## Off

### 1

#### Our interpretation is the topic should determine the division of aff and neg ground – winning that the appropriation of space by private entities is not unjust should always be sufficient condition for voting negative – hold the line, the 1AC proves there’s no I-meet, the text of the 1ac states that the 1ac endorses the res as a unimaginal desire of queernes

#### “Resolved” is a formal decision.

Merriam-Webster

[Unlike Words and Phrases ’64, this card actually exists on the internet! <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/resolved>] pat

a: to declare or decide by a formal resolution and vote

b: to change by resolution or formal vote

the house resolved itself into a committee

#### The Role of the Ballot is to vote for whoever does the better debating – any alternative framework must explain why we switch sides, why there has to be a winner and a loser, and why there are structural rules. The frame for evaluating offense is that debate is a game and we’re all here to win – that means procedural questions come first.

#### Vote neg for predictable limits – abdicating government actions sanctions picking any interpretation for debate – that incentivizes retreat from controversy and forces the neg to first characterize the aff and then debate it which eliminates the benefit of preround research – two impacts –

#### 1. Clash – a common point of engagement ensures effective clash, which is a linear impact – negation is the necessary condition for distinguishing debate from discussion, but negation exists on a sliding scale. The topic of discussion is up to the affirmative, but depth and nuanced engagement is determined by negative ground. Any impact intrinsic to debate, not just discussion, comes from negation because it starts the process of critical thinking, reflexivity, and argument refinement.

#### 2. Fairness – prioritize preserving the competitive aspects of debate – games cannot operate unless both sides can be confident in advance they have an equal chance of winning – the fact they’ve asked you to vote for them proves we all agree that debate is a competition.

### 2

#### Capitalism causes massive violence and inevitable extinction – the fundamental task is developing tools for organization and tactics to bring about revolution.

Escalante ‘19

[Alyson, revolutionary Marxist (duh), philosophy at U of Oregon. 09/08/2019. “Truth and Practice: The Marxist Theory of Knowledge”. https://web.archive.org/web/20190910040756/https://failingthatinvent.home.blog/2019/09/08/truth-and-practic-the-marxist-theory-of-knowledge/] pat

The world we live in today is in a dire state. Climate destruction continues at a fast pace, and every with every passing day, capitalism proves itself to be incapable of addressing this. Capitalist production and its endless drive for resources to match artificial market demands has created a climate crisis that leaves us on the brink of potential extinction.

Governments around the world are turning to far right and fascist leaders to assuage their fears of an uncertain future, and the most marginalized and oppressed suffer because of it. Fascism is on the rise, and history tells us very clearly what that can result in without opposition.

The decaying US empire continues to lash out in violence across the globe in a desperate attempt to re-assert its power and hegemony. Whole countries are destroyed in its desperate bids for more fossil fuels. The world burns from America’s white phosphorus weaponry.

The need for a revolutionary movement capable of replacing capitalism with something better has never been so clear. The choice between socialism or barbarism has never been so stark. More and more people are starting to realize that reform cannot save us, that capitalism and imperialism themselves are the problem, and that we must unite and band together to fight for a better world.

The question then is: how will we know what strategies, what tactics, and what ideas to unite around? If the skeptics and postmodernists are correct that knowledge is always relative and localized, then we cannot built a global and universal strategy to unite around. If they are correct then we are doomed to small acts of localized or individual resistance in the face of apocalypse. To embrace such a vision of the world (with its accompanying epistemological skepticism) is to embrace defeat.

The masses do not want to embrace defeat, they want to know how to fight back. Marxism can provide the tools necessary to engage in that fight.

Marxism, with its self criticism and its insistence on incorporating the valuable ideas of its critics has created a means for unifying workers across the globe with anti-colonial and anti-imperialist struggles. The Marxist belief in the possibility of true ideas, tested and verified in practice, creates the possibility for unity on a global scale. The scientific status of Marxism means that as our climate changes, as our world looks more and more grim, Marxism will adapt through struggle and practice; it will provide us with the ideas and tools we need to fight and win.

There will be no victory for the workers of the world without the ability to wield a revolutionary science. What is at stake in questions of Marxist epistemology is the very possibility of creating a philosophical and scientific basis for revolution. We must defend this possibility. We must defend the scientific status of Marxism, and must insist on the possibility of victory.

#### The aff’s fear of vertical organizing is a reactionary infatuation with failure – naming oneself as a comrade is key to disciplined communist organizing.

Dean ‘19

[Jodi, politics at Hobart and William Smith Colleges. 04/11/2019. “Jodi Dean Comrade,” <http://stateofnatureblog.com/jodi-dean-comrade/>] pat – finders credit to Townes – interviewer questions are in italics

You are absolutely correct that that sort of thinking is the obstacle. It reflects an anti-communist, capitalist, reactionary mind-set that dooms the Left – the clue is the term ‘totalitarian’ which today is used to create a false equivalence between the USSR and Nazi Germany.

Part of the falsity also lies in the delusion that parties are outmoded. Political power is still achieved via parties. The Right knows this. But stupidly too much of the Left abandoned the party form, which then ceded the space to the Right. All over the world there are still communist and socialist parties. The Left embrace of failure is a cop out, a refusal to engage in politics. And the result is that the Right becomes the force channelling popular anger.

Communism is the name we have for the positive alternative to capitalism. It says that we cannot compromise with capitalism. There is no such thing as capitalism with a human face. Capitalism relies on exploitation. It’s as simple as that. Is it hard today to organise under the name communism in Europe and the US? Yes. It’s always been hard. And it has gotten particularly hard in Poland where a law has been passed outlawing the promotion of totalitarianism. Why, if communism had been defeated, was it necessary for the right-wing ruling party to pass this law? Anti-communism is being used to ward off opposition to capitalism; it’s being used to defeat democracy.

