lesson on the law/exit pendulum reveals a broader pattern. In a classic example of cooptation, activists should be con- cerned about the infusion (or indeed confusion) of nonlegal strategies with conservative privatization agendas. Indeed, in significant social policy contexts, legal scholarship oriented toward the exploration of ex- tralegal paths reinforces the exact narrative that it originally resisted — that the state cannot and should not be accountable for sustaining and improving the lifeworld of individuals in the twenty-first-century economy and that we must seek alternative ways to bring about social reform. Whether using the terminology of a path-dependent process, an inevitable downward spiral, a transnational prisoner’s dilemma, or a global race to the bottom, current analyses often suggest a lack of control over the forces of new economic realities. Rather than counter- ing the story of lack of control, pointing to the ongoing role of gov- ernment and showing the contradictions between that which is being kept regulated and that which is privatized, alternative extralegal scholarship accepts these developments as natural and inevitable. Similar to the arguments developed in relation to the labor movement — in which focusing on a limited right to collective bargaining demo- bilized workers and stripped them of their voice, participation, and de- cisionmaking power — contemporary extralegal agendas are limited to very narrow and patterned sets of reforms.

1. Our intersectional approach is the best way to confront oppression—the K oversimplifies, shouldn’t have particular prior questions.

Tomlinson 13 [Barbara Tomlinson, Department of Feminist Studies, University of California, Santa Barbara, To Tell the Truth and Not Get Trapped: Desire, Distance, and Intersectionality at the Scene of Argument, Signs, Vol. 38, No. 4, Summer 2013]

Many critics approach intersectionality carelessly, however, through metacommentary and complaint and through recommendations to bring its radical critique under control by advocating recourse to specific disciplinary methods—without acknowledging that such methods may have long been criticized for their service to dominant discourses. Critics assume that their task is to critique intersectionality, not to foster intersectionality’s ability to critique subordination. The rhetorical frameworks and tropes examined here misrepresent the history and arguments of intersectionality, treat it as a unitary entity rather than an analytic tool used across a range of disciplines, distort its arguments, engage in presentist analytics, reduce intersectionality’s radical critique of power to desires for identity and inclusion, and offer a deradicalized intersectionality as an asset for dominant disciplinary discourses. The frequent use of such argumentative strategies truncates our ability to consider clearly potential concepts of intersectionality. It also hobbles the development of feminist and antiracist arguments. Rather than generating new challenges, these critiques of intersectionality often structure themselves through conceptual binaries that have long been criticized for oversimplifying the complex, dialogic, flexible, and even contradictory relations inherent to arguments about antisubordination. They repeatedly present “strains of particularism versus univeralism, personal narrative versus grand theory, identity-based versus structural, static versus dynamic, parochial versus cosmopolitan, underdeveloped versus sophisticated, old versus new, race versus class, US versus Europe, and so on” (Crenshaw 2011b, 222–23).

#### Without specific detailed description of how the alt can work towards solutions you should be highly skeptical of their critique

**Bryant 12** ( levi, prof of philosophy at Collins college, Critique of the Academic Left, http://larvalsubjects.wordpress.com/2012/11/11/underpants-gnomes-a-critique-of-the-academic-left/)

