# ASEXUALITIES 1AC

#### Notes:

This was an OLD AFF. So it’s not very good. But it’s an argument I feel very strongly about.

CUTTING PLAYLIST:

1. VNV Nation – Everything

2. Amazarashi – Kisetsu Wa Tsugitsugi

3. Beethoven

This aff is gonna be a journey.

## 1AC

### [0:40] “So, have you started liking girls yet?”

#### This 1AC begins with the realization: asexuality is always already a problem for medicine to solve. Przybylo[[1]](#footnote-1)

Corresponding to this, lack of sex or sexual desire, has increasingly become medicalized. Medicalization is the “process whereby more and more of everyday life has come under medical dominion, influence, and supervision,” acquir[ed]ng “medical meaning […] in terms of health and illness” and becoming “a vehicle for eliminating or controlling problematic experiences that are defined as deviant, for the purpose of securing adherence to social norms” (Zola 1983, 295; Kohler Riessman 47-48; see also Zola 1972, 1975; Conrad and Schneider 1980, 1992; Conrad 1992). In the last decade especially, medicalization has become augmented by pharmaceutical companies, which promote and invent both disorders and concomitant treatments (Conrad 2005; Tiefer 2006).19 Significantly, preoccupations with erectile dysfunction for men and female sexual dysfunctions, especially disorders of desire, for women, have been culturally sifted through just such a processes of medicalization. First, in 1998, Viagra (sildenafil citrate) received the approval of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and appeared on the market as a medication to treat erectile difficulties in men. Medicalizing a common bodily lifespan change in men, Viagra also reified penetrative sex as the most authentic, ‘healthy,’ ‘masculine,’ and pleasurable form of sex (Gavey 126-131; Potts 2002; Potts 2005; Potts, Grace, Gavey, and Vares 2004). At the same time, Viagra affects women through increasing pressure on them to have sex when they may not want to, and emphasizing coital sex at the price of other, potentially more pleasurable sexual practices (Potts, Gavey, Grace, and Vares 2003; Potts 2005). Viagra propagates the idea that an erection is achievable on demand and should not be ‘wasted’ once it has arrived. Similarly, the pharmaceutical hunt for at once defining and treating female desire disorders such as Hypoactive Sexual Desire Disorder (HSDD), demonstrates even more profoundly, pharmaceutical involvement in the process of medicalization (Moynihan 2003, 2005; Tiefer 2001, 2006; Tiefer et al. 2002; Irvine; Jutel; Cacchioni; Hartley; Wood et al.). On the one hand, attempts to define and treat HSDD and other female sexual dysfunctions speak to a relatively recent emphasis on women’s entitlement to sexual pleasure; Virginia Braun (2005) writes, “[w]omen’s sexual pleasure – or ability to orgasm – appears as a central concern for women, and indeed for society” (418). This engenders a shift away from the “missing discourse of female sexual desire” and an emphasis on women’s sexual pleasure (Gavey 111). On the other hand, the cultural invention and mobilization of HSDD participates in a reaffirmation of the centrality of 20 coital, penetrative sex as well as of the sexual imperative. Thus, both Viagra and the hunt for HSDD, demonstrate that “over the last two decades it has been the absence of sexual desire, activity and pleasure (often narrowly conflated with orgasm) that has been the problem” (Gavey 110). Both Viagra and the invention of [Hypoactive Sexual Desire Disorder] HSDD participate in a pharmaceutically augmented medicalization that is informed and which informs discourses fixate[s]d on the ‘health’ value of very narrow conceptions of sex (namely hetero-coital-sex). Also, both crystallize the centrality of the sexual imperative discourse, which strongly urges us to engage in ‘healthy’ sex and to do so at any cost and by any means possible. In this context, where the absence of sex and sexual desire are medicalized, and sex is coded as acontextually healthy, it is difficult to not undertake often laborious, expensive, and sometimes risky sex work in order to pursue sexual fulfillment. Finally, I would like to emphasize that the sexual imperative advances the health of sex on very particular terms and in very particular contexts. Mostly, healthy sex is encouraged in healthy relationships (coupled, heterosexual relationships). It is within this context that a lack of sex or sexual desire is understood as alarming, in need of treatment, and perhaps most commonly medicalized. Sex is conceived of as the “normal and natural glue that holds together intimate relationships” (Gavey 142; see also Tiefer 1995, 11). The (heterosexual) relationship becomes the site in which healthy sex is expected and encouraged, and disordered or absent sex is redressed. So while, as Deborah Lupton (2003) writes, “discourses […] claim that sexual attraction and love are one, and that sexual fulfillment is essential to personal happiness,” this is most emphatically the case in the hetero-coupled context (32).