*In the book you explain that the comrade has ‘four primary characteristics: discipline, joy, enthusiasm, and courage.’ Are these the qualities that you feel are currently missing from much of contemporary Left political struggle? How might their resurgence change the kinds of political action we partake in and how we relate to it?*

I would say that it’s the combination that is missing. So there are of course courageous fighters on the Left. For starters think of Black Lives Matter, Standing Rock, all the environmental and climate activists who are fighting against coal, oil, and gas corporations, many of whom who have been killed. I’d also say that there is enthusiasm and joy: people come out for marches; they make hilarious signs; they demonstrate amazing creativity.

Discipline, though, may be what is missing. I don’t mean individual discipline: as every organiser knows, political work takes enormous discipline — showing up, getting people to show up, this isn’t easy. There’s always something else to do and it’s easy to get discouraged, like, will this protest even make a difference? The challenge is in a broader collective discipline where people realise that it’s good and important and necessary to follow a common line, pursue a common strategy.

Too many think that everyone needs to provide their original individual hot take, and that this hot take must be a take down. This kills Left solidarity. Some on the Left also think of discipline as bad, perhaps from (mis)reading Foucault or from embracing a view of the multitude they take from Hardt and Negri. But discipline generates capacity. The more coordinated and disciplined we are, the more we can pursue a collective strategy. And the more prepared we can be after we win.

*Another aspect you consider is how a politics built around comradeship works in relation to identity politics, clearly defined group struggles, and the notion of political ‘allies’. How does comradeship work as a unifying factor here without homogenising the particular issues and contradictions faced by different groups?*

It’s a matter of perspective. Comrade names a relation between people on the same side of a political struggle. It doesn’t name a relation between people and what they are struggling for or against. So comrade doesn’t say anything about particular issues.

One of the examples I use in the book comes from the Communist Party of the United States and its fight against white supremacy and lynching and for black people’s right of self-determination. This was a struggle that the whole party was instructed to pursue. No exceptions. That a comrade was white didn’t exempt them from the requirement to oppose white supremacy in all its forms, everywhere and all the time, that is, in personal life as well as political life. There’s no homogenising here. The struggle was against white supremacy and comrades were told that they had to be willing to act in defence of any black person. I should add that the CP’s work in this area was path-breaking – in the 1930s it was the leading interracial group fighting for black liberation.

The ‘allies’ idea makes politics seem like a possession, something that belongs to a person or group naturally, by virtue of their ascribed identity. Politics is somehow naturalised, as if everyone who shares an identity politics shares a politics – but of course we know that is not true. Politics has to be built, constructed.

*What is the relationship between comrades and party? How does the comrade ensure that the party does not become hierarchical, or a kind of superego figure, demanding ever greater fidelity, commitment and discipline?*

There are no guarantees, not in life, not in politics. The thing to keep in mind is that comrade operates as an interior force. We internalise the perspective of our comrades. So the force we feel is what we impose on ourselves. Our actual comrades are generally far more tolerant and forgiving than the internalised comrade. In fact, the comrade always becomes a super-ego figure demanding greater fidelity, commitment, and discipline. That’s part of the power of comradeship: our comrades (internalised) make us do more than we would otherwise.

And given the world we are in, given the absolute imperative of the fight for communism on a vastly unequal and warming world, we should embrace this. It follows directly from a Left analysis of the present as one of exploitation and inequality – why would we think that anything but commitment and discipline is demanded by our situation?

*A recent review of Comrade in Jacobin raises some similar questions: ‘Are there times when the comradely perspective can undermine socialist organisation? Can comradeship’s ego ideal become so persuasive in practice that it blinds us to dysfunction, discrimination, and abuse among ostensible comrades? Is it more useful than harmful to think of ourselves as equal and the same in contexts where we obviously aren’t?*’

I don’t see how a comradely perspective could undermine socialist organisation. The question doesn’t even make sense to me; there is no socialist organisation absent a comradely perspective. There might be a bunch of individuals who think of themselves as socialists who have paid dues to an association that claims to pursue socialist goals. I wouldn’t call that a socialist organisation myself, but even if it were, how would comradeship undermine rather than activate and inspire it?

The next question about being blind to dysfunction, discrimination, and abuse – comradeship is what lets us see dysfunction and abuse. And it provides us with the norm of equality through which to address it. A great example comes from Claudia Jones in her famous article, ‘An End to the Neglect of the Problems of the Negro Woman!’ She appeals to her white men and women and black men comrades for their failure to treat black women in the Party as equals.

And on the last bit: to think of ourselves as equal does not mean to posit an identity of capacity and experience. The context of comradeship is being on the same political side. For communists and socialists, this side has been organised in terms of party belonging. Equality is an attribute of this belonging: all are equally obliged to carry out the party’s work; all are equally important for the party’s work.

#### The aff is an immaterial solution to material structures – queer theory’s fetishization of change for its own sake is unable to ground a collective subject to resist the violence of capital.

Gleeson et al ‘18

[Jules Joanne Gleeson, University of Vienna, Jose Rosales, Stony Brook University, and Andrew Culp, CalArts. 2018. “Love, Sex, Communism: A Discussion,” <https://www.identitiesjournal.edu.mk/index.php/IJPGC/article/view/333>] pat – ableist language [edited]

[AC:] New Materialism seems to offer a feminist alternative to low theory. But returning to “stuff” does not always sit well with Marxism or queer theory, in spite of many theorists’ best efforts. Training analysis on objects can easily slip into naïve commodity fetishism, and reversing the classic queer theory move of skipping past “being” to “doing” can turn into just another form of essentialism. Perhaps there are readings of Spinoza that split the difference?