The problem as I see it is that **this is the worst sort of abstraction** (in the Marxist sense) **and wishful thinking**. Within a Marxo-Hegelian context, a thought is abstract when it ignores all of the mediations in which a thing is embedded. For example, I understand a robust tree abstractly when I attribute its robustness, say, to its genetics alone, ignoring the complex relations to its soil, the air, sunshine, rainfall, etc., that also allowed it to grow robustly in this way. This is the sort of critique we’re always leveling against the neoliberals. They are abstract thinkers. In their doxa that individuals are entirely responsible for themselves and that they completely make themselves by pulling themselves up by their bootstraps, neoliberals ignore all the mediations belonging to the social and material context in which human beings develop that play a role in determining the vectors of their life. They ignore, for example, that George W. Bush grew up in a family that was highly connected to the world of business and government and that this gave him opportunities that someone living in a remote region of Alaska in a very different material infrastructure and set of family relations does not have. To think concretely is to engage in a cartography of these mediations, a mapping of these networks, from circumstance to circumstance (what I call an “onto-cartography”). It is to map assemblages, networks, or ecologies in the constitution of entities.¶ **Unfortunately, the academic left falls prey to its own form of abstraction**. **It’s good at carrying out critiques that denounce various social formations, yet very poor at proposing any sort of realistic constructions of alternatives**. This because it thinks abstractly in its own way, ignoring how networks, assemblages, structures, or regimes of attraction would have to be **remade to create a workable alternative**. Here I’m reminded by the “underpants gnomes” depicted in South Park:¶ The underpants gnomes have a plan for achieving profit that goes like this:¶ Phase 1: Collect Underpants¶ Phase 2: ?¶ Phase 3: Profit!¶ They even have a catchy song to go with their work:¶ Well this is sadly how it often is with the academic left. **Our plan seems to be as follows:¶ Phase 1: Ultra-Radical Critique¶ Phase 2: ?¶ Phase 3: Revolution and complete social transformation!¶** Our problem is that **we seem perpetually stuck at phase 1 without ever explaining what is to be done at phase 2. Often the critiques** articulated at phase 1 **are right**, **but there are nonetheless all sorts of problems** with those critiques nonetheless. In order to reach phase 3, we have to produce new collectives. **In order for new collectives to be produced, people need to be able to hear and understand the critiques developed at phase 1.** Yet **this is where everything begins to fall apart.** **Even though these critiques are often right, we express them in ways that only an academic with a PhD in critical theory** and post-structural theory **can understand**. How exactly is Adorno to produce an effect in the world if only PhD’s in the humanities can understand him? **Who are these things for?** We seem to always ignore these things and then look down our noses with disdain at the Naomi Kleins and David Graebers of the world. To make matters worse, we publish our work in expensive academic journals that only universities can afford, with presses that don’t have a wide distribution, and **give our talks at expensive hotels at academic conferences attended only by other academics**. Again, who are these things for? **Is it an accident that so many activists look away from these things with contempt, thinking their more about an academic industry** and tenure, **than producing change in the world? If a tree falls in a forest and no one is there to hear it, it doesn’t make a sound! Seriously dudes** and dudettes, **what are you doing?¶** But finally, and worst of all, us Marxists and anarchists all too often act like assholes. We denounce others, we condemn them, we berate them for not engaging with the questions we want to engage with, and we vilify them when they don’t embrace every bit of the doxa that we endorse. **We are every bit as off-putting and unpleasant as the fundamentalist minister or the priest of the inquisition** (have people yet understood that Deleuze and Guattari’s Anti-Oedipus was a critique of the French communist party system and the Stalinist party system, and the horrific passions that arise out of parties and identifications in general?). This type of “revolutionary” **is the greatest friend of the reactionary and capitalist because they do more to drive people into the embrace of reigning ideology than to undermine reigning ideology. These are the people that keep Rush Limbaugh in business.** Well done!¶ But this isn’t where our most serious shortcomings lie. **Our most serious shortcomings are to be found at phase 2. We** almost **never make concrete proposals for how things ought to be restructured, for what new material infrastructures and semiotic fields need to be produced**, and when we do, our critique-intoxicated cynics and skeptics immediately jump in with an analysis of all the ways in which these things contain dirty secrets, ugly motives, and are doomed to fail. **How**, I wonder, **are we to do anything at all when we have no concrete proposals?** **We live on a planet of 6 billion people. These 6 billion people are dependent on a certain network of production and distribution to meet the needs of their consumption.** That network of production and distribution does involve the extraction of resources, the production of food, the maintenance of paths of transit and communication, the disposal of waste, the building of shelters, the distribution of medicines, etc., etc., etc.¶ **What are your proposals? How will you meet these problems?** How will you navigate the existing mediations or semiotic and material features of infrastructure? Marx and Lenin had proposals. Do you? Have you even explored the cartography of the problem? Today we are so intellectually bankrupt on these points that we even have theorists speaking of events and acts and talking about a return to the old socialist party systems, ignoring the horror they generated, their failures, and not even proposing ways of avoiding the repetition of these horrors in a new system of organization. Who among our critical theorists is thinking seriously about how to build a distribution and production system that is responsive to the needs of global consumption, avoiding the problems of planned economy, ie., who is doing this in a way that gets notice in our circles? Who is addressing the problems of micro-fascism that arise with party systems (there’s a reason that it was the Negri & Hardt contingent, not the Badiou contingent that has been the heart of the occupy movement). At least the ecologists are thinking about these things in these terms because, well, they think ecologically. Sadly we need something more, a melding of the ecologists, the Marxists, and the anarchists. We’re not getting it yet though, as far as I can tell. Indeed, folks seem attracted to yet another critical paradigm, Laruelle.¶ I would love, just for a moment, to hear a radical environmentalist talk about his ideal high school that would be academically sound. How would he provide for the energy needs of that school? How would he meet building codes in an environmentally sound way? How would she provide food for the students? What would be her plan for waste disposal? And most importantly, how would she navigate the school board, the state legislature, the federal government, and all the families of these students? **What is your plan? What is your alternative?** I think there are alternatives. I saw one that approached an alternative in Rotterdam. **If you want to make a truly revolutionary contribution, this is where you should start. Why should anyone even bother listening to you if you aren’t proposing real plans?** But we haven’t even gotten to that point. Instead we’re like underpants gnomes, saying “revolution is the answer!” **without addressing any of the infrastructural questions of just how revolution is to be produced, what alternatives it would offer, and how we would concretely go about building those alternatives.** Masturbation.**¶** **“Underpants gnome” deserves to be a category in critical theory; a sort of synonym for self-congratulatory masturbation**. We need less critique not because critique isn’t important or necessary– it is –but because we know the critiques, we know the problems. **We’re intoxicated with critique because it’s easy and safe. We best every opponent with critique. We occupy a position of moral superiority with critique. But do we really do anything with critique?** What we need today, more than ever, is composition or carpentry. **Everyone knows something is wrong. Everyone knows this system is destructive and stacked against them.** Even the Tea Party knows something is wrong with the economic system, despite having the wrong economic theory. **None of us, however, are proposing alternatives. Instead we prefer to shout and denounce. Good luck with that.**

