# Notes

This is a critique of the signifier of the Child. The Child, according to Edelman, “embodies the citizen as an ideal…at the cost of limiting the rights "real" citizens are allowed.” When Edelman speaks of the Child, he isn’t referring to actual children, but rather this figure that upholds the ideal future of society at the cost of non-normative bodies. The first Greteman card has some quotes from famous people like JFK and Obama that show how that idea works – they say things like “We are the nation that has always understood that our future is inextricably linked to the education of our children.” For Edelman, queer violence is enacted in the name of the Child. He says it’s unfathomable to be against the Child – the logic of “we’re doing this for our children and their children” holds lots of persuasive value – which signals heteronormativity.

Therefore, those who are against the Child are queer. Edelman’s notion of reproductive futurism centers around this concept. Reproduction happens in the name of the Child to maintain a prosperous future. If reproduction is in the name of the Child, those who cannot reproduce are against the Child. That’s why queer people are considered a threat to the Child, and thus a threat to societal order writ large because the Child structures society, which enables targeted violence.

Link:

Yes, there’s just one link card, but that shouldn’t really matter because the link should be obvious. Almost all policy affs link very hard because of the way in which they use education of children as a method to resolve some global problem that ends in nuke war, aka they educate in the name of the Child.

Alt:

Queering the child means that we put the Child in opposition to societal order bc queerness is defined in opposition to society. Means that we take away the one thing from society that’s allowing violence to happen, which is the reproductive drive of ensuring a viable future via the Child. Society relies on the Child for coherence in that manner, meaning that taking away the Child renders society incoherent and therefore, there may be some future that is good for queer people. You don’t want to get caught up explaining the world of the alternative though bc a) there’s no way to really know what that looks like and b) explaining the world of the alt links to the K because it’s they symptom of a futural drive.

### To Do

NEG:

1. puar- homonationalism – answers perm and is an additional impact. Good impact stuff for the block. Heg links.

2. can’t predict the future and psychoanalysis link args about predictions- future predictions wrong

3. Rebecca Sheldon- cards about warming and the Child’s relationship to nature and the Child as a way to save us from warming and asteroids

AFF:

1. Edelman indicts- focus on gay men

2. Optimism good- things can get better for queer folk- legal reform- optimistic

3. Rebecca Solnit- “hope in the dark” – 2016 edition of it bc there’s a new afterword where she’s talking about Occupy Wallstreet and that afterword might be the death of all pessimism- it’s unbeatable

4. Michael Snediker – “queer optimism”

# Educational Futurism

### 1NC

#### The aff reifies educational futurism – their upholding of the Child as an emblem of the nation’s future is the root cause of violence against non-normative bodies

Greteman and Wojcikiewicz 14 (Adam J. Greteman, Department of Art Education, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and Steven Wojcikiewicz, “The Problems with the Future: Educational Futurism and the Figural Child,” Journal of Philosophy of Education, Vol. 48, No. 4, PN)

 ‘I touch the future’, Christa McAuliffe said, ‘I teach’. This resonates with educators. By passing on skills, knowledge, and ideas that will be used at later times, they reach out to an unseen future and touch it. Teachers tell their students to study and work hard, for the things they are learning will be needed in the future. The lesson of the day may be applied to a test at the end of the week, or it may be the basis for work that will be carried out at the next grade level. It may even help prepare a student for college, or for a job, or for a fulfilling life. Whatever the specifics, the commonality here is that learning now prepares students for a yet unknown then. Teaching and schooling are suffused with concern about, discussion of, and focus on the future. This theme of futurity carries on beyond school walls and enters political discourse on education. President John F. Kennedy noted, ‘Children are the world's most valuable resource and its best hope for the future’, while Malcolm X claimed ‘education is the passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today’. But, education is not merely directed toward the future of the individual, but also toward the future of the nation. A Nation at Risk, the oft-quoted 1983 US Department of Education report on the state of American education, tells us that, “People are steadfast in their belief that education is the major foundation for the future strength of this country. They even considered education more important than developing the best industrial system or the strongest military force, perhaps because they understood education as the cornerstone of both … Very clearly, the public understands the primary importance of education as the foundation for a satisfying life, an enlightened and civil society, a strong economy, and a secure Nation (National Commission on Excellence in Education, The Public's Commitment section, 1983, para. 2).” Close to 20 years after the publication of A Nation at Risk, the most sweeping educational reform effort of our time, No Child Left Behind, returned the focus back to the Child, continuing the focus on the future in education and the necessity of the Child to maintain the competitiveness of the nation. As former president George W. Bush asserted in one of his last speeches in office, NCLB, “… starts with this concept: Every child can learn. We believe that it is important to have a high quality education if one is going to succeed in the 21st century. It's no longer acceptable to be cranking people out of the school system and saying, okay, just go—you know, you can make a living just through manual labor alone. That's going to happen for some, but it's not the future of America, if we want to be a competitive nation as we head into the 21st century (Bush, 2009, para. 22).” And more recently, President Obama, in a speech when he was running for the office, asserted, ‘We are the nation that has always understood that our future is inextricably linked to the education of our children’ (Obama, 2008, para. 10). Along the same lines, the current Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, has stated that, ‘Today, more than ever, better schooling provides a down payment on the nation's future’ (Duncan, 2009, para. 15). Within these statements, the future cannot be separated from those it relies on—predominately ‘children’. These assumptions made in regards to children, their role in the future, and schools’ roles in creating that future are seemingly ingrained in our society and our politics. The presence of this future focus may seem uncontroversial, its influence benign. Such assumptions may appear to be natural and beyond question, particularly since this futurist-focus originated, in part, with the spread of education during the Enlightenment, with its progress-oriented philosophical perspectives. Yet, we wish to question these assumptions, to explore how they can set narrow boundaries around children in schools. In carrying out this task, we employ the work of Lee Edelman and John Dewey to examine the educational ramifications of the focus on the future, which we call ‘educational futurism’ after Edelman's (2004) ‘reproductive futurism’. Our argument seeks specifically to explore how educational futurism imposes limits on educational discourse and privileges a certain future, thus making it unthinkable to imagine ways outside of such a privileged future. We turn to Edelman for his ‘reproductive futurism’, which is embodied in the regulatory figure of ‘the Child’, because it is seems particularly apt to the educational settings, practices and discourses which are our concern. This ‘figural Child’ for Edelman ‘alone embodies the citizen as an ideal, entitled to claim full rights to its future share in the nation’s good, though always at the cost of limiting the rights “real” citizens are allowed’ (2004, p. 11). The Child exists in discourse and it limits discourse from engaging the unruly lives of children. The Child, for Edelman, is not representative of children. It is all there is. And actions taken in the name of the Child ignore, even exclude, the particularities and contexts that make children who they are—alive and unique. Edelman’s challenge then offers up a threat to education’s identification with the Child, a challenge that is not simply nihilistic, but which rather aims to see what is denied consideration and action. His project, heavily reliant on Lacan’s death drive, offers a challenge to ‘a future whose beat goes on’ to expose the way ‘the political regime of futurism, unable to escape what it abjects, negates it as the negation of meaning, of the Child, and of the future the Child portends’ (pp. 153–154). He insists, as such, on a politics that does not seek accommodation within such logic but an **embrace of the negation**, the unintelligible place of queerness, for it is in such an embrace that queer ethics can engage the **violence against non-normative bodies**. Dewey makes an appearance here because, though he has been narrowly and inaccurately portrayed as the benign father of student-centred, activity-oriented, open, and laissez-faire classroom methods, his positions are far more nuanced, and far more radical, in relation to children and the future (Dewey, 1938; Petrovic, 1998; Popkewitz, 2005; Prawat, 1995; Schleffler, 1974; Wong and Pugh, 2001). He presents a critique of a future focus in education that shows how such a focus means a loss, not only of present opportunities, but also of the promised future for children. Dewey, read in relation to Edelman’s engagement with futurism, offers a place within educational discourse to explore the possibility to engage educational futurism in ways that challenge the discourse of the Child illustrated in our opening statements. To focus on Dewey’s radical insights then is to challenge the innocent position to which he is often relegated. After all, it is the innocent Dewey, like the innocent Child, that supports and carries forward the status quo. Our focus on the radical insights of Dewey position him against the status quo, and against the Child, bringing a different, though complementary, perspective to our engagement with Edelman.

#### The alternative is to queer the Child – only our negation of the Child as a symbol of innocence solves endless violence

Greteman and Wojcikiewicz 14 (Adam J. Greteman, Department of Art Education, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and Steven Wojcikiewicz, “The Problems with the Future: Educational Futurism and the Figural Child,” Journal of Philosophy of Education, Vol. 48, No. 4, PN)

Edelman's critique and exposure of the Child and the Child's structuring logic illustrates that the Child is exclusionary, de-legitimising all that which is not future-focused, or which does not benefit the Child in all its innocent, sentimentalised, and decontextualised (non)identity. The Child takes up the whole frame, permitting nothing else to be seen, recognised, or thinkable. However, Edelman makes it clear that the Child he writes of is figural and therefore ‘not to be confused with the lived experiences of any historical children’ (p. 11). Rather the figural Child ‘serves to regulate political discourse—to prescribe what we count as political discourse—by compelling such discourse to accede in advance to the reality of a collective future whose figurative status we are never permitted to acknowledge or address’ (p. 11). In order to reveal the Child, and the full range of the meanings of the Child for discourse and action, Edelman (2004) proposes the ‘unthinkable’: he threatens the Child by queering it, since ‘queerness names the side of those not “fighting for the children”, the side outside the consensus by which all politics confirms the absolute value of reproductive futurism’ (p. 3). In queering the Child, these hidden discourses and contexts are exposed, and the Child is portrayed, not as the widely and easily accepted stand-in for children, but as an oppressive figure that closes down possibility and denies particularity, all in the name of a future that ‘is mere repetition and just as lethal as the past’, a future that is normatively, narrowly defined but never to be reached. (p. 31). It is important to understand, in this analysis, that to queer the Child in the name of children is, by extension, to put children in the position of the queer. This, in turn, opens up many possibilities. Yet, making the claim that children are queer may provoke anxiety, or outrage because of the reach of the figural Child. Such a statement on the queerness of children, especially in the realm of education, disrupts the innocence of the Child as imagined and portrayed. It challenges the frame that sets the Child up as in need of a proper curriculum, in need of protection. Edelman acknowledges as much noting that, ‘for the cult of the Child permits no shrines to the queerness of boys and girls, since queerness, for contemporary culture at large … is understood as bringing children and childhood to an end’ (p. 19). Such anxiety, or even outrage, is useful for our purposes, for it helps reveal the contextualised, complex, and perhaps troubling realities that lie beneath the bland image of the Child. The Child is not an innocent position. The Child is indeed the representative of positions that have been utilised politically to assault and reject those who do not support the Child. The stories that have been told about the Child have followed a narrow narrative trajectory and to take a stand against the Child is to offer different stories, different narrative trajectories, and challenges to the future. In offering a challenge to this dominant story line on the Child asks that we stand against the maintenance of innocence, for it is its maintenance that inhibits experience and learning (Archard, 2004; Bruhm and Hurley, 2004; Buckingham, 2000). This maintenance of innocence on the part of the Child is an important piece of what separates the Child from children, and what makes the political Child such a totalising force for the suppression of children. This Child is one who is always innocent, always protected, and, as the potential for anxiety and outrage already mentioned alludes to, always inexperienced. Experience taints, disrupts, and ends innocence. And yet, experience itself is a vital characteristic of learning. Thus children in schools, those who are learning, are always already in a queer position. The Child's image of innocence is merely an exclusionary political position, ‘a central reference point in a wider mythology of childhood that helps uphold an unjust moral order in which both adults and children are subject to the oppressive politics of purity’ (Davis, 2011, p. 381). To argue against the Child and its innocence is to open up that which the Child closes off, the real experiences and desires of children.

