# 1NC

## 1

### T

#### Our interpretation is that affirmatives must enact the resolution through a three-tier process.

Reid-Brinkley 8 – PhD from UGA, professor of communications at the University of Pittsburgh (Shanara, “THE HARSH REALITIES OF “ACTING BLACK”: HOW AFRICAN-AMERICAN POLICY DEBATERS NEGOTIATE REPRESENTATION THROUGH RACIAL PERFORMANCE AND STYLE”)

The process of signifyin’ engaged in by the Louisville debaters is not simply designed to critique the use of traditional evidence. As Green argues, their goal is to “challenge the relationship between social power and knowledge.”57 In other words, those with social power within the debate community are able to produce and determine “legitimate” knowledge. These legitimating practices usually function to maintain the dominance of normative knowledge-making practices, while crowding out or directly excluding alternative knowledge-making 83 practices. The Louisville “framework looks to the people who are oppressed by current constructions of power.”58 Jones and Green offer an alternative framework for drawing claims in debate speeches, they refer to it as a three-tier process: A way in which you can validate our claims, is through the three-tier process. And we talk about personal experience, organic intellectuals, and academic intellectuals. Let me give you an analogy. If you place an elephant in the room and send in three blind folded people into the room, and each of them are touching a different part of the elephant. And they come back outside and you ask each different person they gone have a different idea about what they was talking about. But, if you let those people converse and bring those three different people together then you can achieve a greater truth.59 Jones argues that without the three tier process debate claims are based on singular perspectives that privilege those with institutional and economic power. The Louisville debaters do not reject traditional evidence per se, instead they seek to augment or supplement what counts as evidence with other forms of knowledge produced outside of academia. As Green notes in the double-octo-finals at CEDA Nationals, “Knowledge surrounds me in the streets, through my peers, through personal experiences, and everyday wars that I fight with my mind.”60 The thee-tier process: personal experience, organic intellectuals, and traditional evidence, provides a method of argumentation that taps into diverse forms of knowledge-making practices. With the Louisville method, personal experience and organic intellectuals are placed on par with traditional forms of evidence. While the Louisville debaters see the benefit of academic research, they are also critically aware of the normative practices that exclude racial and ethnic minorities from policy-oriented discussions because of their lack of training and expertise. Such exclusions prevent radical solutions to racism, classism, sexism, and homophobia from being more permanently addressed. According to Green: bell hooks talks about how when we rely solely on one perspective to make our claims, radical liberatory theory becomes rootless. That’s the reason why we use a three-tiered process. That’s why we use alternative forms of discourse such as hip hop. That’s also how we use traditional evidence and our personal narratives so you don’t get just one perspective claiming to be the right way. Because it becomes a more meaningful and educational view as far as how we achieve our education.61 The use of hip hop and personal experience function as a check against the homogenizing function of academic and expert discourse. Note the reference to bell hooks. Green argues that without alternative perspectives, “radical libratory theory becomes rootless.” The term rootless seems to refer to a lack of grounded-ness in the material circumstances that academics or experts study. In other words, academics and experts by definition represent an intellectual population with a level of objective distance from that which they study. For the Louisville debaters, this distance is problematic as it prevents the development of a social politic that is rooted in the community of those most greatly affected by the status of oppression.

#### Vote Neg:

#### 1 – Distancing DA – normative knowledge-making practices are steeped in expert vernaculars that crowd-out minority participation – exploration-sans policy analysis sans the three-tiers leads to distancing that demobilizes politics.

#### 2 – Access – not only are privileged debaters forced to acknowledge the structural advantages of their social location and encouraged to mobilize as accomplices to minority debaters, but students confront how lived experience shapes knowledge – their model instills a view from nowhere that encourages passing privilege.

#### 3 – Presumption – absent an affective connection towards space exploration, minority debaters become parasitically invested in imaginary futures which never materialize – turns case.

#### 4 – Pornotroping – the 1AC utilizes suffering as a currency to trade in exchange for ballots which commodifies experience and fosters ivory tower detachment from material suffering – turns the aff because they recreate cruel optimism.

#### 5 – TVA – Defend radical poetry as a method of entrenched, performative resistance against the logic of space exploration or introduce a petition towards the same goal.

#### Drop the debater – we indict their model of debate. Evaluate the T-shell through competing interpretations – you cannot be reasonably oppressive, and reasonability bright-lines are arbitrary which requires judge intervention. No RVIs – you should not win for proving you’re accessible – their model deters debaters from indicting oppressive practices and it forces debaters to defend anti-queer norms.