#### But such discourses pathologize asexual-identified folks who are perfectly happy just not ‘doing it.’ This is harmful especially to women and queer and trans people who already face oppression due to the privileging of heterosexual desire.

**Przybylo 2[[2]](#footnote-2)**

Pathologies of non-sexuality become assigned to those individuals who do not repeat sexually or who do not enjoy repeating sexually. The DSM-IV-TR: Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (American Psychiatric Association, 2000) identifies the following [hypoactive and similar] sexual disorders in women: hypoactive sexual desire disorder, sexual aversion disorder, female sexual arousal disorder, female orgasmic disorder disorder, dyspareunia, and vaginismus, a proliferation which serves to reflect very accurately the compulsion to repeat sexual desire, orgasm, and coitus (American Psychiatric Association, 2000; Basson et al., 2001: 84).6 In a certain sense, the absence of sexual ‘urges’ becomes [as] more problematic than an overabundance of them, as is strangely crystallized by a triad of sexologists in 1998 [had to] who ‘plead for the introduction of a category on excessive (or hyperactive) sexual desire’, whereas the addition of new and varied sexual lack pathologies does not need to be pleaded for (Vroege et al., 2001: 239). And as Gavey suggests, the problem may not lie in disordered women, so much as in a lack of interest in the sex that is being repeated as ‘normal’, ‘the kind of sex on offer’ (2005: 112). Leonore Tiefer reminds us that we should be wary of regarding the DSM as a neutral source indexing reality, but remember instead that it is itself a cultural production invested in a gendered and heterosexist system (1995: 97–102).

#### Thus the advocacy: asexual spectrum-identifying adolescents ought to have the right to make autonomous medical decisions regarding their sexualities.

### [1:15] Advantage 1 is The Doctor’s Office

#### Going into the doctor while ace-spectrum is fraught with tension. The assumption and regulation of (hetero)sexuality by medical institutions and doctors means that experiencing desire differently is a choice ace-spectrum folks aren’t, by and large, entitled to.

#### Adolescents are expected to develop sexual feelings before they’re given the right to choose what doctors they see, leaving ace-spectrum youth at risk of having their identity brushed off as an unhealthy low libido. I shouldn’t need to explain why invalidating one’s identity is bad, but just in case I do: it hurts self-esteem, it detracts from identity formation, and it gives already marginalized adolescents the sense that their marginalization is irrelevant.

#### Adolescence is for many where the sexual imperative reaches a fever pitch, so empowering ace-questioning and ace-identified youth to navigate the doctor’s office is essential regardless of concerns over specific implementation or adolescent immaturity. Asexuality is not a phase, it is not for doctors to prescribe therapy or desire-boosting drugs, and most importantly it is not anyone’s to question.

#### My advocacy intersects with numerous pathologizations in multiple ways, and it provides a unique opportunity for coalition-building, particularly among asexuality and disability advocates. Gupta[[3]](#footnote-3)

