#### **Queerness is not yet here, but a horizon we must always strive for - strategies of political pragmatism miss the ontological ambiguity with which queerness is imbued - we should not abandon the future, but instead reframe what futurity means.**

**Muñoz**, J. (**2009**). Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity. NYU Press. Retrieved February 22, 2020, from www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt9qg4nr

**The** **not**-**quite-conscious** **is** the realm of **potentiality** **that must be called on,** and insisted on, if we are ever **to look beyond the pragmatic sphere of the here and now**, the hollow nature of the present Thus, I wish to argue that queerness is not quite here; it is, in the language of Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben, a potentiality.4 Alain Badiou refers to that which follows the event as the thing-that-is-not-yet-imagined and in my estimation queerness too should be understood to have a similar valence. But my turn to this notion of the not-quite-conscious is again indebted to Bloch and his massive three-volume text The Principle o f H ope.6 That treatise, both a continuation and an amplification of German idealist practices of thought, is a critical discourse— which is to say that it does not avert or turn away from the present. Rather, it critiques an autonaturalizing temporality that we might call straight tim e. **Straight time tells us that there is no future but the here and now of our everyday life**.7 **The only futurity promised is that of reproductive** majoritarian **heterosexuality**, the spectacle of the state refurbishing its ranks through overt and subsidized acts of reproduction. In No Future, Lee **Edelman advises queers that the future is “kid stuff**."8 Although I believe that there is a lot to like about Edelman’s polemic— mostly its disdain for the culture of the child— I ultimately want to speak for a notion of queer futurity by turning to Blochs critical notion of utopia. It is equally polemical to argue that we are not quite queer yet, that queerness, what we will really know as **queerness, does not yet exist** I suggest that **holding queerness in a sort of ontologically humble state**, under a conceptual grid in which we do not claim to always already know queerness in the world, potentially **staves off** theossifying effects of neoliberal ideology and the **degradation of politics** brought about by representations of queerness in contemporary popular culture.A posterior glance at different moments, objects, and spaces might offer us an anticipatory illumination of queerness. **We cannot trust in** the **manifestations of** what some people would call **queerness in the present,** especially as embodied in the pragmatic debates that dominate contemporary gay and lesbian politics. (Here, again, I most pointedly mean **U.S. queers clamoring** for **their right to participate in** the suspect institution of **marriage** **and**, maybe worse, to serve in **the military.)** None of this is to say that there are not avatars of a queer futurity, both in the past and the present, especially in sites of cultural production. What I am suggesting is that we gain a greater conceptual and theoretical leverage if we see queerness as something that is not yet here. In this sense it is useful to consider Edmund Husserl, phenomenology’s founder, and his invitation to look to horizons of being.9 Indeed **to access queer visuality** **we** may **need** to squint, **to** strain our vision and force it to **see** otherwise, **beyond** the limited vista of **the here and now**. To critique an overarching “here and now” is not to turn one’s free away from the everyday. Roland Barthes wrote that the mark of the utopian is the quotidian.10 Such an argument would stress that the utopian is an impulse that we see in everyday life. This impulse is to be glimpsed as something that is extra to the everyday transaction of heteronormative capitalism. This quotidian example of the **utopian can be glimpsed in utopian bonds, affiliations, designs, and gestures** that exist **within the present** moment**.** Turning to the New York School of poetry, a moment that is one of the cultural touchstones for my research, we can consider a poem by James Schuyler that speaks of a hope and desire that is clearly utopian. T he poem, like most of Schuyler s body of work, is clearly rooted in an observation o f the affective realm o f the present. Yet **there is an** excess that the poet also conveys, a type of **affective excess** that presents **the enabling force of** a forward-dawning **futurity that is queerness**. In the poem "A photograph," published in 1974 in the collection Hymn to L ife, a picture that resides on the speakers desk sparks a recollection of domestic bliss.

1. **The resolution asks us to recognize the unconditional right of workers to strike, but such a question misses the point - conventional politics presuppose “workers” as white, heteronormative, and masculine providers while obscuring and removing alternative survival economies from the collective gaze - queering our notions of what “work” is and ought to be is a prerequisite to answering such a question**

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and Caring Queerly” Pages 88-89 Duke University Press, 2020)

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As Guerrero points out, caring labor stands at the center of contemporary economic relations; recognizing this fact shifts predominant understand- ings of work, the workplace, and the worker. The **labor movement** in the United States has a long history of being **organized around** a **normative male worker** **in** industrial **production, who demands a “family wage**” **as the man** of the house **responsible** **for** his dependent **wife and children**. This worker was also the insistent focus of the Trump campaign in 2016 and of much political discussion in 2020, apparently the only worker who matters, **despite** the fact that **fewer** and fewer **households** are **organized around a single** (male) **earner**, and fewer and fewer jobs are in traditional industrial production.