## 2

### K

#### The desire to fill the insatiable lack projects fantasies of complete identity on queer bodies. The 1ACs presumption of the complete, universal agent sustains the fantasy of the Child which exists in a structural antagonism with queerness.

**Edelman 98** – Lee, Jan. 1998, is the Fletcher Professor of English Literature at Tufts University. He is the author of Transmemberment of Song: Hart Crane’s Anatomies of Rhetoric and Desire (Stanford University Press, 1987, Published by: Ohio State University Press, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20107133>, recut Agastya

Like the network of signifying relations Lacan described as the symbolic, politics may function as the register within which we experience social reality, but only insofar as it compels us to experience that reality in the form of a fantasy: the fantasy, precisely, of form as such, of an order, an organization, assuring the stability of our identities as subjects and the consistency of the cultural structures through which those identities are reflected back to us in recognizable form. Though the material conditions of human experience may indeed be at stake in the various conflicts by means of which differing political perspectives vie for the power to name, and by naming to shape, our collective reality, the ceaseless contestation between and among their competing social visions expresses a common will to install as reality it self one libidinally-subtended fantasy or another and thus to avoid traumatically confronting the emptiness at the core of the symbolic "reality" produced by the order of the signifier. To put this otherwise: politics designates the ground on which imaginary relations, relations that hark back to a notion of the self misrecognized as enjoying an originary fullness–an undifferentiated presence that is posited retroactively and therefore lost, one might say, from the start–compete for symbolic fulfillment within the dispensation of the signifier. For the mediation of the signifier alone allows us to articulate these imaginary relations, though always at the price of introducing the distance that precludes their realization: the distance inherent in the chain of ceaseless deferrals and mediations to which the very structure of the linguistic system must give birth. The signifier, as alienating and meaningless token of our symbolic construction as subjects, as token, that is, of our subjectification through subjection to the prospect of meaning; the signifier, by means of which we always inhabit the order of the Other, the order of a social and linguistic reality articulated from somewhere else; the signifier, which calls us into meaning by seeming to call us to ourselves, only ever confers upon us a sort of promissory identity, one with which we never succeed in fully coinciding because we, as subjects of the signifier, can only be signifiers ourselves: can only ever aspire to catch up to?to close the gap that divides and by dividing calls forth?ourselves as subjects. Politics names those processes, then, through which the social subject attempts to secure the conditions of its consolidation by identifying with what is outside it in order to bring it into the presence, deferred perpetually, of itself. Thus, if politics in the symbolic is always a politics of the symbolic, operating in the name, and in the direction, of a future reality, the vision it hopes to realize is rooted in an imaginary past. This not only means that politics conforms to the temporality of desire, to what we might call the inevitable historicity of desire–the successive displacements forward of figures of meaning as nodes of attachment, points of intense metaphoric investment, produced in the hope, however vain, of filling the gap within the subject that the signifier installs?but also that politics is a name for the temporalization of desire, for its translation into a narrative, for its teleological representation. Politics, that is, by externalizing and configuring in the fictive form of a narrative, allegorizes or elaborates sequentially those overdeterminations of libidinal positions and inconsistencies of psychic defenses occasioned by the intractable force of the drives unassimilable to the symbolic's logic of interpretation and meaning-production, drives that carry the destabilizing force of what insists out side or beyond, because foreclosed by, signification. These drives hold the place of what meaning misses in much the same way that the signifier, in its stupidity, its in trinsic meaninglessness, preserves at the heart of the signifying order the irreducible void that order as such undertakes to conceal. Politics, in short, gives us history as the staging of a dream of self-realization through the continuous negotiation and re construction of reality itself; but it does so without acknowledging that the future to which it appeals marks the impossible place of an imaginary past exempt from the deferrals intrinsic to the symbolic's signifying regime. Small wonder then that the post-Kantian era of the universal subject should produce as the figure of politics, because also as the figure of futurity collapsing undecidably into the past, the image of the child as we know it. Historically constructed as numerous scholars, including Phillipe Ari?s, Lawrence Stone, and James Kincaid, have made clear, to serve as the figurai repository for sentimentalized cultural identi fications, the child has come to embody for us the telos of the social order and been enshrined as the figure for whom that order must be held in perpetual trust. The image itself, however, in its coercive universalization, works to discipline political discourse by consigning it always to accede in advance to the reality of a collective futurity whose figurative status we are never permitted to acknowledge or address. From Delacroix's iconic image of Liberty urging us into a brave new world of revolutionary hope, her bare breast making each spectator the unweaned child to whom it belongs, to the equally universalized waif in the logo that performs in miniature the "politics" of the mega-musical Les Miz, 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.