JR: I think Andrew is absolutely right. The turn to Spinoza by people of that generation is wholly political. Especially as it is no secret that Althusser himself saw Spinoza as the means of correcting the Hegelian perversions that were said to be the real causes of Stalinism. However, it is worth noting that given the fate of Spinoza as a figure to whom various political positions are assigned, the association of Spinoza and Deleuze with what is at stake not simply in queer theory but in queer life is due to a set of shared problems that are materialist in nature. Materialist because they are problems encountered within the concrete, actuality, of daily life. And while one might be tempted to consider Butler’s remark as belonging to this materialist position insofar as these alternative family structures are concrete resolution to the problem of precarious housing situations, I would hesitate to endorse such a line of thinking. The solutions devised by already oppressed groups to the social problems generated by capital (housing, access to health care and services, etc.) are necessary and done out of survival. To put it bluntly: Butler’s remark is nothing but the excitement of bourgeois voyeurism. If there is something particular to queer life that is depicted in Paris Is Burning it would be the conditions that determine what is possible and not possible as a queer (these conditions being the need for alternative housing structures, the fact of one’s increased vulnerability simply by virtue of one’s job, e.g., sex work, or gender identity, etc.). So, it is true that even the most refined theories of performativity fall short of addressing the material conditions of queer life. And just as both of you have noted, the key problem that arises out of the recent attempts in queer theory to overcome the limits of Butler’s position are to be found in various positions that unwittingly make materialism into a variant of animism, or into a more one-sided account of the relationship between thinking and being where matter-itself is both problem and solution.

The latter of these two is best seen in Pheng Cheah’s article “Non-Dialectical Materialism,” where Cheah argues for a non-dialectical theory of change by relocating the possibility of real social transformation in matter and not form, in the world of matter-itself and not the immaterial domain of idealism and its abstractions. While Cheah argues that this is a position that is derived from Deleuze and Guattari’s notion of impersonal forces and pre-individual singularities, it is not at all clear to me how these notions require a redefinition of the materialism that begins with Marx and continues in their joint works. It is true that Deleuze and Guattari are singular in thinking through the existence of supposedly absolute processes of deformation, or deterritorialization where what is at work is something that evades the classical distinctions between matter and its forms, or a form and its variable contents. But this is a theory about change in general, whereas the specific interest of transforming the material reality of queer lives finds no political guarantees in general theories of how change occurs in the world. So, what a non-dialectical materialism really amounts to is not a confirmation of Deleuze’s many anti-Hegelian comments and rather amounts to neutralizing any possibility for a collective subject to change its material conditions and thereby transforming what the meaning and substance of their lives is in the process.

To detach any notion of revolutionary transformation from a materialism that begins from the concrete, reality, of queer life (and including its set of particular interests, desires, and needs) amounts to a vision of political struggle that understands itself to be revolutionary due to the (over-)emphasis placed and privilege granted to the reality of change in general. This is tantamount to saying that what is most revolutionary in terms of change is a change that remains blind [ignorant] to the consequences for any subject or group whatsoever. It is a theory of change that is universal and equal only to the extent that we are barred from saying how and why it is beneficial for everyone... let alone for queers and especially queers of color. If what is at stake is not life in general but specifically queer, intersectional, life, then any notion of change can only be revolutionary to the extent that it is a qualitative transformation for queer life. And here we also encounter what is promising with the recent work on queer Marxism since what was revolutionary in the vision of communism is also at work in queer Marxism and in a historical materialist understanding of change. The kind of change we are interested in has never been general in nature; it is always for someone such as the proletariat of the past or the queers of the present.

#### Vote negative for communist organizing – that requires collective struggle and the establishment of centralized organization to inform both theory and practice.

Kuhn ‘18

[Gabriel, Austrian-born writer and translator living in Sweden. Among his book publications is “All Power to the Councils! A Documentary History of the German Revolution of 1918-1919”. March 2018. “Don't Mourn, Organize! Is Communism a Pipe Dream—or a Viable Future?” <https://brooklynrail.org/2018/03/field-notes/Dont-Morn-Organize-Is-Communism-a-Pipe-Dreamor-a-Viable-Future>] pat

The forms of organization this requires must go further than the affinity group but stop short of the vanguard party. Affinity groups do not answer the demand for mass organizing that mass societies require. But neither do vanguard parties. They attempt to lead the masses, not organize them, and that’s a big difference. The party model might in general be insufficient for mass organizing today. The networks that movementism gave way to are perhaps more appropriate, but only if they can overcome the assumption that the looser the connections are, the better. This assumption is wrong. Loose connections might suit the needs of an ever more flexible market economy, but not of effective political organizing. To “have contacts” is not enough; you need to do something with them. And you need to stay committed to the projects you initiate. I will try to flesh this out by listing the aspects I consider most important in organizing today.

1. We need to leave sectarianism behind. The left is weak and each additional division weakens it further. In a 2011 article titled “Movement, Cadre, and the Dual Power,” Joel Olson made a simple, yet very important observation: “We believe that the old arguments between communists and anarchists are largely irrelevant today.” This must be our point of departure.

