## 1ac—story

#### WHY I WANT TO FUCK RONALD REAGAN

#### SEXUAL FANTASIES IN CONNECTION WITH RONALD REAGAN. The genitalia of the Presidential contender exercised a continuing fascination. A series of imaginary genitalia were constructed using (a) the mouth parts of Jacqueline Kennedy, (b) a Cadillac, (c) the assembly kid prepuce of President Johnson...In 89% of cases, the constructed genitalia generated a high incidence of self-induced orgasm. Tests indicate the masturbatory nature of the Presidential contender’s posture. Dolls consisting of plastic models of Reagan’s alternate genitalia were found to have a disturbing effect on deprived children. REAGAN'S HAIRSTYLE. Studies were conducted on the marked fascination exercised by the Presidential contender’s hairstyle. 65% of male subjects made positive connections between the hairstyle and their own pubic hair. A series of optimum hairstyles were constructed. THE CONCEPTUAL ROLE OF REAGAN. Fragments of Reagan’s cinetized postures were used in the construction of model psychodramas in which the Reagan-figure played the role of husband, doctor, insurance salesman, marriage counselor, etc. The failure of these roles to express any meaning reveals the nonfunctional character of Reagan. Reagan’s success therefore indicates society’s periodic need to re-conceptualize its political leaders. Reagan thus appears as a series of posture concepts, basic equations which reformulate the roles of aggression and anality. Reagan’s personality. The profound anality of the Presidential contender may be expected to dominate the United States in the coming years. By contrast the late JFK remained the prototype of the oral subject, usually conceived in pre-pubertal terms. In further studies sadistic psychopaths were given the task of devising sex fantasies involving Reagan. Results confirm the probability of Presidential figures being perceived primarily in genital terms; the face of LB Johnson is clearly genital in significant appearance--the nasal prepuce, scrotal jaw, etc. Faces were seen as either circumcised (JFK, Khrushchev) or uncircumcised (LBJ, Adenauer). In assembly-kit tests Reagan’s face was uniformly perceived as a penile erection. Patients were encouraged to devise the optimum sex-death of Ronald Reagan.

## 1ac—advantage

#### Ultimately our understanding of *what Reagan is*, what a president is, what the government is all established by the production and regulation of what thoughts, what desires, and what pleasures are appropriate to *think* about America’s political leaders and its government. All of this contributes to the formation of community—but the problem is that this is always imperfect, exclusive, and closed.

#### Break open the possibilities of pleasure and the body of the president.

#### Our desires are not our own. They are our prisons, defining the terms and the scope of conceivable action. The 1ac ruptures the illusion of a normative economy of what it is appropriate

Foster 94. Dennis A. Foster, Daisy Dean Frensley Chair in English Literature at Southern Methodist University, PhD from UC Irvine, “Pleasure and Community in Cultural Criticism,” American Literary History, Vol. 6, No. 2 (Summer, 1994), pg. 372

It has, some argue, always been the impulse of Americans to see their political aspirations in terms of the sublime, be- yond the pragmatic politics of the Old World. The genius, if I may, of Ronald Reagan-who as governor so bitterly de- nounced the children of the '60s-was to call for the liberation of the child in corporate and consuming Americans when the '70s had us feeling old and cranky. But under the cover of a new American innocence, there emerged an unprecedented compulsion to serve the economic machinery in the name of private satisfactions. Jean Baudrillard, America's cool lover, saw it coming as early as 1970 when he identified the pathological obligation to enjoy in the "fun-system" of consumption (48). These narrowly constrained pleasures of consumption, so contemptuous of the pleasures of countercultural excesses of the body, had the unhappy effect of producing wild wealth for those few committed to the material fork of the American fantasy. J. G. Ballard looked at America, also in 1970, and in a scandalous piece, "Why I Want to Fuck Ronald Reagan," identified the governor's bursting anal joy as his most seductive characteristic, one that was to be realized on a national level in the 1980s. The fun was blinding. Only when consumers "lost confidence," like aging libertines sadly looking over yet one more virgin, did Americans begin generally to realize that the fun was not properly ours, that our desires were not our own. What I am considering here is the place of pleasure in the formation of communities, particularly of nations, and the con- sistent inability to understand the relation between them that has been a part of our own recent history and has again taken on disturbing international implications. The pursuit of happiness has a calculable side to it-wealth, security, property- but it has another side that seems, depending on the outcome, sublime or, as in nationalism, obscene. The confusion of these two dimensions appears, for example, at the center of most of Don DeLillo's work. He has consistently explored the problem of pleasure that attends Western, Enlightenment thought. It is difficult for most Westerners, particularly those with 10 years and more of university training behind them, to imagine that the idea of the rational individual has not triumphed in the world. The businessmen, CIA spooks, insurance agents, and other power brokers in The Names (1982) long for something beyond themselves but can no more imagine that some cult that kills people in accord with an alphabetic scheme represents the majority of the world than we believe David Koresh is the norm of American faith. In The Names, what goes beyond the individual has its most spectacular representation in the image of thousands of people circling the Kaaba in Mecca, a mass of people running for faith. DeLillo opens Mao 11 (1991) with a similar vision: thousands of couples in Yankee Stadium being married simultaneously by the Reverend Moon to partners they just met. The shadow of that deep pleasure, where some infantile joy inhabits the idea of a community, haunts every at- tempt by DeLillo's heroes to construct satisfying lives. No evi- dence of particular failures in Moonie marriages or alphabetic killings eliminates desires for some sublime transformation. Today, following the collapse of the East-West arrangement, an important issue on both domestic and international levels is to figure out what will constitute a national pleasure- how are we going to understand community. And as we have been asked by our national leaders to rediscover America-always a frightening proposition-it might serve us well to think again about the community and the sublime. The essays in Jean-Luc Nancy's The Inoperative Commu- nity (Communaute desoeuvree) and Jean-Francois Lyotard's The Inhuman propose that community as we normally think about it is impossible, was probably always impossible. The negation both use in their titles suggests the attempt they are making to find an alternative within an aspect of experience that has been denied or repressed. And yet it would be hard to call either of these strenuous accounts utopic, or even opti- mistic, and for that reason they present a useful response to the determined attempts to transcend cultural theory's impasses. The nature of these impasses is the subject of two of Steven Connor's recent books on contemporary theory and value, and as such the books serve as examples and analyses of the obsessions and repetitions that divide literary and cultural studies. Thinking through these problems in terms of pleasure, Connor locates the divides along the difference between satisfaction (the end of a Freudian death drive) and ecstasy (the jouissance of the sublime), between totalitarianism and anarchy. Connor articulates this opposition in Theory and Cultural Value: "The experience of pleasure in art and culture may be a useful place to start, not because art and culture offer access to any kind of pure or disinterested pleasure, but precisely because of the uncertain and impure nature of pleasure in these areas, poised between the interested and the disinterested, be- tween use-value and exchange-value, between homeostatic ego-gratification and the indefiniteness of sublime pleasure" (54). Connor circles variations of this opposition (providing a useful summary of many theorists along the way) in the name of a return to the ripe topic of ethics: so much theory, but what do you do? In his exploration of ethical positions, Connor does not let stand any plea for a paradise of resolutions, no Jiirgen Haber- mas or Fredric Jameson opening a door to utopia, more or less. But he does repeatedly suggest that we might live ethically in the center of a vortex. While remaining skeptical of the university as an institution, for example, one could still retain a "principled attachment" to it as a center that holds crisis open for examination (130); feminists might dialectically inhabit both a French field of difference and poetics (Luce Irigaray, Helene Cixous) and a more political field of universals directed to- ward developing a "dynamic interplay" of values (186-87). Theory, that is, should not determine values or evacuate them but chart their passage from one field to the other (257). This is not a simple pragmatism, as much as Connor admires this American school from John Dewey and William James to Richard Rorty. Rather, it is a determined suspension between idealism and daily life. What I find disturbing is that Connor in his pluralist tendency steadily abandons theory. Like many working in historicist and cultural studies, he displays an ulti- mate distrust of attempts to work a problem through to some usually unsatisfying end, of the impotence of philosophy. Nancy and Lyotard show no such limits. Nancy's book of essays, written in the mid '80s, emerges from the dilemma faced by the Left (that part of politics con- cerned "at least" with "what is at stake in community as op- posed to the right's concern with order and administration" xxxvi) during the collapse of communism. The topical es- says-on democracy, communism, freedom, religion, love- are couched in the difficult, deconstructive gestures of deferral typical of Martin Heidegger or Jacques Derrida and provide few specific historical examples, leaving the philosophy purer than many will like. But what Nancy claims about communism has far-reaching implications, for while communism as a polit- ical reality disappears, it ironically reemerges in new forms, emblematic of "the desire to discover or rediscover a place of community at once beyond social divisions and beyond subor- dination to technopolitical dominion" (1). The most threatening social forms this fantasy takes, Nancy argues, are those of communities that "operate," that are deliberately "worked" out: religion in its more enthusiastic forms, nationalism, and other political movements that tend toward the production of a unified communal spirit, all tending toward totalitarian impulses. What Nancy values instead is the "inoperative," "un- working," desoeuvree in community, "that which, before or beyond the work, withdraws from the work, and which, no longer having to do either with production or with completion, encounters interruption, fragmentation, suspension" (31). That is, the community Nancy imagines is one that emerges from what resists the communal, the gathering of all people in an es- sential spirit. The community, by contrast with the communal, would be what "exposes" you to the fact of your singular, mor- tal self in the presence of others. Nancy presses on the contradiction in democratic soci- eties that liberals, at least, have learned to live with, mostly by forgetting it exists: we dwell with, but separate from, others. This forgetting comes not despite the triumph of democracy in the post-cold war world, but as part of it, or of "the consensus of a single program that we call 'democracy'" (xxxviii). Con- sensus has replaced the difficult, conflictual process of communication, just as communion (the union of spirit) has re- placed community. Americans may assume, as The Life of Brian proclaims, that we are all individuals, but because we exist differentially, the only full individual is, literally, the dead individual(13), someone at last no longer touched by others. At the same time, the idea of a profound communion with other individuals grows out of a fantasy of a lost community, a "lost age in which community was woven of tight, harmo- nious, and infrangible bonds" (9). Such communities, Nancy argues, suppress all freedom, community, life, as contempo- rary examples almost anywhere in the world will demonstrate. Real community, by contrast, involves "sharing" (par- tage), the fact of coming together that distributes, spaces, and places people so that it is not one's individuality that emerges, but a sense of "finitude": "Sharing comes down to this: what community reveals to me, in presenting to me my birth and my death, is my existence outside myself.... A singular being ap- pears, as finitude itself: at the end (or at the beginning), with the contact of the skin (or the heart) of another singular being, at the confines of the same singularity that is, as such, always other, always shared, always exposed" (26-28). The skin, the face, the heart are for Nancy the simple physical facts that al- ways limit our ability to merge with others. No fantasy of com- munion will get past this difference. But these limits are also what open us to communication, to an awareness of our "expo- sure" before the world, and crucially (lest you think this is all bleak stuff) ecstasy, "what happens to the singular being" (7). Hard work, of course, to face exposure, but this is the way to thought, to the divine, to love, to "the impossible." It is not wholeness, but limits that Nancy seeks. Two passages on love: Love re-presents I to itself broken.... [H]e, this subject, was touched, broken into, in his subjectivity, and he is from then on, for the time of love, opened by this slice, broken or fractured, even if only slightly. .... From then on, I is constituted broken. (96) But it is the break itself that makes the heart.... The beat- ing of the heart-rhythm of the partition of being, syn- cope of the sharing of singularity-cuts across presence, life, consciousness. That is why thinking-which is noth- ing other than the weighing or testing of the limits, the ends, of presence, of life, of consciousness-thinking it- self is love. (99) Nancy is attempting here to link the social situation of "being in common," of community and thought, tojouissance. Joy "is to be cut across," which requires an opening to others in "aban- donment," in "destitution," without the protection of spiritual- ism and forgetting. This notion of community as that which separates and places us sounds like Michel Foucault's description of commu- nity under panoptic surveillance, though Foucault's followers, unlike Nancy, see this state of affairs as having oppressive implications. The Foucauldian subject is not congenitally singu- lar but is created as singular by and for power, created as a subject of knowledge. And since anything that might exist before or outside of power and discourse remains by definition unknowable, there seems to be no alternative to what power has created, no escape, no freedom. A number of recent theorists, most strikingly Judith Butler in Gender Trouble, have pro- posed strategies for evading power. Butler proves repeatedly that a sexual body does not exist prior to discourse, but the weight of this repetition suggests a fury at the thought that some piece of nature, as Freud puts it, might be behind our dis- content. Insistently, she points to the origin in discourse of cul- ture's malaise, disavowing organic imperatives and their rep- resentation in drives. "The epistemology of drive theory is junk," one opponent of that nature huffed at me and then turned away when I asked about drives. If our grief is only a conse- quence of discourse, just bad epistemology, then we might make it all right some day. Butler's famous solution is drag, the multiplication of gender positions that enables the individual to escape the construction of power, though I cannot get my mind off Paris is Burning and the image of Venus dreaming of the day when he could replace drag with a sex change opera- tion and thereby marry and settle down in the suburbs. He dies first, and meanwhile drag is becoming fashion. But Butler's strategy has become a common one, suggesting that the way out of the constraints of gender, the marketplace, and technolo- gy is to seize the position imposed by social power and exploit it, multiplying marketplaces and commodities, increasing the flow of information, accepting not a single gender but many until power cannot trace your movements. In all these moves I find a desperate optimism, a hope that happiness may yet be possible. I do not say that pleasure may be possible, because plea- sure itself is part of the problem. For Foucauldians like Butler, pleasure in the form of jouissance is a source of resistance to the other pleasures of consensus based, collective community. The displacements implied in ecstasy suggest not only an unbalancing of the self but also an evasion of power's individuating forces. But when thinking about such pleasure in Western society, we should probably keep in mind the perverse and de- structive jouissance that Baudrillard finds in our shopping malls and highways, the compelling repetitions in American history that W. S. Burroughs describes from the moment the first invaders hit Western shores in Cities of the Red Night (1981). Nancy also looks to jouissance as resistance, but he will have nothing to do with any jouissance that looks like fun. He insists, for instance, that the function of literature (as op- posed to myth, the lost story, the founding fiction) is to inter- rupt every myth, community, and thought of mastery. It is all agony, this suspension he describes, and consequently his cri- tique fails to address the real, if covert, pleasures that sustain modern institutions. Beneath the satisfactions of capital, gov- ernment, science, and even gender lie ancient enjoyments that remain mostly unconscious but vital.