#### Their philosophy structurally excludes the queer body – focus on reason and universalizability structurally excludes homosexuality – this isn’t an ad hom.

**Soble 3** – Alan Soble, The Monist 86:1 (Jan. 2003), pp. 55-89. Kant and Sexual Perversion

Kant immediately continues by completing his sparse inventory of three objectionable, sexually unnatural, practices: A second crimen carnis contra naturam is intercourse between sexus homogenii, in which the object of sexual impulse is a human being but there is homogeneity instead of heterogeneity of sex. . . . This practice too is contrary to the ends of humanity; for the end of humanity in respect of sexuality is to preserve the species without debasing the person; but in this instance the species is not being preserved (as it can be by a crimen carnis secundum naturam), but the person is set aside, the self is degraded below the level of the animals, and humanity is dishonoured. The third crimen carnis contra naturam occurs when the object of the desire is in fact of the opposite sex but is not human. Such is sodomy, or intercourse with animals. This, too, is contrary to the ends of humanity and against our natural instinct. It degrades mankind below the level of animals, for no animal turns in this way from its own species.75

#### Their *rights* discourse inevitably furthers dehumanization of queerness which normalizes and silences overkill.

Stanley 11 (Eric Stanley, Near Life, Queer Death: Overkill and Ontological Capture, 2011, p. 7-8) SJCP//JG

The problem of privatizing violence is not, however, simply one of the re-narration of the incidents. The law, and specifically “rights” discourse, which argues to be the safeguard of liberal democracy, is one of the other motors that works to privatize this structural violence. Rights are inscribed, at least in the symbolic, with the power to protect citizens of the nation-state from the excesses of the government and against the trespass of criminality. In paying attention to the anterior magic of the law, it is not so much, or at least not only, that some are granted rights because they are human, but that the performative granting of rights is what constitutes the promise of humanity under which some bodies are held. This is important in thinking about the murder of Brazell, and about antiqueer violence at large, because it troubles the very foundations of the notion of protection and the formative violence of the law itself. Accord- ing to the juridical logic of liberal democracy, if these rights are infringed upon, the law offers remedy in the name of justice. This necessary and assumptive formal equality before the law is the precursor for a system argued to be based on justice. In other words, for the law to lay claim to something called justice, formalized equality must be a precondition. The law then is a systematic and systematizing process of substitution where the singular and the general are shuttled and replaced to inform a matrix of fictive justice. Thus for the law to uphold the fantasy of justice and disguise its punitive aspirations, antiqueer violence, like all structural violence, must be narrated as an outlaw practice and unrepresentative of culture at large. This logic then must understand acts like the murder of Brazell in the singular. Through a mathematics of mimesis the law reproduces difference as similarity. By funneling the desperate situations and multiple possibilities into a calculable trespass kneading out the contours and the excess along the way, equality appears. To acknowledge the inequality of “equality” before the law would undo the fantastical sutures that bind the U.S. legal system. In the hope of being clear, for the law to read antiqueer violence as a symptom of larger cultural forces, the punishment of the “guilty party” would only be a representation of justice. To this end, the law is made pos- sible through the reproduction of both material and discursive formation of antiqueer, along with many other forms of violence. I too quickly rehearse this argument in the hope that it might foreclose the singular reliance on the law as the ground, and rights as the technology, of safety.23