2. We need theory that is adapted to our times. It must overcome the false contradiction between “class struggle” and “cultural struggle.” There is a fruitful debate about a “new class politics” in the German-speaking world. Sebastian Friedrich, one of its main proponents, drew these conclusions in an article published by Counterpunch:

A new class politics does not relegate gender, race, and imperial legacy to issues that are supplementary to class relations. These issues, and the struggles they imply, are an integral part of class relations. In fact, feminist, anti-racist, and anti-colonial struggles are the base on which effective unified class struggles must be launched.… A new class politics must clarify where and how the specific experiences of workers based on gender, race, citizenship, and other factors converge. It must reveal the overlapping interests of workers as members of the class. This makes common struggles possible.

3. We must not rely on the “objective forces” identified by historical materialism. Subjective forces are important for change. It is easy to underestimate how much neoliberalism shapes the lives even of people opposed to it. In the Global North, political activism has become a leisure activity that people engage in or not, depending on their mood, the identity they are trying to create for themselves, or the road of “self-improvement” they have chosen. In almost all cases, it is secondary to professional careers and personal comforts. Under such circumstances, it is difficult to get anything done. There is nothing wrong with being “voluntaristic.” Radical change is dependent on people wanting radical change, no matter how much Marxists still insist on economic realities determining individual consciousness and, therefore, individuals’ capacity for political action. An organization’s efficiency relies on the individual qualities of its members, that is, responsibility, reliability, and accountability.

Making Things Concrete

If we want communism to be more than a pipe dream, we have to be willing to face reality, even if it confuses, challenges, or even frightens us. We cannot ignore struggles that refer to communist ideals, simply because they aren’t the struggles we’d like to see. If our enthusiasm for communism remains limited to lecture halls and conference rooms, it won’t be anything the powerful will lose sleep over.

The struggle that currently receives most attention among communists of all stripes in the Global North is the one in Kurdistan. In Rojava (Syrian Kurdistan), forces affiliated with the Kurdistan Workers’ Party, PKK, have established a direct-democratic council system, based on the “democratic confederalism” conceived by the imprisoned PKK leader Abduallah Öcalan. Öcalan describes democratic confederalism as “a non-state political administration or a democracy without a state,” and cites Murray Bookchin’s “libertarian municipalism” as a major influence. There are people who celebrate this as a form of anarchism. But as an observant friend of mine noted, an anarchism that is imposed by a leader is a strange kind of anarchism. Besides, there are reports from the ground that challenge the libertarian narrative. The editors of Lower Class Magazine, an online project dedicated to “low budget underground journalism,” travel regularly to Kurdistan and have the following to say:

The Western left sees Rojava as the realization of a democracy “from below”: communes, councils, a confederation; no hierarchies, no party, a spontaneous mass project. Anarchists and “libertarian” communists wax lyrically about the dawn of a direct-democratic Shangri-La. […] Yes, the change in Rojava comes “from below. It is based on the power of the people, no doubt. Communes and councils are at the heart of decision-making, that is true. But as essential is the following: None of this would be happening if it wasn’t for a vanguard leading the way. The revolution in Rojava proves that Leninist vanguardism is correct, not false.

Another European journalist visiting the region noted that the cadres of the People’s Protection Units, YPG, relate to the councils of Rojava in the same way the Bolshevists related to the councils of the Soviet Union. Furthermore, there are troubling pragmatic alliances, which have included collaboration with the U.S. military. Yet the people behind Rojava Solidarity NYC sum up the situation well:

Rojava, an autonomous region in Northern Syrian, the largest revolutionary territory of the 21st century, has projected anarchist and communist ideas to the forefront of political discourse and into the pragmatic and messy reality of everyday life. … From communal relationships to the councils and self-defense units, we can assess numerous potential routes by which we can create liberated communities at home, while learning from their possibilities and pitfalls.

Rojava won’t be the answer to our problems. No single struggle ever is. But the developments in Rojava challenge us to discuss real-life strategies for radical change. It is easy to focus on shortcomings, but if this is all we ever do, where will it get us?

Councils are essential for communist projects. Their power, which is based on the direct involvement and active participation of the masses, is curtailed as soon as political interest groups, such as parties, assume control over them. This conviction separated historical council communism, represented by figures such as Otto Rühle and Anton Pannekoek, from the Bolsheviks. Pannekoek wrote:

The councils are no government; not even the most central councils bear a governmental character. For they have no means to impose their will upon the masses; they have no organs of power. All social power is vested in the hands of the workers themselves.

Unless we want the transition to communism to entail enormous human suffering (which would be utterly absurd), we need to consider the fact that billions of people will need to be fed, sheltered, nursed, provided with access to clean water, and so forth. To produce according to the needs of the people rather than the needs of profit requires enormous efforts in planning, especially if current living standards are to be upheld. (Living standards don’t equal standards of consumption—the standards of consumption in the Global North cannot and should not be upheld, since they are unsustainable.) Furthermore, we must collectively dispose of industrial and nuclear waste, weapons of mass destruction, and ticking environmental bombs. None of this is possible without a level of centralization, no matter how visceral the reactions are that the word might provoke in some circles.

Only a council system can combine the centralization required by the complexity of modern societies with participative democracy. Centralization requires formal structures. Participative democracy requires these structures to be transparent. They need to be bottom-up rather than top-down, and delegates must be directly responsible to their constituencies. The council system is the only administrative framework to provide that.

Romanticizing particular struggles rarely does any good, no matter how council-based they are—or claim to be. If radicals in the Global North fail to address concerns with respect to struggles in the Global South, it is not respectful but condescending. To escape into the intellectual poverty of cultural relativism doesn’t help. We can only evolve from critical engagement. But real-life struggles are our starting point. It makes little sense to demand struggles for communism if we shy away from engaging with the ones that exist. Arundhati Roy put it simply after spending time with Maoist Naxalites in the forests of central India, an experience she chronicled in the book Walking with the Comrades. She said: “I went in because I wanted to tell the story of who these people are.” This informs revolutionary theory and, in turn, improves revolutionary practice. Most importantly, it is crucial for saving communist struggles from betraying their own principles. Everyone can watch failure unfold. The challenge lies in helping to prevent it.