Both groups also seek to combat the over-medicalization of human variation. Asexuality and disability as diagnostic/ medical categories both involve social processes of pathologizing bodily variation.34 Many asexual activists and disability activists see asexuality and some types of disability, respectively, as simply alternative ways of living in the world. However, these ways of living in the world have frequently been targeted by the biomedical community as pathological conditions in need of treatment or “fixing.” Disability and asexual activists have sought to reclaim some types of disability and asexuality, respectively, as non-pathological human variations (at least for some), which do not necessarily or always require medical intervention.35 I believe it would be possible to develop a platform in regards to medicine that many disabled and asexual activists could agree on. A[a]t a minimum, the platform would include a respect for human variation, [and] a rejection of medical treatment in cases where a particular variation (such as loss of sexual desire) does not cause undue physical or emotional distress (while affirming the appropriateness of medical intervention in many cases), and a recognition that more or less of the distress felt by persons identified by society as “variant” results from society’s response to that variation, not the variation itself. My hope is that through recognizing these connections, disability advocates and asexual advocates may be able to break out of the process of mutual repudiation. It is also possible that in developing the shared platforms suggested above, disability and asexual activists may identify areas in 575 which they can work together and move toward a process of mutual negotiation. Such collaboration could be of enormous benefit to people with disabilities, asexual-identified people, and especially people with disabilities who also identify as asexual.

### [0:50] Advantage 2 is Difference and Repetition

#### The AC’s method of affirming the potential for asexuality to do autonomous medical choices differently not only challenges the compulsory sexuality present today, but it also remains situated within today’s social context, avoiding the disadvantages of both abstraction and opposition. Big-stick criticisms like cap Ks miss the point—the AC recognizes that multiple oppressions exist and the advocacy merely highlights one area of oppression. The AC strikes the correct balance. Przybylo 3[[4]](#footnote-4)

Asexuality need not define itself reactively as absence, as what it is not and what it does not. I am suggesting that, although we can never step outside sexusocial discourse, we can in a Butlerian fashion, ‘[take] up . . . the tools where they lie’ (Butler, 1999 [1990]: 185), and rework asexuality’s reactive definition to reflect more accurately its subversive potentialities for plurality. Some of these tools of resistance, of sexual complication, are already in place. For instance, as Scherrer documents, asexuals while not interested in ‘sex’, often continue to pursue an interest in hugging, kissing, cuddling, thus complicating the landscape of sexuality through revaluing which acts ‘count’ (2008: 633). Also, they are refusing simple definitions of sexuality pivoting around object choice and pluralizing the discourse of sexuality through adding such terms as romantic and aromantic to a language otherwise ‘centered a bit too much on one and the same’ (Irigaray, 1981 [1977]: 103). As Eve Sedgwick reminds us, there is more to sexuality than knowing whom we are attracted to, suggesting that we might do well to consider other features such as ‘effeminacy, butchness, femmeness’ or ‘other terms, too, such as top and bottom’ (1995: 16). Asexuality, through the deployment of additional concepts such as romanticism and aromanticism, complicates sexual terminology, adding nuance to otherwise dry territory. Also, those asexuals who identify as aromantic, question the compulsion to couple and invest energy and value in polyamory through the establishment of circles of friends, suggesting that dyadic thinking and living is insufficient (Scherrer, 2008: 234; also Scherrer 2010a and 2010b). We thus see asexuals holding the tools for transfiguring sexuality, through emphasizing acts other than ‘sex’, and transfiguring relational networks, through circumventing the importance of exclusive dyadic units. While it may not be possible to circumvent the sexusociety we are all immersed in, for Foucault, ‘[w]here there is power, there is resistance’ and it is ‘this resistance [which] is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power’ (1990 [1978]: 95). As long as asexuality remains faithful to reactive, binary-bound repetitions, it may only serve as a surface resistance to sexusociety, while at the same time aiding in sexusociety’s production. Asexuality would do well to recognize that there is no vacation away from sexusocial discourse; even the micro safe space of the asexual body is in fact embedded within sexusociety. Luce Irigaray, who so convincingly argues for an imaginary distinct from the phallogocentric, recognizes that every new formulation is inevitably imbued with traces of phallocentrism, since it emerges from ‘phallocratism, where neither women’s sex, their imaginary, nor their language can exist’ (1981 [1977]: 106). Likewise, there is no circumvention of sexusociety. An approach to asexuality as ‘both a symptom of and act of resistance against the epistemological, political, and social terrain postmodernity forces us to [we] inhabit’, provides for spaces of resistance without a disavowal of the cultural context of sexusociety from which it springs (Brown, 1991: 68). Resistance from within sexusociety is possible through choosing to repeat differently. While such resistance may seem local, it may have political effects because it creates a rupture in a system that wishes itself to be flawless, exposing through this difference of repetition the contingency of the entire sexusocial project. While such alternative repetitions will likely not congeal into a substantively different sexusociety, this is not the point. Instead, alternative repetitions are powerful because they suggest to other actors that repeating differently is possible, and most importantly, that the most frequently repeated sequences are not by any means ‘natural’ or ‘innate’. Asexuality, in choosing to repeat differently, must also choose to abandon its reactive, binary-bound sense of itself, focusing on what it does instead of what it does not do. It must shift from declarations of absence, to an enacting of difference, both linguistically and actually. For resistance to be genuine, asexuality should repeat itself differently, plurally, and complexly. This is where its resistant energies lie: in alternative and plural enactments. This is what asexuality must do as a strategy of being, for absence can only be exciting and meaningful for short bursts of time, and even then it is not exactly an accurate description, since there is always some sort of presence. In articulating and enacting differently – in repeating differently – asexuality has the opportunity to transform sexusociety from within, through suggesting that alternative repetitions are possible and through destabilizing those repetitions that have become normalized.