#### This culminates in overkill – excessive violence that murders the queer beyond the confines of death.

**Stanley 11** – Eric Stanley, Near Life, Queer Death: Overkill and Ontological Capture, 2011, p. 8-10, Agastya

Overkill **is** a term used to indicate such excessive violence that it pushes a body beyond death. Overkill is often determined by the postmortem removal of body parts, as with the partial decapitation in **the** case of Lauryn Paige and the dissection of Rashawn Brazell. **The temporality of violence, the biological time when the heart stops pushing and pulling blood, yet the killing is not finished, suggests** the aim is not simply the end of a specific life, but the ending of all queer life. This is the time of queer death, when the utility of violence gives way to the pleasure in the other’s mortality. If queers, along with others, approximate nothing, then the task of ending, of killing, that which is nothing must go beyond normative times of life and death. In other words, if Lauryn was dead after the first few stab wounds to the throat, then what do the remaining fifty wounds signify? The legal theory that is offered to nullify the practice of overkill often functions under the name of the trans- or gay-panic defense. Both of these defense strategies argue that the murderer became so enraged after the “discovery” of either genitalia or someone’s sexuality they were forced to protect themselves from the threat of queerness. Estanislao Martinez of Fresno, California, used the trans-panic defense and received a four-year prison sentence after admittedly stabbing J. Robles, a Latina transwoman, at least twenty times with a pair of scissors. Importantly, this defense is often used, as in the cases of Robles and Paige, after the murderer has engaged in some kind of sex with the victim. The logic of the trans-panic defense as an explanation for overkill, in its gory semiotics, offers us a way of understanding queers as the nothing of Mbembe’s query. **Overkill names the technologies necessary to do away with that which is already gone.** Queers then are the specters of life whose threat is so unimaginable that one is “forced,” not simply to murder, but to push them backward out of time, **out of History, and into that which comes before. 27 In thinking the overkill of Paige and Brazell, I return to Mbembe’s query, “But what does it mean to do violence to what is nothing?”28** This question in its elegant brutality repeats with each case I offer. By resituating this question in the positive, the “something” that is more often than not translated as the human is made to appear. Of interest here, the category of the human assumes generality, yet can only be activated through the specificity of historical and politically located intersection. To this end, the human, the “something” of this query, within the context of the liberal democracy, names rights-bearing subjects, or those who can stand as subjects before the law. The human, then, makes the nothing not only possible but necessary. Following this logic, the work of death, of the death that is already nothing, not quite human, binds the categorical (mis)recognition of humanity. The human, then, resides in the space of life and under the domain of rights, whereas the queer inhabits **the place of compromised personhood and the** zone of death. As perpetual and axiomatic threat to the human, the queer is the negated double of the subject of liberal democracy. Understanding the nothing as the unavoidable shadow of the human serves to counter the arguments that suggest overkill and antiqueer violence at large are a pathological break and that the severe nature of these killings signals something extreme. In contrast, overkill is precisely not outside of, but is that which constitutes liberal democracy as such. **Overkill then is the proper expression to the riddle of the queer nothingness**. Put another way, the spectacular material-semiotics of overkill should not be read as (only) individual pathology; these vicious acts must indict the very social worlds of which they are ambassadors. Overkill is what it means, what it must mean, to do violence to what is nothing.

#### Vote negative to embrace the death drive – only an unwavering affirmation of queer negativity can collapse the symbolic organizing of society that requires the exclusion of queer bodies – a permutation is impossible they’ve picked optimism we endorse pessimism.

Baedan 12 – Summer 2012, authors’ manuscript, Baedan — journal of queer nihilism — issue one, <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/baedan-baedan#toc8>