#### The fatal repetition of debate is that we can never consider our resolutions, their objects, or their subjects as joyous and instead circle ourselves endlessly, metastasizing endlessly in simulated echo chambers. Think the possibility of deriving joy from disorganized speech.

Foster continues.Dennis A. Foster, Daisy Dean Frensley Chair in English Literature at Southern Methodist University, PhD from UC Irvine, “Pleasure and Community in Cultural Criticism,” American Literary History, Vol. 6, No. 2 (Summer, 1994), pg. 372[unbroken]

What Lyotard adds to this discussion is a description of the dynamics of these unconscious enjoyments. His claims in The Postmodern Condition (1984) about the ubiquity of dis- cursive forces seem forgotten in The Inhuman, where he ex- plores a tension between two different ideas of what consti- tutes the human in humanity, or the inhuman limits of humanity. Lyotard situates the human between two "inhuman" temporal positions. One is the indeterminate movement of "progress," "development," or "complexification," a brute, evolutionary drive toward order that produces our cities, in- dustry, communications systems, institutions, no matter what the cost to any species, our own included. Our human desires, the passions that we identify as our humanity, work largely, though unconsciously, in service to this "inhuman" drive, al- lowing us to imagine that we are fulfilling purely personal needs as we promote a larger complexity. The other temporal position is the static persistence of the lost animal, the "famil- iar and unknown guest" (2) from our infant past that haunts our dreams, language, and art. This second inhuman informs our humanity and comes back to us in the forms Freud described as repetition, remembering and working through. Anamnesis, as a process of narrative remembering by which one comes to know that past, works counter to progress: "Writing and read- ing which advance backwards in the direction of the unknown thing 'within'" (2). Lyotard sees us as caught between these two forces but with the possibility of choosing to work in the mode of one or the other. He favors the work of anamnesis, although the direc- tion of the civilized world is otherwise. Complexification, like the unification within Nancy's "working" (that is, not inopera- tive) community, like the Foucauldian extension of power, tends toward the reduction of specific humans to the components of a larger task, to the "hardware" of civilization. Not surprisingly, Lyotard's investigations establish the deep analo- gy between thinking and what thinks-the body is within thinking as "writing is in language" (17). We think because we have bodies. Jane Gallop offered us all an image of the birth of her son and sparked a wave of personal criticism that denied the independence of the cogito from the bodily experience. The implication seems to be that critical thought has its source in the particular traumas of experience. But for all the sympa- thy I have for this gesture, I wonder how much we should con- sider those experiences to be personal: to what extent are indi- vidual failures of happiness productive of critical thought? Insofar as personal essays attempt to discover an origin for thought, or for unhappiness, they evade a more basic prob- lem. Judith Butler writes of the trouble gender is, but gender is actually an answer (flawed as it may be) to the real trouble. Psychoanalysis invites us to consider what is at stake in having a body: bodies are incomplete, born premature, divided by sex, mortal. These incomplete bodies are incapable of permanent satisfaction, and so we suffer. As Jacques Lacan, always the joker, puts it, there is no sexual relation, and I may as well add that there is no community. Something unavailable to thought-Lyotard, like Lacan, calls it the Real-forever blocks the way to satisfaction. All consolations, from gender to philosophy, for this flaw in the Real are fated to fail, and there- fore to be for Butler and others more trouble than they are worth. But that does not keep us from continuing to try to find happiness through them. The irony here is that flawed institutions-family, government, education, et cetera-continue to provide ancient, perverse enjoyments regardless of their ability to make us happy or miserable. The consequence of this enjoyment for the modern world is a fatal repetition. America's enlightened armies of liberation continue to stumble into colonialism; gender refuses to be freed from romance; nations divorced from communism seek out atavistic identities in the affronts suffered in previous millennia. For literary modernity, too, every now is burdened with the excess of an unspoken past and a future that provokes a "perpetual rewriting**"** (Lyotard 28) in which every event is sub- ject to a return. For literature and history, the question is how that return occurs. It can be as the obsessive return of an un- conscious desire, the crime endlessly repeated as though it were fresh each time. This is the deep horror that links, for ex- ample, The New Criterion's hatred of DeLillo's un-American novels to the national hatred of the ethnic other. Or the return can come as the desire, like Oedipus's, to control the past by identifying the crime, which always leads one to repeat the form of the crime (Lyotard 29): this is the pathos of liberal plu- ralism. In both cases there remains the thought that some original fault might be set straight or be so reformed that it ceases to antagonize us. Can there be a way out of this trap? Nancy's deconstruc- tive suspension has so much renunciation of desire that one might detect the odor of the Kantian perverse in his method. Lyotard, however, suggests something like an attendance, not to the lost body of pleasure, but to the "matter," the "body" that does speak: "The body is a confused speaker" (38), and because the body speaks unclearly, the orderly world ignores, and thereby loses "the enigmatic confusion of the past, the confusion of the badly built city, of childhood ... the disorder of the past which takes place before having been wanted and conceived" (38). The reasoning world has no interest in, and derives no benefit from, knowing such a past. The "inhuman" of complexification manifests itself unconsciously in the cal- culations of Enlightenment thought, capitalism, technology, and institutional life: consequently, Lyotard claims, what we experience as desire is "no doubt no other than this process itself, working upon the nervous centres of the human brain and experienced directly by the human body" (71). Any thinking that follows the path of desire (for a stable understanding) is duped. Fortunately, the other "inhuman," that of the confused body, is not, after all, silent. It exists, for one, in the language where words are the body of thought. Lyotard puts it this way: "Words 'say', sound, touch, always 'before' thought. And they always 'say' something other than what thought signifies, and what it wants to signify by putting them into form. Words want nothing.... They are always older than thought" (142). Words are like that old, animal child-body that one can never be rid of: "Always forgotten, it is unforgettable" (143). Writing, then, points toward one kind of thought, jouissance, and the resistance to the inhuman process of capital and complexification. Lyotard makes no claim that this resistance will ever liberate anyone, but here he does suggest an alternative to the "empowering" strategies of most contemporary critical ideologies. Slavoj Zizek, taking up a Lacanian idea, argues that the way to resist the repetitions of desire is to "enjoy your symptom." That is, if you recognize that it is not your desire but what constitutes your desire that belongs to you, if you can identify with your symptom, then you might find an enjoyment that eschews all promise of power, that recognizes control as a constitutional delusion. This proposal may seem rarefied, but Zizek's argument appears in the context of the real totalitarian consequences of certain fantasies of mastery, in Eastern Eu- rope during the cold war and in that same region under the new order of emerging nationalisms. Modern communities will, of course, continue to be plagued by too much mindless suffering, boredom, and violence. And always there are the temptations offered by those who would relieve us of the suspense of our lives through ecstasies of religion, consumption, nationalism, family values. But the political solutions suggested by Butler's stylization of Foucault, or Connor's pluralism, or the wishing for community that characterizes much political discussion lead nowhere. They participate in a pattern of thought that denies what cannot be clearly, positively articulated. Historical and cultural criti- cism has increasingly avoided theory and interpretation, aban- doning textuality. in a claim to be sticking to fact. Psychoana- lytic criticism, for example, in its turn toward self-psychology and object relations disavows the bodily real and its inarticu- late forces in the hope of finding an accidental, hence cor- rectable, cause of unhappiness. As if they can no longer stand the role of interpreting the world, critics of literature, culture, history, and mind have begun to act out an understandable desire to fix things. But they confuse, I believe, the unhappiness that comes from social and economic injustice, which may re- spond to action, and the unhappiness that arises in the meeting of the human with the inhuman in us. This is not a condition to fix but to understand and turn to useful thought and work. The- ory has not run its course: we have taken the first chance to run from it and the limitations it insists on. The inertial power of American institutions, the thrill felt by buyers and sellers wor- shiping on the floor of the stock exchange, is ultimately every bit as great as that which drives the masses DeLillo describes marrying by the ballpark-full and praying in swirling multi- tudes in Mecca. Drag is not going to provide a counterpleasure to substitute for the ecstasy these people experience. If we will be happy, it will not be in the community of consumption or in the spurious chaos of drag. Nancy and Ly- otard suggest that in an attention to language there may be some relief for the sad animal of humanity, and perhaps here there is the suggestion of another literary and critical practice that is not fated to repetition: We wake up and we are not happy. No question of remak- ing a real new house. But no question either of stifling the old childhood which murmurs at our waking. Thinking awakens in the middle of it, from the middle of very old words, loaded with a thousand domesticities. Our ser- vants, our masters. To think, which is to write, means to awaken in them a childhood which these old folk have not yet had. (Lyotard 197) These pleasures are, significantly, domestic, the foundation, not the end, of social change.

