# Apple Valley R1

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#### Communicative arenas such as debate links disabled folk under modes of compulsive able-bodiedness. They are controlled by biopolitical systems of fluency which systematically smooths dysfluencies to maintain the fluid semiotic operation. Thus, the role of the ballot is to vote for the debater that best resists the technologies of fluency.

St. Pierre 17 [Becoming Dysfluent: Fluency as Biopolitics and Hegemony Joshua St. Pierre Journal of Literary & Cultural Disability Studies, Volume 11, Issue 3, 2017, pp. 339-356 (Article) Published by Liverpool University Press] //Lex VM

“Given that compulsory able-bodiedness emanates from everywhere and nowhere, it is perhaps more fruitful to parse this consensus through the mode by which compulsory able-bodiedness **circulates and is translated across different ideas, practices, and institutions** rather than isolating the specific sites where this consensus, this hegemony, is produced. For McRuer, **“the experience of the able-bodied need for an agreed-on common ground” is a common experience that “links all people with disabilities under a system of compulsory able-bodiedness”** (8), and I suggest that this “common ground” of disability oppression is a how as much as a where or a what. That is, a common ground is never just found, but must be cleared away and maintained with effort through time. **“Fluency” can accordingly be understood as a technology operating at the intersection of biopower and hegemony that smooths over and straightens discontinuous semiotics, temporalities, and materialities to eliminate frictions within productive, biopolitical systems and thus secure social order within the material realm. An attention to fluency moves beyond the orthodox focus on ideology as the essential vehicle of hegemony to locate**, alongside Jon Beasley-Murray’s notion of “posthegemony,” **the production of consensus and the security of social order not within the realm of representation but the governance of bodies and life itself. Fluency attempts to regulate and collapse not merely the time between encounters, but the embodied time of encounter and access and judgment.** Fluency attempts to cover over political spaces—to mitigate (when it cannot eliminate) interruption and disruption—**thus facilitating** in one move **the rationalization** and naturali- zation **of embodied difference** that seems to emanate from everywhere and nowhere, **as if everyone agrees.** But whatever else it may be, **fluency is first a process enacted and lived within the material and corporeal.** Here I start from the semiotic and expand outwards. **The vast array of rhythms, semiotic modes, tempos, dictions, and (racialized or disabled) accents that constitute practices of aural “communication” have become the objective domain of the biomedicalizing industry of Speech-Language Pathology.** Barry Guitar, in his well-used textbook on speech impediments, offers an exemplary definition of fluency: “simply as the effortless flow of speech” (13). Yet there is hardly anything simple about this definition, which is offered amid caveats and backtracking. Guitar readily admits (12) that **fluency is difficult to pin down and that** researchers within Speech-Language Pathology often focus **on what it is not—namely, dysfluency.** There are a few characteristics: **Fluent speech is marked by a lack of hesitation, and** Speech-Language Pathology is forced to make (dubious and highly arbitrary) distinctions between “normal” and “abnormal” hesitations (Goldman-Eisler) since breaks and hesitations crop up in all speech. Fluent speech is marked by rhythmical (read: thoroughly normalized) patterning. Fluent speech is similarly marked by **the lack of “extra sounds” interjected into culturally dominant phonetic patterns.** Fluency is defined by the overall rate of speech, which includes not just the rate of vocal flow but of information flow (Starkweather). And lastly, fluency is often defined by a lack of “effort” on the part of the speaker; **a conceit of mastery over language** that highlights the twinned meaning of “fluency.” Transposing this definition into a critical register, **the “effortless flow of speech” can be read as a coordinated—yet often strained—performance of bending the energies and capacities of bodies toward stable and univocal futures. Autistics are compelled to restrict stimming, to sit on their hands** (to have “quiet hands,” Bascom), **and thereby reroute bodily capacities to the smooth performance of so-called intelligible communication. Dyslexic bodies that process information piecemeal and slowly are forced out of social time** (Cosenza 7). As Zach Richter has argued, **the facial tics and erratic gestures of dysfluent speakers are likewise never communicative inflections, but are made abject and cast out of the communicative realm altogether by** what I am here calling **technologies of fluency. Tics** of loud cursing and grunting **from** a public speaker with Tourette’s are imagined as **an interruption to communication.** **Dysfluencies are erased from closed captions and courtroom transcripts. What is thus left is a univocal and fluid semiotic operation that instrumentalizes our relations with others.** Or more precisely, if fluency is a type of Foucauldian technology, then the function of this biopolitical strategy is to regulate and focus the communicative event toward specific, technical ends through the logic of optimization and closure.” (342-344)

#### New biopolitical developments in neoliberal capitalism has shifted the focus of normalizing the disabled body to profiting off of its capacitation through medicalization. Bodies are now evaluated in regard to their productivity and health blurring the distinction between abled and disabled forming gradations of capacity and debility.