Leftist notions of reform, progress, tolerance, and social justice always come up against the harsh reality that any progressive development can only mean a more sophisticated system of misery and exploitation; that tolerance means nothing; that justice is an impossibility. Activists, progressive and revolutionary alike, will always respond to our critique of the social order with a demand that we articulate some sort of alternative. Let us say once and for all that we have none to offer. Faced with the system’s seamless integration of all positive projects into itself, we can’t afford to affirm or posit any more alternatives for it to consume. Rather we must realize that our task is infinite, not because we have so much to build but because we have an entire world to destroy. Our daily life is so saturated and structured by capital that it is impossible to imagine a life worth living, except one of revolt. We understand destruction to be necessary, and we desire it in abundance. We have nothing to gain through shame or lack of confidence in these desires**.** There cannot be freedom in the shadow of prisons, there cannot be human community in the context of commodities, there cannot be self-determination under the reign of a state.This world—the police and armies that defend it, the institutions that constitute it, the architecture that gives it shape, the subjectivities that populate it, the apparatuses that administer its function, the schools that inscribe its ideology, the activism that franticly responds to its crises, the arteries of its circulation and flows, the commodities that define life within it, the communication networks that proliferate it, the information technology that surveils and records it—must be annihilated in every instance, all at once**. To shy away from this task, to assure our enemies of our good intentions,** is the most crass dishonesty. Anarchy, as with queerness, is most powerful in its negative form. Positive conceptions of these, when they are not simply a quiet acquiescence in the face of a sophisticated and evolving totality of domination, are hopelessly trapped in combat with the details of this totality on its own terms. In No Future, Edelman appropriates and privileges a particular psychoanalytic concept: the death drive. In elaborating the relationship of “queer theory and the death drive” (the subtitle of No Future), he deploys the concept in order to name a force that isn’t specifically tied to queer identity. He argues that the death drive is a constant eruption of disorder from within the symbolic order itself. It is an unnameable and inarticulable tendency for any society to produce the contradictions and forces which can tear that society apart. To avoid getting trapped in Lacanian ideology, we should quickly depart from a purely psychoanalytic framework for understanding this drive. Marxism, to imagine it another way, assures us that a fundamental crisis within the capitalist mode of production guarantees that it will produce its own negation from within itself. Messianic traditions, likewise, hold fast to a faith that the messiah must emerge in the course of daily life to overthrow the horror of history. The most romantic elaborations of anarchism describe the inevitability that individuals will revolt against the banality and alienation of modern life. Cybernetic government operates on the understanding that the illusions of social peace contain a complex and unpredictable series of risks, catastrophes, contagions, events and upheavals to be managed. Each of these contains a kernel of truth, if perhaps in spite of their ideologies. The death drive names that permanent and irreducible element which has and will always produce revolt. Species being, queerness, chaos, willful revolt, the commune, rupture, the Idea, the wild, oppositional defiance disorder—we can give innumerable names to what escapes our ability to describe it. Each of these attempts to term the erratic negation intrinsic to society. Each comes close to theorizing the universal tendency that any civilization will produce its own undoing. Explosions of urban rioting, the prevalence of methods of piracy and expropriation, the hatred of work, gender dysphoria, the inexplicable rise in violent attacks against police officers, self-immolation, non-reproductive sexual practices, irrational sabotage, nihilistic hacker culture, lawless encampments which exist simply for themselves—the death drive is evidenced in each moment that exceeds the social order and begins to rip at its fabric. The symbolic deployment of queerness by the social order is always an attempt to identify the negativity of the death drive, to lock this chaotic potential up in the confines of this or that subjectivity. Foucault’s work is foundational to queer theory in part because of his argument that power must create and then classify antagonistic subjectivities so as to then annihilate any subversive potential within a social body. Homosexuals, gangsters, criminals, immigrants, welfare mothers, transsexuals, women, youth, terrorists, the black bloc, communists, extremists: power is always constructing and defining these antagonistic subjects which must be managed. When the smoke clears after a riot, the state and media apparatuses universally begin to locate such events within the logic of identity, freezing the fluidity of revolt into a handful of subject positions to be imprisoned, or, more sinisterly, organized. Progressivism, with its drive toward inclusion and assimilation, stakes its hope on the social viability of these subjects, on their ability to participate in the daily reproduction of society. In doing so, the ideology of progress functions to trap subversive potential within a particular subject, and then to solicit that subject’s self-repudiation of the danger which they’ve been constructed to represent. This move for social peace fails to eliminate the drive, because despite a whole range of determinisms, there is no subject which can solely and perfectly contain the potential for revolt. The simultaneous attempt at justice must also fail, because the integration of each successive subject position into normative relations necessitates the construction of the next Other to be disciplined or destroyed. Rather than a progressive project which aims to steadily eradicate an emergent chaos over time, our project, located at the threshold of Edelman’s work, bases itself upon the persistent negativity of the death drive. We choose not to establish a place for queers, thereby shifting the structural position of queerness to some other population. We identify with the negativity of the drive, and thereby perform a disidentification away from any identity to be represented or which can beg for rights. Following Edelman further: To figure the undoing of civil society, the death drive of the dominant order, is neither to be nor to become that drive; such a being is not the point. Rather, acceding to that figural position means recognizing and refusing the consequences of grounding reality in denial of that drive. As the death drive dissolves those congealments of identity that permit us to know and survive as ourselves, so the queer must insist on disturbing, on queering, social organization as such—on disturbing, and therefore on queering ourselves and our investment in such organization. For queerness can never define an identity; it can only ever disturb one. And so, when I argue, as I aim to do here, that the burden of queerness is to be located less in the assertion of an oppositional political identity than in opposition to politics as the governing fantasy of realizing identities, I am proposing no platform or position from which queer sexuality or any queer subject might finally and truly become itself, as if it could somehow manage thereby to achieve an essential queerness. I am suggesting instead that the efficacy of queerness, its real strategic value, lies in its resistance to a symbolic reality that only ever invests us as subjects insofar as we invest ourselves in it, clinging to its governing fictions, its persistent sublimations, as reality itself. This negative queerness severs us from any simple understanding of ourselves. More so, it severs us from any formulaic or easily-represented notions of what we need, what we desire, or what is to be done. Our queerness does not imagine a coherent self, and thus cannot agitate for any selves to find their place within civilization. The only queerness that queer sexuality could ever hope to achieve would exist in a total refusal of attempts at the symbolic integration of our sexuality into governing and market structures. This refusal of representation forecloses on any hope that we ever have in identity politics or positive identity projects. We decline the progressive faith in the ability for our bodies to be figured into the symbolic order. We decline the liberal assurance that everything will turn out right, if we just have faith. No, instead we mean to “unleash negativity against the coherence of any self-image, subjecting us to a moral law that evacuates the subject so as to locate it through and in that very act of evacuation, permitting the realization, thereby, of a freedom beyond the boundaries of any image or representation, a freedom that ultimately resides in nothing more than the capacity to advance into emptiness.” A non-identitarian, unrepresentable, unintelligible queer revolt will be purely negative, or it won’t be at all. In the same way, an insurrectionary anarchy must embrace the death drive against all the positivisms afforded by the world it opposes. If we hope to interrupt the ceaseless forward motion of capital and its state, we cannot rely on failed methods. Identity politics, platforms, formal organizations, subcultures, activist campaigns (each being either queer or anarchist) will always arrive at the dead ends of identity and representation. We must flee from these positivities, these models, to instead experiment with the undying negativity of the death drive.