### [1:30] Advantage 3 is Narrating the Future

#### [omitted]

#### The net benefit to my performance of utopian imagining is that I resist sexual normativity in this round. Sundrud[[5]](#footnote-5)

Whereas Butler’s theory emphasizes recurrent (and seemingly stable) performances, some scholars believe that performativity is a useful vehicle for recognizing diversity within marginalized communities. As Dolan (2001) argues, performativity gives voice to queer knowledge that is “alienated from ‘the real’ of subjectivity” (p. 65). Performativity, thus, allows LGBT and asexual individuals to construct queer rhetorics of knowledge and deeply personal, nuanced narratives of identity. Performativity empowers marginalized individuals to explore the intersections of identity and even consider seemingly conflicting identities that constitute their sense of self. When asexuals share and celebrate nonessential asexual narratives, they may find it easier to resist the deployment of sexual normativity. 108 Not surprisingly, as each asexual woman constructed her asexual narratives, she consciously and unconsciously told stories that gave credence to the notion of an “essential” asexual identity. However, Pollock’s (2008) theory of performativity argues that narratives concerning one’s sexual identity do not reveal a given truth, but rather situate identity within “contested rhetorics of narrative knowing” (p. 122). Her theory posits knowledge as constantly emerg[es]ing through a fluid process of (re)telling stories. Thus, each asexual woman constructs and maintains an asexual identity for as long as her stories support this rhetorical construct. Similarly, Fisher (1989) frames sexuality as constituted through stories of reason, logic, and persuasion. These theories are critical to understanding each woman’s transition from a heterosexual identity to an asexual identity. For example, Sarah claimed an essential lesbian identity for twenty years until she discovered the asexual community and began to rationalize her identity as both lesbian and asexual. The “truth” about her sexual identity depended upon her interpreting and rationalizing her past behavior into “knowledge” about her sexual identity. When scholars understand the process of constructing gendered and sexual identities through narrative performances, they can begin to analyze critically the specific and multiple narratives that constitute feminine, masculine, heterosexual, and homosexual identities. When employing oral history methodologies to deconstruct narratives of identity, there is a tendency for scholars to focus on narratives of past and present. This is problematic, Muñoz (2006, 2009) argues, because queer identity emerges primarily through the construction of future-oriented narratives. Focusing on narratives of past and present will reveal only existing bodies of “knowledge” that marginalize queer 109 individuals. Thus, it is the responsibility of every critical scholar to support and encourage the construction of utopian narratives. In doing so, scholars might empower queer individuals to explore narratives that might affect change in their communities. As scholars continue to employ performance studies to understand the construction of sexual identities, they should consider how seemingly stable sexual identities are given credence through recurrent narratives and ritual performances. This research study posits that sexual identities change as individuals contextualize their past experiences and future dreams against normative expectations. For the advancement of queer studies, it is important that scholars deconstruct essential narratives of sexuality and make visible the ways in which heteronormative narrative performances bestow privilege and status within our society.