Fritsch 15 [Fritsch, Kelly Michelle. "The Neoliberal Biopolitics of Disability: Towards Emergent Intracorporeal Practices." Diss. York U, Toronto, 2015. YorkSpace Institutional Repository. York University, 16 Dec. 2015. Web.] //Lex VM

Puar argues that all bodies in neoliberal capitalism are “being evaluated in relation to their success or failure in terms of health, wealth, progressive productivity, upward mobility, [and] enhanced capacity” (2011, 155). As such, there is no body that meets the standard of adequately able-bodied anymore, only “gradations of capacity and debility” (2011, 155) that blur the distinction between disabled and non-disabled. Puar contends that given biopolitical developments in neoliberal capitalism, normalizing the disabled body is no longer the major focus of medical intervention. She claims that a biopolitical shift has occurred focusing on the differential capacitation of all bodies, not the achievement of a normative able-bodiedness. That is, through capacitating processes like genetic therapies, surgeries, supplements, prosthetic enhancements, and healthism, there is a shift from regulative normality that cures or rehabilitates to ongoing biological control, where bodies are to be capacitated beyond what is thought of as the able-body. Capacitating or enhancing the body beyond the traditional boundaries of what has been marked and produced as the able-body can be traced through Dumit’s (2012) research. For example, Dumit attends to the ways in which cure is an intervention that occurs only once, and thus is limited in the scope of its potential profitability. In comparison, life-long interventions, such as being prescribed drugs for hypertension, diabetes, or high cholesterol are much more profitable because they are taken “not to cure the condition but to reduce the risk factor and potential future events, such as heart disease or heart attacks” (2012, 5). This profitability comes to influence our very understandings of health and the body, shifting the dichotomous terrain of the able/disabled, normal/abnormal. The imperative is for as many people as possible to constitute an “at risk” group, such as those requiring cholesterol lowering drugs, so as to lower their risk through taking drugs. As Dumit’s research shows, 106 through the production of risk, the use of statistics in clinical trials, and the power of the pharmaceutical industry, it has become commonly accepted within medical communities to prescribe cholesterol-lowering drugs to everyone over 30 in America (2012, 13). Even further, Dumit’s research shows that not only is this practice widely accepted but that the pharmaceutical industry itself, alongside public health discourses, have managed to morally obligate the use of preventative pharmaceutical treatments for those deemed “at risk” (13). According to Puar, neoliberalized biopolitics mobilizes the tension between capacity and debility to break down the binaries between normative/non-normative, disabled/abled because “debility is profitable to capitalism, but so is the demand to ‘recover’ from or overcome it” (2011, 154) through processes of capacitation, such as that of taking cholesterol drugs everyday. An economy of debility and capacity serves the interests of neoliberal biocapitalism and reshapes formations of disability. As a result, disability is not a uniformly oppressed identity category or form of embodiment that lacks or is abnormal. Although oppression may be part of the story, disability can be caught up in processes of both debility and capacity. Rather than clear distinctions being made between who is normal and who is abnormal, emphasis instead is placed on “variegation, modulation and tweaking;” (2011, 155) forms of inclusion/exclusion that involve modes of differential inclusion; and with self and other or subject and object displaced in favour of the “construction of micro-states of subindividual differentiation” (2011, 155). In contrast to the sub-subjective nature of debility and capacity, the disability rights perspective usually focuses on the ways in which disability has been cast as an oppressive identity through structural forms of ableism that produce disability as a diminished state of being. For example, the ways by which disabled people have been excluded from paid work 107 has led some disability activists and scholars to highlight the importance of disabled people’s inclusion in productive work (Gleeson 1999; Taylor 2004). This has been, and continues to be, an important fight for disabled people, for as Wilton and Schuer (2006, 187) note, “neoliberalism’s privileging of paid work as a marker of citizenship has intensified the costs associated with failing to access the workplace.”

#### Speech and technologies of fluency has fueled the rise of Semiocapitalism which requires information to move quickly and effortlessly. This results in the capacitation of certain disabled bodies at the expense of debilitating dysfluent ones.