#### Only communism can allow for an experimentation with sexuality outside of the bounds of productive labor.

Gleeson et al ‘18

[Jules Joanne Gleeson, University of Vienna, Jose Rosales, Stony Brook University, and Andrew Culp, CalArts. 2018. “Love, Sex, Communism: A Discussion,” <https://www.identitiesjournal.edu.mk/index.php/IJPGC/article/view/333>] pat

JR: It is my suspicion that one way in which Marxist feminism could be understood as offering a new understanding of the relationship of work and sex, or work and love, is on the basis of how Marxist feminism has been able to deepen the specificity of what exactly a communist politics promises and entails. The example that immediately comes to mind here is Silvia Federici’s seminal essay “Wages against Housework.” It is in this essay where Federici makes a comment that appears as nothing but a passing remark; a statement that is less a materialist description and more a declaration regarding just what exactly is entailed and implicitly asserted in the project of bringing about a communist future. So, and in the course of her analysis, Federici writes: “[W]e want to call work what is work so that eventually we might rediscover what is love and create our sexuality, which we have never known.” Given Federici’s insight, and inquiring into the opportunities afforded to us by Marxist feminism, we could begin by attempting to understand the precise sense in which she makes this remark. In other words, is it the case that Federici is implicitly arguing for a view that seeks out the meaning and social relations of love, intimacy, and familial bonds, insofar as they are stripped of their determinations by the social relations of capital?

My suspicion, however, is that the question with which Federici is occupied is one that is as difficult and profound as it is simple and concise: What would it mean to love as a communist? To love like a comrade, or as someone in solidarity, or as someone in a romantic relationship? And what are the modes of loving, both ourselves and others, that are made possible only by virtue of communism? This is to inquire into the possibility of an image of communism as one that is irreducible to its being the solution to the riddle of history. So, if what is implied by Federici’s remark is that communism is the historical condition upon which questions of love and sexuality can be posed, in its most profound and meaningful manner, then what is potentially discovered within the tradition of Marxist feminism more generally is a vision of communism as something more than historical resolutions; a communism that was to be the very condition through which the meaning and function of love no longer derives its sense or value through its participation in a time no longer defined as that of labor or of leisure.

And so, regarding the connection between love and the form of time adequate to it, and with respect to Federici’s insistence on the political necessity of maintaining a clear separation of the time of work from that of sex/love/life, we catch a glimpse of how this Marxist feminist analysis of the relationship between production and reproduction are immediately related to Marx’s own position on the differing forms of time proper to capitalism and communism. For example, Marx makes a relevant observation in the Grundrisse when he writes that: “For real wealth is developed productive power of all individuals. The measure of wealth is then not any longer, in any way, labor time, but rather disposable time.” This disposable-time that is said to be the true measure of the wealth produced under communism; this time with which we can do as we please and that structures one’s life as a life defined by this form of time that can only be attributed to communism; this time, then, is the form of time that not only corresponds to Federici’s separation of sex from work but does so in a way that moves beyond the brute opposition of labor-time vs. leisure-time (which is simply unwaged time put in the service of reproducing labor-power). In this way, one would be able to see how disposable-time is the form of time adequate to communism; as the form of time most adequate for a communist determination of the questions and experiences surrounding love and sexuality; as the form of time proper for our rediscovery of love, for the creation of sexualities we have never known.

## 1NC – Case

### 1NC – Presumption

#### Frame the 1AC through solvency, not impacts – any attempt to filter offense through the RotB or the speech act of the aff is an arbitrary goalpost that only serves to insulate it from criticism and nuanced testing – forcing us to negate the efficacy of personal strategies is at best impossible and at worst violent – the aff can’t change the material structures that produce anti-queer violence – no warrant for how the aff spills up to impact structures of labor writ large or out of debate means you vote neg on presumption.

### 1NC – Queerness

#### Either everything is queer, or nothing is – either way, their analytic is worthless.

Ruffolo ‘9

[David, University of Toronot. 2009. “Post-Queer Politics.”] pat

Queer has reached a political peak. Its theoretical movements have become limited by its incessant investment in identity politics and its political outlook has in many ways attained dormant status due to its narrowed interest in heteronormativity. This is, of course, not to suggest the end of queer but instead a potential deterritorialization of queer as we know it today. Over the past two decades, a significant body of work has contributed to what is referred to as queer studies. Queer theorizations are at the heart of this anti-canonical genre where the intersection of bodies, identities, and cultures continue to be a central focus. Although queer theory informs much of this work vis-à-vis the queering of theory and the theories of queer, important feminist, postcolonial, and ability theorizations have more recently informed the body of queer studies. So while I consider queer studies and theories to be interconnected (and at times interchangeable), the theoretical and philosophical movements of queer studies are certainly not restricted to or by queer theories. What remains consistent amongst these various theorizations, however, is a shared politics embedded in significations, representations, and identifications where language has become somewhat of a unified trajectory for thinking through experience. These important works without question continue to offer many insightful ways to account for the intersection of bodies, institutions, cultural practices, social traditions, political movements, and economic initiatives. Michael Warner’s introduction of heteronormativity in the early 1990s monumentally framed the ways in which we think about how subjects are subjected to the normative discourses of heterosexuality and in doing so created the important spaces to challenge and reimagine these productivities. As a result of this and many other significant contributions, queer theory has become almost exclusively interested in challenging heteronormative ideologies by examining and exposing how subjects come into being through discursive interactions. It offers a critical politics for thinking about how subjects are constituted through heteronormative discourses. Most notable, perhaps, is bringing to light how subjects become intelligible through binary identity categories such as male/ female, masculine/feminine, and straight/gay. It queers—disturbs, disrupts, and centers—what is considered “normal” in order to explore possibilities outside of patriarchal, hierarchical, and heteronormative discursive practices. We see this, for instance, in the works of Butler (1990), Fuss (1995), and Muñoz (1999) as they explore a shift from identities to (dis)identifications. I outline elsewhere (Ruffolo 2006a) how such readings confront binary identities so as to appreciate third spaces: fixed and stable identities are reconfigured as mobile and fluid identifications, where the “I” is no longer determined by the Other but is discursively negotiated through others. Queer theory critically redefines the relationships amongst bodies, identities, and culture through a particular commitment to subjectivity as seen through significations, representations, and identifications. The vigor of queer is its commitment to disrupt ideologies, practices, concepts, values, and assumptions that are essentially normal in order to expose what is normatively essentialized. Having said this, what, you might ask, are my post-queer intentions?