## Link

### L – Generic

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Kennedy noted, ‘Children are the world's most valuable resource and its best hope for the future’, while Malcolm X claimed ‘education is the passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today’. But, education is not merely directed toward the future of the individual, but also toward the future of the nation. A Nation at Risk, the oft-quoted 1983 US Department of Education report on the state of American education, tells us that, “People are steadfast in their belief that education is the major foundation for the future strength of this country. 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Complexity theory- 2,3 bad future really scary

## Impact

### Normativity

#### The impact is queer violence – everyone who refuses the figure of the Child is seen as a threat to social order

Edelman 04 (Lee, professor of English at Tufts, No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive, p. 11-13, PN)

\*impact

\*AT: FW/institutional change good

In its coercive universalization, however, the image of the Child, not to be confused with the lived experiences of any historical children, serves to regulate political discourse—to prescribe what will count as political discourse—by compelling such discourse to accede in advance to the reality of a collective future whose figurative status we are never per-mitted to acknowledge or address. From Delacroix's iconic image of Liberty leading us into a brave new world of revolutionary possibility— her bare breast making each spectator the unweaned Child to whom it's held out while the boy to her left, reproducing her posture, affirms the absolute logic of reproduction itself—to the revolutionary waif in the logo that miniaturizes the "politics" of Les Mis (summed up in its anthem to futurism, the "inspirational" "One Day More"), we are no more able to conceive of a politics without a fantasy of the future than we are able to conceive of a future without the figure of the Child. That figural Child alone embodies the citizen as an ideal, entitled to claim full rights to its future share in the nation's good, though always at the cost of limiting the rights "real" citizens are allowed. For the social order exists to pre-serve for this universalized subject, this fantasmatic Child, a notional freedom more highly valued than the actuality of freedom itself, which might, after all, put at risk the Child to whom such a freedom falls due. Hence, whatever refuses this mandate by which our political institutions compel the collective reproduction of the Child must appear as a threat not only to the organization of a given social order but also, and far more ominously, to social order as such, insofar as it threatens the logic of futurism on which meaning always depends. So, for example, when P. D. James, in her novel The Children of Men, imagines a future in which the human race has suffered a seemingly absolute loss of the capacity to reproduce, her narrator, Theodore Faron, not only attributes this reversal of biological fortune to the putative crisis of sexual values in late twentieth-century democracies — "Pornography and sexual violence on film, on television, in books, in life had increased and became more explicit but less and less in the West we made love and bred children," he declares—but also gives voice to the ideological truism that governs our investment in the Child as the obligatory token of futurity: "Without the hope of posterity, for our race if not for ourselves, without the assurance that we being dead yet live," he later observes, "all pleasures of the mind and senses sometimes seem to me no more than pathetic and crumbling defences shored up against our ruins." 2 While this allusion to Eliot's "The Waste Land" may recall another of its well-known lines, one for which we apparently have Eliot's wife, Vivian, to thank— "What you get married for if you don't want children?" —it also brings out the function of the child as the prop of the secular theology on which our social reality rests: the secular theology that shapes at once the meaning of our collective narratives and our collective narratives of meaning. Charged, after all, with the task of assuring "that we being dead yet live," the Child, as if by nature (more precisely, as the promise of a natural transcendence of the limits of nature itself), exudes the very pathos from which the narrator of The Children of Men re-coils when he comes upon it in non-reproductive "pleasures of the mind and senses." For the "pathetic" quality he projectively locates in non-generative sexual enjoyment—enjoyment that he views in the absence of futurity as empty, substitutive, pathological—exposes the fetishistic figurations of the Child that the narrator pits against it as legible in terms identical to those for which enjoyment without "hope of posterity" is peremptorily dismissed: legible, that is, as nothing more than "pathetic and crumbling defences shored up against our ruins." How better to characterize the narrative project of The Children of Men itself, which ends, as anyone not born yesterday surely expects from the start, with the re-newal of our barren and dying race through the miracle of birth? After all, as Walter Wangerin Jr., reviewing the book for the New York Times, approvingly noted in a sentence delicately poised between description and performance of the novel's pro-procreative ideology: "If there is a baby, there is a future, there is redemption. "13 If, however, there is no baby and, in consequence, no future, then the blame must fall on the fatal lure of sterile, narcissistic enjoyments understood as inherently destructive of meaning and therefore as responsible for the undoing of social organization, collective reality, and, inevitably, life itself. Given that the author of The Children of Men, like the parents of mankind's children, succumbs so completely to the narcissism —all-pervasive, self-congratulatory, and strategically misrecognized— that animates pronatalism, why should we be the least bit surprised when her narrator, facing his futureless future, laments, with what we must call a straight face, that "sex totally divorced from procreation has be-come almost meaninglessly acrobatic"? 15 Which is, of course, to say no more than that sexual practice will continue to allegorize the vicissitudes of meaning so long as the specifically heterosexual alibi of reproductive necessity obscures the drive beyond meaning driving the machinery of sexual meaningfulness: so long, that is, as the biological fact of heterosexual procreation bestows the imprimatur of meaning-production on heterogenital relations. For the Child, whose mere possibility is enough to spirit away the naked truth of heterosexual sex—impregnating hetero-sexuality, as it were, with the future of signification by conferring upon it the cultural burden of signifying futurity—figures our identification with an always about-to-be-realized identity. It thus denies the constant threat to the social order of meaning inherent in the structure of Symbolic desire that commits us to pursuing fulfillment by way of a meaning unable, as meaning, either to fulfill us or, in turn, to be fulfilled because unable to close the gap in identity, the division incised by the signifier, that "meaning," despite itself, means.

#### Educational futurism maintains the figural Child as a weapon against individual children—this is the underpinning of violence against all excluded kids

Greteman and Wojcikiewicz 14 (Adam J. Greteman, Department of Art Education, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and Steven Wojcikiewicz, “The Problems with the Future: Educational Futurism and the Figural Child,” Journal of Philosophy of Education, Vol. 48, No. 4)

McDonough (2007) noted the challenge a ‘queer future’ presents, particularly to the common school. Engaging Queer Theory with Liberal philosophy, he explored the precarious space where identities are defined and how the futures of particular identities, specifically gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT), are foreclosed. The challenges of queerness to education then are to the futures that education creates and denies. As McDonough illustrates, . . . the problem in the case of queer children is not just that their communities lack a sufficiently expansive range of queer futures . . . the problem is also that those communities may actively foreclose queer possibilities as children’s capacities of independent practical reasoning are developing (p. 801). While McDonough’s focus on the future of queer identities is specifically in relation to GLBT identities, we have sought to challenge the ‘future’ by engaging the ways in which Edelman’s figural Child and Dewey’s Adult foreclose the future for all children, for as Kathryn Bond-Stockton (2009) argues, all children are queer. Educational futurism then regulates political and educational discourse and forecloses possibilities for the unruly student body—seeking to ‘straighten’ students up and ‘orient’ them in particular directions. The figural Child of Edelman and the Adult of Dewey, as we have explored, have or had an impact on classrooms and children’s experiences. As such, we believe this impact has peculiar consequences that garner further exploration and analysis. Anyone familiar with schooling, anyone who has spent time watching students asking the teacher to just tell them what’s on the test, students acting only with direct and careful instructions, and students becoming fearful and even hostile in the face of undefined tasks and indeterminate results, has seen the workings of educational futurism. So too these workings are familiar to anyone who has seen the violence inflicted against the bodies of students for not being normal, for being GLBT, for being fat, for speaking differently, for being abled differently. When the future is held up as a forever distant and politicised goal, a future figured by the Child, the results are conformity, the destruction of the individual, the fear of growth, and an education carried out through punishment and bribery. Children who are taught according to the dictates of the Child and the Adult are denied the present, and thus denied, not only the chance to be children, but also the chance to be adults.

## Alt

### Alt – Queer the Child

#### The alternative is to queer the Child – only our negation of the Child as a symbol of innocence, but rather suppression solves endless violence

Greteman and Wojcikiewicz 14 (Adam J. Greteman, Department of Art Education, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and Steven Wojcikiewicz, “The Problems with the Future: Educational Futurism and the Figural Child,” Journal of Philosophy of Education, Vol. 48, No. 4, PN)

Edelman's critique and exposure of the Child and the Child's structuring logic illustrates that the Child is exclusionary, de-legitimising all that which is not future-focused, or which does not benefit the Child in all its innocent, sentimentalised, and decontextualised (non)identity. The Child takes up the whole frame, permitting nothing else to be seen, recognised, or thinkable. However, Edelman makes it clear that the Child he writes of is figural and therefore ‘not to be confused with the lived experiences of any historical children’ (p. 11). Rather the figural Child ‘serves to regulate political discourse—to prescribe what we count as political discourse—by compelling such discourse to accede in advance to the reality of a collective future whose figurative status we are never permitted to acknowledge or address’ (p. 11). In order to reveal the Child, and the full range of the meanings of the Child for discourse and action, Edelman (2004) proposes the ‘unthinkable’: he threatens the Child by queering it, since ‘queerness names the side of those not “fighting for the children”, the side outside the consensus by which all politics confirms the absolute value of reproductive futurism’ (p. 3). In queering the Child, these hidden discourses and contexts are exposed, and the Child is portrayed, not as the widely and easily accepted stand-in for children, but as an oppressive figure that closes down possibility and denies particularity, all in the name of a future that ‘is mere repetition and just as lethal as the past’, a future that is normatively, narrowly defined but never to be reached. (p. 31). It is important to understand, in this analysis, that to queer the Child in the name of children is, by extension, to put children in the position of the queer. This, in turn, opens up many possibilities. Yet, making the claim that children are queer may provoke anxiety, or outrage because of the reach of the figural Child. Such a statement on the queerness of children, especially in the realm of education, disrupts the innocence of the Child as imagined and portrayed. It challenges the frame that sets the Child up as in need of a proper curriculum, in need of protection. Edelman acknowledges as much noting that, ‘for the cult of the Child permits no shrines to the queerness of boys and girls, since queerness, for contemporary culture at large … is understood as bringing children and childhood to an end’ (p. 19). Such anxiety, or even outrage, is useful for our purposes, for it helps reveal the contextualised, complex, and perhaps troubling realities that lie beneath the bland image of the Child. The Child is not an innocent position. The Child is indeed the representative of positions that have been utilised politically to assault and reject those who do not support the Child. The stories that have been told about the Child have followed a narrow narrative trajectory and to take a stand against the Child is to offer different stories, different narrative trajectories, and challenges to the future. In offering a challenge to this dominant story line on the Child asks that we stand against the maintenance of innocence, for it is its maintenance that inhibits experience and learning (Archard, 2004; Bruhm and Hurley, 2004; Buckingham, 2000). This maintenance of innocence on the part of the Child is an important piece of what separates the Child from children, and what makes the political Child such a totalising force for the suppression of children. This Child is one who is always innocent, always protected, and, as the potential for anxiety and outrage already mentioned alludes to, always inexperienced. Experience taints, disrupts, and ends innocence. And yet, experience itself is a vital characteristic of learning. Thus children in schools, those who are learning, are always already in a queer position. The Child's image of innocence is merely an exclusionary political position, ‘a central reference point in a wider mythology of childhood that helps uphold an unjust moral order in which both adults and children are subject to the oppressive politics of purity’ (Davis, 2011, p. 381). To argue against the Child and its innocence is to open up that which the Child closes off, the real experiences and desires of children.

### 2NC – Alt Solvency

#### Our embrace of negativity, failure, and incompleteness ruptures the figural Child and its hold on the future

Greteman and Wojcikiewicz 14 (Adam J. Greteman, Department of Art Education, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and Steven Wojcikiewicz, “The Problems with the Future: Educational Futurism and the Figural Child,” Journal of Philosophy of Education, Vol. 48, No. 4)

Seeing the disruptive potential of the embracing the ‘negativity’ of queerness, Edelman utilises Lacan’s theorisation of the death drive. He notes that ‘the death drive marks the excess embedded within the Symbolic through the loss, the Real loss, that the advent of the signifier effects’ (2004, p. 9). The death drive becomes the moment of undoing, of constantly seeking to disrupt and destroy the signifier for ‘the queer insists that politics is always a politics of the signifier’ (p. 6). Queerness makes possible a constant disruption or ‘the violent undoing of meaning, the loss of identity and coherence’ (p. 132). Edelman’s embrace of the death drive thus challenges the story of the Child’s innocence. In this challenge however, he notes that, . . . to intervene in the reproduction of such a reality—an intervention that may well take the form of figuring that reality’s abortion—queer theory must always insist on its connection to the vicissitudes of the sign, to the tension between the signifier’s collapse into the letter’s cadaverous materiality and its participation in a system of reference wherein it generates meaning itself (p. 7). Edelman, as such, is following a broader theme in queer theory. Eve Sedgwick (1993) suggests queer ‘can refer to: the mesh of possibilities, of gaps, overlaps, dissonances, and resonances, lapses and excesses of meaning when the constituent elements of anyone’s gender, of anyone’s sexuality aren’t made (or can’t be made) to signify monolithically’ (p. 8). The social order, under modernity, is fantasised to be coherent, to seek consistency, completeness, and unity. It seeks to tell a story that does not fail, even as it always must. It is this failure that queerness embraces. As Edelman notes ‘queer theory marks the “other” side of politics: the “side” where narrative realization and derealization overlap . . . the “side” **outside of all political sides**’ (p. 7). While some may seek to tame queer theory so as to imply troubling—eliminating the queers association with (homo)sexuality—such a move is problematic as it ‘dematerialize[s] any possibility of queerness itself’ because homosexuality is a piece of the queers ‘definitional center’ (Sedgwick, 1993, p. 8). Such a move ignores the role of sexual orientation in queerness. And as Ahmed notes ‘being oriented in different ways does matter, precisely because of how spaces are already oriented . . . Orientations affect what bodies can do’ (2006, p. 563). As such, orientation impacts the ability to think of the future and to what ends one is oriented toward. The task in part is the embrace of the negative in order to challenge the social reality and its fantasy of coherence to orient in new ways. The incompleteness of children, much maligned, emerges then as a site for such a challenge whereby the incompleteness is embraced so that coherence is always in question. The social reality is constantly under threat of disintegration and as such seeks to regulate those bodies that cause such threats. The queerness of children produces different ways to do and be in the world, hidden by the regulatory subject in the form of the Child. To employ a queer perspective in the examination of educational futurism is not solely to carry out a simple act of negation (i.e. negating the Child), but to recognise how that negation is, in part, how the future is figured and how different futures might become thinkable. For Edelman this embrace occurs through his theorisation around the death drive, which ‘names what the queer, in the order of the social, is called forth to figure: the negativity opposed to every form of social viability’ (2004, p. 9). Queerness challenges the world and opposes the norms that structure the logic of the social. It is not reproductive and within the realm of the social, unintelligible. It works against stability at all times, seeking its own death. In doing so, queerness challenges identity politics: [w]here the political interventions of identitarian minorities— including those who seek to substantialize the identities of lesbians, gay men, and bisexuals—may properly take shape as oppositional, affording the dominant order a reassuringly symmetrical, if inverted, depiction of its own ostensibly coherent identity, queer theory’s opposition is precisely to any such logic of opposition, its proper task the ceaseless disappropriation of every propriety. (p. 24) Yet, this death, this negation, is not to deny existence, but to push for alternative possibilities—it is, one might say, productive but never reproductive in producing new orientations to the world. It is creative in its destructive intentions, as it must **never cease its negation** within any given normative framework.