St. Pierre 2 [Becoming Dysfluent: Fluency as Biopolitics and Hegemony Joshua St. Pierre Journal of Literary & Cultural Disability Studies, Volume 11, Issue 3, 2017, pp. 339-356 (Article) Published by Liverpool University Press] //UTDD recut Lex VM

Considered in terms of optimization, the function of fluency is quite familiar: technologies of normalizing embodied difference rely upon manageable or “docile” communication channels and semiotic protocols (Foucault, “The Subject and Power,” 135). Speech is now human capital (a flattened capacity that produces future return) and it is hardly surprising that technologies of fluency have come to play a central role in the productive machinery of semiocapitalism. This system requires not only vast quantities of information, but the ability to move it around quickly and effortlessly. Fluency is not a “repressive” but a productive force (Foucault, Discipline and Punish), one that impels modern subjects to be loquacious, to increase their information flow (see, for example, Starkweather above), and to maximize their communicative inputs and outputs. These transformations have created new forms of disability oppression. Many disabled people who could not work under industrialized capitalist conditions have benefitted from the fact that communication has become immanent to the production process (see Mitchell and Snyder, “Disability as Multitude,” 189) yet such changes, while empowering for some, shift the socioeconomic terrain in threatening ways for others. Call centers, for example, are a mainstay of immaterial labor yet effectively exclude people with communication disabilities from employment across the board. The ability to regulate informational and affective flow has become a baseline for postindustrial labor. Clare Butler argues that “Being a skilled verbal communicator is [now] treated as a justifiable requirement in the workplace” (720), such that the imperatives to “sound right” and possess “excellent communication skills” marginalize dysfluent laborers in postindustrial economies.” (344)

#### Biocapitalism creates a structure of value where the ideal Child that symbolizes the image of futurity is the one that embodies maximized productivity. In reality, this sacred Child is unobtainable and requires the death and enhancement of disability to give it meaning. This locks disability in a cycle of cruelly optimistic futures that are predicated on disabled death.

Fritsch 2 [Fritsch, Kelly Michelle. "The Neoliberal Biopolitics of Disability: Towards Emergent Intracorporeal Practices." Diss. York U, Toronto, 2015. YorkSpace Institutional Repository. York University, 16 Dec. 2015. Web.] //Lex VM

What Berardi (2011) and Edelman (2004) do not account for are the ways in which the Child as the image of the future is not only central to the notion of progress, but how this Child relies on an economy of disability that is deeply entrenched in neoliberal practices. As I have marked in other chapters, this not only to alludes to the multifaceted ways in which neoliberal practices produce disability or are complicit in rising rates of disabling conditions, but also marks the ways by which the practices of neoliberalism that demand that some succeed at the expense of others cannot be fully accounted for without addressing disability. This is to say, Paige’s withering is related to the enhancement of others and simply capacitating Paige within the context of neoliberal futurity does not address the myriad ways in which disability functions within neoliberal economies. Thus, while Edelman (2004) is correct in asserting that the contemporary political order favours heteronormativity in the ways in which it incites the Child as the image of the future, this image of the Child of the future also continuously incites compulsory enhanced bodiediness as the child of reproductive futurity is not only not to be disabled, but must be better than able-bodied. McRuer, in the context of Edelman’s work comments: “‘everybody,’ after all, or so the saying goes, ‘wants a healthy baby.’ At the same time, despite this commonplace desire, the imagined future is actually inescapably inaccessible; no real, flesh-and-blood child can ever embody the innocence, health, and ability associated with the sacred Child” (2008). I agree with Edelman’s sharp and scathing critique of 146 reproductive futurity, and while I also agree with McRuer that Edelman’s Child is ablebodied, what neither Edelman or McRuer elucidate is how reproductive futurity relies on both a capacitated and bodily enhanced Child that shapes the ways the political gets mobilized in the name of the future, and for some disabled children to grow up at the expense of others who are never intended to grow up. Edelman is right, then, about the ways in which the figure of the Child re-inforces heteronormativity but he fails to take stock of the ways in which the Child is also always, already able-bodied, or how the Child is capacitated and enhanced. While McRuer is right to point out that no child can fully embody the desirable able-bodied child, and, thus, sets up disability as the impediment to a desirable future, I am interested in how the better-than-able-bodied Child requires some disabled children to grow up at the expense of other disabled children in order to give the Child meaning. Thus, the disabled child is the figure of no future, as will be demonstrated in the case of Emily Rapp (2013) desiring to terminate pregnancy on the basis of disability, and in the case of infanticide and filicide on the basis of disability. However, the disabled child is also the figure of the future in that the suffering child creates particular neoliberal futures through the mobilization of biocapital, cure, and enhancement. Therefore, as I will go on to show, we are deeply invested in narratives of suffering children, but some of those children are always supposed to remain children, never growing up, while others are celebrated, enhanced, and capacitated precisely because they can be made to slide into the neoliberal promise of the future. As I will argue, it is precisely in sliding into neoliberalism’s forms of capacitation and enhancement that incapacitates and disables others.