### [1:30] Framing

#### The role of the ballot in this round is to vote for the debater who best *[performatively and]* methodologically situates asexuality in the resolution’s context of adolescent medical choices. The way to weigh between *[and among performance and]* methodology is: which best strikes the correct balance between accounting for common ace-spectrum experiences and the ethical actions they necessitate, and increasing awareness of asexuality and hope for ace-spectrum individuals in the debate community. Examples of arguments you can read against this AC are: anti-assimilationist criticisms, *[narratives about sexuality that are more inclusive and ace-positive,]* or pretty much any neg argument you already have.

#### The debate space is communally constructed through the endorsement and privileging of certain discourses and ways of acting and performing. A vision of debate must therefore account for how the performances and methods endorsed in this round intersect with the features of this activity that make it valuable. Morgan[[6]](#footnote-6)

Critical pedagogy is the general name given to the theoretical perspectives developed by writers such as Peter McLaren, Henry Giroux and their associates. McLaren (1999) describes critical pedagogy as a ‘way of thinking about, negotiating, and transforming the relationship among classroom teaching, the production of knowledge, the institutional structures of the school, and the social and material relationships of the wider community, society, and nation-state’ (p. 454). Critical pedagogy is what happens when critical theory meets education. It draws widely on liberation theology, Freirian pedagogy, the sociology of knowledge, the Frankfurt school of critical theory, feminist theory, neo-Marxist cultural criticism and, more recently, postmodern social theory. Critical pedagogy sees schooling as a form of cultural politics, since schooling always involves an introduction to, preparation for and legitimisation of, certain ways of seeing and behaving in the world. Schooling always involves power relationships and the privileging of certain forms of knowledge. Invariably, these forms of knowledge serve to reproduce social inequalities linked to racism, sexism, class discrimination and ethnocentrism. Critical pedagogy involves recognising how existing curriculum, resources and approaches to teaching offer students a perspective on the world that serves to marginalise certain voices and ways of life. The task of critical pedagogy is for teachers and students to make explicit the socially constructed character of knowledge, and ask whose interests particular ‘knowledges’ serve. Armed with such awareness, students and teachers should be able to challenge unequal and undemocratic structures (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1991; Giroux, 1992, 1994, 1996; McLaren, 1995, 1999). [continues] This work has pointed to the ways in which places are constructed through competing spatialities. Space is always open to interpretation and contestation by different individuals or groups, many of who are trying to question and redefine the meanings and boundaries of particular spaces (Keith & Pile, 1993; Sibley, 1995; Cresswell, 1996). Massey (1995) provides examples of this when she notes that different social groups may have distinct spatialities – they may have different abilities and propensities to travel and mobility, or different levels of commitment to places. Different groups have different degrees of spatial power, which is expressed in a variety of ways. For example, powerful social groups may distance themselves from various ‘bads’, such as production, or from economic decline and dereliction; or seek to exclude other groups from residential proximity. In these ways, space is constructed and contested. Valentine (1996) provides an example of this process in her discussion of the ‘heterosexual street’. She suggests that public space – the ‘heterosexual street’ – is not an asexual space. Instead, it is commonly assumed to be ‘naturally’ or ‘authentically’ heterosexual. She argues that there is nothing ‘natural’ about this space. Rather, spaces become heterosexual through the accumulation of repeated acts, including things such as different-sex couples holding hands as they walk down the street, adverts and shop window displays that present images of contented nuclear families, heterosexualised conversations at bus stops or queues for the bank, and piped music in shops and restaurants that relate tales of heterosexual love. Valentine shows that these small, repeated and seemingly inconsequential acts produce public space as heterosexual space. Such space is experienced by lesbian and gay men as potentially hostile, and leads many to police their own desires and actions, hence reinforcing the appearance that ‘normal’ space is ‘straight’ space. However, Valentine reminds us that such public spaces are rarely produced in a singular, uniform way as heterosexual. In fact, there are usually ‘others’ present who are producing their own relational spaces, or who are reading ‘heterosexual space’ against the grain – experiencing it differently. Valentine offers a number of examples to illustrate this. For instance, dress can provide subtle