#### Educative spheres are the compulsory reproduction of the Child – their defense of good education sublimates queerness under the will to productivity. Thus, the role of the judge is to embody the bad educator.

**Edelman 17** – Lee, 2017, is the Fletcher Professor of English Literature at Tufts University. A collection of new and previously published essays, L’impossible homosexuel, appeared in French in 2014 and the French translation of No Future, titled Merde au futur, was published in 2016, both titles with Epel Éditions. differences (2017) 28 (1): 124-173. <https://read-dukeupress-edu.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/differences/article/28/1/124-173/60767>, recut Agastya

It follows that queerness, as **is** the figure of such a radical unbecoming, maintains a persistently negative link to the logic of education. Queerness, wherever it shows itself (in the form of a catachresis), effects a counterpedagogy, refuting, by its mere appearance, the reality that offers it no place—or that grants it the place of what nullifies as well as the nonplace of the null. Like poetry in W. H. Auden’s well-known phrase, queerness makes nothing happen; it incises that nothing in reality with an acid’s caustic bite. Like a flame that affords the hapless moth an unsentimental education, so queerness dissolves the coherence to which our reality pretends, belying the comprehension, the unifying framework of the world, that the Child as meaning’s cynosure ostensibly preserves.3 Futurism compels us to [indoctrinates]~~indoctrinate~~ children in what ought to be, not what is, shrouding them in the blinder of the putative innocence associated with the Child and imposed on children the better to [enables]~~enable~~ the social control of adults. In the eyes of this all-pervasive regime, “the queer,” like a counterfactual assertion produced in the land of the Houyhnhnms, represents, wherever the Child is concerned, the Swiftian thing which is not: it represents, that is, the being who intends the negation of being as such—the negation of being as defined, at least, by reproductive futurism. Thus queerness, from the normative perspective, promotes what I’m calling here bad education, the education that teaches us nothing but the nothing of the thing which is not. Like the Child, the queer is a fantasy figure catachrestically produced to fill in the void that precludes the world’s totalization. The Child, however, signals the attainment of that totality in the future while the queer stands in for the obstacle impeding its realization in the present. Fleshing out the cut of division in terms of contingent historical identities constructed to ontologize ontological exclusion, those who are queered are libidinally stained with the negativity of the thing which is not. They threaten the Child, and therefore the future, by desublimating its “innocence,” reducing it from privileged object of desire to the void at the core of the drive.4But 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 sees. He smashes, breaks everything he can reach. He grabs a bird as he would grab a stone, and he strangles it without knowing what he 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 interdictions from outside intervene to deter the child from masturbating, from sucking his thumb, from pissing all over the place whenever he 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 nonknowing, 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 [receives]~~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 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 ab-sens, 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 totalized 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. For Schiller the attainment of humanity to its proper moral state depends on this assumption of unity as an ideal: “Every individual man, it may be said, carries in disposition and determination a pure ideal man within himself, with whose unalterable unity it is the great task of his existence, throughout all his vicissitudes, to harmonize” (31). The process of this harmonization, for Schiller, as effected by the “cultivation of Beauty,” constitutes “the education of humanity” (55) and depends on the coordination of life in time, the life of the human as animal, with the development of moral possibility through and as the State. Schiller notes: The great consideration is, therefore, that physical society in time may not cease for an instant while moral society is being formed in idea, that for the sake of human dignity its very existence may not be endangered. When the mechanic has the works of a clock to repair, he lets the wheels run down; but the living clockwork of the State must be repaired while it is still in motion [. . .]