#### Vote aff to enact dysfluencies in communicative spheres to create frictions that disrupt the semiotic flow of debate. Our politics resists the spell of the linguistic by using dysfluent systems of grammar, norms and communication to escape the totalizing demands of fluency.

St. Pierre 3[Becoming Dysfluent: Fluency as Biopolitics and Hegemony Joshua St. Pierre Journal of Literary & Cultural Disability Studies, Volume 11, Issue 3, 2017, pp. 339-356 (Article) Published by Liverpool University Press] //UTDD recut Lex VM

“In conclusion, we might consider that for McRuer, following Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, **“disability” can refer to “the open mesh of possibilities, gaps, overlaps, dissonances and resonances, lapses and excesses of meaning when the constituent elements of bodily, mental, or behavioral functioning aren’t made** (or can’t be made) **to signify monolithically”** (156–57). **An attention to dysfluent voices as material enunciations offers one specific way to think about this crip excess, particularly as resistance to hegemony. Fluent voices presume to signify monolithically and thus anticipate and linearly sustain the givenness of what is**—**fluency must be decomposed for a crip politic to flourish.** Yet **while fluency may have the first word** (my speech arrives always a hesitation), **it certainly never has the last—the impulse of fluency is totalizing but “something always escapes!”** (Beasley-Murray xxi). Chris Eagle has written that **an attention to dysfluency within disability studies would “understand mastery over language as always already tenuous, fragile, and partial”** (6) and **we might in this way begin to imagine dysfluency not as a communicative “breakdown” but as a type of escape or,** **in Deleuzio-Guattarian terms, flight.** In Lexicon of the Mouth: Poetics and Politics of the Voice and the Oral Imaginary, Brandon LaBelle suggests that **by “considering interrupted speech, we enter into a politics of the mouth. By tripping over the word, stuttering evidences the deep performative drive of the mouth under the spell of the** linguistic. It stumbles precisely over a syllable, a grammar, a phoneme; the mouth gasps along the fault lines of a given vocabulary, to lisp over words, and in doing so, raises the volume on the very question as to what constitutes ‘proper speech’” (139; emphasis added). I have always imagined LaBelle’s offhanded remark a playful engagement with the Germanic fable the “Pied Piper.” In many versions of this classic tale, the piper leads all but three of the entranced village children into the river to drown. These are three crips, in fact: the first, physically disabled who could not keep pace; the second, deaf, who like Odysseus who could not hear the piper’s song; and the third, blind. Only those transformed by disability could resist the irresistible, the linear pull into deep water. In a similar way, **the spell of fluency lures and strings words from our mouths in the lock-and-file order of “proper speech,” intelligibility, and surplus value.** To what world and what dangers does this straightening syntax lead? **The crip mouth, on the other hand, stumbles over and along the major grammar. It cannot follow and in this excess forms a collective site of material agency that stubbornly resists the spell of the linguistic. Against the liberal sirens (those masters of consensus) the agential capacity of dysfluency lies precisely in its flight from understanding and intelligibility.**” (353-354)

#### Voting affirmative engages in a heterotopic imagination of disability. This is a method of imagining disability differently outside of the current neoliberal conditions. The product is a figure of disability not as something to overcome but as a life worth living.