#### Our embrace of the death drive is a strategy of negation to every form of social viability that dismantles the impossible future of the Child

Edelman 04 (Lee, professor of English at Tufts, No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive, p. 8-11, PN)

If politics in the Symbolic is always therefore a politics of the Symbolic, operating in the name and in the direction of a constantly anticipated future reality, then the telos that would, in fantasy, put an end to these deferrals, the presence toward which the metonymic chain of signifiers always aims, must be recognized, nonetheless, as belonging to an Imaginary past. This means not only that politics conforms to the temporality of desire, to what we might call the inevitable historicity of desire — the successive displacements forward of nodes of attachment as figures of meaning, points of intense metaphoric investment, produced in the hope, however vain, of filling the constitutive gap in the subject that the signifier necessarily installs—but also that politics is a name for the temporalization of desire, for its translation into a narrative, for its teleological determination. Politics, that is, by externalizing and configuring in the fictive form of a narrative, allegorizes or elaborates sequentially, precisely as desire, those over-determinations of libidinal positions and inconsistencies of psychic defenses occasioned by what disarticulates the narrativity of desire: the drives, themselves intractable, unassimilable to the logic of interpretation or the demands of meaning-production; the drives that carry the destabilizing force of what insists outside or beyond, because foreclosed by, signification. The drive —more exactly, the death drive —holds a privileged place in this book. As the constancy of a pressure both alien and internal to the logic of the Symbolic, as the inarticulable surplus that dismantles the subject from within, the death drive names what the queer, in the order of the social, is called forth to figure: the negativity opposed to every form of social viability. Lacan makes clear that the death drive emerges as a consequence of the Symbolic; indeed, he ends Seminar 2 with the claim that "the symbolic order is simultaneously non-being and insisting to be, that is what Freud has in mind when he talks about the death instinct as being what is most fundamental —a symbolic order in travail, in the process of coming, insisting on being realized." 9 This constant movement toward realization cannot be divorced, however, from a will to undo what is thereby instituted, to begin again ex nihilo. For the death drive marks the excess embedded within the Symbolic through the loss, the Real loss, that the advent of the signifier effects. Suzanne Barnard expresses this reality, an irrepressible remainder that the subject cannot separate itself from. In other words, while desire is born of and sustained by a constitutive lack, drive emerges in relation to a constitutive surplus. This surplus is what Lacan calls the subject's 'anatomical complement,' an excessive, `unreal' remainder that produces an ever-present jouissance. This surplus, compelling the Symbolic to enact a perpetual repetition, remains spectral, 'unreal," or impossible insofar as it insists out-side the logic of meaning that, nonetheless, produces it. The drive holds the place of what meaning misses in much the same way that the signifier preserves at the heart of the signifying order the empty and arbitrary letter, the meaningless substrate of signification that meaning intends to conceal. Politics, then, in opposing itself to the negativity of such a drive, gives us history as the continuous staging of our dream of eventual self-realization by endlessly reconstructing, in the mirror of desire, what we take to be reality itself. And it does so without letting us acknowledge that the future, to which it persistently appeals, marks the impossible place of an Imaginary past exempt from the deferrals intrinsic to the operation of the signifying chain and projected ahead as the site at which being and meaning are joined as One. In this it enacts the formal repetition distinctive of the drive while representing itself as bringing to fulfillment the narrative sequence of history and, with it, of desire, in the realization of the subject's authentic presence in the Child imagined as enjoying unmediated access to Imaginary wholeness. Small wonder that the era of the universal subject should produce as the very figure of politics, because also as the embodiment of futurity collapsing undecidably into the past, the image of the Child as we know it: the Child who becomes, in Wordsworth's phrase, but more punitively, "father of the Man." Historically constructed, as social critics and intellectual historians including Phillipe Aries, James Kincaid, and Lawrence Stone have made clear, to serve as the repository of variously sentimentalized cultural identifications, the Child has come to embody for us the telos of the social order and come to be seen as the one for whom that order is held in perpetual trust.

# 2NC

### Overview

#### Education reform tries to promise a future for the innocent Child by attaining all knowledge, but at the same time, they ignore forms of knowledge that is seen as threatening to the Child’s innocence, which results in violence against non-normative bodies.

Edelman 17 (Lee, professor of English at Tufts, “Learning Nothing: Bad Education.” Duke University Press. DOA: 7/1/17. http://differences.dukejournals.org/content/28/1/124.full.pdf+html, PN)

\*\*\*edited for gendered language

But what exactly does innocence mean and how does it manage to sublimate the negativity of that void? Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who helped to enshrine it as the privilege of the Child, reminds us that it frequently coincides with a passion for wholesale destruction: “A child wants to upset everything ~~he~~ [it] sees. ~~He~~ [it] smashes, breaks everything ~~he~~ [it] can reach. ~~He~~ [it] grabs a bird as ~~he~~ [it] would grab a stone, and ~~he~~ [it] strangles it without knowing what ~~he~~ [it] does” (Rousseau 37). Seen from this angle, the Child can preserve its “natural” state of innocence only to the extent that it preserves as well its “natural” state of ignorance. While hardly a comfort to the strangled bird, the thoughtless Child, knowing nothing of death, bears no guilt for its murderous act. It kills with an innocent exuberance, unconscious of what it does. But the Child confronts a worse threat in the bush than the slaughtered birds in its hand. Heaven help it the day it takes pleasure in “strangling” a bird of a different feather, which is to say, in “choking the chicken.” At that point, the drives of the Child must be made to submit to parental law. In the words of the French psychoanalyst Lucien Israël, “From this period inter- dictions from outside intervene to deter the child from masturbating, from sucking his thumb, from pissing all over the place whenever ~~he~~ [it] wants to do so” (86; my translation). One must, in effect, limit innocence in defense of innocence itself. Rousseau understood this necessity well, whether or not he recognized it as inherently self-deconstructing. Regardless of the author’s intentions, Émile unfolds the contradictions of an educational program that claims to find its model in “nothing but the march of nature” (34). Specifying the fractured logic on which that assertion must rest, Jacques Derrida produced his widely influential reading of the supplement. As he writes in Of Grammatology: “According to Rousseau, the negativity of evil will always have the form of supplementarity. Evil is exterior to nature, to what is by nature innocent and good. It supervenes upon nature. But always by way of supplementing what ought to lack nothing at all in itself.” Does nature, and with it “innocence,” require the “negativity of evil”? Derrida suggests just that: “Yet all education, the keystone of Rousseauist thought, will be described or presented as a system of substitution [. . .] destined to reconstitute Nature’s edifice in the most natural way possible” (158). The prime example afforded by Rousseau of this perverse or contradictory logic centers on the Child whose innocence, perversely, occasions its own perversion. Derrida, who carefully traces this logic, situates the Child in the place of negativity associated with the cut or the gap that constitutes an originary “deficiency” for Rousseau: “Childhood is the first manifestation of the deficiency which, in nature, calls for supplementation [suppléance]. [. . .] Without childhood, no supplement would ever appear in Nature. Now the supplement is here both humanity’s good fortune and the origin of its perversion” (159–60). In its lack of self-sufficiency, in its need for acculturation, the Child exposes an absence internal to the fullness of nature itself. The natural, of course, in a perfect world, would need no supplementation since the supplement evinces a “negativity of evil” unnatural by definition. The Child, however, as the “first manifestation of the deficiency [. . .] in nature,” introduces, in its very innocence, supplementarity as original sin. It opens, that is, the dimension of futurity imagined as redeeming the lack to which such futurity attests. Consider how Eve’s punishment in the book of Genesis, that she must bring forth children in pain, reenacts the transgression that occasioned it: the pursuit of a supplement (the fruit of knowledge) to make up for loss or lack. But by positivizing the lack whose excessive presence made Eden incomplete, a lack figured by the serpent as the world’s first “queer” and first agent of bad education, the supplement costs us paradise by dividing paradise from itself. (Could Eden have ever been paradise if it seemed to need supplementation?) Like the fruit of the tree, the fruit of Eve’s loins makes supplementarity infinite as the fatal fall into time opens up the void in the form of futurity. No wonder we protect the Child from the knowledge of and at its origin; by reading as “innocence” the Child’s luxurious immersion in non-knowing, we deny our own knowledge that the Child confirms the deficiency in Nature, the impossibility of Eden. “Perfection [. . .] cannot have children,” as Sylvia Plath declares (262). Produced in response to, and in order to deny, the “evil” of knowledge as supplement, the Child embodies “innocence” as the negation of knowledge’s negativity. Because “knowledge” of that negativity involves the unconscious, the Thing, and the drive, the negation of that negative knowledge effectively positivizes the Child, which then, by virtue of its sublimation, can reinforce the law’s intertwining of prohibition and desire. Framed as the Child’s antithesis, though, the queer, like that negativity, deconstructs the law in the very process of desublimating the Child and exposing its implication in the pulsion of the drive. In order to obviate such a reduction, the Child, Rousseau argues, ought to be given a minimal amount of knowledge to protect it from the greater knowledge its innocence couldn’t survive. Émile proposes that the Child receive, where “the organs of the secret pleasures and those of the disgusting needs” are concerned, an education that explicitly “turns [it] away from a dangerous curiosity” (217). Rousseau’s text urges parents to make sure that “the first fire of imagination is smothered” by associating the sexual organs with excrement, dirt, disease, and death, inducing, thereby, a connection between “coarse words” and “displeasing ideas.” The Child “is not forbidden to pronounce these words and to have these ideas,” in the Rousseauian program, “but without ~~his~~ being aware of it, ~~he~~ [it] is made to have a repugnance against recalling them” (217). Thus the armor most likely to protect the Child’s innocence is a sort of aversive knowledge, one that effects a disinclination to “dangerous curiosity” and that does so surreptitiously, without the Child’s even knowing that an aversion is being instilled. Given the major role he plays in the history of the Child’s sublimation, we should hardly be surprised that Rousseau idealizes the innocence he deconstructs. But Israël sees the Child’s education from a starkly different perspective, reading the Child’s relation to excrement and to its various “disgusting needs” without supposing, like Émile, some innate and “innocent” repugnance before such filth. It’s rather, as Israël points out, “[g]ood housewives and housekeepers, [who] don’t like the child’s smearing itself with its shit.” “Education,” he continues, “is education against the drive. To lead out of [. . .], that’s what educate means, to lead out of the universe of the drive” (87).5 Education, in other words, instills and enacts the imperative to sublimate insofar as “the operations of sublimation are always ethically, culturally, and socially valorized” (Lacan, Ethics 144). Good education thus always intends and assures the social good by negating whatever refuses that good and so endangers the Child, even if that danger inheres in the very nature of the Child. Education becomes, like sexuality, compulsory reproduction, procuring the Child for an order of truth that denies the foundational negativity, deficiency, perversion on which it rests. In the aftermath of such an education, as Israël concludes, “one no longer knows anything about the universe of the drive, because the only small way to safeguard something of it is by knowing nothing about it” (87).6 This is the context in which he defines “education as antidrive [l’éducation comme antipulsion]” (87). Education, that is, as understanding, seals off and displaces the incomprehensible element, the absens, that always drives its systematizations, while maintaining that element, dialectically, as the destabilizing other of education and knowledge. Not the negation of knowledge, then, this internal element bespeaks, instead, the negativity inherent in knowledge as such. Adorned with its innocence as privileged nonknowledge, the Child perpetuates through sublimation the enforced nonknowledge as and in which the “universe of the drive” insists, allegorically instantiating the Thing’s sublimation as the creation of something out of nothing, as the dialectical negation of negativity that generates presence through reference to futurity. Allegory, sublimation, and dialectic, then, share a logic with one another, each naming a mode of production that displaces into systematic knowledge a negativity impossible to comprehend and at odds with all total- ized forms.7 It follows that a fourth term, education, belongs beside these three: the education that perfectly complements the Child as the promise of coherent totality—the education that is always, as Friedrich Schiller would have it, an aesthetic education.

