# 2AC---AT: Queer IR

#### Queer IR doesn’t explain international relations.

Currah 14 — Paisley Currah, Professor of Political Science and Gender Studies at Brooklyn College, 2014 (“The State,” *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly,* Vol. 1, No. 1-2, Accessible Online via e-Duke Journals Scholarly Collection, Accessed On 07-13-2016)

According to Gilles Deleuze, a concept ‘‘should express an event rather than an essence’’ (1995: 14). Molar, large-scale accounts of sex and the state have assumed a sameness to sex and a singular rationality to state actors, decisions, and projects. If the state is not unitary, coordinated, and hierarchically organized in an ultimately rational way—if, as Michel Foucault suggests, ‘‘the state is only a composite reality and a mythicized abstraction whose importance is much less than we think’’ (1991: 103)— then it should come as no surprise that state definitions of sex are also plural. A contradiction is something that does not make sense, a position that is logically inconsistent. To begin by letting go of the assumption that there is any ‘‘there there,’’ any whatness, to (legal) sex apart from what an agency says it is, the contradiction evaporates. The official sex designation—or, more precisely, the M or the F— stamped on documents or coded in records becomes the starting point. Then an analysis can focus not on what sex is, or what it should be, but on what it does, what it accomplishes, what it produces. Indeed, if the only thing we know for sure about sex is what any of these many state actors say it is in any particular instance, sex will turn out to be as messy and diffuse a concept as the state. Entering into the analysis without a firm sense of what sex is or what the state is—as a priori facts, as edifices—makes the processes through which they come into being more visible. It might be better to defer attempts to resolve— theoretically or politically— the messiness in order to understand what a particular system of sex designation does for a particular state project such as recognition or redistribution (Currah, forthcoming). Of course, states should not only or always be imagined as messy, scattered nodes of local and arbitrary power arrangements. The Leviathan state’s terrible concentrated authority to impose sanctions (death, imprisonment, fines) has been the subject of theories of sovereignty for centuries. For this purpose, the most apt definition of the state begins with the simple description from Max Weber: ‘‘A human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate physical violence within a particular given territory’’ (1991: 78). To create a truly compelling account of sovereign violence and the paradox of sovereignty, one must take Weber’s definition, put question marks around ‘‘legitimate,’’ and add the observation made by scholars such as Walter Benjamin, Carl Schmitt, Hannah Arendt, Jacques Derrida, and Giorgio Agamben that the force that creates the law and makes it legitimate cannot be justified by a law that does not yet exist. Still, much of what states do— regulating the health, safety, and public welfare through myriad regulations, rules, decisions, practices— does not reach the threshold of juridical violence, even if those actions are ultimately undergirded by its threat. Fetishizing a generalized idea of the state and its terrifying or redemptive power (depending on one’s perspective) can obscure what is actually happening in the local, micro, particular sites where most public authority is exercised. While it is crucial to theorize the singular finality of state violence, neglecting to examine the messiness of actually existing and potentially incommensurate policies, practices, rules, and norms risks substituting the conceptual for the concrete and gets in the way of understanding what might actually be going on (Latour 1995: 48).

#### And, it doesn’t specify an alternative global system---that’s a precondition to any form of alt solvency---they say there are other ways to engage internationally but don’t specify what they are or how they are superior---“negation in every instance” is not an advocacy.

Dillon Tatum 18. Assistant professor in the Department of Political Science and Geography at Francis Marion University. “Toward a Radical IR.” Duck of Minerva. 11/28/2018. <http://duckofminerva.com/2018/11/toward-a-radical-ir.html>