Fritsch 3[Fritsch, Kelly Michelle. "The Neoliberal Biopolitics of Disability: Towards Emergent Intracorporeal Practices." Diss. York U, Toronto, 2015. YorkSpace Institutional Repository. York University, 16 Dec. 2015. Web.]// UTDD recut Lex VM

Challenging the undesirability of disability is a shared responsibility and goes beyond the inclusion of disabled people within the exploitative and individualized relations of neoliberal capitalism. That is, challenging the undesirability of disability requires more than individualized access to education, employment, or vibrant social lives. Challenging the undesirability of disability requires that disability be imagined differently, that is, imagined in ways that ensure that disability can be collectively practiced and experienced differently. In order to imagine disability differently, it is imperative to understand how the neoliberal hegemonic social imagination both works to curtail who is considered desirable and informs the production of a good, individualized neoliberal subject that limits disabled and able-bodied people alike. Neoliberal policies and practices individualize both able-bodied and disabled bodies through forms of debility and capacity (Puar 2011) and through the economization of social relations and life itself (Murphy 2013) such that being critical of these forms of social, economic, and political relations is not enough to extricate ourselves from our role in maintaining and reproducing these relations. In order to desire disability differently, we must begin with marginal, heterotopic imaginations whereby disability is practiced as not something to overcome or merely tolerate, but rather as a part of a life worth living. Building on Michel Foucault’s concept of heterotopia (1998), a concept that marks “outside places” by their discontinuity and multiplicity, and drawing on the work of Mel Chen (2012) and Rod Michalko (1999), I argue that the heterotopic imagination reconfigures how disability emerges, with whom it emerges, and where. When disability is viewed through the lens of the heterotopic imagination, it becomes an intracorporeal, non-anthropocentric, multiplicity that exceeds the individualized human body inscribed by 175 neoliberal biocapitalism. To elaborate on disability as this emergent multiplicity, I read Chen’s and Michalko’s work alongside Thomas Lemke’s (2015) work on Foucault’s concepts of the milieu and government of things, as well as the agential realism of feminist materialist Karen Barad (2007; 2008). Desiring disability differently does not merely allow the current formulation of disability to become desirable. On the contrary, desiring disability differently through the heterotopic imagination radically alters what disability is, how it is practiced, and what it can be.

### Underview

#### theorizing disability through gradations of debility moves away from a stable conception of disability and allows us to explicitly critique U.S. imperialism while maintaining a larger theory of how power operates. Puar 17

“The Right to Maim: Debility, Capacity, Disability” 2017 // UTDD

”Phenomenological elaborations of **the multiplicity of material embodiment of bodies with disabilities** and the political stakes in the liberatory facets of bodily difference notwithstanding, I join a growing chorus of scholars and activists who urge greater attention not only to how disabled bodies are maintained in difference and hierarchy but also to how disabled bodies are solicited and manufactured. This is a crucial facet of disability that **complicates** the **exceptionalism** of certain kinds of disabilities and disabled bod- ies **with attention to debilitation as a primary activity of capitalist global expansion. Theorizing** these two together—**the biopolitics of disability and** the biopolitics of **debilitation—demands nothing less than the crafting of a scholarly platform that seeks to address and attempts to eliminate the local and global conditions of inequality that give rise to** the incidence of much—if not most—of **the world’s disability**. A disability justice approach, as many have argued, **is** unequivocally antiwar, pro-labor, antiracist, prison abolitionist, and **anti-imperialist.** This approach is **resolutely vigilant about critiquing U.S. imperialism both within the United States—as a settler colonial state—and internationally, as the director of the war on terror**, an occupier of Afghanistan and Iraq, and as the main entity legitimating and funding Israel’s settler colonial occupation of Palestine. There cannot be a focus on growing disability culture alone, for indeed this growth happens within the context of these imperial projects, is informed by them, and cannot be separated from them.11 Any flourishing of cultures of disability and disability pride must be evaluated in the context of these fissures in order to ask who is able to participate in empowerment discourses and practices and why.” (67)

#### Disability is the master trope for all forms of oppression on the basis of inferiority – involuntary aesthetics disqualify humans based on their ability.

Siebers 10 [Tobin Siebers, Department of English Language and Literature at the University of Michigan; “The Aesthetics of Human Disqualification”; University of Michigan Press; 10/28/2010; accessed 07/30/19 // WHSRS]