Responding to these economic shifts and backward-looking politi- cal discourse, NDWA has powerfully argued that domestic work could be considered the paradigmatic form of work in neoliberal economies, thereby making the organizing of nontraditional labor a newly paradig- matic form of organizing. Domestic workers are claiming the category of worker as their own and simultaneously remaking that very category. Both work and worker are different. **Retail** work, **restaurant work, health care**, home care, **and domestic work** are jobs **filled by people of color**, white **women, migrants**, and/or **queer and gender-nonconforming** workers— notably **not** the **imagined** lunch-pail **laborer** of the past who brought home a “family wage.”

Our analysis suggests that disability **justice entails** joining in this rethinking—**queering**—of normative **understandings of work** and worker, for many disabled people are in need of care, and the workers who help them live on must be part of any movement for disability justice. This is **emphasized by** the historical **injustices** committed **against** **those doing** the work of **care in the home**. Historian Premilla Nadasen and activist Tiffany Williams succinctly summarize the **racial politics of domestic work in the United States** that have **excluded domestic workers**, along with agricul- tural workers**, from protections and benefits** afforded other forms of labor:

For most of US history, domestic work was performed by African American and immigrant women. During the 19th century, domestic workers in the North were mostly Irish immigrant women; in the West, they were Asian or Latina; in the South, African American women—first as slaves and then as freed people—worked in the homes of white families. . . . In the US, the racial politics of domestic work profoundly influenced its treatment in labor legislation in the first half of the 20th century. **When New Deal** labor **legislation** was **enacted** in the 1930s, Southern **Congressmen**, **concerned about** maintaining **control over** the **African American labor** force, **insisted** **on** the **exclusion of domestic** and agricultural **workers** **from Social Security, mini- mum wage,** and **collective bargaining** laws.30

This historical **exclusion** has **created gendered and racialized** **labor** mar- kets that now attract increasing numbers of immigrants from the global South.31 **Workers in these markets** often **move between “legitimate” work**- places (rehab hospitals and nursing homes, for example) **and** various **sur- vival economies**—the CNA who first works **in** a rehab facility and then finds a job in **private home**, or the seasonal agricultural worker who moves from the fields into undocumented factory work. When migrants them- selves are denounced as “criminals,” undocumented immigrants fearful of deportation try **to find a foothold in jobs not subject to official over- sight**.3 So it is that the survival of those in need of care depends on caring labor done by persons struggling to survive.

Puar’s work is a necessary theorization that advances our thinking about social relations in a geopolitical order that produces debility as dis- tinct from and yet intertwined with disability.33 Attending to geopolitical context articulates the relationship between disability and debility at sev- eral points, including how some populations are put at risk of debilitation. The geopolitical **model** also creates a context for analyzing the relations that **funnel** so many **people seeking to escape** debilitating **violence** into caring labor.

Specifically, in moving away from various forms of debilitating vio- lence, vast groups of people are swept into global labor flows that propel them **into caring labor** and other kinds of service jobs. Many people who think of themselves as independent and autonomous depend on caring labor. It can seem as if disabled people are the ones primarily in need of caring labor, but as Saskia Sassen has pointed out, service jobs are essential to the contemporary global economy: “Low-wage workers par- ticipate in leading sectors [that are generally understood as] professional sectors, but the [low-wage workers] do so under conditions which render them invisible.”34 The professionals and businessmen in gleaming glass towers are dependent on workers in service jobs, from low-paid clerical and cleaning staff to all manner of delivery services and workers in food trucks, coffee shops, and restaurants.35 Yet **when students pick up food from coffee shops or bankers pick up** their **suits from** the **dry cleaners** they **rarely think** that **they are depending on others** to feed and clothe them, in part **because** the **labor** of cooking and doing the laundry **has** often **been invisible** as work when done in the home. As Puar notes, attending to this labor and to its frequently debilitating conditions “exposes the perceived norm as a fantasy of the social.”36 This fantasy includes the perceived norm of the autonomous individual who does not depend on the care of others.