#### Obviously perfect satisfaction is impossible. Being alive guarantees that shit happens that we don’t necessarily enjoy and we’ll never claim to solve that problem. Legislating what people ought to derive pleasure from is always already a reaction to the imperfections in any such system of value—the question of this debate is whether you’ll legislate our pleasure in enjoying the sexualization of the body of the president. What will you do with us, the discontents, the other worldly, those that dare to desire what civilization deems undesirable: commandeering the body of the commander-in-chief? How can debate be a happy activity if the fun of freedom isn’t welcome here?

#### Debate should embrace the obscene – we invite you to take ecstasy with us and to simply fly away. Leave the present in order to embrace a utopian future. Return at will to the past when you feel like giving Ronald Reagan a good fuck. Abandon rigid conceptions of temporality in order to create a multiplicity of new political imaginations that free oneself from norms that regulate libidinal desire

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Conclusion *“Take Ecstasy with Me”* **WE MUST** **VACATE the here and now for a then and there**. Individual transports are insufficient. We need to engage in a collective temporal distortion. We need to step out of the rigid conceptualization that is a straight present. In this book I have argued that queerness is not yet here; thus, we must always be future bound in our desires and designs. The future is a spatial and temporal destination. It is also another place, if we believe Heidegger, who argued that the temporal is prior to the spatial. What we need to know is that queerness is not yet here but it approaches like a crashing wave of potentiality. And we must give in to its propulsion, its status as a destination. Willingly we let ourselves feel queerness’s pull, knowing it as something else that we can feel, that we must feel. We must take ecstasy. The title of this conclusion is lifted from indie pop stars the Magnetic Fields. Sung by the wonderfully languid Stephen Merritt, the band’s leader, the song and its titular request could certainly be heard as a call to submit to pleasures both pharmaceutical and carnal. And let us hope that they certainly mean at least both those things. But when I listen to this song I hear something else, or more nearly, I feel something else. A wave of lush emotions washes over me, and other meanings for the word *ecstasy* are keyed. The gender-neutral song’s address resonates queerly and performs a certain kind of longing for a something else. Might it be a call for a certain kind of transcendence? Or is it in fact something more? The Magnetic Fields are asking us to perform a certain “stepping out” with them. That “stepping out” would hopefully include a night on the town, but it could and maybe should be something more. Going back through religion and philosophy we might think of a stepping out of time and place, leaving the here and now of straight time for a then and a there that might be queer futurity Saint Theresa’s ecstasy, most memorably signaled in Lorenzo Bernini’s marble sculpture, has served as the visual sign of ecstasy for many 185 186 Conclusion Christians. The affective transport chiseled in her face connotes a kind of rapture that has enthralled countless spectators. It represents a leaving of self for something larger in the form of divinity. Plotinus described this form of ecstasy as God’s help to reach God and possess him. In Plotinus, God reaches man beyond all reason and gives him a kind of happiness that is ecstasy.’ In seminar XX, Lacan looks to Bernini’s sculpture as the most compelling example of what he calls the Other or feminine jouissance. 2 Ecstasy and jouissance thus both represent an individualistic move outside of the self. These usages resonates with the life of the term *ecstasy* in the history of philosophy. *Ekstasis,* in the ancient Greek *(exstare* in the Latin), means “to stand” or “to be out outside of oneself;’ *ex* meaning “out” and *stasis* meaning “stand” Generally the term has meant a mode of contemplation or consciousness that is not self-enclosed, particularly in regard to being conscious of the other. By the time we get to phenomenology especially Heidegger, we encounter a version of being outside of oneself in time. In *Being and Time* Heidegger reflects on the activity of timeliness and its relation to *ekstatisch.3* Knowing ecstasy is having a sense of timeliness’s motion, comprehending a temporal unity, which includes the past (having-been), the future (the not-yet), and the present (the making- present). This temporally calibrated idea of ecstasy contains the potential to help us encounter a queer temporality, a thing that is not the linearity that many of us have been calling straight time. While discussing the Montreal-based band Lesbians on Ecstasy, Halberstam points to their mobilization of queer temporality through their thought experiment of imagining lesbian history as if it were on ecstasy. Here they certainly mean the drug MDMA, but they also mean an ecstatic temporality As Halberstam explicates, their electronic covers of earnest lesbian anthems remake the past to reimagine a new temporality.4 The “stepping out” that the Magnetic Fields song’s title requests, this plaintive “Take Ecstasy with Me,” is a request to step out of the here and now of straight time. Let us briefly consider the song’s invitation, located in its lyrics. It begins with a having-been: “You used to slide down the carpeted stairs / Or down the banister / You stuttered like a Kaleidoscope / ‘Cause you knew too many words / You used to make ginger bread houses / We used to have taffy pulls.” After this having-been in the form of fecund romanticized childhood is rendered, we here the song’s chorus, which contains this invitation to step out of time with the speaker! singer: “Take ecstasy with me, baby / Take ecstasy with me’ When we first hear this invitation it seems like it is merely a beckoning to go back to this idealized having-been. But then the present (the making-present) is invoked in the song’s next few lines, lines that first seem to be about further describing the mythic past but on closer listening telegraph a painful instant from the present: “You had a black snow mobile / We drove out under the northern lights / A vodka bottle gave you those raccoon eyes / We got beat up just for holding hands.” Did the vodka give the song’s addressee raccoon eyes? Or was it the bottle deployed in an act of violence? Certainly we know that the present being described in the song is one in which we are “beat up just for holding hands” At this point we hear the lyrical refrain differently “Take ecstasy with me, baby / Take ecstasy with me:’ The weird, quirky pop song takes on the affective cadence of a stirring queer anthem. (A cover of this song by the electronic dance act chk chk chk did briefly become a dance-floor anthem.) Take ecstasy with me thus becomes a request to stand out of time together, to resist the stultifying temporality and time that is not ours, that is saturated with violence both visceral and emotional, a time that is not queerness. Queerness’s time is the time of ecstasy. **Ecstasy is queerness’s way**. We know time through the field of the affective, and affect is tightly bound to temporality. But let us take ecstasy together, as the Magnetic Fields request. That means going beyond the singular shattering that a version of jouissance suggests or the transport of Christian rapture. Taking ecstasy with one another, in as many ways as possible, can perhaps be our best way of enacting a queer time that is not yet here but nonetheless always potentially dawning. **Taking ecstasy with one another is an invitation, a call, to a then-and- there, a not-yet-here**. Following this book’s rhythm of cross-temporal comparison, I offer lesbian poet Elizabeth Bishop’s invitation to her staunch spinster mentor Marianne Moore to “come flying”: *Invitation to Miss Marianne Moore* From Brooklyn, over the Brooklyn Bridge, on this fine morning, please come flying. In a cloud of fiery pale chemicals, please come flying, to the rapid rolling of thousands of small blue drums descending out of the mackerel sky over the glittering grandstand of harbor-water, please come flying. The next few lines describe the river that the two poets would traverse, the multitude of flags they would behold on ships. Bishop refers to Moore’s signature three-cornered Paul Revere hat and her pointy black shoes, making the address all the more personal and highlighting Moore’s own queer extravagance. They would “mount” the magical sky with what Bishop calls a natural heroism. Our queer dynamic duo would then fly over “the accidents, above the malignant movies, the taxicabs and injustices at large:’ This flight is a spectacle of queer transport made lyric. Each stanza closes with the invitation to come flying. The last two stanzas are especially poignant for my thesis: With dynasties of negative constructions darkening and dying around you, with grammar that suddenly turns and shines like flocks of sandpipers flying, please come flying. Come like a light in the white mackerel slcy, come like a daytime comet with a long unnebulous train of words, from Brooklyn, over the Brooklyn Bridge, on this fine morning, please come flying.6 It is important to note that the poem’s last few lines announce the flight’s destination as not determinedly spatial but instead as temporal: “this fine morning:’ Kathryn R. Kent has written carefully about the complicated cross-generational bond between the two women that eventually led to a sort of disappointment when Moore’s mother (with whom she lived) became an overarching influence in her life and overwhelmed the identificatory erotics between the two great poets.7 (As I have maintained, disappointment is a big part of utopian longing.) Kent explains the ways in which Bishop’s work signaled a queer discourse of invitation that did not subsume the other but was instead additive. Two other queer ghosts who float over the bridge are Walt Whitman and Hart Crane, both of whom wrote monumental poems about the bridge and what it represented. Bishop and Moore were both conversant about that work and the queer intertext that was being rendered. One can perhaps also decipher the living presence of writer Samuel R. Delany hovering. He is the author of “Atlantis: A Model 1924,” a haunting story that meditates on his own family history as it is interlaced with Crane’s biography and his relationship with the Brooklyn Bridge.8 The point is that the poem itself is poised at a dense connective site in the North American queer imagination. The Brooklyn Bridge and crossing the river, arguably both ways, represents the possibility of queer transport, leaving the here and now for a then and there. Thus, I look at Bishop’s poem as being illustrative of a queer utopianism that is by its very nature additive, like the convergence of past, present, and future that I have discussed throughout this book. This convergence is the very meaning of the ecstatic. The poem, like the pop song, is also a unique example of the concrete utopianism for which I am calling. Bishop does not overly sugarcoat the invitation; she clearly states that there are “dynasties of negative constructions / darkening and dying around you:’ But this invitation, this plea, is made despite the crushing force of the dynasty of the here and now. It is an invitation to desire differently, to desire more, to desire better. ***Cruising Utopia* can ultimately be read as an invitation, a performative provocation. Manifesto-like and ardent, it is a call to think about our lives and times differently, to look beyond a narrow version of the here and now on which so many around us who are bent on the normative count. Utopia in this book has been about an insistence on something else, something better, something dawning**. I offer this book as a resource for the political imagination. This text is meant to serve as something of a flight plan for a collective political becoming. These pages have described aesthetic and political practices that need to be seen as necessary modes of stepping out of this place and time to something fuller, vaster, more sensual, and brighter. From shared critical dissatisfaction we arrive at collective potentiality.