David Brook’s latest column in the New York Times, banging on the same themes about “the kids are just not right,” raises some questions about what it means to engage in radical politics in the Trump era. Brooks compares the younger generation’s belief “that the system itself is rotten and needs to be torn down” to accomodationist and gradualisms. He continues on to speculate about how these new attitudes might affect older, more “pragmatic,” liberals who desire to work within the system. Brooks, as usual, uses a conservative argument to position himself in the “middle.” I have been thinking a lot about this issue of “radicalism” contra arguments about working within systems that are unjust in thinking about liberal world order and its futures. It has led me to a question I am currently exploring in a work-in-progress about what the possibilities are of radicalism as a way of approaching international politics. Against arguments like Brooks’, and even more sophisticated arguments about agonistic democracy developed by thinkers like Chantal Mouffe, I think there is a place in IR for radical conceptions of transformation, order, and politics. What is radicalism? Brooks never fully fleshes out this concept. Philosophy and political theory have engaged with the issue of radicalism as a concept, though the results are often divergent. To quote Agnes Heller, in her treatise on radical philosophy, it “can give the world a norm, and it can will people to want to give a world to the norm.” Radicalism as an idea, and as a form of critique, mobilizes many different modes of thinking about the social and the political. The most comprehensive definition of radicalism is that provided by Paul McLaughlin, who defines radicalism “in terms of (i) a fundamental orientation (toward fundamental objects) (ii) in the political domain (iii) of an argumentative nature.” More than that, though, we can add that radicalism intervenes in the political domain with the goal of fundamental transformation. Additionally, though radicalism indeed proceeds in an argumentative nature, this methodology for argument is one that is aimed at critiquing, and seeking the destruction/replacement of existing institutions. A revised working definition of radicalism, therefore, is: a way of thinking about politics that focuses on totalities, praxis and political action, and the deployment of historicist methods with an eye toward “getting to the root of things.” Thus, radicalism is both a broad range of critical thought and practice, but also is specific in the realms of focus, action, and method. If Brooks is right that there is a major clash between a radical younger generation and a more pragmatic and moderate older generation in American politics, these differences are not well expressed in contemporary thinking about IR. Some of the biggest divisions are between what Robert Cox called “problem-solving theories” and theories that critique such approaches, but provide little argumentation aimed at tearing structures of injustice down altogether. In short: IR, even at its critical ends, is not radical (for an excellent exception see here and here). Why is this important? This morning, I taught a seminar on the question “Is Liberal World Order Finished?” I asked my students to think about what makes a liberal order “liberal,” and then asked: “Can we fix the liberal world order, or can we imagine a world without it?—and what would that look like?” The students were quick to point out the violences, inequities, and problems inherent in a liberal world order, but it took a good bit of pushing and prodding to get them to articulate whether/how we should/could take this order apart and rethink it. This was not just a difficult task for the students—it is something IR has not spent enough time meditating on.

There is a lot to be critical of these days. And, I disagree with Brooks’s pessimism about a younger radical generation. Politics is deeply intertwined with engagements with radicalism. What I think is missing when we consider global politics, though, is that many of our pressing questions about institutions, order, and state action proceed from the same sort of moderation, accomodationism, or—at the most—an immanently critical vein. If we want to intellectually and politically approach issues like: What do we make of the future(s) of liberal world order? IR needs to engage with radicalism.

#### Alt fails—Trump era cemented heteronormative views within politics, cooption inevitable

**Weber 16** (Cynthia Weber, Professor of International Relations at the University of Sussex, “Sovereignty, Sexuality And The Will To Trump: A Queer IR Analysis And Response,” 11-27-2016, accessed 07-21-2022, https://thedisorderofthings.com/2016/11/27/sovereignty-sexuality-and-the-will-to-trump-a-queer-ir-analysis-and-response/)//sfs