1. **The impact is chrononormativity - pragmatic and linear approaches to politics reinforce the binding nature of straight time where systems of power link temporality, change, and identity together into a neat little package to maximize productivity and legitimize state violence in a way that is inherently antiqueer, rendering any alternative modes of being killable at the earliest convenience Thus the role of the ballot is to endorse the debater that best addresses the violence of straight time**

Elizabeth **Freeman**, **2010** (Elizabeth Freeman is Professor of English at the University of California, Davis. “Time Binds: Queer Temporalities, Queer Histories” Pages 3-6 Duke University Press, 2010 Wally)

By portraying the reciprocal derangement of bodies and sequences, k.i.p. offers a through-the-looking-glass view of how time binds a socius. By ‘‘binds,’’ I mean to invoke the way that human energy is collated so that it can sustain itself.Π By **‘‘time binds**,’’ I mean something beyond the obvious point that people find themselves with less time than they need. Instead, I mean that naked **flesh is bound into socially meaningful** embodiment **through** **temporal regulation**: binding is what turns mere existence into a form of mastery in a process I’ll refer to as **chrononormativity**, or **the use of time to organize** **individual** human **bodies toward maximum productivity**. And I mean that **people are bound to one another**, engrouped, **made to feel coherently collective, through** particular **orchestrations of time**: Dana Luciano has termed this chronobiopolitics, or ‘‘the sexual arrangement of the time of life’’ of entire populations.π Chrononormativity is a mode of implantation, a technique by which institutional forces come to seem like somatic facts. Schedules, calendars, time zones, and even wristwatches inculcate what the sociologist Evitar Zerubavel calls ‘‘hidden rhythms,’’ forms of **temporal experience** that **seem natural to those whom** they **privilege**.∫ **Manipulations** of time **convert** historically specific **regimes of asymmetrical power into** seemingly **ordinary bodily tempos** and routines, which in turn **organize the** value and **meaning of time**. The advent of **wage work**, for example, **entailed a violent retemporalization of bodies** once tuned to the seasonal rhythms of agricultural labor.Ω An even broader description of chrononormativity appears in Pierre Bourdieu’s discussion of habitus—a social group’s cultivated set of gestural and attitudinal dispositions. Bourdieu argues that ‘‘the durably installed generative principle of regulated improvisations’’ structuring the norms of embodiment, personhood, and activity in a culture takes shape within the rhythms of gift exchange.∞≠ For Bourdieu, cultural competence and thus belonging itself are matters of timing, of coming to inhabit a culture’s expectations about the temporal lapses between getting and giving such that they seem inborn. More recently, Judith Butler has shown how the rhythms of gendered performance— specifically, repetitions—accrete to ‘‘freeze’’ masculinity and femininity into timeless truths of being.∞∞ Zerubavel’s ‘‘hidden rhythms,’’ Bourdieu’s ‘‘habitus,’’ and Butler’s ‘‘gender performativity’’ all describe how repetition engenders identity, situating the body’s supposed truth in what Nietzsche calls ‘‘monumental time,’’ or static existence outside of historical movement.∞≤ But Bourdieu alone allows us to see that subjectivity emerges in part through mastering the cultural norms of withholding, delay, surprise, pause, and knowing when to stop—through mastery over certain forms of time. In **temporal manipulations** that go beyond pure repetition, his work suggests, institutionally and culturally **enforced** rhythms, or **timings, shape flesh into legible, acceptable embodiment**. In **chronobiopolitics**, this process **extends beyond individual** anatomies **to encompass** the management of **entire populations**: people **whose individual bodies are synchronized** not only **with** one another but also with **larger temporal schemae** experience belonging itself as natural. In a chronobiological society, **the state and** other **institutions**, **including** representational apparatuses, **link** properly **temporalized bodies to narratives of** movement and **change**. **These are** teleological schemes of events or **strategies for living such as marriage,** accumulation of **health** and **wealth** for the future, **reproduction,** childrearing**, and death** and its attendant rituals. Indeed, as the anthropologist John Borneman’s work clarifies, so-called personal **histories become legible only within** a **state-sponsored timeline**.