# 1ar

The permutation is a means of recognizing the transformative potential of the future as an untouched ground for social change, queerness needs to draw strength from its own aggressive confrontation with heterosexuality, rather than accept the negativity projected onto it by heterosexuality.

Bateman 2006 (R Benjamin Bateman, doctoral candidate in English at the University of Virginia, Spring 2006, The Minnesota Review, online: <http://www.theminnesotareview.org/journal/ns6566/bateman_r_benjamin_ns6566_stf1.shtml>)

Certain readers might chafe at Edelman's suggestion that Butler's politics is insufficiently radical. After all, Butler has been criticized, like Edelman, for trafficking in recondite theories and postmodern argot and for failing to offer a viable model of political agency. To be sure, Butler's post-structuralist and Foucaultian commitments constrain her ability to posit a stable political agent and to conceive a politics that would radically oppose, rather than merely reinforce or marginally reinflect, a dominant cultural order. But in her recent work, perhaps most strikingly in 2004's Undoing Gender, Butler has turned to the "question of social transformation" (the title of UG's tenth chapter), arguing, quite programmatically, that social transformation "…is a question of developing, within law, within psychiatry, within social and literary theory, a new legitimating lexicon for the gender complexity that we have always been living" (219). Lest she be accused of nominalism, Butler stresses the importance of real bodies in forging such a vocabulary: "…the body is that which can occupy the norm in myriad ways, exceed the norm, rework the norm, and expose realities to which we thought we were confined as open to transformation" (217). While Edelman rejects the future as a site of social reproduction, Butler prizes it as a space of uncertainty, an ambiguous terrain upon which competing and perhaps unforeseeable claims will be made and new social orders elaborated.