Crucially, the Trump campaign didn’t just roll out its vision of this ‘US sovereign subject’ by employing either/or logics, even though much of the time this seemed to be the case. Yes, Trump pitted ‘trustworthy’ and ‘untrustworthy’ US citizens against one another. But he constantly flip flopped on who these trustworthy and untrustworthy citizens were, whether in the case of women, ‘the blacks’ or the first black President of the United States of America. The campaign also rolled out Mike Pence to deny many of the things Trump said. And Trump made a lot of inherently contradictory statements that suggested he was for and against some groups or policies at the same time. For example, Trump said, ‘There can be no discrimination against gays. I’m against gay marriage’ (although in his 60 Minutes interview, Trump said gay marriage was a legally settled issue). Trump also made inconsistent statements about the anti-trans\* bathroom law in North Carolina. Comments like these were implicitly and explicitly made in the register of sex, gender and sexuality throughout the campaign, and they were more consistent with and/or logics and neither/nor logics than they were with either/or logics. These statements demonstrate how some of **the paradoxical figures and logics found in queer discourses were coopted** by the Trump campaign for its own purposes. All of this left many politicians, pundits, and ordinary US American citizens wondering if Trump was a clown who should be laughed off or an existential threat to the American democratic project. Trump positioned himself as either and both and even neither as it suited his ambitions. And he will likely continue to do so as the 45th President of the United States. What is to be done? As the US and the world face up to the realities of the impossible Presidency that the Trump campaign made possible, there is no shortage of recommendations circulating in critical camps about what is to be done. These include: Organizing new coalitions and devising experimental techniques to make them effective; **Disarming** the **specific modalities of citizenship, governance and reason** that make (un)reasonable identifications with a will to Trump possible; and **Resisting all** xenophobias, forms of **racism**, **misogyny**, **homo/bi/trans\*phobias**, and other oppressive ideologies and social relations that violently order the world in whatever name – be it **white supremacy**, **rightwing nationalism**, conservatism, or **neoliberalism**. I am less hopeful than Joan Cocks might be that these new political alliances and institutions will be forged ‘without sovereign aspirations, delusions, or pretensions’, **whatever their scale**. And I may be more persuaded than Cocks is that the counter-Trump re-imaginings of the US that will support these political alliances and institutions are **an essential part of what makes radical change possible, even if these re-imaginings fail to escape the ‘delusion of sovereignty’ and its corresponding delusions of things like sex, gender and sexuality**. This, it seems to me, is something **Trump’s radical re-imagining of the US as his platform for winning the White House underscores**. As we all move forward and ready ourselves for some difficult conversations, this queer IR analysis suggests we keep the following two points in mind. First, connections between sovereignty, sex, gender and sexuality are neither academic nor trivial. Nor are they separable from racisms, xenophobias and other systems of power. How sovereignties are specifically sexualized, racialized, classed and otherwise configured to authorize the defense of particular nationalisms and internationalisms has real effects on real people. This is as true in relation to the hate speech and physical violence authorized in the name of Trump as it is for the policies that will emerge from a Trump administration. Second, **exclusively anti-normative, always contrarian, somehow liberating understandings** of ‘queer’, ‘queers’, and ‘queer logics’ can **obscure** the fact that ‘queer’ – just like **any (dis)position, strategy, or tool – can be captured, mimicked, and mobilized** to map the world in despicable ways. **Alt-Right** offers one important example of a white supremacist organization **adopting techniques of the left** for such purposes. How the Trump campaign **mobilized what (otherwise) might appear to be queer logics of statecraft to de-normalize Clinton’s ‘neoliberal US sovereign subject’ on behalf of Trump’s (re)normalized ‘repressed, entitled, white US sovereign subject’** is another. **There is no reason to believe that, as President, Trump will abandon the very logics and tactics that helped win** him the Presidency. These are among the stakes a queer IR analysis of a will to Trump makes plain. For me, **opposing a will to Trump** starts by reminding myself that – like ‘queer’ – a ‘state’s sovereign subjectivity is…”[i]llusive, always on the move.” It is “at best like something, but it never is that something”’. Trump is of some ever-changing United States of America, but Trump is not the United States of America. The same can be said of the ‘US sovereign subject’ Trump’s campaign strategically figured to authorize Trump’s will to power. It is in these gaps and fissures where I will pitch my political tent and stage my **practical political resistance** to a will to Trump.

#### Alt Fails — rethinking doesn’t change material conditions.

**Cocks 16** — Joan Cocks, Emeritus Professor of Politics and Co-Founder of the Program in Critical Social Thought at Mount Holyoke College, holds a Ph.D. from the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, 2016 (“Queer International Relations (II),” The Disorder of Things—a scholarly blog, November 22nd, Available Online at <https://thedisorderofthings.com/2016/11/22/queer-international-relations-ii/>, Accessed 02-06-2020)

Although he/she stands as an emblem of Cynthia’s hope for pluralizing the monolithic concept of sovereign man and for queering an integrated Europe, I’m going to gesture only briefly to the border-straddling Eurovision song contest winner Neuwirth/Wurst. I have to confess that I’ve never watched Eurovision and so must trust Cynthia’s reading of N/W entirely, but as she depicts him/her, unlike the normal homosexual, this bearded lady from Austria and Colombia managed to provoke wildly clashing reactions from leaders and peoples in different countries and of different political stripes by impaling him/herself on the border of masculine and feminine, the Global North and Global South, secularism and religion, white and brown racial identities, and national particularity and regional integration. Still, while Cynthia’s layered reading of N/W is as sophisticated an interpretation of identity deconstruction as any cultural theorist could hope for, **a performance of ambiguities in identity on stage**, **and the parsing of those ambiguities in a queer IR theory text**, **can push the world forward** (or, to the minds of N/W’s critics, backward) **only so far**.

### perm

#### The perm allows for queer sensibility through more incorporation of queerness in IR

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In summarizing some of these themes, controversies and tensions, I am unavoidably reading queer theory as an IR scholar steeped in a literature that, for the most part, has not accepted and has even been actively hostile to a ‘queer IR’ (Weber 2014b). Nevertheless, an **intersection of queer and ‘dominant’ IR is potentially fruitful**, but it is not a matter of ‘mixing and stirring’ since the **queer has been relevant to IR and world politics all along**, in its dominant narratives of discipline as they extend through the halls of power, products of media and culture, and the offices, conference rooms and journals of the field of International Relations (Weber 2013; 2014a, 2014b; Wilcox 2015). In other words, I am interrogating IR from a body of literature that has become known as ‘queer theory’ but this effort should not be read as a neglect of the ways in which a growing contingent of IR scholars have read world politics through a queer lens to make up a rich variety of critical and innovative approaches