∞≥ This timeline tends to serve a nation’s economic interests, too. In the United States, for instance, states now license, register, or certify birth (and thus citizenship, eventually encrypted in a Social Security id for taxpaying purposes), marriage or domestic partnership (which privatizes caretaking and regulates the distribution of privatized property), and death (which terminates the identities linked to state benefits, redistributing these benefits through familial channels), along with sundry privileges like driving (to jobs and commercial venues) and serving in the military (thus incurring state expenditures that often serve corporate interests). **In the eyes of the state**, this **sequence of socioeconomically ‘‘productive’’ moments is** what it means to have a **life** at all. And in zones not fully reducible to the state—in, say, psychiatry, medicine, and law—having a life entails the ability to narrate it not only in these state-sanctioned terms but also in a novelistic framework: as event-centered, goal-oriented, intentional, and culminating in epiphanies or major transformations.∞∂ The logic of **time-as-productive** thereby **becomes** one of serial **cause-and effect**: **the past seems useless unless it predicts** and becomes **material for a future**. **These teleologies of living**, in turn, **structure** the **logic of** a **‘‘people’s’’ inheritance**: rather than just the transfer of private property along heteroreproductive lines, inheritance becomes **the familial** **and collective legacy** from which **a group will draw a properly political future**—be it national, ethnic, or something else. **Chronobiopolitics harnesses** not only **sequence** but **also cycle**, the dialectical companion to sequence, for the idea of **time as cyclical stabilizes its forward movement, promising renewal rather than rupture**. And as Julia Kristeva argues, the gender binary organizes the meaning of this and other times conceived as outside of—but symbiotic with—linear time.∞Σ Kristeva claims that Woman, as a cultural symbol, comes to be correlated with the endless returns of cyclical time, as well as the stasis of monumental time: the figure of Woman supplements the historically specific nation-state with appeals to nature and eternity. Luciano dates a particularly Anglo-American version of this arrangement to the early nineteenth century, when ‘‘separate spheres’’ were above all temporal: the repetitions and routines of domestic life supposedly restored working men to their status as human beings responding to a ‘‘natural’’ environment, renewing their bodies for reentry into the time of mechanized production and collective national destiny.∞Π In the wake of industrialization in the United States, she writes, mourning was newly reconceptualized as an experience outside of ordinary time, as eternal, recurrent, even sacred—and so, I would argue, were any number of other affective modes. Mid-nineteenth-century writers figured maternal love, domestic bliss, romantic attachments, and eventually even bachelorhood as havens from a heartless world and, more importantly, as sensations that moved according to their own beat. **The emerging discourse of domesticity**, especially, inculcated and validated a set of feelings—love, security, harmony, peace, romance, sexual satisfaction, motherly instincts—**in part by figuring them as timeless**, as primal, as **a human condition** located in and emanating from the psyche’s interior. In this sense, the nineteenth century’s celebrated ‘‘heart,’’ experienced by its owner as the bearer of archaic or recalcitrant sensations, was the laboring body’s double, the flip side of the same coin of industrialization. **The** fact that the **wage system privatized domestic activities** also meant that they could be experienced as taking place in a different time zone. In the home, **time bound persons ‘‘back’’ to ‘‘nature,’’ a state of innocence** that could be **understood** as restorative **only if women’s domestic labor** were **fully effaced**. If time becomes history through its organization into a series of discrete units linked by **cause and effect,** this **organization** in turn retrospectively **constructs** an **imagined** plenitude of **‘‘timeless’’ time to which history can return and regroup**.