signifiers of lesbian identities and gestures such as a glance, or an independent or confident manner can alert those ‘in the know’ to one’s sexuality. As well as these more subtle, discrete ways of producing lesbian space, there are more overt in ‘in yer face’ ways to ‘queer’ public space. Lesbian and gay pride marches allow gay and lesbian people to numerically dominate the streets, thus challenging the status of public spaces as heterosexual. These issues are developed in a vibrant and growing literature concerned with sexuality and space (see, for example, Bell & Valentine, 1995; Mort, 1996; Bondi, 1998; Knopp, 1998). The point made by many feminist and cultural geographers is that space is not simply the product of capital and class relationships and that we should also take seriously the role of other social relationships in the production of space. This is reflected in Soja’s latest work (1996), which has taken on board many of these ideas and now appears to welcome the new ‘postmodernised and spatialised’ politics of difference in his notion of Thirdspace. For Soja, Thirdspace offers the possibility of expanding the scope of our geographical imaginations about the spatiality of life, a dimension as significant as historicality and sociality. This means building on and going beyond a Firstspace perspective which focuses on the ‘real’ material world, and a Secondspace perspective that interprets ‘reality’ through representations, to reach a Thirdspace of multiple ‘real- and-imagined places’. Drawing on feminist and postcolonial theorists, Soja conceptualises Thirdspace as a space of ‘radical openness’, which those marginalised by racism, patriarchy, capitalism, colonialism and other oppressions choose as a speaking position. Thirdspace offers a source of community for those oppressed by the social categories around which society is structured. This brief discussion has attempted to capture the flavour of some of the debates about ‘space’, which characterise contemporary human geography. It is possible to suggest that there has been a shift from a conception of space as ‘essential’ to a conception of space as ‘constructed’. More specifically, there has been a shift away from the idea of space as homogenous, continuous, objective, Cartesian and knowable, towards a view of space as fragmented, imaginative, unknowable and subjective. Rather than being regarded as a neutral container for social action, space is increasingly regarded as tied up with issues of power and difference (Watson, 1999). The debates about space described here appear far removed from the concept of space that currently dominates school geography. However, if we accept the argument that space is not an innocent container of social events but is a political concept, then we need to examine how space is dealt with in the curriculum. The school geography curriculum adopts a view of space, which is no longer widely accepted in the discipline in that it tends towards a ‘spatial fetishism’ and ignores the social and political (Peet, 1998). Whilst this discussion has focused on the discipline of geography, a critical pedagogy of space would also consider the ways in which space is conceptualised in other curriculum areas. For example, in History models of time-space are represented, and Art and Design is concerned with issues of the use of public space. Towards a Critical Pedagogy of Space In a recent lecture Ed Soja (1999b) commented on the pedagogical implications of his work. He suggested that students need to learn how space is filled with power and ideology at all scales from the body to the global. They should be taught how they live their lives in socially constructed spaces that have the potential to both entrap and enable. The key contribution of the critical geographical literature discussed in the previous section has been to analyse the power relationships involved in the production of space. A ‘critical pedagogy of space’ revolves around the political task of understanding how resistance to oppressive power relationships can be realised. This is implied in McLaren’s call for critical pedagogy to ‘move in the direction of challenging new carceral systems of social control’. McLaren outlines what he regards a central feature of this pedagogy: The critical pedagogy to which I am referring needs to be made less in- formative and more per-formative, less a pedagogy directed toward the interrogation of written texts than a corporeal pedagogy grounded in the lived experiences of students ... (McLaren, 1999, p. 452) There are many examples that could inform such a ‘per-formative’ pedagogy. One of the lessons that children learn from a very young age is that space is both enabling and constraining. Children quickly learn that some spaces – such as the sweet shop with a sign on the door saying ‘only two schoolchildren at a time’ – do not welcome them, whilst others require that they have the necessary cash to gain admittance. They learn that there are limits to our spaces and that some people can dominate space to exclude others. In what follows, I discuss two examples of how a critical pedagogy of space might be grounded in the lived experience of students in order to highlight some of the issues raised by such a pedagogy.