In the Fall-Winter 2005 issue of Social Text, David Eng, Judith Halberstam, and José Esteban Muñoz ask a necessary question of queer studies today: “What’s queer about queer studies now?” In the introduction, Eng, Halberstam, and Muñoz provide an overview of queer that sets a foundation for my critique of queer:

Around 1990 queer emerged into public consciousness. It was a term that challenged the normalizing mechanisms of state power to name its sexual subjects: male or female, married or single, heterosexual or homosexual, natural or perverse. Given its commitment to interrogating the social processes that not only produced and recognized but also normalized and sustained identity, the political promise of the term resided specifically in its broad critique of multiple social antagonisms, including race, gender, class, nationality, and religion, in addition to sexuality. (1)

By asking the question “what’s queer about queer studies now,” this edition explores the purpose and value of queer in a time of global economics marked by a post-9/11 politics embedded in war and terror. It offers a critical comparison between the “broad social concerns” of queer studies in the past with the more intensely interconnected focus of queer studies in the present—work interested in “theories of race, on problems of transnationalism, on conflicts between global capital and labor, on issues of diaspora and immigration, and on questions of citizenship, national belonging, and necropolitics” (2). Post-Queer Politics engages Eng, Halberstam, and Muñoz’s call for a “renewed queer studies” by taking into consideration the various interconnections amongst the wide range of contributors of this edition. It is well known that queer theory is interested in challenging binaries through an interrogation of heteronormative practices using queer as a verb (a radical process of disruption) rather than a noun (an umbrella term encompassing multiple identities). My introductory comments on the peaking of queer are situated in this relationship between queer and heteronormativity. I make the argument here and throughout this book that the queer/heteronormativity dualism is unproductive considering the contemporary complexities of neoliberal capitalism and globalization. *Post-Queer Politics* is primarily interested in challenging the queer/heteronormative dyad that has informed much of the theorizations of queer and the queering of theories over the past few decades. I consider the “peaking” of queer as a *plateau* that negotiates contemporary queer theories and post-queer theorizations. *Post-Queer Politics* is interested in examining the current politics of queer and the queering of politics through a renewed sense of queer that is differentiated from queer’s current implications in subjectivity. Its vision is twofold: to consider what something post might do for queer and what queer might do for something post. I am interested in the *doings* of post-queer rather than the *beings* of it so as to avoid unnecessary binaries that have resulted in the current desire for something post. This project is about the politics around “post-” and “queer” rather than a post-identitarian landscape that would situate “post-” and “queer” as binaries.

### 1NC – Ruti

#### Their critiques of the humanist subject are counterproductive.

Ruti ‘17

[Mari, critical theory and GSS at the University of Toronto. Talk delivered at Harvard University on 03/21/2017. “The Disenchanted: Queer Theory Between Negativity and Flourishing.”] pat

In The Ethics of Opting Out: Queer Theory’s Defiant Subjects, which was released in the spring of 2017, I put pressure on these theories on several levels, of which I’ll merely mention one, namely that I think that something essential gets lost in translation when American queer theorists appropriate 20th-century French critiques of the so-called humanist subject. It is true that Lacan, Foucault, and Deleuze and Guattari were all highly critical of the notion of the sovereign, autonomous, and agentic subject that we have inherited from Western philosophy in part because they, like earlier thinkers such as Adorno and Levinas, saw the connection between this subject and violence; they understood that this subject’s quest for self-mastery was linked to its quest to master the world, and that the results were disastrous, ranging from slavery and colonialism to Nazi Germany. However, I do not think that continental theorists, generally speaking, sought to destroy the subject as such. Instead, they were interested in what subjectivity might look like after the collapse of the arrogant humanist subject. They wanted to destabilize this subject, to undermine its sovereignty, challenge its autonomy, and dilute its agency. Yes, there was much talk about the subversion of the subject, desubjectivation, and even, in the case of Deleuze and Guattari, of pulverizing the subject. But, ultimately, there was also an idealistic reaching for an alternative, for a subjectivity that would be less sure of itself and therefore more capacious, creative, and open to otherness.