#### The 1ac puts hope in a queerness-to-come, in which the bounds of appropriate thought have been expanded and imploded. Our performance of the past is our ingestion and embrace of ecstasy, of a rejection of the political ideological coordinates of the status quo, of a rejection of of disciplining thought, sexuality, pleasure, and being through exclusionary norms. Our 1ac steps out of straight time and into a queer future

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The speaker remembers the grandness of an unspectacular Friday in which he and his addressee slept in and then scrambled to catch a train to a dinner out in the country. He attempts to explain the ecstasy he felt that night, indicating that one moment of ecstasy, a moment he identifies as being marked both by self-consciousness and obliviousness, possesses a potentially transformative charge. He then considers another moment of ecstasy in retrospect, a looking back at a no-longer-conscious that provides an affective endave in the present that staves off the sense of “bad feelings” that mark the affective disjuncture of being queer in straight time. The moment in the poem of deeper introspection—beginning “Do I believe in / the perfectibility of /man?”—is an example of utopian desire inspired by queer relationality. Moments *of* queer relational bliss, what the poet names as ecstasies, are viewed as having the ability to rewrite a larger map of everyday life. When “future generations” are invoked, the poet is signaling a queerness to come, a way of being in the world that is glimpsed through reveries in a quotidian life that challenges the dominance of an affective world, a present, full of anxiousness and fear. These future generations are, like the “we” invoked in the manifesto by the Third World Gay Revolution group, not an identitarian formulation but, instead, the invocation of a future collectivity, a queerness that registers as the illumination of a horizon of existence. The poem speaks of multiple temporalities and the affective mode known as ecstasy, which resonates alongside the work of Martin Heidegger. In *Being and Time Heidegger Reflects* on the activity of timelines and its relation to *ekstatisch (ecstasy)* signaling for Heidegger *the* ***ecstatic unity*** of temporality—Past, Present, and Future.’2 The ecstasy the speaker feels and remembers in “A photograph” *is* not consigned to one moment. It steps out from the past and remarks on the unity of an expansive version of temporality; hence the future generations are invoked. To know ecstasy in the way in which the poem’s speaker does is to have a sense of timeliness’s motion, to understand a temporal unity that is important to what I attempt to describe as the time of queerness. Queerness’s time is a stepping out of the linearity of straight time. Straight time is a self-naturalizing temporality. Straight time’s “presentness” needs to be phenomenologically questioned, and this is the fundamental value of a queer utopian hermeneutics. Queerness’s ecstatic and horizontal temporality is a path and a movement to a greater openness to the world. It would be difficult to mistake Schuyler’s poem for one of Frank O’Hara’s upbeat reveries. O’Hara’s optimism is a contagious happiness within the quotidian that I would also describe as having a utopian quality. Schuyler’s poetry is not so much about optimism but instead about a hope that is distinctly utopian and distinctly queer. The poem imagines another collective belonging, an enclave in the future where readers will not be beset with feelings of nervousness and fear. These feelings are the affective results of being outside of straight time. He writes from a depressive position, “(I’ve known un- / happiness enough),” but reaches beyond the affective force-field of the present. Hope for Bloch is an essential characteristic of not only the utopian but also the human condition. Thus, I talk about the human as a relatively stable category. But queerness in its utopian connotations promises a human that **is not yet here**, thus disrupting any ossified understanding of the hu-. man. The point is to stave off a gay and lesbian antiutopianism that is very much tainted with a polemics of the pragmatic rights discourse that in and of itself hamstrings not only politics but also desire. Queerness as utopian formation is a formation based on an economy of desire and desiring. This desire is always directed at that thing that is not yet here, objects and moments that burn with anticipation and promise. The desire that propels Schuyler’s “A photograph” is born of the no-longer-conscious, the rich resonance of remembrance, distinct pleasures felt in the past. And thus past pleasures stave off the affective perils of the present while they enable a desire that is queer futurity’s core. Queerness is utopian, and there is something queer about the utopian. FredricJameson described the utopian as the oddball or the maniac.’3 Indeed, to live inside straight time and ask for, desire, and imagine another time and place is to represent and perform a desire that is both utopian and queer. To participate in such an endeavor is not to imagine an isolated future for the individual but instead to participate in a hermeneutic that wishes to describe a collective futurity1 notion of futurity that functions as a historical materialist critique. In the two textual examples I have employed we see an overt utopianism that is explicit in the Third World Gay Revolution manifesto, and what I am identifying as a *utopian impulse* is perceivable in Schuvler’s poetry. One requires a utopian hermeneutic to see an already operative principle of hope that hums in the poet’s work. The other text, the manifesto, does another type of performative work; it *does* utopia. To “read” the performative, along the lines of thought first inaugurated by J. *L.* Austin, is implicitly to critique the epistemological. Performativity and utopia both call into question what s epistemologically there and signal a highly ephemeral ontological field that can be characterized as a doing in *futurity.* Thus, a manifesto is a call to a doing in and for the future. The utopian impulse to be gleaned from the poem is a call for a “doing” that is a becoming of and for “future generations.” This rejection of the here and now, the ontologically static, is indeed, by the measure of homonormative codes, a maniacal and oddball endeavor. The queer utopian project addressed here turns to the fringe of political and cultural production to offset the tyranny of the homonormative It is drawn to tastes, ideologies, and aesthetics that can only seem odd, strange or indeed queer next to the muted striving of the practical and normalcy desiring homosexual. The turn to the call of the no-longer--conscious is not a turn to normative historical analysis. Indeed it is important to complicate queer history and understand it as doing more than the flawed process of merely evidencing. Evidencing protocols often fail to enact real hermeneutical inquiry and instead opt to reinstate that which is known in advance. Thus, practices of knowledge production that are content merely to cull selectively from the past while striking a pose of positivist undertaking or empirical knowledge retrieval often nullify the political imagination. Jameson’s Marxian dictate “always historicize”5 is not a methodological call for empirical data collection. Instead, it is a dialectical injunction, suggesting we animate our critical faculties by bringing the past to bear on the present and the future. Utopian hermeneutics offer us a refined lens to view queerness, insofar as queerness, if it is indeed not quite here is nonetheless intensely relational with the past The present is not enough. It is **impoverished** and **toxic** for queers and other people who do not feel the privilege of majoritarian belonging, nor mative tastes, and “rational’ expectations. (I address the question of rationalism shortly). Let me be clear that the idea is not simply to turn away from the present. One cannot afford such a maneuver, and if one thinks one can one has resisted the present in favor of folly. The present must be known in relation to the alternative temporal an spatial maps provided by a perception of past and future affective worlds. Utopian thinking gets maligned for being naively romantic. Of course, much of it has been naive. We know that any history of actualized utopian communities would be replete with failures. No one, other than perhaps Marx himself, has been more cognizant about this fact than Bloch. But it is through this Marxian tradition, not beside or against it, that the problem of the present is addressed. In the following quotation we begin to glimpse the importance of the Marxian tradition for the here and now. Marxism, above all, was first to bring a concept of knowledge into the world that essentially refers to becomeness, but to the tendency of what is coming up thus for the first time it brings future into our conceptual and theoretical grasp. Such recognition of tendency is necessary to remember, and to open up the No-Longer-Conscious Thus we see Bloch’s model for approaching the past. The idea is not to attempt merely to represent it with simplistic strokes. More nearly it is important to call on the past, to animate it, understanding that the past has a Performative nature, which is to say that rather than being static and fixed the past does things. iIt is in this very way that the past is performative. Following a Blochian thread it seems important to put the past into with the present, calling into view the tautological nature of the present. The present which is almost exclusively concerned through the parameters of straight time, is the self-naturalizing endeavor. Opening up a queer past is enabled by Marxian ideological tactics. Bloch explains: Marxism thus rescued the rational core of utopia and made it concrete as well as the core of the still idealistic tendency of dialectics. Romanticism does not understand utopia, not even its own, but utopia that has become concrete understands Romanticism and makes inroads into it, in so far as archaic material in its archetypes and work, contain a not yet voiced, undischarged element.17 Bloch invites us to look to this no longer conscious, a past that is akin to what Derrida described as the trace. These ephemeral traces, flickering illuminations from other times and places, are sites that may indeed appear merely romantic, even to themselves. Nonetheless they assist those of us who wish to follow queerness’s promise, its still unrealized potential, to see something else, a component that the German aesthetician would call *cultural surplus.* I build on this idea to suggest that the surplus is both cultural and affective. Most distinctly, **I point to a queer feeling of hope in the face of hopeless** and heteronormative maps of the present where furitity is indeed the province of normative reproduction. This hope takes on the philosoptica contours of idealism. A queer utopian hermeneutic would thus be queer in its aim to look for queer relational formations within the social. It is also about this temporal project that I align with queerness, a work shaped by its idealist trajectory; indeed it is the work of not settling for the present, of asking and looking beyond the here and now. Such a hermeneutic would then be epistemologically and ontologically humble in that it would not claim the epistemological certitude of a queerness that we simply “know” but instead strain to active the no-longer-conscious and to extend a glance toward that which is forward-dawning, anticipatory illuminations of the not-yet-conscious. The purpose of such temporal maneuvers is to wrest ourselves from the present’s stultifying hold, to know our queerness as a belonging in particularity that is not dictated or organized around the spirit of political impasse that characterizes the present. Jameson has suggested that for Bloch the present is provincial18 This spatialization of time makes sense in relation to the history of utopian thought, most famously described as an island by Thomas More. To mark the present as provincial is not to ridicule or demean the spots on queerness’s map that do not signify as metropolitan. The here and now has an opposite number, and that would be the then and there. I have argued that the then that disrupts the tyranny of the now is both past and future. Along those lines, the here that is unnamed yet always implicit in the metropolitan hub requires the challenge of a there that can be regional or global. The transregional or the global as modes of spatial organization potentially displace the hegemony of an unnamed here that is always dominated by the shadow of the nation-state and its mutable and multiple corporate interests. While *globalization* is a term that mostly defines a worldwide system of manufactured asymmetry and ravenous exploitation, it also signals the encroaching of the there on the here in ways that are worth considering. The Third World Gay Revolution group was an organization that grew out of the larger Gay Liberation Front at roughly the same time that the Radicalesbians also spun off from the larger group in the spring/summer of 1970. Although they took the name Third World Gay Revo1ution the group’s members have been described by a recent historian as people of color..’9 Their own usage of the term “Third World” clearly connotes their deep identification with the global phenomenon that was decolonization. It is therefore imperative to remember this moment from the no-longer- conscious that transcended a gay and lesbian activist nationalist imaginary. For Heideggr “time and space are not co-ordinate. Time is prior to space.” If time is prior to space, then we can view both the force of the no-longer-conscious and the not-yet-here as potentially bearing on the *here* of naturalized space and time. Thus, at the center of cultural texts such as the manifesto “All Together Now (A Blueprint for the Movement)” we find an ideological document, and its claim to the pragmatic is the product of a short-sighted here that fails to include anything but an entitled and privileged world. THe there of queer utopia cannot simply be that of the faltering yet still influential nation-state. This is then to say that the distinctions between here and there, and the world that the here and now organizes, are not fixed—they are already becoming undone in relation to a forward-dawning futurity. It is important to understand that a critique of our homosexual present is not an attack on what many people routinely name as lesbian or gay but, instead, an appraisal of how queerness is still forming, or in many crucial ways formless. Queerness’s form is utopian. Ultimately, we must insist on a queer futurity because the present is so poisonous and insolvent. A resource that cannot be discounted to know the future is indeed the no-longer-conscious, that thing or place that may be extinguished but not yet discharged in its utopian potentiality.