#### Why do we call it the debate space if we’re not willing to live up to what that entails? In this space, your ballot doesn’t just answer the question “what is the debate space now?” but rather it answers the question “what should debate become?” Every ballot makes an ethical endorsement of a certain model of debate, even if it endorses traditional models.

#### Second, your ballot should resist the imposition of dominant ideology onto marginalized groups. This is a uniquely educational space. Trifonas[[7]](#footnote-7)

Domination and subordination, I imply that they are relations of power. In an educational context, the exercise of **power is accomplished in interactions** (i.e., in a social organization), manifesting itselfas acts **of** exclusion, **marginalization**, silencing, and so forth. Thus**,** **paying attention to** how **power** operatesalong axes of gender, race, class, and ability (that is, recognizing that social differences are not given, but are accomplished in and through educational settings) **is a step toward educational equity**. What does the above discussion mean in the educational context? It means that in the interactions of teachers with students in the classroom, or in other contexts, attention needs to be directed toward how **dominant** andsubordinate **relations** (be they based on race, gender, class, or ability) permeate these contexts and intersect in complicated ways to **produce inequality** and marginalization. The frequently used and well-meaning phrase, “I treat everyone the same, ” often used by teachers and administrators to indicate their lack of bias in a diverse educational setting, in fact masks unequal power relations. Similarly, educational policies that assume that people are the same or equal may serve to entrench existing inequality precisely because people enter into the educational process with different and unequal experiences. These attempts, well meaning though they may be, tend to render inequality invisible, and thus work against equity in education. In her exploration of white privilege in higher education in the United States, Frances Rains (1998), an aboriginal-Japanese American woman, states emphatically that these benign acts are disempowering for the minority person because they erase his or her racial identity. The denial of racism in this case is in fact a form of racism. Thus, in moving toward equity in education that allows us to address multiple and intersecting axes of difference and inequality, I recommend that **we try to** think and **act “against the grain” in** developing **education**al policies and handling various kinds of pedagogical situations. 5 To work against the grain is to recognize that education is not neutral; it is contested. Mohanty puts it as such: … [E]ducation represents both a struggle for meaning and a struggle over power relations. [It is] a central terrain where power and politics operate out of the lived culture of individuals and groups situated in asymmetrical social and political positions. (Mohanty 1990:184) We need to develop a critical awareness of the power dynamics operative in institutional relations-and of the fact that people participate in institutions as unequal subjects. Working against the grain is to take a proactive approach to understanding and acting upon institutional relations, whether in the classroom, in other interactions with students, or in policy development. **Rather than overlooking** the embeddedness of gender, race, class, ability, and other **forms of inequality** that shape our interactions, **working against the grain** makes explicit the political nature of education and how power operates to privilege, silence, and marginalize individuals who are differently located in the educational process. In her exploration of feminist pedagogy, Linda Briskin (1990) makes a clear distinction between nonsexist and antisexist education critical to our understanding here. She asserts that nonsexism is an approach that attempts to neutralize sexual inequality by pretending that gender can be made irrelevant in the classroom. Thus, for instance, merely asserting that male and female students should have equal time to speak-and indeed giving them equal time-cannot adequately rectify the endemic problem of sexism in the classroom. One of Briskin's students reported that in her political science tutorials that when the male students spoke, everyone paid attention. When a female student spoke, however, the class acted as if no one was speaking (13). Neutrality is an attempt to conceal the unequal distribution of power. An against the grain approach would acknowledge explicitly that we are all gendered, racialized, and differently constructed subjects who do not participate in interactional relations as equals. This goes beyond formulating sexism, racism, abilism, and class privilege in individualist terms and treating them as if they were personal attitudes. Terry Wolverton (1983) discovered the difference between nonracism and antiracism in her consciousness-raising attempt: I had confused the act of trying to appear not to be racist with actively working to eliminate racism. Trying to appear not racist had made me deny my racism, and therefore exclude the possibility of change. (191) Being against the grain means seeing inequality as systemic and interpersonal (rather than individual), and combatting oppression as a collective responsibility, not just as a personal attribute (so that somehow a person can cleanse herself or himself of