Undoubtedly, some of this idealism persists in even the most negative of queer theories in the sense that their negativity usually contains utopian longings. However, I think that queer theory’s flagellation of the sovereign, autonomous, and agentic subject is by now so ritualistic, undertaken in such a habitual manner, that it has become too predictable to be genuinely critical. I of course understand why it is happening. Particularly now that we are watching President Trump and his corporate allies parade on the political stage, it is easy to recognize the figure of the white-straight-masculinist, self-contained, self-satisfied, and self-confident subject that posthumanist theorists have criticized for decades. But I think that a distinction needs to be drawn between the Trumps of the world and the vast majority of the world’s population. In other words, I think that the call to annihilate (q uq) “the subject” misfires when it is indiscriminate, for when it is generalized, it becomes aimed at individuals who have never come anywhere near to approximating the sovereign subject. That is, it seems to me that the last thing that those who have been dispossessed by social inequalities such as homophobia, sexism, racism, poverty, or neocolonialism need is further dispossession; self-annihilation cannot possibly be a goal for those who already feel annihilated by structural violence, who already lead precarious lives. Likewise, I have a hard time imagining that those who have experienced various forms of Halberstamian failure, for instance those who are unemployed or cutting themselves, view these experiences as sexy forms of political rebellion.

### 1NC – Berlant

#### Affective forms of community invest in a notion of “feeling political together” which may be proximate to structures of power, but inevitably erase differential relationships and subject positions in favor of “intimate” forms of communication.

Berlant ‘11

[Lauren, English at UChicago. 2011. “Cruel Optimism.”] pat

Intensely political seasons spawn reveries of a different immediacy. People imagine alternative environments where authenticity trumps ideology, truths cannot be concealed, and communication feels intimate, face-to-face. In these times, even politicians imagine occupying a post–public sphere public where they might just somehow make an unmediated transmission to the body politic. “Somehow you just got to go over the heads of the filter and speak directly to the people,” then-President George W. Bush commented in October 2003, echoing a long tradition of sentimental political fantasies and soon followed by condemnations of the “filter” by the Republican National Committee and the presidential campaign of John McCain and Sarah Palin. What is “the filter” that demands circumnavigation? Bush seems to be inverting the meaning of his own, mixed, metaphor. A filter, after all, separates out noise from communication and, in so doing, makes communication possible. Jacques Attali and Michel Serres have both argued that there is no communication without noise, as noise interferes from within any utterance, threatening its tractability. The performance of distortion that constitutes communication therefore demands discernment, or filtering. However steadfast one’s commitment to truth, there is no avoiding the noise.

Yet Bush’s wish to skirt the filter points to something profound in the desire for the political. He wants to transmit not the message but the noise. He wants the public to feel the funk, the live intensities and desires that make messages affectively immediate, seductive, and binding. In his head a public’s binding to the political is best achieved neither by policy nor ideology but the affect of feeling political together, an effect of having communicated true feeling without the distancing mediation of speech. The transmission of noise performs political attachment as a sustaining intimate relation, without which great dramas of betrayal are felt and staged. In The Ethical Soundscape, Charles Hirschkind talks about the role of “maieutic listening” in constructing the intimate political publics of Egypt. There, the feeling tones of the affective soundscape produce attachments to and investments in a sense of political and social mutuality that is performed in moments of collective audition. This process involves taking on listening together as itself an object/scene of desire. The attainment of that attunement produces a sense of shared worldness, apart from whatever aim or claim the listening public might later bring to a particular political world because of what they have heard.

From Hirschkind’s perspective the social circulation of noise, of affective binding, converts the world to a space of moral action that seems juxtapolitical—proximate to, without being compromised by, the instrumentalities of power that govern social life. Speaking above the filter would confirm to Bush’s whole listening audience that they already share an affective environment; mobilizing “the ethical and therapeutic virtues of the ear” would accomplish the visceral transmission of his assurance not only that he has made a better good life possible for Americans and humans around the globe, but that, affectively speaking, there is already a better sensorial world right here, right now, more intimate and secure and just as real as the world made by the media’s anxiogenic sensationalist analysis. This vision locates the desire for the political in an alternative commons in the present that the senses confirm and circulate as though without mediation.

What exactly is the problem with “the filter”? The contemporary filtered or mediated political sphere in the United States transmits news 24/7 from a new ordinary created by crisis, in which life seems reduced to discussions about tactics for survival and who is to blame. The filter tells you that the public has entered a historical situation whose contours it does not know. It impresses itself upon mass consciousness as an epochal crisis, unfolding like a disaster film made up of human-interest stories and stories about institutions that have lost their way. It is a moment on the verge of a post-normative phase, in which fantasmatic clarities about the conditions for enduring collectivity, historical continuity, and infrastructural stability have melted away, along with predictable relations between event and effect.

Living amidst war and environmental disaster, people are shown constantly being surprised at what does and does not seem to have a transformative impact. Living amid economic crisis, people are shown constantly being surprised at the amount, location, and enormity of moral and affective irregulation that come from fading rules of accountability and recognition. What will govern the terms and relations of reliable reciprocity among governments, intimates, workers, owners, churches, citizens, political parties, or strangers? What forms of life will secure the sense of affective democracy that people have been educated to expect from their publics? Nobody knows. The news about the recent past and the pressures of the near future demand constant emergency cleanup and hyperspeculation about what it means to live in the ongoing present among piles of cases where things didn’t work out or seem to make sense, at least not yet. There are vigils; there is witnessing, testimony, and yelling. But there is not yet a consensual rubric that would shape these matters into an event. The affective structure of the situation is therefore anxious and the political emotions attached to it veer wildly from recognition of the enigma that is clearly there to explanations that make sense, the kind of satisfying sense that enables enduring.