. We must therefore search for some support for the continuation of society. (29–30) As Paul de Man points out, the Schillerian aesthetic aims at the unification of sensory content and abstract form, linking the “sensuous world to a world of ideas” (Schiller 115) for reasons that have everything to do with the future that the Child is meant to secure. “[T]he necessity of this synthesis,” de Man remarks, “is made in the name of an empirical concept, which is that of humanity, of the human, which is used then as a principle of closure. The human, the needs of the human, the necessities of the human are absolute and are not open to critical attack” (Aesthetic 150). Needless to say, the “human,” whose continued survival the Child guarantees, constitutes a recurrent site of ideological contestation. But insofar as “We are all Schillerians” (de Man qtd. in Warminski 7) according to de Man—which is to say, adherents, consciously or not, of an aesthetic ideology bound up with reproductive futurism—such contestation concerns the definition, not the value, of the “human.”8 Though the regime of aesthetic ideology protects that value from “critical attack,” queerness refers to whatever conveys the threat of such attack by opening a critical gap within the logic of the aesthetic itself, exposing thereby the negativity from which Schiller and the Schillerian tradition retreat.9 To confront such negativity would require a loss of the only ground on which the “empirical concept” of “humanity” could sustain the fantasy of its sovereignty; as Schiller puts it, “The person must therefore be its own ground, for the enduring cannot issue from alteration; and so we have in the first place the idea of absolute being grounded in itself, that is to say of freedom” (61). To clarify the stake in this aesthetic ideology—and so, in the sublimation of the Child—I want to touch on de Man’s account of an even more rigorous effort to produce a self-grounding philosophical system. In “Pascal’s Allegory of Persuasion,” de Man focuses on what happens when Blaise Pascal, observing geometry’s refusal to define its principal objects (movement, number, and space), asserts that this “lack of definition is rather a perfection than a fault” and then claims that these principal objects have a “reciprocal and necessary relation” in which he implicates time as well (Pascal 151–52).10 To exemplify this reciprocity, he asserts the homology among these “principal objects” with reference to the “two infinities [ces deux infinis]” of enlargement and contraction. Just as a movement can always be made faster or slower, and numbers can always be made larger or smaller, so space can always be increased or diminished and a temporal duration extended or reduced. Movement, number, space, and time thus are always infinitely distant from their radical extremes: nothingness and infinity (“le néant et l’infini” [Pascal 154]). The demand that these realms remain perfectly homologous, though, runs into a certain difficulty when Pascal confronts the status of the “one” (which, as described by Euclid, is and is not a number at once) and tries to locate it in relation to what is not included in the realm of space because “indivisible” and lacking spatial extension. Pascal declares, “[T]he only reason that the one is not included in the ranks of the numbers is that Euclid and the first authors who dealt with arithmetic, having several properties to give it that were common to all the numbers other than one, excluded the one from the meaning of the word number, so as not to have to say all the time we find such and such a condition in all numbers other than one” (160).11 Euclid recognizes, however, as Pascal observes, that the one, insofar as it is not a nothing (“un néant”), belongs to the same “genre” as number. As soon as they are added together, after all, two ones will produce a number, but two indivisible spatial entities, two elements lacking spatial extension, could never yield a spatial expanse by being joined together. If no homology exists between the one in the realm of number and an indivisible entity in the realm of space, then Pascal, according to de Man, had to “suspend this separation while maintaining it—because the underlying homology of space and number, the ground of the system, should never be fundamentally in question” (Aesthetic 59). So Pascal finds a corollary for the indivisible entity by adducing the zero in the order of number, which, while not a number itself, is presupposed by number and has clear equivalents in terms of motion, space, and time: “If you want to find a comparison in the realm of numbers that accurately represents what we are considering in the realm of extension, it would have to be that of zero to numbers. Because zero is not of the same genre as numbers, [. . .] it’s a veritable indivisible of numbers just as the indivisible is a veritable zero of extension” (163–64).12 As Ernesto Laclau describes it, “the zero is radically heterogeneous with the order of number” but “crucial if there is going to be an order of number at all” (“Identity” 68). It allows, moreover, “the homology between number, time and motion [. . .] to be maintained” insofar as it provides “the equivalent of ‘instant’ or ‘stasis’ [. . .] in the order of number” (67). Much as the aesthetic, for Schiller, restores, in de Man’s words, “equilibrium, harmony, on the level of principles” (Aesthetic 151), so for Pascal, as de Man maintains, “the homogeneity of the universe is recovered” (59) by way of the zero. For de Man, however, its true importance lies in its allegorical relation to what Pascal understands as the arbitrariness of linguistic definition—the arbitrariness that lets Euclid exclude the one from definition as a number while still offering a definition of magnitudes by which it belongs to the “genre” of