## 2ac framework

#### Their topical versions of the aff lock us into a mindset of the present. Only moving beyond the concern of the state and individualizing debate around performative agency can we come to come can rescue queerness from the anemically short-sighted status quo conception of identity

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When we consider the extremely pragmatic agenda that organized LGBT activism in North America today, the demand “we want a new society” may seem naïve by the presents standard. Many people would dismiss these demands as impractical or merely utopian. Yet I contend that there is great value in pulling these words from the no-longer-conscious to arm a critique of the present. The use of “we” in this manifest can be mistakenly read as the “we” implicity in the identity politics that emerged after the Third World Gay Revolutionary group. Such a reading would miss the point. This “we” does not speak to a merely identitarian logic but instead to a logic of futurity. The “we” speaks to a “we” that is “not yet conscious,” the future society that is being invoked and addressed at the same moment. The “we” is not content to describe who the collective is but more nearly described that the collective and the larger social order could be, what it should be. The particularities that are listed – “race, sex, age, or social preferences” – are not thing in and of themselves that format this “we”; indeed the statement’s “we” is “regardless” of these markers, which is not to say that it is beyond such distinctions or due to these differences but, instead, that it is beside them. This is to say that the field of utopian possibility is one in which multiple forms of belonging in difference adhere to a belonging to collectivity.

Such multiple forms of belonging in difference and expansive critiques of social asymmetries are absent in the dominant LGBT leadership community and in many aspects of queer critique. One manifesto from today’s movement that seems especially representative of the anemic short-sighted and retrograde politics of the present is “all together now (a blueprint for the movement),” a text written by the pro-gay-marriage lawyer Evan Wolfson that appeared on his website, freedomtomarry.org. Wolfsons’ single-minded text identifies the social recognition and financial advantages offered by traditional marriage pacts as the key to what he calls “freedom.” Freedom for Wolfson is mere inclusion in a corrupt and bankrupt social order. Wolfson cannot critique the larger ideological regime that represents marriage as something desirable natural and good. His assimilationist gay politics posits an “all” that is in fact a few: queers with enough access to capital to imagine a life integrated within north American capitalist culture. It goes almost without saying that the “all” invoked by the gay lawyer and his followers are normative citizen subjects with a host of rights only afford **to some (and not all) queer people**. Arguments against gay marriage have been articulated with great acumen by Lisa Duggan and Richard Kim. But it is Wolfsons’ invocation of the term freedom that is most unsettling.

Wolfosn and his website’s rhetoric degrade the concept of freedom. Homonormative cultural and political lobbyists such as wolfson have **degraded** the political and conceptual forces of concepts such as freedom in the same way that a current political regime of the United States has degraded the term liberation in the case of recent Middle Eastern foreign policy. I invoke Wolfson here not so much as this chapter’s problem or foil but merely as a recent symptom of the erosion of the gay and lesbian political imagination. Wolfson represents many of the homonormative interests leading the contemporary LGBT movement towards the goal of “naturalizing” the flawed and toxic ideological formation known as marriage. The aping of traditional straight relationality, especially marriage, for gays and lesbians announces itself as a pragmatic strategy when it is in fat a deeply ideological project that is hardly practical. **In this way gay marriage’s detractors are absolutely right: gay marriage is not natural – but then again, neither is marriage for any individual.**

A similar but more nuanced form of what I am referring to as gay pragmatic thought can be seen in Biddy Martin’s work, especially here psychoanalytically inspired diagnosis’s that queer critique suffers from an androcentric bias in which queerness presents itself as the “extraordinary” while at the same time fleeing the charge of beign “ordinary.” Being ordinary and being married are both antiutopian wishes, desires that automatically rein themselves in, never daring to see or imagine the not-yet-conscious. This line of thought that I am identifying as pragmatic is taken from its vernacular register. I am not referring to the actual philosophical tradition of American pragmatism of Charles Pierce, Williams James or John Dewey. But the current gay political strategy I am describing does share an interest in empiricism with that school Gay pragmatic organizing is in direct opposition to the idealist thought that I associate as endemic to forward-dawning queerness that calls on a no-longer-conscious in the service of imagining a futurity.

The not-quite-conscious is the realm of potentiality that must be called on and instead on if we are ever to **look beyond the pragmatic sphere** of the here and now, the follow nature of the present. Thus, I wish to argue that queerness is not quite here; it is, in the language of Italian philosopher Georgio Agamben, a potentiality. Alain Badiou refers to that which follows the event as the thing-that-is-not-yet-imagined, and in my estimation queerness too should be understood to have similar valence. But my turn to this notion of the not-quite-conscious is again indebted to Bloch and his massive three-volume text the principles of hope. That treatise, both a continuation and an amplification of German idealist practice of thought is a critical discourse – which is to that that it does not avert or turn away from the present. Rather it critiques an autonaturalizing temporality that we might call straight time. **Straight time tells us that there is no future but the here and now of our everyday life.** The only futurity it promises is that of reproductive majoritarian heterosexuality, the spectacle of the state refurbishing its ranks through overly and subsidized acts of reproduction. In No future, Lee Edelman advises queers that the future is “kid stuff.” Although I believe that there is a lot to like about Edelman’s polemic – mostly its disdain for the culture of the child – **I ultimately want to speak for a notion of queer futurity by turning to Bloch’s critical notion of Utopia.**

**It is equally polemical to argue that we are not quite queer yet, that queerness, what we will really know as queerness, does not yet exist. I suggest that holding queerness in a sort of ontologically humble state, under a conceptual grid in which we do not claim to always already know queerness in the world, potentially staves off the ossifying effect of neoligical ideology** and the degradation of politics brought about by representations of queerness in contemporary popular culture**.**

A posterior glance at different moments, objects, and spaces might offer us an anticipatory illumination of queerness. We cannot trust in the manifestations of what some people would call queerness in the present, especially as embodied in the pragmatic debates that dominate contemporary gay and lesbian politics. (Here, again, I most pointedly mean US queers clamoring for their right to participate in the suspect institution of marriage and, maybe worse, to serve in the military.) None of this is to say that there are not avatars of a queer futurity, both in the past and the present, especially in sites of cultural production. What I am suggesting is that we gain a grater conceptual and theoretical leverage if we see queerness as something that is not yet here. In this sense it is useful to consider Edmund Husserl, phenominology’s founder, and his invitation to look to horizons of being. Indeed to access queer visuality we may need to squint, to strain our vision and force it to see otherwise, beyond the limited vista of the here and now.