Butler's model offers queer theory a brighter future than Edelman's, not simply because it confers agency upon social actors and highlights the social's capacity for transformation, but because it supersedes the liberal inclusiveness for which Edelman faults it. Butler's queer world is not one in which the dominant order remains stable as it incorporates, or ingests, peripheral sexualities into its fold. Rather, it is one in which the periphery remakes the center, rearticulating what it means to be "normal" or "American" or "queer." Thus, queers do not simply enter society on heterosexuality's terms; they recast such terms, seizing upon instabilities in signification to elaborate previously unarticulated and perhaps unanticipatable ways of life. Edelman's point that 'queer' names "the resistance of the social to itself" (2002) combats the very anti-futurism he endorses; in this formulation, queerness functions as the force that prevents a particular social order from coinciding with itself, from congealing into a futureless nightmare. Queer, then, might denote the instability of all norms and social orders, their intrinsic capacity for change

#### Plan is key to transgender integration in the military

Robinson 13 Allyson D., Executive Director, OutServe-SLDN—a network of LGBT military personnel; transgender US military veteran; “Open Transgender Military Service: It's Time to Get Started” *Huffington Post*; April 5, 2013; http://www.huffingtonpost.com/allyson-d-robinson/open-transgender-military-service\_b\_3020776.html

Panetta's announcement just weeks before leaving office that he would bring an end to the policy of excluding women from combat assignments surprised, well, everyone. To call this move historic is to put it mildly. Not long after that, he made history again, bringing a measure of equity to the benefits offered to same-sex military families before leaving D.C. to return to his much-loved walnut farm in California. History will remember Panetta's tenure at the Defense Department favorably for these decisions to change policies that no longer reflected the reality of our wars or, just as importantly, the values of our nation.¶ As a woman veteran, I was elated with these changes. As the wife of a woman veteran (my wife Danyelle was a West Point classmate of mine and served as an Army officer with honor and distinction), I felt encouraged by them.¶ But as a transgender veteran, and an advocate for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) service members, veterans and their families, the changes that Secretary Panetta brought about in his last days in office have left me emboldened. Here's why: As the combat exclusion for women comes to an end and open service for gay, lesbian and bisexual Americans edges closer to truly equal service, it becomes more and more obvious that there is no longer any rational basis on which to bar qualified transgender people from serving in our armed forces.¶ At the heart of the combat exclusion rule were two assumptions that were accepted uncritically, if not quite universally, for decades. The first was that women are somehow, by our nature, "unfit" for close combat. The valorous service of America's women veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan, asymmetric battlefields where the "front line" is everywhere and every trooper faces the risk of close combat every day, put the lie to that. So too did the military's uncanny ability to find ways to circumvent the rules as it became apparent they were no longer working in the field. Today there are few more effective ways to reveal oneself to be an armchair general, out of touch with the reality of modern war, than by saying that women don't have what it takes to hang on the battlefield.¶ The second assumption underlying the combat exclusion was that the differences between men and women (real or, just as frequently, the product of sexist imagination) could not be accommodated under battlefield conditions without compromising the war-fighting effectiveness of the force. Steady advances in combat service support technology, techniques and procedures rendered all serious objections in this category obsolete long ago. (I refuse even to honor with a response those objections based not on quantifiable differences in the sexes but on chauvinist notions of a need to protect women, or to protect men from women.)¶ With the stroke of a pen, Secretary Panetta consigned these two assumptions to the dustbin of history, where, along with military racial segregation and "don't ask, don't tell" (DADT), they can serve as embarrassing reminders of how easy it is to justify our prejudices in the name of security. However, it will be up to his successors to take the next logical step: the exorcism from DOD regulations of what is today a blanket, no-exceptions-allowed exclusion of all transgender people from service. Such a move is absolutely appropriate today, because the bottom line is this: If "valor knows no gender," as President Obama said when the combat exclusion rule fell, and if men and women really can be accommodated simultaneously under close combat conditions without a negative impact on war-fighting ability, then there is no reason other than prejudice for the transgender exclusion to remain.