#### **In response to the call of modern politics to engage in these violent temporalities, I advocate for a fundamentally different approach - take ecstasy with me - accepting the invitation allows us to vacate the here and how for a utopian then and there that distorts straight time and restructures desire towards queer liberation**

**Muñoz**, J. (**2009**). Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity. NYU Press. Retrieved February 22, 2020, from www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt9qg4nr

**WE MUST VACATE the here and now for a then and there**. Individual transports are insufficient **We need to engage in a collective temporal distortion**. We need to step out of the rigid conceptualization that is a straight present In this book I have argued that **queerness is not yet here**; **thus, we must always be future bound in our desires and designs.** **The future is a spatial and temporal destination**. It is also another place, if we believe Heidegger, who argued that the temporal is prior to the spatial W hat we need to know is that **queerness** is not yet here but it **approaches like a crashing wave of potentiality**. And we must give in to its propulsion, its status as a destination. Willingly we let ourselves feel queerness s pull, knowing it as something else that we can feel, that we must feel **We must take ecstasy**. The tide of this conclusion is M ed from indie pop stars the Magnetic Fields. **Sung** **by** the wonderfully languid **Stephen Merritt**, the bands leader, the song and its titular request could **certainly be heard as a call** **to** **submit to pleasures both pharmaceutical and carnal**. And let us hope that they certainly mean at least both those things. But when I listen to this song I hear something else, or more nearly, I feel something else. A wave of lush emotions washes over me, and other meanings for the word ecstasy are keyed. **The gender-neutral songs address resonates queerly and performs a certain** kind of **longing for a something else.** Might it be a call for a certain kind of transcendence? Or is it in fact something more? The Magnetic Fields are asking us to perform a certain “stepping out" with them. That “stepping out" would hopefully include a night on the town, but it could and maybe should be something more. Going back through religion and philosophy we might think of a stepping out of time and place, leaving the here and now of straight time for a then and a there that might be queer futurity. Saint Theresas ecstasy, most memorably signaled in Lorenzo Berninis marble sculpture, has served as the visual sign of ecstasy for many Christians. The affective transport chiseled in her face connotes a kind of rapture that has enthralled countless spectators. It represents a leaving of self for something larger in the form of divinity. Plotinus described this form of ecstasy as Gods help to reach God and possess him. In Plotinus, God reaches man beyond all reason and gives him a kind of happiness that is ecstasy.1 In seminar X X , Lacan looks to Berninis sculpture as the most compelling example of what he calls the Other or feminine jouissance.2 Ecstasy and puissance thus both represent an individualistic move outside of the self These usages resonates with the life of the term ecstasy in the history of philosophy. Ekstasis, in die ancient Greek (exstare in the Latin), means "to stand” or "to be out outside of oneself)” ex meaning "out” and stasis meaning "stand.” Generally the term has meant a mode of contemplation or consciousness that is not self-enclosed, particularly in regard to being conscious of the other: By the time we get to phenomenology, especially Heidegger, we encounter a version of being outside of oneself in time. In Being and Tim e Heidegger reflects on the activity of timeliness and its relation to ekstatisch.3 Knowing ecstasy is having a sense of timeliness s motion, comprehending a temporal unity, which includes the past (having-been), the future (the not-yet), and the present (the makingpresent). This temporally calibrated idea of ecstasy contains the potential to help us encounter a queer temporality, a thing that is not the linearity that many of us have been calling straight time. While discussing the Montreal-based band Lesbians on Ecstasy, Halberstam points to their mobilization of queer temporality through their thought experiment of imagining lesbian history as if it were on ecstasy. Here they certainly mean the drug MDMA, but they also mean an ecstatic temporality. As Halberstam explicates, their electronic covers of earnest lesbian anthems remake the past to reimagine a new temporality.4 The “stepping out” that the Magnetic Fields songs tide requests, this plaintive “Take Ecstasy with Me**,” is a request to step out of the here and now of straight time**. Let us briefly consider the song’s invitation, located in its lyrics. It begins with a having-been: "You used to slide down the carpeted stairs / Or down the banister / You stuttered like a Kaleidoscope / ’Cause you knew too many words / You used to make ginger bread houses / W e used to have taffy pulls.” After this having-been in the form of fecund romanticized childhood is rendered, we hear the song’s chorus, which contains this invitation to step out of time with the speaker/ singer: "Take ecstasy with me, baby / Take ecstasy with me.” W hen we first hear this invitation it seems like it is merely a beckoning to go back to this idealized having-been. But then the present (the making-present) is invoked in the songs next few lines, lines that first seem to be about further describing the mythic past but on closer listening telegraph a painful instant from the present: “You had a black snow mobile / We drove out under the northern lights / A vodka bottle gave you those raccoon eyes / We got beat up just for holding hands.” Did the vodka give the songs addressee raccoon