### Framework

#### Our interpretation is that the judge is an educator that identifies the Child with the queer.

#### Their framework makes the alternative unthinkable—maintaining the political order relies on the futurity of the Child which depoliticizes resistance and guarantees heteronormative violence. Their defense of policy debate is just another conservative scheme to reproduce the future

Edelman 2004 (Lee, professor of English at Tufts, No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive, p. 2-4)

But what helped him most in these public appeals on behalf of America’s children was the social consensus that such anappeal is impossible to refuse. Indeed, though these public service announcements concluded with the sort of rhetorical flourish associated with hard-fought political campaigns (“We’re fighting for the children. Whose side are you on?”), that rhetoric was intended to avow that this issue, like an ideological Möbius strip, only permitted one side. Such "self-evident” one-sidedness— the affirmation of a value so unquestioned, because so obviously unques- tionable, as that of the Child whose innocence solicits our defense—is precisely, of course, what distinguishes public service announcements from the partisan discourse of political argumentation. But it is also, I suggest, what makes such announcements so oppressively political — political not in the partisan terms implied by the media consultant, but political in a far more insidious way: political insofar as the fantasy sub- tending the image of the Child invariably shapes the logic within which the political itself must be thought. That logic compels us, to the extent that we would register as politically responsible, to submit to the framing of political debate—and, indeed, of the political field—as defined by the terms of what this book describes as reproductive futurism: terms that impose an ideological limit on political discourse as such, preserving in the process the absolute privilege of heteronormativity by rendering un- thinkable, by casting outside the political domain, the possibility of a queer resistance to this organizing principle of communal relations. For politics, **however radical** the means by which specific constituencies attempt to produce a more desirable social order, remains, at its core, conservative insofar as it works to affirm a structure, to authenticate social order, which it then intends to transmit to the future in the form of its inner Child. That Child remains the perpetual horizon of **every** acknowledged politics, the fantasmatic beneficiary of every political intervention. Even proponents of abortion rights, while promoting the free- dom ofwomen to control their own bodies through reproductive choice, recurrently frame their political struggle, mirroring their anti-abortion foes, as a “fight for our children — for our daughters and our sons,” and thus as a fight for the future.2 What, in that case, would it signify not to be “fightingforthe children”? How could one take the other “side,” when taking any side at all necessarily constrains one to take the side of, by virtue of taking a side within, a political order that returns to the Child as the image of the future it intends? Impossibly, against all reason, my project stakes its claim to the very space that “politics” makes unthinkable: the space outside the framework within which politics as we know it appears and so outside the conflict of visions that share as their pre- supposition that the body politic must survive. Indeed, at the heart of my polemical engagement with the cultural text of politics and the politics of cultural texts lies a simple provocation: that queemess names the side of those not “fighting for the children,” the side outside the consensus by which all politics confirms the absolute value of reproductive futurism. The ups and downs of political fortune may measure the social order’s pulse, but queemess, by contrast, figures, outside and beyond its politi- cal symptoms, the place of the social order’s death drive: a place, to be sure, of abjection expressed in the stigma, sometimes fatal, that follows from reading that figure literally, and hence a place from which liberal politics strives—and strives quite reasonably, given its unlimited faith in reason—to disassociate the queer. More radically, though, as I argue here, queerness attains its ethical value precisely insofar as it accedes to that place, accepting its figural status as resistance to the viability of the social while insisting on the inextricability of such resistance from every social structure. To make such a claim I examine in this book the pervasive invocation of the Child as the emblem of futurity's unquestioned value and propose against it the impossible project of a queer opposittonality that would oppose itself to the structural determinants of politics as such, which is also to say, that wouldopposg itself to the l ogic of opposition. This paradoxical formulation suggests a refusal—the appropriately perverse refusal that characterizes queer theory—of every substantialization of identity, which is always oppositionaily defined,3 and, by extension, of history as linear narrative (the poor man’s teleology) in which meaning succeeds in revealing itself— as itself— through time. Far from partaking of this narrative movement toward a viable political future, far from per- petuating the fantasy of meaning’s eventual realization, the queer comes to figure the bar to every realization of futurity, the resistance, internal to the social, to **every social structure** or form.

## AT

### AT: PDB

#### 1. They’re mutually exclusive- the alternative calls for a radical negation of the Child within Symbolic order, but all of politics is infused within that order. That’s Greteman.

#### 2. Footnoting DA: the perm attempts to incorporate queerness within social order, but queerness can only be defined in opposition to society – that allows for leftist cooption of the alt

Edelman 04 (Lee, professor of English at Tufts, No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive, p. 13-14, PN)

The consequences of such an identification both of and with the Child as the preeminent emblem of the motivating end, though one endlessly postponed, of every political vision as a vision of futurity must weigh on any delineation of a queer oppositional politics. For the only queerness that queer sexualities could ever hope to signify would spring from their determined opposition to this underlying structure of the political —their opposition, that is, to the governing fantasy of achieving Symbolic closure through the marriage of identity to futurity in order to realize the social subject. Conservatives acknowledge this radical potential, which is also to say, this radical threat, of queerness more fully than liberals, for conservatism preemptively imagines the wholesale rupturing of the social fabric, whereas liberalism conservatively clings to a faith in its limitless elasticity. The discourse of the right thus tends toward a greater awareness of, and insistence on, the literalization of the figural logics that various social subjects are made to inhabit and enact, the logics that, from a "rational" viewpoint, reduce individual identity to stereotypical generality, while the discourse of the left tends to understand better the Symbolic's capacity to accommodate change by displacing those logics onto history as the inevitable unfolding of narrative sequence. The right, that is, better sees the inherently conflictual aspect of identities, the constant danger they face in alterity, the psychic anxiety with which they are lived; but the Left better recognizes history's persistent rewriting of those identities, finding hope in the fact that identity's borders are never fully fixed. The left in this is always right from the vantage point of reason, but left in the shade by its reason is the darkness inseparable from its light: the defensive structure of the ego, the rigidity of identity as experienced by the subject, and the fixity of the Imaginary relation through which we (re)produce ourselves. This conservatism of the ego compels the subject, whether liberal or conservative politically, to endorse as the meaning of politics itself the reproductive futurism that perpetuates as reality a fantasy frame intended to secure the survival of the social in the Imaginary form of the Child.

#### 3. The perm kills alt solvency by creating a disruption within the queer pessimist movement

Edelman 04 (Lee, professor of English at Tufts, No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive, p. 14-17, PN)

Consider, for example, a local moment from the ongoing war against abortion. Not long ago, on a much traveled corner in Cambridge, Massachusetts, opponents of the legal right to abortion plastered an image of a full-term fetus, larger in size than a full-grown man, on a rented billboard that bore the phrase: "It's not a choice; it's a child." Barbara Johnson, in a dazzling analysis of anti-abortion polemics like this, has demonstrated how they borrow and generate tropes that effectively animate by personifying the fetus, determining in advance the answer to the juridical question of its personhood by means of the terms through which the fetus, and therefore the question, is addressed.16 Rather, therefore, than attempt to deconstruct this particular rhetorical instance (rather, that is, than note, for example, the juxtaposition of the pronoun "it," appropriate to a fetus, with the supremely humanizing epithet "child," which might call for a gendered pronoun, in order to show how this fragment of discourse maintains the un-decidability it undertakes to resolve, casting doubt thereby on the truth of its statement by the form of its enunciation), I want to focus instead, for a moment, on the ideological truth its enunciation, unintentionally perhaps, makes clear. For, strange as it is that a gay man should say this, when I first encountered that billboard in Cambridge I read it as addressed to me. The sign, after all, might as well have pronounced, and with the same absolute and invisible authority that testifies to the successfully accomplished work of ideological naturalization, the biblical mandate "Be fruitful and multiply." Like an anamorphotic distortion that only when viewed from the proper angle assumes a recognizable form, the slogan acquired, through the obliquity of my subjective relation to it, a logic that illuminated the common stake in the militant right's opposition to abortion and to the practice of queer sexualities —a common stake all too well understood (as the literalization of a figural identity) by radical groups like the Army of God, which claimed credit for the Atlanta terrorist bombings in 1997 of an abortion clinic and a nightclub frequented by lesbians and gay men. The Cambridge billboard thus seemed to announce what liberalism prefers to occlude: that the governing compulsion, the singular imperative, that affords us no meaningful choice is the compulsion to embrace our own futurity in the privileged form of the Child, to imagine each moment as pregnant with the Child of our Imaginary identifications, as pregnant, that is, with a meaning whose presence would fill up the hole in the Symbolic —the hole that marks both the place of the Real and the internal division or distance by which we are constituted as subjects and destined to pursue the phantom of meaning through the signifier's metonymic slide. No more than the right will the left, therefore, identify itself with abortion; instead, as the billboard noted with scorn, it aligns itself with "choice." Who would, after all, come out for abortion or stand against re-production, against futurity, and so against life? Who would destroy the Child and with it the vitalizing fantasy of bridging, in time, the gap of signification (a fantasy that distracts us from the violence of the drives while (permitting us to enact them)? The right once again knows the answer, knows that the true oppositional politics implicit in the practice of queer sexualities lies not in the liberal discourse and patient negotiation of tolerances and rights, important as these undoubtedly are to all of us still denied them, but in the capacity of queer sexualities to figure the radical dissolution of the contract, in every sense social and Symbolic, on which the future as putative assurance against the jouissance of the Real depends. With this in mind, we should listen to, and even perhaps be instructed by, the readings of queer sexualities produced by the forces of reaction. However much we might wish, for example, to reverse the values presupposed in the following statement by Donald Wildmon, founder and head of the homophobic American FamilyAssociation, we might do well to consider it less as an instance of hyperbolic rant and more as a reminder of the disorientation that queer sexualities should entail: "Acceptance or indifference to the homosexual movement will result in society's destruction by allowing civil order to be redefined and by plummeting ourselves, our children and grandchildren into an age of godlessness. Indeed, the very foundation of Western Civilization is at stake." 17 Before the self-righteous bromides of liberal pluralism spill from our lips, before we supply once more the assurance that ours is another kind of love but a love like his nonetheless, before we piously invoke the litany of our glorious contributions to the civilizations of East and West alike, dare we pause for a moment to acknowledge that Mr. Wildmon might be right — or, more important, that he ought to be right: that queerness should and must redefine such notions as "civil order" through a rupturing of our foundational faith in the reproduction of futurity?

### AT: Legal change key

#### Legal analysis is the wrong starting point – queerness can only exist outside of Symbolic order because there is no future for queer people

Edelman 04 (Lee, professor of English at Tufts, No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive, p. 29-31, PN)

We might like to believe that with patience, with work, with generous contributions to lobbying groups or generous participation in activist groups or generous doses of legal savvy and electoral sophistication, the future will hold a place for us—a place at the political table that won't have to come at the cost of the places we seek in the bed or the bar or the baths. But there are no queers in that future as there can be no future for queers, chosen as they are to bear the bad tidings that there can be no future at all: that the future, as Annie's hymn to the hope of "Tomorrow" understands, is "always/ A day/Away." Like the lovers on Keats's Grecian urn, forever "near the goal" of a union they'll never in fact achieve, we're held in thrall by a future continually deferred by time itself, constrained to pursue the dream of a day when today and tomorrow are one. That future is nothing but kid stuff, reborn each day to screen out the grave that gapes from within the lifeless letter, luring us into, ensnaring us in, reality's gossamer web. Those queered by the social order that projects its death drive onto them are no doubt positioned to recognize the structuring fantasy that so defines them. But they're positioned as well to recognize the irreducibility of that fantasy and the cost of construing it as contingent to the logic of social organization as such. Acceding to this figural identification with the undoing of identity, which is also to say with the disarticulation of social and Symbolic form, might well be described, in John Brenkman's words, as "politically self-destructive." But politics (as the social elaboration of reality) and the self (as mere prosthesis maintaining the future for the figural Child), are what queerness, again as figure, necessarily destroys —necessarily insofar as this "self" is the agent of re-productive futurism and this "politics" the means of its promulgation as the order of social reality. But perhaps, as Lacan's engagement with Antigone in Seminar 7 suggests, political self-destruction inheres in the only act that counts as one: the act of resisting enslavement to the future in the name of having a life. If the fate of the queer is to figure the fate that cuts the thread of futurity, if the jouissance, the corrosive enjoyment, intrinsic to queer (non)identity annihilates the fetishistic jouissance that works to consolidate identity by allowing reality to coagulate around its ritual reproduction, then the only oppositional status to which our queerness could ever lead would depend on our taking seriously the place of the death drive we're called on to figure and insisting, against the cult of the Child and the political order it enforces, that we, as Guy Hocquenghem made clear, are "not the signifier ofwhat might become a new form of 'social organisation,'" that we do not intend a new politics, a better society, a brighter tomorrow, since all of these fantasies reproduce the past, through dis-placement, in the form of the future. We choose, instead, not to choose the Child, as disciplinary image of the Imaginary past or as site of a pro-jective identification with an always impossible future. The queerness we propose, in Hocquenghem's words, "is unaware of the passing of generations as stages on the road to better living. It knows nothing about `sacrifice now for the sake of future generations' . . . (it] knows that civilisation alone is mortal." 34 Even more: it delights in that mortality as the negation of everything that would define itself, moralistically, as pro-life. It is we who must bury the subject in the tomb-like hollow of the signifier, pronouncing at last the words for which we're condemned should we speak them or not: that we are the advocates of abortion; that the Child as futurity's emblem must die; that the future is mere repeti-tion and just as lethal as the past. Our queerness has nothing to offer a Symbolic that lives by denying that nothingness except an insistence on the haunting excess that this nothingness entails, an insistence on the negativity that pierces the fantasy screen of futurity, shattering narrative temporality with irony's always explosive force. And so what is queerest about us, queerest within us, and queerest despite us is this willingness to insist intransitively—to insist that the future stop here.