Uncertainty is the material that Bush wished to bracket. His desire for a politics of ambient noise, prepropositional transmission, and intuitive reciprocity sought to displace the filtered story of instability and contradiction from the center of sociality. He also wishfully banished self- reflexive, cultivated opinion and judgment from their central public- sphere function. In short, as Jacques Rancière would put it, Bush’s wishful feeling was to separate the political from politics as such. In so doing he would cast the ongoing activity of social antagonism to the realm of the epiphenomenal, in contrast to which the affective feedback loop of the political would make stronger the true soul- to- soul continuity between politicians and their public. Foucault used to call “sexuality” that noisy affectivity that Bush wanted to transmit from mouth to ear, heart to heart, gut to gut. From his perspective, at least, the political is best lodged in the appetites.

These are not politically tendentious observations. Perhaps when Bush uttered his desire for affective communication to be the medium of the political, he was trying cynically to distract the public gaze from some of his particular actions. But the wish to inhabit a vaguely warm sense of already established, autonomic, and atmospheric solidarity with the body politic is hardly his special desire. Indeed, in his preference for the noise of immediacy, he has many bedfellows in the body politic with whom he shares little else politically, namely, the ones who prefer political meetings in town halls, caucuses, demonstrations, and other intimate assemblies to the pleasure of disembodied migratory identification that constitutes mass publics. He also joins his antagonists in the nondominant classes who have long produced intimate publics to provide the feeling of immediacy and solidarity by establishing in the public sphere an affective register of belonging to inhabit when there are few adequate normative institutions to fall back on, rest in, or return to.

Public spheres are always affect worlds, worlds to which people are bound, when they are, by affective projections of a constantly negotiated common interestedness. But an intimate public is more specific. In an intimate public one senses that matters of survival are at stake and that collective mediation through narration and audition might provide some routes out of the impasse and the struggle of the present, or at least some sense that there would be recognition were the participants in the room together. An intimate public promises the sense of being held in its penumbra. You do not need to audition for membership in it. Minimally, you need just to perform audition, to listen and to be interested in the scene’s visceral impact. You might have been drawn to it because of a curiosity about something minor, unassociated with catastrophe, like knitting or collecting something, or having a certain kind of sexuality, only after which it became a community of support, offering tones of suffering, humor, and cheerleading. Perhaps an illness led to seeking out a community of survival tacticians. In either case, any person can contribute to an intimate public a personal story about not being defeated by what is overwhelming. More likely, though, participants take things in and sometimes circulate what they hear, captioning them with opinion or wonder. But they do not have to do anything to belong. They can be passive and lurk, deciding when to appear and disappear, and consider the freedom to come and go the exercise of sovereign freedom.

Indeed, in liberal societies, freedom includes freedom from the obligation to pay attention to much, whether personal or political—no-one is obliged to be conscious or socially active in their modes and scenes of belonging. For many this means that political attention is usually something delegated and politics is something overheard, encountered indirectly and unsystematically, through a kind of communication more akin to gossip than to cultivated rationality. But there is nothing fundamentally passive or superficial in overhearing the political. What hits a person encountering the dissemination of news about power has nothing to do with how thorough or cultivated their knowledge is or how they integrate the impact into living. Amidst all of the chaos, crisis, and injustice in front of us, the desire for alternative filters that produce the sense—if not the scene—of a more livable and intimate sociality is another name for the desire for the political.

This is why an intimate attachment to the political can amount to a relation of cruel optimism. I have argued throughout this book that an optimistic attachment is cruel when the object/scene of desire is itself an obstacle to fulfilling the very wants that bring people to it: but its life-organizing status can trump interfering with the damage it provokes. It may be a relation of cruel optimism, when, despite an awareness that the normative political sphere appears as a shrunken, broken, or distant place of activity among elites, members of the body politic return periodically to its recommitment ceremonies and scenes. Voting is one thing; collective caring, listening, and scanning the airwaves, are others. All of these modes of orientation and having a feeling about it confirm our attachment to the system and thereby confirm the system and the legitimacy of the affects that make one feel bound to it, even if the manifest content of the binding has the negative force of cynicism or the dark attenuation of political depression.

How and why does this attachment persist? Is it out of habit? Is it in hopes of the potentiality embedded in the political as such? Or, from a stance of critical engagement, an investment in the possibility of its repair? The exhausting repetition of the politically depressed position that seeks repair of what may be constitutively broken can eventually split the activity of optimism from expectation and demand. Maintaining this split enables one to sustain one’s attachment to the political as such and to one’s sense of membership in the idea of the polity, which is a virtual—but sensual, not abstract—space of the commons. And so, detaching from it could induce many potential losses along with new freedoms.

Grant Farred calls fidelity to the political without expectation of recognition, representation, or return a profoundly ethical act. His exemplary case derives from voting patterns of African Americans in the 2004 presidential election, but the anxiety about the costs of this ethical commitment has only increased with the election of Barack Obama as the President of the emotional infrastructure of the United States as well as of its governing and administrative ones. What is the relation between the “Yes We Can!” optimism for the political and how politics actually works? What is the effect of Obama’s optimization of political optimism against the political depression of the historically disappointed, especially given any President’s limited sovereignty as a transformative agent in ordinary life? How can we track the divergences between politically orchestrated emotions and their affective environments? Traditionally, political solidarity is a more of a structure than a feeling—an identification with other people who are similarly committed to a project that does not require affective continuity or warm personal feeling to sustain itself. But maintaining solidarity requires skills for adjudicating incommensurate visions of the better good life. The atrophy of these skills is at risk when politics is reduced to the demand for affective attunement, insofar as the sense of belonging is threatened by the inconvenience of antagonistic aims. Add to this the possibility that “the political” as we know it in mass democracy requires such a splitting of attachment and expectation. Splitting off political optimism from the way things are can sustain many kinds of the cruelest optimism.