number. The zero, as de Man expands upon its brief appearance in Pascal’s text, correlates with geometry’s nondefinition of its own initial principles and the lack of any demonstrable ground to undergird its logic: “All these truths,” Pascal writes, “are incapable of demonstration, and yet they are the foundation and the principles of geometry” (154). This leads de Man to characterize Pascal’s project in the following terms: The continuous universe [. . .] is interrupted, disrupted at all points by a principle of radical heterogeneity without which it cannot come into being. Moreover, this rupture [. . .] does not occur on the transcendental level, but on the level of language, in the inability of a theory of language as sign or as name [. . .] to ground this homogeneity without having recourse to the signifying function [. . .] that makes the zero of signification the necessary condition for grounded knowledge. The notion of language as sign is dependent on, and derived from, a different notion in which language functions as rudderless signification and transforms what it denominates into the linguistic equivalent of the arithmetical zero. It is as sign that language is capable of engendering the principles of infinity, of genus, species, and homogeneity, which allow for [. . .] totalizations, but none of these tropes could come about without the systematic effacement of the zero and its reconversion into a name. There can be no one without the zero, but the zero always appears in the guise of a one, of a some(thing). The name is the trope of the zero. The zero is always called a one, when the zero is actually nameless, “innommable.” (Aesthetic 59) The importance of this account for my argument lies in its evocation of the zero’s “effacement” and its concomitant “reconversion” into, its tropological representation as, a positivized and enumerable entity, which is to say, a “one.”13 The “systematic” effacement of the zero as the disruptive and heterogeneous principle on which the “continuous universe,” as a totalized system, nonetheless depends, enacts a logic that underlies the aesthetic for Schiller, the supplement for Derrida, education for Rousseau, and sublimation for Lacan. Not that these terms are interchangeable or designate the same thing, but each reinforces the social imperative toward the “marriage” of “mind and world” (Warminski 8), toward a unified system, a comprehension, that strives to efface its internal rupture or structural impossibility, its predication on ab-sens, through repetitive tropological substitutions that continuously turn zero into one by making the ontological exclusions articulated as queerness or rness, for example, assume the substantial status of the “queer” or the “black” as identity.14 Consonant with such a logic, though, the negativity of this repetition, the drive that underlies it, undergoes “reconversion” into the “truth” of reproduction, refiguring the stasis of its iterations as movement toward futurity.15 This, of course, is the function of the Child, and so of the Child’s education. Could teachings at odds with this logic add up to anything at all, having nothing at all to add but the persistence of nothing in the “guise” of the one—nothing to add but the negative sign that signals a primal subtraction, the negativity added to the sign as such in order to show, as de Man writes above, that “language as sign is dependent on, and derived from, a different notion”? If sublimation, aesthetics, and logic turn the zero into one, this “different notion” reverses the process and so makes the one, the referential entity, into something unintelligible, the “linguistic equivalent” of zero. This “different notion” recalls what Brian Rotman has in mind when he discusses the insistence of the sixteenth-century Flemish mathematician, Simon Stevin, “on a semiotic account of number, on an account which transferred zero’s lack of referentiality, its lack of ‘positive content,’ to all numbers” (29). Such a “notion,” like queerness as ontological negation, leads to nothing in the social order of meaning: which is to say, to the nothing of the “zero of signification” that always subtends that order. Andrzej Warminski views this zero as the “stutter of sheerly mechanical enumeration” (31), a phrase that echoes de Man’s own words in “Hegel on the Sublime,” words to which we might turn in order to gloss the zero as well: “Like a stutter, or a broken record, it makes what it keeps repeating worthless and meaningless. [. . .] Completely devoid of aura or éclat, it offers nothing to please anyone” (Aesthetic 116). How could the nothing of the zero, then, with its mechanistic repetitions, ever generate something of value and make a contribution to life? Simply put, it can’t. The very value of “value” enshrines sublimation as a good insofar as it privileges positive production and the dialectical logic that undertakes to make something out of nothing, to turn a profit on negativity. A teaching that profits no one and that “offers nothing to please”: to what could that teaching amount if not a radical threat to the one, to the Child, to the good, and so to the future? In an aesthetic order based on the harmonization of sign and meaning, that teaching could serve as nothing more than the sign of a bad education.