**Disqualification as a symbolic process removes individuals from the ranks of quality human beings, putting them at risk of unequal treatment, bodily harm, and death**. That people may be subjected to violence if they do not achieve a prescribed level of quality is an injustice rarely questioned. In fact, even though we may redefine what we mean by quality people, for example as historical minorities are allowed to move into their ranks, we have not yet ceased to believe that nonquality human beings do exist and that they should be treated differently from people of quality. Harriet McBryde Johnson’s debate with Peter Singer provides a recent example of the widespread belief in the existence of nonquality human beings (Johnson). Johnson, a disability activist, argues that all disabled people qualify as persons who have the same rights as everyone else. Singer, a moral philosopher at Princeton University, claims to the contrary that people with certain disabilities should be euthanized, especially if they are thought to be in pain, because they do not qualify as persons. Similarly, Martha Nussbaum, the University of Chicago moral philosopher, establishes a threshold below which “a fully human life, a life worthy of human dignity,” is not possible (181). In particular, she notes that **the onset of certain disabilities may reduce a person to the status of former human being**: “we may say of some conditions of a being, let us say a permanent vegetative state of a (former) human being, that this just is not a human life at all” (181). Surprisingly **little thought and energy have been given to disputing the belief that nonquality human beings do exist**. This belief is so robust that it supports the most serious and characteristic injustices of our day. **Disqualification at this moment in time justifies discrimination, servitude, imprisonment, involuntary institutionalization, euthanasia, human and civil rights violations, military intervention, compulsory sterilization, police actions, assisted suicide, capital punishment, and murder**. It is my contention that disqualification finds support in the way that bodies appear and in their specific appearances—that is, **disqualification is justified through the accusation of mental or physical inferiority based on aesthetic principles**. Disqualification is produced by naturalizing inferiority as the justification for unequal treatment, violence, and oppression. According to Snyder and Mitchell, **disability serves in the modern period as “the master trope of human disqualification**.” They argue that disability represents a marker of otherness that establishes differences between human beings not as acceptable or valuable variations but as dangerous deviations. Douglas Baynton provides compelling examples from the modern era, explaining that during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the United States disability identity disqualified other identities defined by gender, race, class, and nationality. **Women were deemed inferior because they were said to have mental and physical disabilities. People of color had fewer rights than other persons based on accusations of biological inferiority. Immigrants were excluded from entry into the United States when they were poor, sick, or failed standardized tests**, even though the populations already living there were poor, sick, and failed standardized tests. In every case, **disability identity served to justify oppression by amplifying ideas about inferiority already attached to other minority identities. Disability is the trope by which the assumed inferiority of these other minority identities achieved expression**. The appearance of lesser mental and physical abilities disqualifies people as inferior and justifies their oppression. It is now possible to recognize disability as a trope used to posit the inferiority of certain minority populations, but it remains extremely difficult to understand that mental and physical markers of inferiority are also tropes placed in the service of disability oppression. Before disability can be used as a disqualifier, disability, too, has to be disqualified. Beneath the troping of blackness as inbuilt inferiority, for example, lies the troping of disability as inferior. Beneath the troping of femininity as biological deficiency lies the troping of disability as deficiency. **The mental and physical properties of bodies become the natural symbols of inferiority via a process of disqualification that seems biological, not cultural—which is why disability discrimination seems to be a medical rather than a social problem.