### AT: Nothing happens post alt

#### Their demands for a world past the alt prove our argument – queerness only prescribes a negation of societal order because calling for other forms of society reifies reproductive futurism

Edelman 04 (Lee, professor of English at Tufts, No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive, p. 4-7, PN)

\*edited for gendered language

Rather than rejecting, with liberal discourse, this ascription of negativity to the queer, we might, as I argue, do better to consider accepting and even embracing it. Not in the hope of forging thereby some more perfect social order—such a hope, after all, would only reproduce the con-straining mandate of futurism, just as any such order would equally occasion the negativity of the queer—but rather to refuse the insistence of hope itself as affirmation, which is always affirmation of an order whose refusal will register as unthinkable, irresponsible, inhumane. And the trump card of affirmation? Always the question: If not this, what? Always the demand to translate the insistence, the pulsive force, of negativity into some determinate stance or "position" whose determination would thus negate it: always the imperative to immure it in some stable and positive form. When I argue, then, that we might do well to attempt what is surely impossible— to withdraw our allegiance, however compulsory, from a reality based on the Ponzi scheme of reproductive futurism—I do not intend to propose some "good" that will thereby be assured. To the contrary, I mean to insist that nothing, and certainly not what we call the "good," can ever have any assurance at all in the order of the Symbolic. Abjuring fidelity to a futurism that's always purchased at our expense, though bound, as Symbolic subjects consigned to figure the Symbolic's undoing, to the necessary contradiction of trying to turn its intelligibility against itself, we might rather, figuratively, cast our vote for "none of the above," for the primacy of a constant no in response to the law of the Symbolic, which would echo that law's foundational act, its self-constituting negation. The structuring optimism of politics to which the order of meaning commits us, installing as it does the perpetual hope of reaching meaning through signification, is always, I would argue, a negation of this primal, constitutive, and negative act. And the various positivities produced in its wake by the logic of political hope depend on the mathematical illusion that negated negations might somehow escape, and not redouble, such negativity. My polemic thus stakes its for-tunes on a truly hopeless wager: that taking the Symbolic's negativity to the very letter of the law, that attending to the persistence of something internal to reason that reason refuses, that turning the force of queerness against all subjects, however queer, can afford an access to the jouissance that at once defines and negates us. Or better: can expose the constancy, the inescapability, of such access to jouissance in the social order itself, even if that order can access its constant access to jouissance only in the process of abjecting that constancy of access onto the queer. In contrast to what Theodor Adorno describes as the "grimness with which a ~~man~~ [person] clings to ~~himself~~ [themself], as to the immediately sure and substantial," the queerness of which I speak would deliberately sever us from ourselves, from the assurance, that is, of knowing ourselves and hence of knowing our "good."4 Such queerness proposes, in place of the good, something I want to call "better," though it promises, in more than one sense of the phrase, absolutely nothing. I connect this something better with Lacan's characterization of what he calls "truth," where truth does not assure happiness, or even, as Lacan makes clear, the good.' Instead, it names only the insistent particularity of the subject, impossible fully to articulate and "tend [ing] toward the real."6 Lacan, therefore, can write of this truth: The quality that best characterizes it is that of being the true Wunsch, which was at the origin of an aberrant or atypical behavior. We encounter this Wunsch with its particular, irreducible character as a modification that presupposes no other form of normalization than that of an experience of pleasure or of pain, but of a final ex-perience from whence it springs and is subsequently preserved in the depths of the subject in an irreducible form. The Wunsch does not have the character of a universal law but, on the contrary, of the most particular of laws —even if it is universal that this particularity is to be found in every human being.' Truth, like queerness, irreducibly linked to the "aberrant or atypical," to what chafes against "normalization," finds its value not in a good susceptible to generalization, but only in the stubborn particularity that voids every notion of a general good. The embrace of queer negativity, then, can have no justification if justification requires it to reinforce some positive social value; its value, instead, resides in its challenge to value as defined by the social, and thus in its radical challenge to the very value of the social itself. For by figuring a refusal of the coercive belief in the paramount value of futurity, while refusing as well any backdoor hope for dialectical ac­cess to meaning, the queer dispossesses the social order of the ground on which it rests: a faith in the consistent reality of the social - -and by extension, of the social subject; a faith that politics, whether of the left or of the right, implicitly affirms. Divesting such politics of its thematic trappings, bracketing the particularity of its various proposals for social organization, the queer insists that politics is always a politics of the sig­nifier, or even of what Lacan will often refer to as "the letter." It serves to shore up a reality always unmoored by signification and lacking any guarantee. To say as much is not, of course, to deny the experiential vio­lence that frequently troubles social reality or the apparent consistency with which it bears—and thereby bears down on— us all. It is, rather, to suggest that queerness exposes the obliquity of our relation to what we experience in and as social reality, alerting us to the fantasies structurally necessary in order to sustain it and engaging those fantasies through the figural logics, the linguistic structures, that shape them. If it aims effectively to intervene in the reproduction of such a reality—an intervention that may well take the form of figuring that reality's abortion—then queer theory must always insist on its connection to the vicissitudes of the sign, to the tension between the signifier's collapse into the letter's cadaverous materiality and its participation in a system of reference wherein it generates meaning itself. As a particular story, in other words, of why storytelling fails, one that takes both the value and the burden of that failure upon itself, queer theory, as I construe it, marks the "other" side of politics: the "side" where narrative realization and derealization overlap, where the energies of vitalization ceaselessly turn against themselves; the "side" outside all political sides, committed as they are, on every side, to futurism's unquestioned good. The rest of this book attempts to explain the implications of this assertion, but first, let me sketch some connections between politics and the politics of the sign by establishing the psychoanalytic context within which my argument takes shape.

### AT Queer Ecology

#### Link-turn – reproductive futurism creates a false hope in the reproduction of resources which is the root cause of environmental destruction

Anderson and Azzarello 12 (Jill E., Ph.D. from the University of Mississippi in 2011 and is currently an Assistant Professor of English at Tennessee State University, Robert, Assistant Professor of English at Southern University at New Orleans. He is the author of Queer environmentality: Ecology, evolution, andsexuality in American literature. “Queer ecology: A roundtable discussion.” European Journal of Ecopsychology. DOA: 7/7/17. http://sustainableunh.unh.edu/sites/sustainableunh.unh.edu/files/images/Anderson\_et\_al\_Queer\_ecology\_-\_A\_roundtable\_discussion.pdf, PN)

Jill E. Anderson My journey toward queer ecocriticism began about five years ago when I read Christopher Isherwood’s (1964/2001) novel A Single Man in a graduate literature course. What struck me was Isherwood’s utilization of his gay, middle-aged firstperson narrator, George, as a kind of barometer not just for the ecological destruction occurring around him in California but also the postwar population boom (a reason my own research and writing focuses on the particular historical moment of Cold War America). But more than just observing these things, George explicitly links them and concludes that heterosexual coupling will be the cause of the coming apocalypse and complete destruction of the environment primarily (although the Cold War concern of nuclear holocaust is certainly present). Right after the Second World War, George sees “the Change” occur – “breeders” begin to move into once-idyllic and bohemian places in California: “in the late forties, when the World War Two vets came swarming out of the East with their justmarried wives, in search of new and better breeding grounds in the sunny Southland, which had been their last nostalgic glimpse of home before they shipped out to the Pacific. And what better breeding grounds than a hillside neighborhood like this one, only five minutes’ walk from the beach and with no through traffic to decimate the future tots? So, one by one, the cottages which used to reek of bathtub gin and reverberate with the poetry of Hart Crane have fallen to the occupying army of Coke-drinking television watchers” (p. 18, emphases mine). I include this extended quote from the novel because it introduces many of the tropes essential to my ecologically queer readings: disparagement of normalized heterosexual couplings and conventional reproduction; abuse of the landscape for strictly human-centered purposes; emphasis on reproduction always necessitating concern for the future and progressive conceptualizations of time; eschewal of more “bohemian” life ways; and the acquisition of consumer products leading it their requisite waste. But this is not the only blueprint for queering ecocriticism and ecologizing queer theory. Other readings might also include: challenges to notions of normalization/naturalization and redefinition of queerness and other sexualities; establishment of homes, spaces, and/or ecosystems as queer-friendly or at least productive of non-heteronormative lifestyles; highlighting of alternative family formations and reproductions; and rejection of “traditional”, normative, middle-class comprehension of life that include consumerism and unquestioned dominance of the natural world. This list is not exhaustive nor have I pointed out any of the theoretical underpinnings here, but I think this list highlights the important tropes that generally go a long way in questioning our constructions of “naturalness”. Robert Azzarello There are two questions before us. The first is ontological: a question about what queer ecology is, an analysis of its being. The second is axiological: a question about what queer ecology contributes to the world, an analysis of its value. These two questions – the ontological and the axiological – are generally very difficult to parse. Indeed, the philosopher David Hume famously described this difficulty, arguing that ontological description (what something is) is often structured by axiological adjudication (what something ought to be or ought to do), and vice versa. To begin, then, I would say in response to our two questions: what we imagine queer ecology to be emerges in tandem with what we hope it contributes to the world. But there is an even more basic question to be answered: what is ecology? Ecology, strictly speaking, is a logos of the oikos. It is not the oikos itself, but a discursive logic of the oikos, an attempt to put into logical discourse what exceeds logical discourse. Because ecology is not a thing but a selfconscious theory of a thing, it cannot hold the same ontological status as, say, Nature or planet Earth and claim sheer referentiality as these latter terms try to do. Ecology, however, can often be misconstrued as a fancy new ontological name for Nature itself. It can, in other words, inherit the same dogmatic epistemology from its previous instantiation, falling into the objectivist trap of truth versus falsity and repressing the fundamental ontological-axiological connection. For this reason, and in slight contrast to queer ecology, I prefer the term “queer environmentality”. So, what is queer environmentality? As a “mentality,” or habit of thought, it expresses a way of looking at the oikos that rejects reproductive heteronormativity. It looks out into the world and does not see only males desiring females, and females desiring males, with the sole aim of reproducing the species by any means necessary. It does not see bodies as mere carriers for the seeds of future life. It rejects this vision because reproductive heteronormativity is ontologically insufficient (it does not do justice to the biodiversity of bodies and pleasures, of aims and desires, in the world) and it is axiologically problematic (it values beings instrumentally only insofar as those beings have the capacity to produce the next generation, their supposed destiny). Without a doubt, the global environmental crisis stems from specific economies of exploitation, calculated risk, and negotiated ruin. How has the ontology-axiology of reproductive heteronormativity contributed to this crisis? Exploitation happens best if resources – whether human or otherwise – are imagined to give infinitely on and on into the future. Reproductive heteronormativity is put in the service of this mode of exploitation, mitigating risk and enabling ruin, because the world is imagined to have this great capacity to reproduce itself infinitely. What the world needs now is not more reinvestment in reproductive heteronormativity as an ideological insurance plan to fix environmental crisis. Instead, the world needs a queer environmentality: an ontology of radical biodiversity and an axiology of genuine intrinsic value.

### AT: Scenario Planning

#### Predictions are bad – only our recognition of the complexity of IR prevents conflict

Kavalski 07 (Emilian, professor of IR at the University of Western Sydney, PhD international politics from Loughborough University. “The fifth debate and the emergence of complex international relations theory: notes on the application of complexity theory to the study of international life,” *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* Volume 20, Issue 3, p. 450-51, PN)

As Beaumont (1994, 145) has quipped, there is something paradoxical about concluding an article on complexity, since the sequential unfolding of uncertainties, dilemmas and paradoxes works against focusing analysis and drawing neat conclusions. Yet, the perception of complexity does not automatically imply a ‘“defeatist” attitude’ (LaPorte 1975, 328). Therefore, this overview of the application of CT to world politics calls us to start thinking about the study of international life from a complex systems perspective. The proponents of CIR theory maintain that complexity cannot be regulated (and, thereby, structured through methodological tools), but that it is experienced. Such an assertion confronts the conventional wisdom of IR with the patterns of complexity: the former is premised on the separation of the ‘objects of knowledge from their contexts’ and the latter, while distinguishing between the objects, ‘interconnects’ them (Browaeys and Baets 2003, 335). The emergent attempts at comprehending the complexity of international life, therefore, have initiated the fifth debate in IR. The claim here is that this development has important emancipatory (and, thereby, policy) implications. Such a prospect has been made possible through the ontological innovation of CIR theory—the envisioning of social science imagination as a ‘system of interference’ that makes particular forms of the social real while foreclosing others (Law and Urry 2004, 397). On the one hand, CIR theory insists that complex systems thinking ‘should compel the stro3ngest states to act in ways that reduce the vulnerability of the weakest’ (Snyder and Jervis 1993, 20). Rosenau (2003, 330), for instance, argues that the complexity (or what he calls ‘fragmegration’) of international life has made it possible for a wide range of individual and collective actors to put pressure on ‘rights-insensitive states’ across all the dimensions of state capabilities that have previously been impervious to demands on behalf of human rights. This acknowledges that activism generates its own countervailing forces that assume a continuing expansion of the analytical skills that enable people to alter their priorities across whole systems and subsystems (that is, alter habit-driven behaviour) as they discover that ‘the former cannot provide satisfying solutions to major problems and that the latter cannot contain low-intensity conflicts and maintain a satisfying degree of public order’ (Rosenau 1990, 457). Thus, in contrast to the reactionary stance of mainstream IR, CIR theory advocates an emancipatory agenda for a ‘new vision of politics that emphasises responsibility’ (Barnett 2005, 115) made possible by the promise of ‘immanent self-ordering’ (Parfitt 2006, 424). On the other hand, several CIR theoreticians have pointed out that the recognition of the complexity of international life diminishes the likelihood of recourse to force in world affairs—the suggestion is that the acknowledgement of the unpredictability and contradictions of international interactions as well as policies informed by CT should make foreign-policy-making more peaceful (Puente 2006; Suedfeld and Tetlock 1977). For instance, some have argued that 450 Emilian Kavalski policy-makers who recognize the unintended consequences of complexity indicate preferences for diplomacy over military confrontation (Raphael 1982; Wallace and Suedfeld 1988). For instance, the case of the 2003 invasion of Iraq points to the problem of reductionist decision-making—that is, even if the ‘rules of the game’ are completely known and understood at the local level, it might be impossible to predict regional/global outcomes; furthermore, the quandary of policy formulation based on parsimonious (simplifying) analysis is inherent rather than situational, because ‘planning based on predictions is not merely impractical; it is [also] logically impossible’ (Mathews et al 1999, 450). Such discussion of the emancipatory aspects of CIR theory is not intended as a distraction from some of its shortcomings. Instead, the suggestion is that these flaws necessitate further exploration of the CIR framework as it is alone in taking the discontinuities of international life seriously. This article contends that the application of the complexity paradigm to the study of international life would refocus the study of global affairs. Returning to the words of Herbert Wells in the epigraph of this article, the promise of CIR theory is that it can help lift ‘the darkest shadow’ from the totalizing discourses of terrorism and fear that seem to pervade current world politics by volunteering ‘imaginative thinking’ on the complexity of human societies and their interactions.