eyes? Or was it the bottle deployed in an act of violence? Certainly we know that the present being described in the song is one in which we are “beat up just for holding hands.” At this point we hear the lyrical refrain differently “Take ecstasy with me, baby / Take ecstasy with me.” The weird, quirky pop song takes on the affective cadence of a stirring queer anthem. (A cover of this song by the electronic dance act chk chk chk did briefly become a dance-floor anthem.) Take ecstasy with me thus becomes a request to stand out of time together, to resist the stultifying temporality and time that is not ours, that is saturated with violence both visceral and emotional, a time that is not queerness. Queerness time is the time of ecstasy. Ecstasy is queerness s way. We know time through the field of the affective, and affect is tightly bound to temporality. But let us take ecstasy together, as the Magnetic Fields request. **That means going beyond the** **singular shattering that a version of jouissance suggests or the transport of Christian rapture**. Taking ecstasy with one another, in as many ways as possible, can perhaps be our best way of enacting a queer time that is not yet here but nonetheless always potentially dawning. Taking ecstasy with one another is an invitation, a call, to a then-and there, a not-yet-here. Following this books rhythm of cross-temporal comparison, I offer lesbian poet Elizabeth Bishops invitation to her staunch spinster mentor Marianne Moore to “come flying”: Invitation to Miss Marianne Moore From Brooklyn, over the Brooklyn Bridge, on this fine morning, please come flying In a doud of fiery pale chemicals, please come flying to the rapid rolling of thousands of small blue drums descending out of the mackerel sky over the glittering grandstand of harbor-water, please come fiying.s Ih e next few lines describe the river that the two poets would traverse, the multitude of dags they would behold on ships. Bishop refers to Moores signature three-cornered Paul Revere hat and her pointy black shoes, making the address all the more personal and highlighting M oores own queer extravagance. They would “mount” the magical sky with what Bishop calls a natural heroism. Our queer dynamic duo would then fly over “the accidents, above the malignant movies, the taxicabs and injustices at large.” This flight is a spectacle of queer transport made lyric. Each stanza closes with the invitation to come flying. The last two stanzas are especially poignant for my thesis: With dynasties of negative constructions darkening and dying around you, with g ram m ar that suddenly turns and shines like flocks of sandpipers flying, please come flying. Come like a light in the white mackerel sky, come like a daytime comet with a long unnebulous train of words, from Brooklyn, over the Brooklyn Bridge, on this fine morning, please come frying.6 It is important to note that the poems last few lines announce the flight s destination as not determinedly spatial but instead as temporal: “this fine morning.” Kathryn R Kent has written carefully about the complicated cross-generational bond between the two women that eventually led to a sort of disappointment when Moores mother (with whom she lived) became an overarching influence in her life and overwhelmed the identificatory erotics between the two great poets.7 (As I have maintained, disappointment is a big part of utopian longing.) Kent explains the ways in which Bishop s work signaled a queer discourse of invitation that did not subsume the other but was instead additive. Two other queer ghosts who float over the bridge are Walt Whitman and Hart Crane, both of whom wrote monumental poems about the bridge and what it represented. Bishop and Moore were both conversant about that work and the queer intertext that was being rendered. One can perhaps also decipher the living presence of writer Samuel K Delany hovering. He is the author of “Atlantis: A Model 1924,” a haunting story that meditates on his own family history as it is interlaced with Cranes biography and his relationship with the Brooklyn Bridge.8 The point is that the poem itself is poised at a dense connective site in the North American queer imagination. The Brooklyn Bridge and crossing the river, arguably both ways, represents the possibility of queer transport, leaving the here and now for a then and there. Thus, I look at Bishop’s poem as being illustrative of a queer utopianism that is by its very nature additive, like the convergence of past, present, and future that I have discussed throughout this book. This convergence is the very meaning of the ecstatic. The poem, like the pop song, is also a unique example of the concrete utopianism for which I am calling. Bishop does not overly sugarcoat the invitation; she clearly states that there are "dynasties of negative constructions / darkening and dying around you.” But this invitation, this plea, is made despite the crushing force of the dynasty of the here and now. **It is an invitation to desire differently,** to **desire more,** to **desire better**. Cruising Utopia can ultimately be read as an invitation, a performative provocation. Manifesto-like and ardent, it is a call to think about our lives and times differently, to look beyond a narrow version of the here and now on which so many around us who are bent on the normative count Utopia in this book has been about an insistence on something else, something better, something dawning. I offer this book as a resource for the political imagination. This text is meant to serve as something of a flight plan for a collective political becoming. These pages have described aesthetic and political practices that need to be seen as necessary modes of stepping out of this place and time to something fuller, vaster, more sensual, and brighter. **From shared critical dissatisfaction we arrive at collective potentiality.**