To critique an overarching “here and now” is not to turn one’s face away from the everyday. Roland Barthes wrote that **the mark of the utopian is the quotidian.** Such an argument would stress that the utopian is an impulse that we can see in everyday life. This impulse is to be glimpsed as something that is extra to the everyday transaction of heteronormative capitalism. This quotidian explain of the utopian can be glimpsed in utopian bonds, affiliations, designs, and gestures that exist within the present moment. Turning to the new York school of poetry, a moment that is one of the cultural touchstones for my research, we can consider a poem by james schuyler that speaks of a hope and desire that is clearly utopian.

#### Community formation DA—communities should not be formed based on drawing lines of inclusion based on what it is appropriate to desire from debate—justifies the violent policing and ultimately purging of radicals and a McCarthyist educational agenda that eliminates the possibility of JOY derived from the activity by scripting the FORM that CONTENT can take, writing scripted desire onto bodies which eviscerates not only the meaning to being alive but to taking part in debate itself—refuse this model of our community which policies the borders of what can even be thought

Bleiker 98. Roland Bleiker, Alternatives: Global, Local, Political, Vol. 22, No. 1 (Jan.-Mar. 1997), pg. 63

The doorkeepers of IR are those who, knowingly or unknowingly, make sure that the discipline's discursive boundaries remain intact. Discourses, in a Foucaultian sense, are subtle mechanisms that frame our thinking process. They determine the limits of what can be thought, talked, and written of in a normal and rational way. In every society the production of discourses is controlled, selected, organized, and diffused by certain procedures. They create systems of exclusion that elevate one group of discourses to a hegemonic status while con- demning others to exile. Although the boundaries of discourses change, at times gradually, at times abruptly, they maintain a certain unity across time, a unity that dominates and transgresses individual authors, texts, or social practices. They explain, to return to Niet- zsche, why "all things that live long are gradually so saturated with reason that their origin in unreason thereby becomes improbable."28 Academic disciplines are powerful mechanisms to direct and control the production and diffusion of discourses. They establish the rules of intellectual exchange and define the methods, tech- niques, and instruments that are considered proper for the pursuit of knowledge. Within these margins, each discipline recognizes true and false propositions based on the standards of evaluation it estab- lished to assess them.29

#### Current debate practices are an example of a heteronormative policing of identities – this form of debate is an action of violence and exclusion against queer and securitized bodies

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I'm always glad to have Nancy's arguments. I feel that we have a¶ productive disagreement. I guess I'll say one thing about one of the¶ points she regularly makes. Nancy and some other social theorists who¶ are profoundly influenced by the Habermasian school worry that I am¶ always interested in producing new possibilities but that I don't say¶ which possibilities are good to pursue and which are bad to pursue, that¶ I don't have a set of strong norms that would tell us which possibilities¶ to actualize and which not. Certainly, I don't want all possibilities¶ realized, so why don't I distinguish among them? What I would answer¶ to that is that when we ask the question, "How ought we to live and what¶ possibilities should we collectively seek to realize?" we always ask it¶ within a given horizon of possibilities that are already establishedwhat¶ is imaginable. What worries me is that we very often make¶ decisions about what life to pursue and what possibilities to realize¶ without ever asking how our very notions of "what is possible," "what¶ is livable," "what is imaginable" are constrained in advance, and maybe¶ in some very politically consequential ways. For instance, say you're¶ in a human rights organization that hasn't thought about the problem¶ of gay and lesbian human rights-violence against gays and lesbians,¶ the radical pathologization orpsychiatrization or imprisonment of gays¶ and lesbians. And say you are considering which strategies to pursue¶ in the field but that the field of possibilities is delimited in advance such¶ that gay and lesbian lives are not thinkable within the field. What does¶ it mean to make a normative judgment on that basis when you have not¶ critically interrogated how the field of possibility is itself constituted,¶ and constituted through some pretty violent exclusions? It's not as if I¶ wouldn't make such decisions or don't think there are hard decisions¶ to make; what worries me is that the rush to decision-ism and to strong¶ normativity very often fails to consider what is meant by some of the¶ very basic terms that it assumes. For example, what is a deciding¶ person? How are decisions made? What is the field of possibilities that¶ is delimited in advance to me? What is outside that field? I worry that¶ there is a critical dimension to political normativity (and even a¶ normative dimension) that is missing, because if there's a violent¶ circumscription of the possible-that is to say, certain lives are not¶ considered lives, certain human capacities are not considered humanwhat¶ does it mean that we take that for granted as we proceed to decide¶ what we ought and ought not to do? It means that in our effort to be¶ normative we perform a violence and an exclusion for which we are not¶ accountable, and in my view that produces a massive contradiction.¶ Of course, Martha Nussbaum has also made a very strong attack on¶ me, but I think it actually has nothing to do with my work. It doesn't¶ strike me as an engaged or careful reading, and I presume that it does¶ probably epitomize a certain frustration that a certain kind of liberal¶ American politics has with a critical approach to some of its most¶ important issues. She wants to be able to make strong paternalistic¶ claims about women's conditions; she wants to be able to use the¶ language of universality without interrogating it; she wants to be able¶ to tell us how Indian women suffer; and she wants to be able to, in her¶ words, make "an assault" on local cultures when it is mandated by¶ universal concerns. I see her as being very much opposed to the¶ problem of cultural translation and cultural difference; she thinks they¶ get in the way of strong normative arguments. We can see something¶ like a resurgence of a certain kind of white feminism here that doesn't¶ want to have to hear about difference, that wants to be able to make its¶ strong claims and speak in the name of "reason," and speak in the name¶ of everyone without having to hear them, without having to learn what¶ it might mean to hear them. So, I'm sorry about that. It seems to me to¶ be full of a kind of displaced animosity, but I think people can read it¶ for what it is.¶ Let me make one final comment. You've asked me about difficult¶ writing, and you've asked me whether I think the State has any role in¶ the adjudication of hate speech. These are in effect questions about¶ whether what I write is readable, whether what I am for is translatable¶ into contemporary politics in an obvious or clear way. I think that I¶ probably produce a certain amount of anxiety, or what Foucault calls¶ the politics of discomfort, and I don't do that just to be annoying. For¶ me, there's more hope in the world when we can question what is taken¶ for granted, especially about what it is to be a human, which is a really¶ fundamental question. What qualifies as a human, as a human subject,¶ as human speech, as human desire? How do we circumscribe human¶ speech or desire? At what cost? And at what cost to whom? These are¶ questions that I think are important and that function within everyday¶ grammar, everyday language, as taken-far-granted notions. We feel¶ that we know the answers. We know what family is, we know what¶ desire is, we know what a human subject is, we know what speech is,¶ we know what is comprehensible, we know its limits. And I think that¶ this feeling of certainty leads to a terrible parochialism. Taking for¶ granted one's own linguistic horizon as the ultimate linguistic horizon¶ leads to an enormous parochialism and keeps us from being open to¶ radical difference and from undergoing the discomfort and the anxiety¶ of realizing that the scheme of intelligibility on which we rely fundamentally¶ is not adequate, is not common, and closes us off from the¶ possibility ofunderstanding others and ourselves in a more fundamentally¶ capacious way.

#### Best framework card ever, even better than Shivley

Lyotard 74. The Postmodern Condition. 63-4.

Of course, it does not always happen like this in reality. Countless¶ scientists have seen their "move" ignored or repressed, sometimes for¶ decades, because it too abruptly destabilized the accepted positions,¶ not only in the university and scientific hierarchy, but also in the¶ 221¶ problematic. The stronger the “move” the more likely it is to be¶ denied the minimum consensus, precisely because it changes the rules of the game upon which consensus had been based. But when the institution of knowledge functions in this manner, it is acting like an ordinary power center whose behavior is governed by a principle of homeostasis.¶ Such behavior is terrorist, as is the behavior of the system de- scribed by Luhmann. By terror I mean the efficiency gained by elimi- nating, or threatening to eliminate, a player from the language game one shares with him. He is silenced or consents, not because he has been refuted, but because his ability to participate has been threat- ened (there are many ways to prevent someone from playing). The decision makers' arrogance, which in principle has no equivalent in the sciences, consists in the exercise of terror. It says: "Adapt your¶ 222¶ aspirations to our ends—or else."¶ Even permissiveness toward the various games is made condition-¶ al on performativity. The redefinition of the norms of life consists in enhancing the system's competence for power. That this is the case is particularly evident in the introduction of telematics tech- nology: the technocrats see in telematics a promise of liberalization and enrichment in the interactions between interlocutors; but what makes this process attractive for them is that it will result in new tensions in the system, and these will lead to an improvement in its performativity.223¶ To the extent that science is differential, its pragmatics provides the antimodel of a stable system. A statement is deemed worth re- taining the moment it marks a difference from what is already known, and after an argument and proof in support of it has been found. Science is a model of an "open system," in which a statement becomes relevant if it "generates ideas," that is, if it generates other statements and other game rules. Science possesses no general metalanguage in which all other languages can be transcribed and evaluated. This is what prevents its identification with the system and, all things considered, with terror. If the division between decision makers and executors exists in the scientific community (and it does), it is a fact of the socioeconomic system and not of the pragmatics of science itself. It is in fact one of the major obstacles to the imagina- tive development of knowledge.