# \*\*AFF\*\*

## Edelman indicts

### Family

#### Edelman assimilates all notions of family with futurity – eliminates the possibility of familial queer negativity

Power 9 (Nina, Roehampton University, UK. “Non-Reproductive Futurism: Ranciere’s rational equality against Edelman’s body apolitic.” Borderlands. Volume 8, Number 2. 2009. DOA: 7/1/17. <http://www.borderlands.net.au/vol8no2_2009/power_futurism.pdf>, PN)

But these economic contradictions complicate Edelman’s picture somewhat, as they point to something beyond the symbolic, and beyond the sheen of ideology. Whilst it is true that politics in the main presents itself as defender of the family (although this is perhaps less the case outside of the right-wing framing of some American discourses), it is clear that in practice ‘the family’ is often badly treated by the very same governments who claim to defend it. Furthermore, against Edelman’s opposition between the reproductively futural and the queer, there empirically exist extremely diverse kinds of family arrangements, and have done for a long time. As Barrett and McIntosh put it in The Anti-social Family: If there were a direct correspondence between the imagery of the family represented in the media and the actual composition of households, we would find the majority of the population living in nuclear residences of children and their parents. Yet, if the 1971 census is to be believed, fewer than a third of Britain’s households were enmeshed in such an arrangement and only one in ten was organized in the normatively sanctioned pattern of paternal breadwinner and maternal full-time housewife (Barrett and McIntosh, 1982: 32-3). Edelman could of course protest that his is not an empirical point, but a symbolic one, and there is certainly something enlightening about being able to ‘spot,’ in the wake of Edelman’s analysis, reproductive futurism whenever it rears its smiling, big-eyed, irresistible head. But in the light of the relative empirical paucity of this normative notion of the family, and of the child taken care of by the father’s wage and the mother’s domestic care, a question arises as to how far Edelman’s notion of the ‘queer’ extends. If ‘queerness names the side of those not “fighting for the children”’ (Edelman, 2004: 3) it must by definition exclude any family arrangement, however non-child oriented. Can you have family arrangements of those who take care of children but nonetheless are not ‘fighting for the children’? Can one have a generic attitude towards children, or has the logic of reproductive futurism filtered all the way down such that it is impossible to think of children as anything other than ‘special,’ as ‘little angels’? There are, however, plenty of children being raised in situations where very little was staked on their future, and plenty of family structures in which caring for young people is far more a question of pragmatics than of ideology. Edelman makes clear that he is not talking about really existing families and actual children, but it must be noted that Edelman sometimes slips from the figural to the literal, or at least certainly seems to position the woman on the side of the children in a rather dubious way. As Fraiman puts it in her reading of Edelman: ‘Figurations of women’s bodies … are subtly de-eroticised and assimilated to the figurative child’ (Fraiman, 2003: 131). Does Edelman fall too far into the rhetoric of the Christian Right by associating women too quickly with childbirth and some sort of supposedly natural maternal desire that in turn is supposed to characterise reproductive futurism? Edelman seems to assimilate all notions of the family with notions of the future, and to reify families as solid, reactionary entities to be opposed by identity-shaking queer negativity. But what is the ‘identity’ of the family as such? It’s not a real one in the sense of being the majority composition of living arrangements (at least in the British case, as noted above). It’s not a seamlessly ideological one either, seeing as the image of the family presented by (primarily right-wing) politicians is, in practice, rife with contradiction. It seems more likely the case that the ideology must be so extreme in order to cover over the real truth of the family as the economic support for an increasingly precarious labour market. In the 1950s, a male breadwinner’s wage was enough to support an entire ‘classical’ family, now both partners must (in most cases) work to earn anywhere near the same amount. If women are now fully included in the workforce it is because men’s wages have been depressed, even as women still fail to earn as much as their male counterparts. Who looks after the children is an increasingly complicated question, and neither the state nor the classical family seem able to do it effectively and affordably. Politics is so pro-child in theory because it is so anti-child (and anti-woman) in practice.

## Perm

#### Perm do both – only a political strategy that recognizes the limitations of the Child can solve because Edelman’s conflation of all politics and futurism is totalizing and doesn’t take into account historical movements.

Power 9 (Nina, Roehampton University, UK. “Non-Reproductive Futurism: Ranciere’s rational equality against Edelman’s body apolitic.” Borderlands. Volume 8, Number 2. 2009. DOA: 7/1/17. <http://www.borderlands.net.au/vol8no2_2009/power_futurism.pdf>, PN)

Edelman’s desire to conflate all politics with reproductive futurism does an injustice to the politics behind some of the historical shifts in the way abortion, for example, has been conceived. Even in the examples Edelman himself gives of anti-reproductive movements, he is quick to state that these campaigns for abortion rights frame the argument in terms of a ‘fight for our future – for our daughters and sons’ (Edelman, 2004: 3). But, whilst it is true that the anti-abortion debate (especially in America) is often played out on the territory of the right (where the rhetoric of pro-life reigns), it is certainly not the case in other parts of the world that abortion is defended in the name of those children already born, i.e. trapped in the framework of reproductive futurity. Elsewhere, it is the rationality of the woman, her ability to make economic and pragmatic decisions that feature foremost in any debate about the rights and wrongs of abortion. Historically, too, discussions about abortion took place in broader contexts that stressed abortion alongside questions of the equal right to work, progressive notions of family structure and so on. Before Stalin repealed the laws, the Soviet Union under Lenin was the first to provide free and on demand abortions. These laws were couched not in terms of ‘life,’ but in terms of pragmatism predicated on a notion of political equality. As Wendy Z. Goldman puts it: Soviet theorists held that the transition to capitalism had transformed the family by undermining its social and economic functions. Under socialism, it would wither away and under communism, it would cease to exist entirely. (Goldman, 1993: 11) Unless the family is considered in its social and economic function, it makes no sense to speak of its power as an image, however powerful this image might be. Edelman ultimately concedes far too much to a very narrow ideological image of the family that, whilst pernicious, is easier to undo with reference to history and practice than he seems to think. As Tim Dean puts it: ‘the polemical ire that permeates No Future seems to have been appropriated wholesale from the rightwing rants to which he recommends we hearken’ (Dean, 2008: 126). In the first section I tried to identify some of the contradictions between the contemporary family and the demands of capitalism, while above I gave examples of politics not based on reproduction and reproduction not based on futurity: what follows from this is that there are important historical shifts in the way in which the family and the image of the child comes to shift in and out of focus. Take the discussions surrounding in vitro fertilisation. First viable as a reproductive practice in the late 1970s, early artificial insemination was regarded as a ‘paganistic and atheistic’ practice (Barrett and McIntosh, 1982: 11). Now, however, despite the wastage of potential viable embryos in the process, it is generally regarded as a practical option for infertile couples. Here the contradictions of contemporary social feeling towards children is exposed once again: reproductive futurism turns out not to be invested in all children, but only those it chooses to keep out of a pragmatism enabled by technology. Edelman talks about the ‘morbidity inherent in fetishization as such’ when opponents of abortion use photos of foetuses to highlight the proximity of the foetus to the ‘fully-formed child’ (Edelman, 2004: 41). He is right that morbidity and the politics of life seem to go hand-inhand, but then proceeds to argue that it is the queer alone that has a duty to remain true to this morbidity, to expose the ‘misrecognised’ investments of ‘sentimental futurism’: The subject … must accept its sinthome, its particular pathway to jouissance … This, I suggest, is the ethical burden to which queerness must accede in a social order intent on misrecognising its own investment in morbidity, fetishisation, and repetition: to inhabit the place of meaninglessness associated with the sinthome; to figure an unregenerate, and unregenerating, sexuality whose singular insistence on jouissance, rejecting every constraint imposed by sentimental futurism, exposes aesthetic culture – the culture of forms and their reproduction, the culture of Imaginary forms – as always already a “culture of death” intent on abjecting the force of a death drive that shatters the tomb we call life. (Edelman, 2004: 47-8) This does not exactly seem like a revelation. We live for the most part in pragmatic acceptance of this culture of death. It hardly shocks us when, for example, statistics reveal that, in 2004, 60% of women who had abortions had already given birth to at least one child (Sharples, 2008). Those people most identified with children – mothers – turn out, quite often, to deal with ‘life’ rather more pragmatically than we might otherwise believe. Edelman has to ignore historical and current examples of abortion rights campaigns, and other attitudes towards the family, in order to shoehorn all politics into a single vision to which he then opposes his notion of the queer. As Brenkman puts it: ‘To grant the Right the status of exemplary articulators of “the” social order strikes me as politically self-destructive and theoretically just plain wrong’ (Brenkman, 2002: 177). There are genuine moments of historical and political importance in terms of thinking about the family that seem to escape Edelman’s dismissal of politics as inevitably futural. We do not need to give up on politics altogether, whilst still accepting that the image of the child is a massive ideological obstacle. Rancière’s notion of political equality (‘Politics … is that activity which turns on equality as its principle’ (Rancière, 1999: ix)) neither concedes ground to politics as it appears (the ordering of the state, the police, a supposed consensus) nor does it think that politics is impossible or nondesirable, as Edelman does. We must ask: is all politics conservative by definition? Does negativity or resistance to existing power structures always translate back into some stable and positive form? The examples of the kibbutzim and the various contradictions in the ideology and practices of contemporary reproduction make it clear that Edelman, whilst having a strong argument about the shape that the ideology of the child takes, has to ignore the unstable compromises that the contemporary world has already made with itself regarding life and death in reproduction. Alan Sinfield has questioned whether we should really conflate all political aspirations with Edelman’s conception of reproductive futurism: ‘perhaps reproductive futurism is capturing and abusing other political aspirations and they should be reasserted’ (Sinfield, 2005: 50). It is not, then, that all politics is reproductively futural, but that this image has come to pervert other political desires, which may have a more complex relationship to children and a progressive conception of humanity.

### Legal Reform

#### Engaging the political is possible and key to solve – Edelman fails to take into account the disruptive potential of politics

Power 9 (Nina, Roehampton University, UK. “Non-Reproductive Futurism: Ranciere’s rational equality against Edelman’s body apolitic.” Borderlands. Volume 8, Number 2. 2009. DOA: 7/1/17. <http://www.borderlands.net.au/vol8no2_2009/power_futurism.pdf>, PN)