** If we consider how difficult it is at this moment to disqualify people as inferior on the basis of their racial, sexual, gender, or class characteristics, we may come to recognize the ground that we must cover in the future before we experience the same difficulty disqualifying people as inferior on the basis of disability. We might also recognize the work that disability performs at present in situations where race, sexuality, gender, and class are used to disqualify people as physically or mentally inferior. **Aesthetics studies the way that some bodies make other bodies feel. Bodies, minimally defined, are what appear in the world. They involve manifestations of physical appearance,** whether this appearance is defined as the physical manifestation itself or as the particular appearance of a given physical manifestation. Bodies include in my definition human bodies, paintings, sculpture, buildings, the entire range of human artifacts as well as animals and objects in the natural world. Aesthetics, moreover, has always stressed that **feelings produced in bodies by other bodies are involuntary, as if they represented a form of unconscious communication between bodies**, a contagious possession of one body by another. Aesthetics is the domain in which the sensation of otherness is felt at its most powerful, strange, and frightening. Whether the effect is beauty and pleasure, ugliness and pain, or sublimity and terror, the emotional impact of one body on another is experienced as an assault on autonomy and a testament to the power of otherness. Aesthetics is the human science most concerned with invitations to think and feel otherwise about our own influence, interests, and imagination. Of course, **when bodies produce feelings of pleasure or pain, they also invite judgments about whether they should be accepted or rejected in the human community.** People thought to experience more pleasure or pain than others or to produce unusual levels of pleasure and pain in other bodies are among the bodies most discriminated against, actively excluded, and violated on the current scene, be they disabled, sexed, gendered, or racialized bodies. **Disabled people, but also sex workers, gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered people, and people of color, are tortured and killed because of beliefs about their relationship to pain and pleasure** (Siebers 2009). This is why **aesthetic disqualification is not merely a matter for art critics or museum directors but a political process of concern to us all.** An understanding of **aesthetics** is crucial because it **reveals the operative principles of disqualification used in minority oppression**. Oppression is the systematic victimization of one group by another. It is a form of intergroup violence. That oppression involves “groups,” and not “individuals,” means that it concerns identities, and this means, furthermore, that oppression always focuses on how the body appears, both on how it appears as a public and physical presence and on its specific and various appearances. Oppression is justified most often by the attribution of natural inferiority—what some call “in-built” or “biological” inferiority. Natural inferiority is always somatic, focusing on the mental and physical features of the group, and it figures as disability. **The prototype of biological inferiority is disability. The representation of inferiority always comes back to the appearance of the body and the way the body makes other bodies feel**. This is why the study of **oppression requires an understanding of aesthetics—not only because oppression uses aesthetic judgments for its violence but also because the signposts of how oppression works** are visible in the history of art, where aesthetic judgments about the creation and appreciation of bodies are openly discussed. One additional thought must be noted before I treat some analytic examples from the historical record. First, despite my statement that disability now serves as the master trope of human disqualification, **it is not a matter of reducing other minority identities to disability identity. Rather, it is a matter of understanding the work done by disability in oppressive systems.** In disability oppression, **the physical and mental properties of the body are socially constructed as disqualifying defects, but this specific type of social construction happens to be integral at the present moment to the symbolic requirements of oppression in general**. In every oppressive system of our day, I want to claim, the oppressed identity is represented in some way as disabled, and although it is hard to understand, the same process obtains when disability is the oppressed identity. “**Racism” disqualifies on the basis of race, providing justification for the inferiority of certain skin colors**, bloodlines, and physical features. “**Sexism” disqualifies on the basis of** sex/gender as a direct representation of **mental and physical inferiority.** “**Classism” disqualifies on the basis of family lineage** and socioeconomic power **as proof of inferior genealogical status. “Ableism” disqualifies on the basis of mental and physical differences, first selecting and then stigmatizing them as disabilities**. The oppressive system occults in each case the fact that the disqualified identity is socially constructed, a mere convention, representing signs of incompetence, weakness, or inferiority as undeniable facts of nature. As racism, sexism, and classism fall away slowly as justifications for human inferiority—and the critiques of these prejudices prove powerful examples of how to fight oppression—the prejudice against disability remains in full force, providing seemingly credible reasons for the belief in human inferiority and the oppressive systems built upon it. This usage will continue, I expect, until we reach a historical moment when we know as much about the social construction of disability as we now know about the social construction of race, class, gender, and sexuality. **Disability represents at this moment in time the final frontier of justifiable human inferiority.**