1. **The AC functions as a call for a melancholic utopia - things aren’t perfect and likely never will be, but engaging in forms of queer worldmaking allows a break from modern ideas of what utopia ought to be, and creates a rupture in modern temporalities**

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The idea that a different type of universalism might be possible comes from a number of different sources, bringing together the religious stud- ies critique of secularism with the queer critique of normativity. If we take seriously historian Ann Braude’s idea (discussed in chapter 1) of recognizing “religion” in unexpected places, we do, indeed, find it in very queer sites.19 Take, for example, the conclusion of José Esteban Muñoz’s book Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity, titled “**Take Ecstasy with Me**,” an allusion to the song of the same title.20 As performed by the indie pop group The Magnetic Fields—whose lead singer, Stephin Merritt, Muñoz describes as “wonderfully languid”—the song **offers** **possibilities** that Muñoz names as “pleasures both phar- maceutical and carnal” and evokes utopian possibilities. **The song is**, however, quite **melancholy**, invoking both lost childhood pleasures and violence directed against its narrator and a friend or lover for “just hold- ing hands.” **From this melancholy starting point,** **Muñoz** is able to **draw upon** a **number** of sources for the **queer world-making embodied in** the invitation to “**take ecstasy with me**”: the Christian ascetic ecstasy of St. Teresa of Ávila, the science fiction and life writing of Samuel Delany and Delany’s imaginative intertwining with the poetry of Hart Crane, and Muñoz’s own reading of poet Elizabeth Bishop. **This world is not** really religious or **secular**—**it** does, however, call upon a carnal ecstasy that **is about more than sex**. **And** it **is** most decidedly **queer**.

In responding to Muñoz’s invitation to take ecstasy, I hear the possi- bility that queer melancholy could move toward a perverse affirmation of both hardship and political solidarity with others outcast from the normative world. The practice of **pursuing melancholic ecstasy** so as to **produce** a **perverse solidarity** is **in** its combination of **hope and impos- sibility a utopian undertaking**. In the common sense understanding of melancholy, the emotion hardly seems like the feeling that one would like for one’s utopia. Utopia is no-place, after all, ours to imagine. So why imagine a queer utopia overcast with melancholy?

But Muñoz’s book engages an understanding of utopia that does not represent Elysian fields stretching unproblematically to the horizon. Muñoz reminds us to be critical and think queerly about how utopia might be imagined. One scholar who has done this is Angelika Bam- mer, who wrote a very persuasive book about feminist utopian literature and how its **imagined utopian worlds—in which** everything works well and **everyone is happy**—seemed to always **depend on** first **removing** any **people who threaten the** holistically idealized **realm**—such as the removal of all men from Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s Herland (echoed by Gilman’s commitment to racial “disappearances,” as documented by Tracy Fessenden).21

Bammer’s **critique focuses on** the ways in **which** Gilman’s and other feminist **utopias create happiness for “everyone” by removing** from “**ev- eryone” people who might be disruptive or simply different**, a line of thought that connects to later queer work, such as Sara Ahmed’s ques- tioning of the familial imperative, “**I just want you to be happy**.” Such a wish can be positively **oppressive in its assumption** that the family already knows what will make one happy. As Simone de Beauvoir ob- served, “There is no possibility of measuring the happiness of others, and it is always easy to describe as happy the situation in which one wishes to place them.” This logic is made vivid by Jeanette Winterson’s amazingly titled memoir, Why Be Happy When You Could Be Normal?, which is the urgent question her mother asks of her queer daughter as she heads out the door.22 Both Ahmed and Winterson know that **the** familial **imperative to be happy** actually **confuses happiness with nor- malcy**, something **that** **queer children** havealready **act**ed **against**.

In contrast with a utopian happiness dependent upon disappearances, **Muñoz’s affectively charged,** melancholic cruising of **utopia affirms** that **happiness need not be** the most cherished **goal of queer world-making**. **Queer utopias are** open to **ambivalence and disjunction**, are off-kilter, **even perverse**.23 Refusing to give up on parts of oneself and one’s life in order to join a world, no matter how utopian, in which everyone is “happy” means embracing negative affects that have been the subject of much recent work on public feelings. For instance, David L. Eng and David Kazanjian’s important book on grief, Loss: The Politics of Mourn- ing, brings together queer scholarship, critical race studies, and post- colonial work. These fields all necessarily engage loss. In none is grief a simply individual event, for individuals are always already part of collec- tivities that—given the punitive powers of sexism, homophobia, trans- phobia, racism, and colonialism—have suffered loss.