If, in fact, representational politics is only unreasonable, then it is to these moments of rational disruption, those events and occurrences that interrupt the everyday flow of a political discourse which thinks it’s being practical but is in essence incredibly unstable, that a true kind of queerness emerges – Edelman is thus entirely right to highlight the importance of disruption against the existing order, but wrong to insist that it must always be on the side of unreason or anti-reason. Rancière recognises instead the subversive and disruptive nature of politics: ‘What makes politics an object of scandal is that it is that activity which has the rationality of disagreement as its own rationality’ (Rancière 1999: xii). From the standpoint of the supposedly ‘rational’ state, this ‘rationality of disagreement’– in other words the contention that politics, far from being a secure foundation, is predicated on a dissensus, the ability of speaking beings to disagree with one another – appears as decidedly paradoxical and threatening. It is not merely that human beings can disagree with one another, but that some cannot even be heard, and that this is where secure identification of individuals comes undone: For Rancière, if there are some invisible, nameless and disenfranchised people, it is because they do not participate in the public (political) life of the city (the mechanisms for dividing up legitimate shares, the police, etc.); it is because although they have an acknowledged place in society, that is to say a place viewed as useful, and are identified as such by sociology today, they are nevertheless excluded from legitimately speaking out (Déotte and Lapidus, 2004: 79). Unlike Edelman’s conception of the queer, which is purely negative, perhaps even individualistic, Rancière explicitly stresses the role that equality plays in his conception of politics. In the chapter entitled ‘From Archipolitics to Metapolitics,’ Rancière argues that: Politics only exists through the bringing off of the equality of anyone and everyone in a vacuous freedom of a part of the community that deregulates any count of parts. The equality that is the nonpolitical condition of politics does not show up here for what it is: it only appears as the figure of wrong. (Rancière, 1999: 61) The figure of wrong (to be opposed to the ‘right’ of classical political philosophy and jurisprudence) could, however, be understood as ‘queer,’ even in some of Edelman’s own senses: it is unwanted, negative, and not comprehensible from the standpoint of the existing order and the set demarcation of places. As Marx originally put it, the possibility of German emancipation could only arise: [i]n the formation of a class with radical chains, a class of civil society which is not a class of civil society, a class [Stand] which is the dissolution of all classes, a sphere which has a universal character because of its universal suffering and which lays claim to no particular right because the wrong it suffers is not a particular wrong but wrong in general. (Marx, 1974: 256) This idea of ‘wrong in general’ exceeds the description of civil society with its regulated classes and parts: ‘Wrong’ does not refer to a group of people that have somehow been ill-treated but something structurally in excess of the very identity of groups or classes. As Rancière puts it: ‘Politics ceases ... wherever the whole of the community is reduced to the sum of its parts with nothing left over’ (Rancière, 1999: 123). When Edelman talks about queerness as ‘the site outside the consensus’ (Edelman, 2004: 3) he comes very close to Rancière’s conception of politics as exception. Except that for Edelman this ‘site’ would somehow be radically opposed to politics as such. But Rancière’s position is less stark: there are two orders of politics and two orders of rationality. On the one hand, there is the politics that he associates with the ‘police,’ classical political philosophy and consensus, on the other, there is politics as disruption, and disagreement (or dissensus). As Rancière states: Politics, in its specificity, is rare. It is always local and occasional. Its actual eclipse is perfectly real and no political science exists that could map its future any more than a political ethics that would make its existence the object solely of will. (Rancière, 1999: 139) Politics for Rancière literally has ‘no future,’ or at least not one that is predictable. As Hallward puts it: According to Rancière, equality is not the result of a fairer distribution of social functions or places so much as the immediate disruption of any such distribution; it refers not to place but to the placeless or out-of-place, not to class but to the unclassifiable or out-of-class. (Hallward, 2006: 110) There are indeed, as Rancière’s work suggests, other ways of thinking about a politics that has ‘no future,’ despite Edelman’s insistence that all politics is futural (‘The Child remains the perpetual horizon of every acknowledged politics’ (Edelman, 2004: 3)). It may be the case that, historically, some ways of thinking about alternative conceptions of politics vis-à-vis the child have been cut off from us: in that sense, then, Edelman’s work can be seen as registering the end of a sequence of political possibilities. His central implication is that politics, in its very nature, is conservative. Edelman argues that politics ‘works to affirm a structure, to authenticate social order, which it then intends to transmit to the future in the form of its inner Child’ (Edelman, 2004: 3). For him, it is clear that ‘reproductive futurism’ has come to subsume all kinds of politics, both left and right. It places: an ideological limit on political discourse as such, preserving in the process the absolute privilege of heteronormativity by rendering unthinkable, by casting outside the political domain, the possibility of queer resistance to this organizing principle of communal relations. (Edelman, 2004: 2) But the question of a ‘queer’ (that is, non-futural) resistance to communal relations has in fact been an issue for various twentieth century political movements. There have been various kinds of ‘queer’ resistance to the organising principle of heteronormativity, which have at the same time been explicitly political projects. In a sense they have been different responses to the very problem that Edelman identifies as ‘reproductive futurism.’ The next section looks at one of these attempts to rethink both the child and politics using the examples of the early kibbutzim of the mid-twentieth century and historical discussions of abortion rights. Whilst the kibbutzim cannot be said to clearly express a Rancièrean politics as such, they do provide a ‘queer’ response to the problem that Edelman thinks can no longer be answered politically. Discussions of abortion can also be seen to have historically taken place in very different frameworks than Edelman allows, thus releasing a certain kind of rational politics from the vice-like grip of reproductive futurism.

### Scenario Planning/Futurity Good

#### Scenario planning is good – only way to reduce proximate causes of violence

Weaver 2K (Ole, professor of International Relations at the Department of Political Science at University of Copenhagen “International relations theory and the politics of European integration,” p. 284-285)

The other main possibility is to stress' responsibility. Particularly in a field like security one has to make choices a nd deal with the challenges and risks that one confronts – and not shy away into long-range or principled trans-formations. The meta political line risks (despite the theoretical commit­ment to the concrete other) implying that politics can be contained within large 'systemic questions. In line with he classical revolutionary tradition, after the change (now no longer the revolution but the meta-physical trans­formation), there will be no more problems whereas in our situation (until the change) we should not deal with the 'small questions' of politics, only with the large one (cf. Rorty 1996). However, the ethical demand in post-structuralism (e.g. Derrida's 'justice') is of a kind that can never be instan­tiated in any concrete political order – It is an experience of the undecidable that exceeds any concrete solution and reinserts politics. Therefore, politics can never be reduced to meta-questions there is no way to erase the small, particular, banal conflicts and controversies. In contrast to the quasi-institutionalist formula of radical democracy which one finds in the 'opening' oriented version of deconstruction, we could with Derrida stress the singularity of the event. To take a position, take part, and 'produce events' (Derrida 1994: 89) means to get involved in specific struggles. Politics takes place 'in the singular event of engage­ment' (Derrida 1996: 83). Derrida's politics is focused on the calls that demand response/responsi­bility contained in words like justice, Europe and emancipation. Should we treat security in this manner? No, security is not that kind of call. 'Security' is not a way to open (or keep open) an ethical horizon. Security is a much more situational concept oriented to the handling of specifics. It belongs to the sphere of how to handle challenges – and avoid 'the worst' (Derrida 1991). Here enters again the possible pessimism which for the security analyst might be occupational or structural. The infinitude of responsibility (Derrida 1996: 86) or the tragic nature of politics (Morgenthau 1946, Chapter 7) means that one can never feel reassured that by some 'good deed', 'I have assumed my responsibilities ' (Derrida 1996: 86). If I conduct myself particularly well with regard to someone, I know that it is to the detriment of an other; of one nation to the detriment of my friends to the detriment of other friends or non-friends, etc. This is the infinitude that inscribes itself within responsibility; otherwise there would he no ethical problems or decisions. (ibid.; and parallel argumentation in Morgenthau 1946; Chapters 6 and 7) Because of this there will remain conflicts and risks - and the question of how to handle them. Should developments be securitized (and if so, in what terms)? Often, our reply will be to aim for de-securitization and then politics meet meta-politics; but occasionally the underlying pessimism regarding the prospects for orderliness and compatibility among human aspirations will point to scenarios sufficiently worrisome that responsibility will entail securitization in order to block the worst. As a security/securitization analyst, this means accepting the task of trying to manage and avoid spirals and accelerating security concerns, to try to assist in shaping the continent in a way that creates the least insecurity and violence - even if this occasionally means invoking/producing `structures' or even using the dubious instrument of securitization. In the case of the current European configuration, the above analysis suggests the use of securitization at the level of European scenarios with the aim of pre­empting and avoiding numerous instances of local securitization that could lead to security dilemmas and escalations, violence and mutual vilification.

#### Futurity is key to challenge oppressive structures – focus on reproductive futurism allows us to be reflexive of the past and present

Unger 7 (Robert Mangabeira, Professor of Law Harvard, “The Self Awakened: Pragmatism Unbound,” <http://www.law.harvard.edu/unger/english/docs/pragmatism.doc>)

The third theme is Futurity. Whether or not time is for real in the vast world of nature, of which our knowledge always remains at once remote and contradictory, is a subject that will always continue to arouse controversy. That time is for real in human existence is not, however, a speculative thesis; it is a pressure we face with mounting force, so long as we remain conscious and not deluded, in our passage from birth to death. The temporal character of our existence is the consequence of our embodiment, the stigma of our finitude, and the condition that gives transcendence its point. We are not exhausted by the social and cultural worlds we inhabit and build. They are finite. We, in comparison to them, are not. We can see, think, feel, build, and connect in more ways than they can allow. That is why we are required to rebel against them: to advance our interests and ideals as we now understand them, but also to become ourselves, affirming the polarity that constitutes the law-breaking law of our being.       To seek what goes beyond the established structure and represents, for that very reason, the possible beginning of another structure, even of a structure that organizes its own remaking, is to live for the future. Living for the future is a way of living in the present as a being not wholly determined by the present conditions of its existence. We never completely surrender. We go about our business of passive submission, of voiceless despair, as if we knew that the established order were not for keeps, and had no final claim to our allegiance. Orientation to the future -- futurity -- is a defining condition of personality.       So fundamental is this feature of our existence that it also shapes the experience of thinking, even when our thoughts are directed away from ourselves to nature. Ceaselessly reorganizing our experience of particulars under general headings, constantly breaking up and remaking the headings to master the experience, intuiting in one set of known relations the existence of another, next to it or hidden under it, finding out one thing when we had set out to find out another, and discovering indeed what our assumptions and methods may have ruled out as paradoxical, contradictory, or impossible, we come to see the next steps of thought -- its possibilities, its future -- as the point of the whole past of thought.       Futurity should cease to be a predicament and should become a program: we should radicalize it to empower ourselves. That is the reason to take an interest in ways of organizing thought and society that diminish the influence of what happened before on what can happen next. Such intellectual and institutional innovations make change in thought less dependent on the pressure of unmastered anomalies and change in society less dependent on the blows of unexpected trauma. In any given historical situation, the effort to live for the future has consequences for how we order our ideas and for how we order our societies. There is a structure to the organized revision of structures. Its constituents, however, are not timeless. We paste them together with the time-soaked materials at hand.

### Optimism Good

#### Dismissing optimism pushes hope to the future, allowing shame to occupy the present – turns the K

Snediker 6 (Michael D Snediker, well-known poet and a scholar of American literature and disability theory. He was a Queens National Scholar and Associate Professor of American Literature at Queen’s University, in Kingston, Ontario. “Queer Optimism.” Postmodern Culture 16.3 (2006). msnedike@mtholyoke.edu <http://pmc.iath.virginia.edu/text-only/issue.506/16.3snediker.txt>, PN)

I mean, here, to distinguish between the energy that motivates a¶ theoretical enterprise and the subject /of/ that enterprise. Queer¶ optimism (/pace/ inevitable charges of sloppiness by hard-core¶ nominalists) speaks less to what /motivates/ a project than to a¶ project's content. Optimistic motivations (of Butler, or even¶ Bersani, and many other theorists[11 <#foot11>) could correspond¶ to Gramsci's "optimism of the will," while queer optimism would¶ not. This is the case because Gramsci's optimism does not seem¶ radically different from optimism as usually conceived, whereas¶ queer optimism, /prima facie/, seeks to complicate /how/ optimism¶ is conceived. This is not to say that I do not feel solidarity¶ with recent interventions in pessimistic methodology (for¶ instance, challenges to what Paul Ricoeur first termed a¶ hermeneutics of suspicion).[12 <#foot12>] Queer optimism, however,¶ calls for a different /sort/ of intervention, an intervention on¶ the level of content rather than of practice. On the level of¶ practice, then, I'm sympathetic toward Butler's recent invoking of¶ hope. "I hope to show," Butler writes in Giving an Account of¶ Oneself, "that morality is neither a symptom of its social¶ conditions nor a site of transcendence of them, but rather is¶ essential to the determination of agency and the possibility of¶ hope" (21). The formulation, "possibility of hope," confirms what¶ in a subsequent sentence Butler makes clear: that hope inhabits a¶ horizon, emergent "at the limits of our schemes of¶ intelligibility" (21). This hope, in content if not necessarily in¶ practice, differs from queer optimism in that hope¶ held-as-promissory (or "possibility"), or consigned to¶ intelligibility's limits, is only fleetingly intelligible--which¶ is to say, estranged from immanent, fastidious articulation.¶ 26.¶ Hope is promissory, hope is a horizon. Shame, on the other hand,¶ occurs in a lavish present tense. This, again, helps clarify my¶ turn to shame. What if the field of queer optimism could be¶ situated /as firmly/ in the present tense /as shame/? Even as work¶ /on/ shame may arise out of generosity and hopefulness, this work,¶ within queer theory and affect theory, provides shame all the more¶ eloquent and vibrant a vocabulary, leaving positive affect itself¶ lexically impoverished. That positive affect would seem naturally¶ less available to thinking (or that hope definitionally would¶ exist futurally, and shame immanently) is the sort of temporal¶ donnée against which this essay speaks.

#### Edelman misunderstands optimism – it doesn’t have to be futural or attached to political hope and it’s the only way to offer queer people multiple options.