#### Engage in the aff’s utopic calling for “some more perfect order” as a method of criticizing settle colonialism and colonial structures. Ahmed 10

“The Promise of Happiness” by Sara Ahmed 2010 iBooks // UTDD

“It does not follow that we can simply collapse happiness with the future or into the future. **The future** after all **can be imagined in ways that are far from happy**: if we feel we have lost the possibility of happiness, **if we feel we have lost hope** that we might find happiness somewhere along the way, **then the future will embody that loss** of possibility. So too happiness can be imagined as past, as being what we once had, as being what we have lost in arriving somewhere, or even what we have given up so others can get somewhere. **Nostalgic and promissory** forms of **happiness belong under the same horizon**, insofar as **they imagine happiness as** being **somewhere other than** where we are in **the** present. And when happiness is present, it can recede, becoming anxious, becoming the thing that we could lose in the unfolding of time. When happiness is present, we can become defensive, such that we retreat with fear from anything or anyone that threatens to take our happiness away. But can we simply give up our attachment to thinking about happier futures or the future of happiness? Queer theorists have been the most vocal in refusing to affirm the future, refusing to embrace the future in a politics of affirmation. Lee Edelman, in his provocatively titled No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive, writes: “Rather than rejecting, with liberal discourse, this ascription of negativity to 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 constraining mandate of futurism, just as any order would equally occasion the negativity of the queer—but rather to refuse the insistence of hope itself as affirmation, which is always an affirmation of an order whose refusal will register as unthinkable, irresponsible, inhumane” (2004: 4). For Edelman, queer theory must be hopeless, must have “no future,” which means saying no to the future.1 To affirm an order might be to define and regulate what is thinkable in advance of thought. In response to Edelman’s polemic, I want to take seriously the **question** of **whether all forms of** political hope, all forms of optimism as well as utopianism, all dreams of **“some more perfect order,” can be described as** performing the logic of **futurism, which** in turn **would require negativity to be located in those who cannot inherit this future.** And yet Edelman is still affirming something in the act of refusing affirmation. I find something rather optimistic and hopeful about Edelman’s polemic, where **hope rests on the possibility opened up by inhabiting the negative.** Michael D. Snediker has suggested that the queer embrace of **negativity might be “optimistically motivated”** (2009:15). Snediker argues for a “queer optimism,” which would not be an optimism of an ordinary sort. For Snediker, “Queer optimism cannot guarantee what such a happiness would look like, how such happiness would feel. And while it does not promise a road to an Emerald City, Queer Optimism avails a new terrain of critical enquiry, which seems a felicity in its own right” (30). Happiness becomes interesting for queer optimists. Snediker argues that rather than presuming the normativity of happiness, we could imagine happiness as “theoretically mobilizable, as conceptually difficult.” He asks, “What if happiness weren’t merely, self-reflexively happy, but interesting?” (30). I agree: happiness is interesting. The more I follow the word happiness around, the more it captures my interest. We can still recognize the significance “of queer pessimism as an alien affect: a queer politics which refuses to organize its hope for happiness around the figure of the child or other tropes for reproductivity and survival is already alienated from the present. Queer pessimism matters as a pessimism about a certain kind of optimism, as a refusal to be optimistic about “the right things” in the right kind of way.2 **Certain forms of political negativity are read as** stubbornness **or as a way of being stuck. We learned about this dynamic from the figure of the melancholic migrant who is read as holding on to something that has already gone in the very act of noticing racism as going on and ongoing.** Indeed **the very act of recognizing injustice in the present is read as a theft of optimism, a killing of joy, a failure to move on or to put certain histories behind us.** Queer pessimism becomes interesting as an alien affect, although **to become pessimistic as a matter of principle is to risk being optimistic about pessimism itself.**” Snediker is right to point out that queer affirmations of negativity are not simply negative. **To embrace the negative or to say yes to a no cannot be described as a purely negative** gesture. **To affirm negation is still an affirmation, which could reinstitute a certain yes** as the proper signifier of queer politics, **even as a yes to what’s not** (see Ahmed 2006: 175). I am tempted to call this move **“being for being against.”** My response to **the affirmation of negation would not** **be to affirm or negate affirmation in return but to ask for a different orientation to what is being or not being affirmed.** Rather than affirming positive or negative affects, my task throughout this book has been to read how positive and negative affects are distributed and how this distribution is pedagogic—we learn about affect by reading about the how of its distribution. In this chapter, I want to think about the redistribution of affect that is possible in the achievement of what we can call **“revolutionary consciousnesses”** and how this redistribution takes time and animates our relationship to time. Forms of political consciousness must be achieved, as György Lukács taught us in History and Class Consciousness (1971). It is important not to individuate such an achievement but to recognize the role of collective labor in the process of becoming conscious of class, race, and gendered forms of oppression, which involves a necessary estrangement from the present. **We can explore the strange and perverse mixtures of hope and despair, optimism and pessimism within forms of politics that take as a starting point a critique of the world as it is, and a belief that the world can be different.** I will do so by offering a consideration of dystopian forms, including what I call happiness dystopias. Why dystopia? Why not utopia, which seems to rest as a form more explicitly on visions of happy futures? Of course, utopias cannot be reduced to happy futures. As Jean Baudrillard argues, “Utopia does not write itself into the future. It is always, from right now, what the order of the day is missing” ([2001] 2006: 62). Fredric Jameson agrees, suggesting that utopias do not present us with happy images of an after-this-life: “This is why it is a mistake to approach Utopias with positive expectations, as though they offered visions of happy worlds” (2005: 12). The Utopian form is a testimony to the possibility of an alternative and involves hope in the very mode of its negative critique. Indeed, Jameson argues that “the Utopian form itself is the answer to the universal ideological conviction that no alternative is possible” (232). The Utopian form might not make the alternative possible, but it aims to make impossible the belief that there is no alternative.” (408-415)