Grieving therefore requires a “politics of mourning,” collective work necessary to address loss and turn toward a sense of fractured possibil- ity.24 A sense of the future as far from determined, as needing to be created, loosens the hold of a traditional utopian universalism. Utopia is far from assured, and belonging may be quite tentative, which saves utopian possibility from the violence necessary to secure the borders of a holistic world that is also supposed to secure happiness for those who remain inside. **An affectively queer utopia is open to** crosscutting **differences**, including those of race, nation, and sex. **Not everybody has to be** contained **within this bounded universal, nor does** such a **utopia require everybody to share** in **the same feelings**, whether of happiness or of grief. In this sense, **norms would no longer be sutured to modern power** (as we saw in chapter 1), **no longer would** the **statistically average** also **represent what everyone should** do and **be**. There is no projection of a common course of life progressing from one stage to the next, child- hood to adulthood.

1. **Other forms of critical analysis fall trap to the Evidency of normal historical analysis that nullifies and ignores the politics of imagination that a queer Utopia necessitates - only the aff can solve**

**Muñoz**, J. (**2009**). Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity. NYU Press. Retrieved February 22, 2020, from www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt9qg4nr

**Marx fails to “read” the performative**, along the lines of thought first inaugurated by J. L. Austin, is implicitly to critique the epistemological.14 **Performativity and utopia** both call into **question what is epistemologically there and signal** **a** highly ephemeral **ontological field** that can be **characterized as** a doing in **futurity**. Thus, a manifesto is a call to a doing in and for the future. **The utopian** impulse to be gleaned from the poem is a **call for “doing” that is a becoming**: the becoming of and for “future generations.” Thisrejection of the here and now, the ontologically static, is indeed, by the measure of homonormative codes, a maniacal and oddball endeavor. The queer utopian project addressed here turns to the fringe of political and cultural production to offset the tyranny of the homonormative. It is drawn to tastes, ideologies, and aesthetics that can only seem odd, strange, or indeed queer next to the muted striving of the practical and normalcy-desiring homosexual.

**The** turn to the call of the **no-longer-conscious is not a turn to normative historical analysis**. Indeed it is important to complicate queer history and **understand it as doing more than** the flawed process of merely **evidencing**. **Evidencing** protocols often **fail to enact real** hermeneutical **inquiry and** **instead** opt to **reinstate that which is known** in advance. Thus, **practices of knowledge production** that are content merely to **cull** selectively **from the past, while** striking a pose of positivist undertaking or empirical knowledge retrieval, often **nullify** the **political imagination**. Jameson’s Marxian dictate “always historicize”15 is not a methodological call for empirical data collection. **Instead**, it is a dialectical injunction, suggesting we **animate our critical faculties** by bringing the past to bear on the present and the future. **Utopian hermeneutics offer us a refined lens to view queerness**, insofar as queerness, **if it is** indeed **not quite here**, is nonetheless intensely relational with the past.

**The present is not enough**. **It is** impoverished and **toxic for queers and other** people **who do not feel the privilege of majoritarian belonging**, normative tastes, and “rational” expectations. (I address the question of rationalism shortly). Let me be clear that the idea is not simply to turn away from the present. One cannot afford such a maneuver, and if one thinks one can, one has resisted the present in favor of folly. The present must be known in relation to the alternative temporal and spatial maps provided by a perception of past and future affective worlds.

**The AC is not fundamentally difficult to understand - we say that normative statements of how linear time and pragmatic politics ought to function create violence against the Queer bodies that reject such practices: The only strategy that remains for bodies marked for death is to step out of the here and now of straight time, and instead embrace queer utopianism as a horizon for new modes of being**

**For this space, this means rejecting the static norms of debate that bind us to temporality and its violence - arguments that make normative statements like “you must defend the resolution” entrench violence against those who relate to debate as something more than a place to read homophobic philosophers from the 18th century or a game where we just read “independent voting issues” until one of them is dropped - thae 4 minute 1AR is a good example of how rigid time is used to exclude radical positions like the AC that need to dedicate more speaking to breaking the molds of debate instead of a random Locke case - this probably means you should give more credence to the arguments we do make and that you should be skeptical of any so-called “dropped arguments.”**