Snediker 6 (Michael D Snediker, well-known poet and a scholar of American literature and disability theory. He was a Queens National Scholar and Associate Professor of American Literature at Queen’s University, in Kingston, Ontario. “Queer Optimism.” Postmodern Culture 16.3 (2006). msnedike@mtholyoke.edu <http://pmc.iath.virginia.edu/text-only/issue.506/16.3snediker.txt>, PN)

Edelman insists that "the only oppositional status to which our queerness could ever lead would depend on our taking seriously the place of the death drive we're called on to figure" (30). Edelman, as the passage I've cited suggests, doesn't seem to leave queers a lot of options, even as the option he adjures hardly seems self-evident. The egregious militancy of No Future presents an apogee of what I've been calling queer pessimism. Or if not an apogee, then a sort of /pessimism-drag/. My own thinking differs from Edelman's in many ways, and might often go without saying.[18 <#foot18>] How, for instance, could a project attached to queer optimism /not/ bristle at a book that insists unilaterally that "the only oppositional status" available to queers demands fealty to the death drive? Edelman's book certainly trounces optimism, but the optimism he trounces is /not/ the optimism for which my own project lobbies. Edelman writes thus: The structuring optimism of politics to which the order of meaning commits us, installing as it does the perpetual hope of reaching meaning through signification, is always, I would argue, a negation of this primal, constitutive, and negative act. And the various positivities produced in its wake by the logic of political hope depend on the mathematical illusion that negated negations might somehow escape, and not redouble, such negativity. My polemic thus stakes its fortunes on a truly hopeless wager: that taking the Symbolic's negativity to the very letter of the law . . . that turning the force of queerness against all subjects, however queer, can afford an access to the /jouissance/ that at once defines us and negates us. Or better: can expose the constancy, the inescapability, of such access to /jouissance/ in the social order itself, even if that order can access its constant access to /jouissance/ only in the process of abjecting that constancy of access onto the queer. (5) As I've made clear, and as this essay's final section will make clearer, queer optimism is no more attached to "the logic of political hope" than No Future is. Even as I think there /are/ some forms of hope worth defending, I'm not interested, for present purposes, in demarcating good and bad hopes, hegemonic and nonhegemonic attachments to futurity. To the extent that my own project seeks to recuperate optimism's potential critical interest by arguing for its separability from the promissory, I'm here insisting that there are ways of resisting a pernicious logic of "reproductive futurism" besides embodying the death drive. If Edelman opines that all forms of optimism eventually lead to Little Orphan Annie singing "Tomorrow," and therefore that all forms of optimism must be met with queer death-driven irony's "always explosive force" (31), I oppositely insist that optimism's limited cultural and theoretical intelligibility might not call for optimism's grandiose excoriation, but for optimism to be rethought along /non-futural/ lines. Edelman's hypostasization of optimism accepts optimism as at best simplistic and at worst fascistic. This hypostasization leaves unthinkable queer optimism's own proposition that the reduction of optimism to a diachronic, futurally bound axis is itself the outcome of a machinery that spits out optimism as junk, and renders suspicious any form of "enjoyment" that isn't a (mis)translation of /jouissance/, "a violent passage beyond the bounds of identity, meaning, and law" (25), the production of "identity as mortification." Enjoyment, anyone?[19 <#foot19>]

## Queer Ecology DA

### 2AC

#### Edelman’s rejection of the future might open space for critique, but it’s net worse for ecological and anti-oppression politics

Seymour 2013 (Nicole, Asst. prof of English at CSU Fullerton, Strange Natures: Futurity, Empathy, and the Queer Ecological Imagination)

The anti-social thesis has also led some queer theorists to critique futurity, which just so happens to be a fundamental rhetoric of environmentalism at large. Edelman’s No Future is now (in) famous for its takedown of “reproduc- tive futurism,” which entails the staging of politics and reality itself through the figure of “the Child.” In the PMLA roundtable on the anti-social thesis, Edelman observed that one question dominated the roundtable discussion: “do our narratives of political efficacy, historicist analysis, and pedagogical practice naturalize what No Future designates as reproductive futurism, thus compelling us all, regardless of political affiliation or critical method, to prostrate ourselves at the altar of what I call the Futurch?” (821, my em- phasis). Aside from the fact that Edelman hereby shows an attunement to the processes that determine what counts as natural, his question leaves no room for any consideration of futurity qua the planet and its resources.5 Again, a deep suspicion of all that is deemed natural abides. This is not to say that Edelman’s critique of reproductive futurism can- not be put to ecological use. For one thing, it certainly has the potential to spark objections to environmental agendas grounded in heterosexist, pro-reproductive rhetoric. In a recent course I taught on queer theory and ecocriticism, I juxtaposed images targeted in No Future—Tiny Tim in Charles Dickens’s A Christmas Carol, for one—with images from the many environ- mental campaigns that use the image of the child. The latter included the Environment Illinois ad cited in my preface and the logo of the World Health Organization Europe, which features a feminized figure atop a globe, hold- ing the hand of a childlike figure, with the heading “The Future for Our Children.” Such sentimentalized rhetoric, as my students and I discussed, suggests that concern for the future qua the planet can only emerge, or emerges most effectively, from white, heterosexual, familial reproductivity. Moreover, it potentially privatizes issues of environmental health by locating them within that domestic framework, rather than tracing them to larger structures such as racism and classism, which make for unequal distributions of risk.4 But despite this potential of the queer critique of futurism and futurity to function for anti-racist, anti-classist, anti-sexist environmentalist ends, it still proves problematic on many levels. For one thing, while Edelman cri- tiques capitalism in his PMLA comments, he fails to acknowledge that, more often than not, it is corporate and governmental disregard for the future that enables the (paradoxical) reproduction of capital, and, more specifically, environmental degradation and destruction in the name of capital accumula- tion. Indeed, anyone who has seen a “Drill Offshore Now” bumper sticker, or heard the chants of “Drill, Baby, Drill” during the John McCain-Sarah Palin campaign, would be suspicious of the idea that concern for future generations, or for the future more broadly, is a sacred tenet of the conservative Right.

#### A focus on the transformative potential of the future along with constructive policy now is key to avert ecological destruction and challenge oppression—turns the K

Seymour 2013 (Nicole, Asst. prof of English at CSU Fullerton, Strange Natures: Futurity, Empathy, and the Queer Ecological Imagination)

Since this book presumes that the persisting gaps between queer theory and ecocriticism need to be bridged, and thatwe should both embrace and build upon queer ecological thought, I will offer a few answers to that dreaded question so often asked of critical theorists: “Why should I care?” Someone like Robisch might say that the solution to theory’s potential hindrance to the environmentalist agenda would be to simply ignore theory. But that would mean, as I have intimated in my preface, dismissing the anti-homophobia and anti-transphobia of queer theory, among its other insights, as well as the anti-misogyny and anti-racism of paradigms such as feminist theory and critical race studies. It would also mean brushing aside the momen- tous question asked by Mortimer-Sandilands and Erickson: “What does it mean that ideas, spaces, and practices designated as ‘nature’ are often so vigorously defended against queers in a society in which that very nature is increasingly degraded and exploited?” (5) Finally, it would mean ignoring the fact that so many literary and filmic texts influenced by poststructuralism and postmodernism actually take “nature” qua the non-human quite seriously. In short, without a perspective that is at once ecological and queer, we cannot intervene in some of the most pressing intellectual and political conflicts of the contemporary era; we cannot adequately address oppression, especially interrelated oppressions; and we cannot effectively interpret a great deal of the cultural and artistic output of the past several decades. We must note that ecocritics and environmentalists on the one hand, and queer theorists and activists on the other, have formulated very different versions of the “Why should I care?” question. The ecocriticism/environ- mentalism camp has formulated this question in terms of the “sinking ship hypothesis”—asking, essentially, why we should prioritize the queer in queer ecology, when the environment is at such dire risk. As Peter Barry summarizes: “Seeking to contribute to rectifying injustices in the areas of gender, race and class is a praiseworthy aim for critics and theorists to have, but it isn’t sensible to ignore the fact that making a difference in these presupposes thatwe can manage to avoid environmental catastrophe. Otherwise, it might seem like working... to secure improved working-conditions for the crew as the Titanic speeds towards the iceberg” (248). Or, as David Orton quips more succinctly: “There can be no social justice on a dead planet.”17 Some environmentalists take an even more extreme view, suggesting that attending to factors such as race, class, gender, and sexuality actually keeps us from fighting environmental degradation. But this view, I argue, represents a failure of imagination. Not only am I unclear as to why we can’t attend to both social and environmental concerns, I’m not convinced that the two are separate. Social ecologist Murray Bookchin is likewise unconvinced; he argues that, “based on considerable anthro- pological evidence, [we can see] that the modern view of nature as a hos- tile ... ‘other’ grows historically out of a projection of warped, hierarchi- cal social relations onto the rest of the natural world” (57, my emphasis). Even if such evidence were lacking, the fact remains that a considerable number of individuals do not have the luxury of choosing environmental concerns over social concerns. Further, the suggestion that one should confront environmental problems in a “gender-blind” or “color-blind" way is highly problematic, even offensive: it asks that we all be more like the white, straight, privileged men who have, historically, been at the forefront of environmental destruction in the first place. Conversely, queer theorists and activists have, though much less directly, asked why we should prioritize the ecology in queer ecology. Consider Hal- berstam’s contribution to aGLQ roundtable on “Queer Temporalities”: I am in a drag king club at 2:00 a.m. and the performances are really bad, and some kid comes onstage and just rips an amazing performance of Elvis or Eminem or Michael Jackson and the people in the club recognize why they are here, in this place at this time, engaged in activities that probably seem pointless to people stranded in hetero temporalities.... Queer time for me is the dark nightclub, the perverse turn away from the narrative coherence of adolescence—early adulthood—marriage—reproduction—child rearing— retirement—death, the embrace oflate childhood in place of early adulthood or immaturity in place of responsibility. (“Theorizing Queer Temporalities” 181-82) Like the queer embrace of the “unnatural” and the anti-social, the queer embrace of a “live in the now” attitude draws on familiar stereotypes of queers as preoccupied with the frivolous, and with meaningless and fleet- ing pleasures. More to the point, this embrace resonates poorly in an envi- ronmental framework; it allows for a dismissal that runs something like, “Why should I care about the environment? If the world falls apart in the future, I’m not going to be there to see it.” Such dismissals also happen to inform “Drill, baby, drill”—style politics—and the contemporary political climate, in which environmental regulation has been (falsely) positioned as a contributing factor to financial crisis.18 To be fair, long-term environmental problems would quite understand- ably be a low priority for many of the queer “kid [s] ” whose only refuge is the “dark nightclub.” And of course, my claims are extrapolative; Halber- stam’s version of queer time does not seem intent upon articulating any relationship, positive or negative, to the environment or nature as such, and Halberstam has been a prominent critic of queer-theoretical elisions of racial, class, and gender inequality. But perhaps all of the above is to the point. The texts I treat in Strange Natures tell us that failures of queer eco- logical empathy—in the dismissal I’ve cited above, the failure to imagine someone or something to whom environmental destruction would, and does, matter—can have disastrous results not just for the environment, but for those individuals who fail. It produces a devastating isolation, a discon- nection from human and non-human others alike. And it prevents those individuals from recognizing how their everyday experiences of oppression might be bound up with ecological destruction. My texts, in response, ask a galvanizing set of questions around empathy: What if we could imagine that environmental catastrophe does matter, even, or perhaps especially, if we are not going to witness its effects? How might that imagination func- tion as a form of queer survival? How could we develop, and strengthen, that imagination? I argue that a concept of queer time that is attuned to environmentalism’s focus on futurity—on the long- and short-term effects of policies and products; on health outcomes for humans and non-humans alike; on sustainable practices—is one place to start.

### 1AR - queer theory = neoliberal

#### Queer autonomy results in neoliberal advocates- causes environmental crises

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For a long while I found myself harbouring the fantasy of thinking through the potential for understanding queer as the permaculture ‘edge’ – that highly productive space where two ecosystems meet and merge. In tentatively exploring this conceptualisation, I was thinking of ‘queer’ as more than a synonym for LGBT, and as something more than an oppositional space to normative sexual and gender arrangements. I was considering queer as an ethical stance of openness to sexual and gender difference and diversity, as a productive opportunity to do sexgender differently. But before I ever had the opportunity to fully explore this way of considering the intersection of queer praxis and the conceptual vocabulary of permaculture’s approach to environmental concerns, I began to fall out of love with queer (and, in different ways, with permaculture). Queer theory seems to have run its course, to have outlived its usefulness, and to no longer have much new to offer to emancipatory politics. The radical queer networks that were once so central to my research, my politics and my desires now seem to have been recuperated, just another niche market for metropolitan hipsters willing to play with the boundaries of sexual and gender identity. The prefigurative possibilities for collective queer autonomy increasingly feel like little more than a variation of the individualised autonomy promoted by neoliberal advocates of the free market these last three decades. I guess I have come to the realisation that ‘queer’ does not stand (as far) outside the sexual politics of neoliberalism as I had once thought. I say all this to question whether queer thinking actually has anything useful to contribute to debates about how humanity should respond to issues of sustainability and environmental crisis [In writing this, I note that I have slipped quite quickly from the topic of ‘ecology’ to environmental crisis]. Having said this, I acknowledge that there may yet be important and useful work to do to challenge the heteronormative assumptions that are so often entangled in debates about ‘sustainability’. There might be productive work to be done queering the very concepts of ‘sustainability’ and (environmental) ‘crisis’. But those are not issues I want to pursue here either. There is a large body of work going back several decades now that theorises the political economy of sexualities, sexual identities and sexual politics – so much second-wave feminist writing, John D’Emilio’s important work on the place of homosexuality in changing capitalist divisions of labour, and Lisa Duggan’s work on the new homonormativity as the sexual politics of neoliberalism (amongst others). But it strikes me that while modern sexual identities (including, later, the queer challenge to them) came into being contemporaneously with the ascendency of neoliberal capitalism, they also coincide with height of high-carbon economies. I think it is time to explore the political ecology of sexualities, to consider the role of (spatially uneven patterns of) (in)direct resource consumption in shaping sexualities and sexual subjectivities. Such work would trace the role of ecological resources in the assemblages of objects and practices through which sexual desires are acted upon and sexual subjectivities are performed. It could also engage in productive ways with what Jane Bennett has described as the ‘vital materialities’ of life-itself. This expanded repertoire of thinking about sexualities might begin to offer ways out of the queer impasse I have described and prompt an expanded understanding of the impact of contemporary sexualities on ecological systems at various geographical scales.