## 2ac case

#### hegemonic conceptions of what masculinity and femininity in render intelligible the conditions that enable compulsory heterosexuality

**Butler 99** [Judith, Gender Trouble, edition published 1999, Routledge: New York, NY, p. 37-43]

The feminist appropriation of sexual difference, whether written in¶ opposition to the phallogocentrism of Lacan (Irigaray) or as a critical¶ reelaboration of Lacan, attempts to theorize the feminine, not as an¶ expression of the metaphysics of substance, but as the unrepresentable¶ absence effected by (masculine) denial that grounds the signifying economy¶ through exclusion.The feminine as the repudiated/excluded within¶ that system constitutes the possibility of a critique and disruption of¶ that hegemonic conceptual scheme.The works of Jacqueline Rose49 and¶ Jane Gallop50 underscore in different ways the constructed status of¶ sexual difference, the inherent instability of that construction, and the¶ dual consequentiality of a prohibition that at once institutes a sexual¶ identity and provides for the exposure of that construction’s tenuous¶ ground. Although Wittig and other materialist feminists within the¶ French context would argue that sexual difference is an unthinking¶ replication of a reified set of sexed polarities, these criticisms neglect¶ the critical dimension of the unconscious which, as a site of repressed¶ sexuality, reemerges within the discourse of the subject as the very¶ impossibility of its coherence. As Rose points out very clearly, the construction¶ of a coherent sexual identity along the disjunctive axis of the¶ feminine/masculine is bound to fail;51 the disruptions of this coherence¶ through the inadvertent reemergence of the repressed reveal not only¶ that “identity” is constructed, but that the prohibition that constructs¶ identity is inefficacious (the paternal law ought to be understood not as¶ a deterministic divine will, but as a perpetual bumbler, preparing the¶ ground for the insurrections against him).¶ The differences between the materialist and Lacanian (and post-¶ Lacanian) positions emerge in a normative quarrel over whether there¶ is a retrievable sexuality either “before” or “outside” the law in the¶ mode of the unconscious or “after” the law as a postgenital sexuality.¶ Paradoxically, the normative trope of polymorphous perversity is¶ understood to characterize both views of alternative sexuality.There is¶ no agreement, however, on the manner of delimiting that “law” or set¶ of “laws.” The psychoanalytic critique succeeds in giving an account of¶ the construction of “the subject”—and perhaps also the illusion of¶ substance—within the matrix of normative gender relations. In her¶ existential-materialist mode,Wittig presumes the subject, the person,¶ to have a presocial and pregendered integrity. On the other hand, “the¶ paternal Law” in Lacan, as well as the monologic mastery of phallogocentrism¶ in Irigaray, bear the mark of a monotheistic singularity that is¶ perhaps less unitary and culturally universal than the guiding structuralist¶ assumptions of the account presume.52¶ But the quarrel seems also to turn on the articulation of a temporal¶ trope of a subversive sexuality that flourishes prior to the imposition of a¶ law, after its overthrow, or during its reign as a constant challenge to its¶ authority. Here it seems wise to reinvoke Foucault who, in claiming that¶ sexuality and power are coextensive, implicitly refutes the postulation¶ of a subversive or emancipatory sexuality which could be free of the¶ law.We can press the argument further by pointing out that “the before”¶ of the law and “the after” are discursively and performatively instituted¶ modes of temporality that are invoked within the terms of a normative¶ framework which asserts that subversion, destabilization, or displacement¶ requires a sexuality that somehow escapes the hegemonic prohibitions¶ on sex. For Foucault, those prohibitions are invariably and¶ inadvertently productive in the sense that “the subject” who is supposed¶ to be founded and produced in and through those prohibitions does not¶ have access to a sexuality that is in some sense “outside,” “before,” or¶ “after” power itself. Power, rather than the law, encompasses both the¶ juridical (prohibitive and regulatory) and the productive (inadvertently¶ generative) functions of differential relations. Hence, the sexuality that¶ emerges within the matrix of power relations is not a simple replication¶ or copy of the law itself, a uniform repetition of a masculinist economy¶ of identity. The productions swerve from their original purposes and¶ inadvertently mobilize possibilities of “subjects” that do not merely¶ exceed the bounds of cultural intelligibility, but effectively expand the¶ boundaries of what is, in fact, culturally intelligible.¶ The feminist norm of a postgenital sexuality became the object of¶ significant criticism from feminist theorists of sexuality, some of whom¶ have sought a specifically feminist and/or lesbian appropriation of¶ Foucault. This utopian notion of a sexuality freed from heterosexual¶ constructs, a sexuality beyond “sex,” failed to acknowledge the ways in¶ which power relations continue to construct sexuality for women even¶ within the terms of a “liberated” heterosexuality or lesbianism.53 The¶ same criticism is waged against the notion of a specifically feminine sexual¶ pleasure that is radically differentiated from phallic sexuality.¶ Irigaray’s occasional efforts to derive a specific feminine sexuality from¶ a specific female anatomy have been the focus of anti-essentialist arguments¶ for some time.54 The return to biology as the ground of a specific¶ feminine sexuality or meaning seems to defeat the feminist premise that¶ biology is not destiny. But whether feminine sexuality is articulated here¶ through a discourse of biology for purely strategic reasons,55 or whether¶ it is, in fact, a feminist return to biological essentialism, the characterization¶ of female sexuality as radically distinct from a phallic organization¶ of sexuality remains problematic. Women who fail either to recognize¶ that sexuality as their own or understand their sexuality as partially constructed¶ within the terms of the phallic economy are potentially written¶ off within the terms of that theory as “male-identified” or “unenlightened.”¶ Indeed, it is often unclear within Irigaray’s text whether sexuality¶ is culturally constructed, or whether it is only culturally constructed¶ within the terms of the phallus. In other words, is specifically feminine¶ pleasure “outside” of culture as its prehistory or as its utopian future? If¶ so, of what use is such a notion for negotiating the contemporary struggles¶ of sexuality within the terms of its construction?¶ The pro-sexuality movement within feminist theory and practice¶ has effectively argued that sexuality is always constructed within the¶ terms of discourse and power, where power is partially understood in¶ terms of heterosexual and phallic cultural conventions.The emergence¶ of a sexuality constructed (not determined) in these terms within lesbian,¶ bisexual, and heterosexual contexts is, therefore, not a sign of a¶ masculine identification in some reductive sense. It is not the failed¶ project of criticizing phallogocentrism or heterosexual hegemony, as if¶ a political critique could effectively undo the cultural construction of¶ the feminist critic’s sexuality. If sexuality is culturally constructed¶ within existing power relations, then the postulation of a normative¶ sexuality that is “before,” “outside,” or “beyond” power is a cultural¶ impossibility and a politically impracticable dream, one that postpones¶ the concrete and contemporary task of rethinking subversive possibilities¶ for sexuality and identity within the terms of power itself. This¶ critical task presumes, of course, that to operate within the matrix of¶ power is not the same as to replicate uncritically relations of domination.¶ It offers the possibility of a repetition of the law which is not its¶ consolidation, but its displacement. In the place of a “male-identified”¶ sexuality in which “male” serves as the cause and irreducible meaning¶ of that sexuality, we might develop a notion of sexuality constructed in¶ terms of phallic relations of power that replay and redistribute the possibilities¶ of that phallicism precisely through the subversive operation of¶ “identifications” that are, within the power field of sexuality, inevitable.¶ If “identifications,” following Jacqueline Rose, can be exposed as phantasmatic,¶ then it must be possible to enact an identification that displays¶ its phantasmatic structure. If there is no radical repudiation of a culturally¶ constructed sexuality, what is left is the question of how to¶ acknowledge and “do” the construction one is invariably in. Are there¶ forms of repetition that do not constitute a simple imitation, reproduction,¶ and, hence, consolidation of the law (the anachronistic notion of¶ “male identification” that ought to be discarded from a feminist vocabulary)?¶ What possibilities of gender configurations exist among the various¶ emergent and occasionally convergent matrices of cultural¶ intelligibility that govern gendered life?¶ Within the terms of feminist sexual theory, it is clear that the presence¶ of power dynamics within sexuality is in no sense the same as the¶ simple consolidation or augmentation of a heterosexist or phallogocentric¶ power regime. The “presence” of so-called heterosexual conventions¶ within homosexual contexts as well as the proliferation of¶ specifically gay discourses of sexual difference, as in the case of “butch”¶ and “femme” as historical identities of sexual style, cannot be explained¶ as chimerical representations of originally heterosexual identities.And¶ neither can they be understood as the pernicious insistence of heterosexist¶ constructs within gay sexuality and identity. The repetition of¶ heterosexual constructs within sexual cultures both gay and straight¶ may well be the inevitable site of the denaturalization and mobilization¶ of gender categories. The replication of heterosexual constructs in¶ non-heterosexual frames brings into relief the utterly constructed¶ status of the so-called heterosexual original.Thus, gay is to straight not¶ as copy is to original, but, rather, as copy is to copy.The parodic repetition¶ of “the original,” discussed in the final sections of chapter 3 of¶ this text, reveals the original to be nothing other than a parody of the¶ idea of the natural and the original.56 Even if heterosexist constructs¶ circulate as the available sites of power/discourse from which to do¶ gender at all, the question remains:What possibilities of recirculation¶ exist? Which possibilities of doing gender repeat and displace through¶ hyperbole, dissonance, internal confusion, and proliferation the very¶ constructs by which they are mobilized?¶ Consider not only that the ambiguities and incoherences within and¶ among heterosexual, homosexual, and bisexual practices are suppressed¶ and redescribed within the reified framework of the disjunctive¶ and asymmetrical binary of masculine/feminine, but that these cultural¶ configurations of gender confusion operate as sites for intervention,¶ exposure, and displacement of these reifications. In other words, the¶ “unity” of gender is the effect of a regulatory practice that seeks to render¶ gender identity uniform through a compulsory heterosexuality.The¶ force of this practice is, through an exclusionary apparatus of production,¶ to restrict the relative meanings of “heterosexuality,” “homosexuality,”¶ and “bisexuality” as well as the subversive sites of their¶ convergence and resignification. That the power regimes of heterosexism¶ and phallogocentrism seek to augment themselves through a constant¶ repetition of their logic, their metaphysic, and their naturalized¶ ontologies does not imply that repetition itself ought to be stopped—as¶ if it could be. If repetition is bound to persist as the mechanism of the¶ cultural reproduction of identities, then the crucial question emerges:¶ What kind of subversive repetition might call into question the regulatory¶ practice of identity itself?¶ If there is no recourse to a “person,” a “sex,” or a “sexuality” that¶ escapes the matrix of power and discursive relations that effectively¶ produce and regulate the intelligibility of those concepts for us, what¶ constitutes the possibility of effective inversion, subversion, or displacement¶ within the terms of a constructed identity? What possibilities¶ exist by virtue of the constructed character of sex and gender?¶ Whereas Foucault is ambiguous about the precise character of the “regulatory¶ practices” that produce the category of sex, and Wittig appears¶ to invest the full responsibility of the construction to sexual reproduction¶ and its instrument, compulsory heterosexuality, yet other discourses¶ converge to produce this categorial fiction for reasons not¶ always clear or consistent with one another. The power relations that¶ infuse the biological sciences are not easily reduced, and the medicolegal¶ alliance emerging in nineteenth-century Europe has spawned categorial¶ fictions that could not be anticipated in advance. The very¶ complexity of the discursive map that constructs gender appears to¶ hold out the promise of an inadvertent and generative convergence of¶ these discursive and regulatory structures. If the regulatory fictions of¶ sex and gender are themselves multiply contested sites of meaning,¶ then the very multiplicity of their construction holds out the possibility¶ of a disruption of their univocal posturing.

## 2ac quare

#### We begin with our conception of queerness articulated by Muñoz in 2009

Muñoz prof/chair of performance studies @ NYU 2k9 (José Esteban, Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity)

**Queerness is not yet here. Queerness is an ideality**. Put another way, **we are not yet queer**. We may never touch queerness, but we can feel it as the warm illumination of a horizon imbued with potentiality. We have never been queer, yet queerness exists for us as an ideality that can be distilled from the past and used to imagine a future. The future is queerness’s domain. Queerness is a structuring and educated mode of desiring that allows us to see and feel beyond the quagmire of the present**. The here and now is a** **prison house**. We must strive in the past of the here and now’s totalizing rendering of reality to think and feel a *then and there*. Some will say that all we have are the pleasures of this moment, but we must never settle for minimal transport; we must dream and enact new and better pleasures, other ways of being in the world, and ultimately new worlds. Queerness is a longing that propels us onward, beyond romances of the negative and toiling in the present. Queerness is that thing that lets us feel that this world is not enough, that indeed something is missing. Often we can glimpse the world’s proposed and promised by queerness in the realm of the aesthetic. The aesthetic, especially, the queer aesthetic, frequently contains blueprints and schemata of a forward-dawning futurity. Both the ornamental and the quotidian can contain a map of the utopia that is queerness. Turing to the aesthetic in the case of queerness is nothing like an escape from the social realm, insofar as queer aesthetics map future social relations. Queerness is also a performative because it is not simply a being but a doing for and toward the future. Queerness is essentially about the rejection of a here and now and an insistence on potentiality or concrete possibility for another world.

#### The future is not at the fingertips of queers of colour or others excluded from politics. Only embracing the future can create a world where these people can be included.

**Muñoz** prof/chair of performance studies @ NYU **2k9** (José Esteban, Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity)

We know that many of these white friends on the Lower East Side, such as O’Hara and Allen Ginsberg, were also a little lavender. The interview works as a mild disavowal of the play’s ending, a display of ambivalence that ignores its queer affect and tenor. The author’s need to justify his end as the appeasement of his immediate social world needs further scrutiny. A turn to Hegel via Judith Butler’s recent meditation on the longing for recognition can further explicate the stakes in this moment of contact and interracial intimacy.22 Butler tells a tale of recognition, made famous by G. W. F. Hegel in *The Phenomenology of Spirit.23* It is a representative moment that signals the spirit of German philosophical idealism in which Bloch and other utopian thinkers participate, and it further illuminates the play’s ending. Reflecting on the paradigm of the master and the bondsman, Butler outlines the relation to self and other:   
The moment in “Lordship and Bondage” when the two self-consciousnesses come to recognize one another is, accordingly, in the “life and death struggle,” the moment in which they each see the shared power they have to annihilate the Other and, thereby, destroy the condition of their own self-reflection. Thus, it is as a moment of fundamental vulnerability that recognition becomes possible, and need becomes self-conscious. What recognition does at such a moment is, to be sure, to hold destruction in check.24   
The Hegelian narrative is enriched when we insert Frantz Fanon’s contribution to the very central philosophical thematic of self/other and the drama of recognition. If we consider the vicissitudes of the fact of blackness, the radical contingency that is epidermalization, the narrative fills out further and the tale of vulnerability is fleshed out. Recognition, across antagonisms within the social such as sex, race, and still other modalities of difference, is often more than simply a tacit admission of vulnerability. Indeed, it is often a moment of being wounded.25 In this sense I offer *The Toilet* as a tale of wounded recognition. It marks and narrativizes the frenzy of violence that characterizes our cross-identificatory recognition. *The Toilet* teaches us that the practice of recognition is a brutal choreography, scored to the discordant sounds of desire and hate. With that stated, its semidisowned ending speaks to the sticky interface between the interracial and the queer. The interracial and the queer coanimate each other, and that coanimation, which is not only about homosexuality but about blackness and how the two touch across space and time, takes the form of not only the amalgamation of movements that rate a seizure but also the fragmented gesture that signals an endurance/support, queerness’s being in, toward, and for futurity. Utopian hermeneutics like those invoked in the project of queer futurity consider the forward-dawning significance of   
the gesture. Thus, the play’s dramatic conclusion is not an end but, more nearly, an   
+ Agambenian means without an end. Recognition of this order challenges theories of antirelationality that dominate queer criticism, such as Edelman’s and the Leo Bersani of “Is the Rectum a Grave?” and**,** to a lesser degree, *Homos.26***The act of accepting no future is dependent on renouncing** politics and various principles of hope that are, by their very nature, relational. By finishing on a note not of reconciliation but of the refusal of total repudiation—a gestural enduring/supporting—The *Toilet* shows us that relationality is not pretty, but the option of simply opting out of it, or describing it as something that has never been available to us, is imaginable only if one can frame queerness as a singular abstraction that can be subtracted and isolated from a larger social matrix.   
In *No Future* Edelman takes on Cornel West’s referencing of futurity in an op-ed for the *Boston Globe* that he wrote with Sylvia Ann Hewitt titled “A Parent’s Bill of Rights.”27 The title is disturbingly smug (as if biological parents of the middle class did not already have uncontested rights to their children!), and the editorial is a neoliberal screed on behalf of the culture of the child. But Edelman’s critique never considers the topic of race that is central to the actual editorial. West’s pro-children agenda aligns with his other concerns about the crises of African American youth.   
Edelman’s critique of the editorial, with which for the most part I am deeply sympathetic, is flawed insofar as it decontextualizes West’s work from the topic that has been so central to his critical interventions: blackness. In the same way all queers are not the stealth-universal-white-gay- man invoked in queer antirelational formulations, all children are not the privileged white babies to whom contemporary society caters. Again, there is for me a lot to like in this critique of antireproductive futurism, but in Edelman’s theory **it is enacted by the active disavowal of a crisis in afrofuturism.28** Theories of queer temporality that fail to factor in the relational relevance of race or class merely reproduce a crypto-universal white gay subject that is weirdly atemporal—which is to say a subject whose time is a restricted and restricting hollowed-out present free of the need for the challenge of imagining a futurity that exists beyond the self or the here and now.   
The question of children hangs heavily when one considers Baraka’s present. On August 12, 2003, one of his daughters, Shani Baraka, and her female lover, Rayshon Holmes, were killed by the estranged husband of Wanda Pasha, who is also one of Baraka’s daughters. The thirty-one- and thirty-year-old women’s murders were preceded a few months earlier by another hate crime in Newark, the killing of fifteen-year-old Sakia Gunn. Gunn was a black transgendered youth who traveled from Hoboken to

Greenwich Village and the Christopher Street piers to hang out with other young queers of color. Baraka and his wife, Amina, have in part dealt with the tragic loss of their daughter by turning to activism. The violent fate of their child has alerted them to the systemic violence that faces queer people (and especially young people) of color. The Barakas have both become ardent antiviolence activists speaking out directly on LGBT issues. Real violence has ironically brought Baraka back to a queer world that he had renounced so many years ago. Through his tremendous loss he has decided to further diversify his consistent commitment to activism and social justice to include what can only be understood as queer politics. In the world of *The Toilet* there are no hate crimes, no lexicon that identifies homophobia per se, but there is the fact of an aggression constantly on the verge of brutal actualization. The mimetic violence resonates across time and to the scene of the loss that the author will endure decades later. This story from real life is not meant to serve as the proof for my argument. Indeed, the play’s highly homoerotic violence is in crucial ways nothing like the misogynist violence against women that befell the dramatist’s family or the transgenderphobic violence that ended Gunn’s young life. I mention these tragedies because it makes one simple point. **The future is only the stuff of some kids**. **Racialized kids, queer kids, are not the sovereign princes of futurity**. **Although Edelman does indicate that the future of the child as futurity is different from the future of actual children, his framing nonetheless accepts and reproduces this monolithic figure of the child that is indeed always already white.** He all but ignores the point that other modes of particularity within the social are constitutive of subjecthood beyond the kind of jouissance that refuses both narratological meaning and what he understands as the fantasy of futurity. He anticipates and bristles against his future critics with a precognitive paranoia in footnote 19 of his first chapter. He rightly predicts that some identitarian critics (I suppose that would be me in this instance, despite my ambivalent relation to the concept of identity) would dismiss his polemic by saying it is determined by his middle-class white gay male positionality. This attempt to inoculate himself from those who engage his polemic does not do the job. In the final analysis, white gay male crypto-identity politics (the restaging of whiteness as universal norm via the imaginary negation of all other identities that position themselves as not white) is beside the point. **The deeper point is indeed “political,” as, but certainly not more, political than Edelman’s argument. It is important not to hand over futurity to normative white reproductive futurity. That dominant mode of futurity is indeed “winning;’ but that is all the more reason to call on a utopian political imagination that will enable us to glimpse another time and place:**a “not-yet” where queer youths of color actually get to grow up. Utopian and willfully idealistic practices of thought are in order if we are to resist the perils of heteronormative pragmatism and Anglo-normative pessimism. Imagining a queer subject who is abstracted from the sensuous intersectionalities that mark our experience is an ineffectual way out. Such an escape via singularity is a ticket whose price most cannot afford. The way to deal with the asymmetries and violent frenzies that mark the present is not to forget the future. The here and now is simply not enough. Queerness should and could be about a desire for another way of being in both the world and time, a desire that resists mandates to accept that which is not enough.