sexism, racism, abilism, or class bias). It is to pay attention to oppression as an interactional property that can be altered (see Manners 1998). Roger Simon (1993) suggests, in his development of a philosophical basis for teaching against the grain, which shares many commonalities in how I think about an integrative approach to equity in education, that teaching against the grain is fundamentally a moral practice. By this he does not mean that teachers simply fulfill the mandate and guidelines of school authorities. He believes that teachers must expose the partial and imperfect nature of existing knowledge, which is constructed on the basis of asymmetrical power relations (for instance, who has the power to speak and whose voices are suppressed?). It is the responsibility of the teacher or educator to show how dominant forms of knowledge and ways of knowing constrict human capacities. In exposing the power relations integral to the knowledge construction process, the educator, by extension, must treat teaching and learning as a mutual and collaborative act between teachers and students. What may this ideal look like in practice? Marilyn Cochran-Smith (1991) also explores the notion of teaching against the grain in her research on how teachers and students worked together in a preservice program in the Philadelphia area. Borrowing from Gramsci's formulation that action is everyone's responsibility, she asserts that teaching is fundamentally a political activity. In practical terms, she outlines what it may mean to teach against the grain in an actual teaching and learning situation. Her succinct articulation is worth quoting at length: To teach against the grain, teachers have to understand and work both within and around the culture of teaching and the politics of schooling at their particular schools and within their larger school system and communities. They cannot simply announce better ways of doing things, as outsiders are likely to do. They have to teach differently without judging the ways other teach or dismissing the ideas others espouse…. [They] are not at liberty to publicly announce brilliant but excoriating critiques of their colleagues and the bureaucracies in which they labor. Their ultimate commitment is to the school lives and futures of the children with whom they live and work. Without condescension or defensiveness, they have to work with parents and other teachers on different ways of seeing and measuring development, connecting and dividing knowledge, and knowing about teaching and schooling. They have to be astute observers of individual learners with the ability to pose and explore questions that transcend cultural attribution, institutional habit, and the alleged certainty of outside experts. They have to see beyond and through the conventional labels and practices that sustain the status quo by raising unanswerable and often uncomfortable questions. Perhaps most importantly, teachers who work against the grain must name and wrestle with their own doubts, must fend off the fatigue of reform and depend on the strength of their individual and collaborative convictions that their work ultimately makes a difference in the fabric of social responsibility. (Cochran-Smith 1991:284-85) For me, to be against the grain is therefore to recognize that the routinized courses of action and interactions in all educational contexts are imbued with unequal distribution of power that produce and reinforce various forms of marginalization and exclusion. Thus, a commitment to redress these power relations (i.e., equity in education) involves interventions and actions that may appear “counter-intuitive.” 6 Undoing inequality and achieving equity in education is a risky and uncomfortable act because we need to disrupt the ways things are “normally” done. This involves a serious (and frequently threatening) effort to interrogate our privilege as well as our powerlessness. It obliges us to examine our own privilege relative though it may be, to move out of our internalized positions as victims, to take control over our lives, and to take responsibilities for change. It requires us to question what we take for granted, and a commitment to a vision of society built on reflection, reform, mutuality, and respect in theory and in practice. Teaching and learning against the grain is not easy, comfortable, or safe. It is protracted, difficult, uncomfortable, painful, and risky. It involves struggles with our colleagues, our students, as well as struggles within ourselves against our internalized beliefs and normalized behaviors. In other words, it is a lifelong challenge. However, as Simon (1993) puts it, teaching against the grain is also a project of hope. We engage in it with the knowledge and conviction that we are in a long-term collaborative project with like-minded people whose goal is to make the world a better place for us and for our children.

#### Engaging in discourses about asexuality is especially relevant—they’re largely absent from the debate community. Other issues of oppression are important, but some stock K debates have been discussed a lot already. There’s diminishing marginal utility to increasing awareness and activism about every issue, but awareness is a major problem specifically for asexuality—Przybylo indicates that stigmatization arises from lack of awareness—so in this round in particular, we should discuss asexuality.

#### Third, ethics must continually refine traditional universal norms to account for the particulars of oppression. Laboria Cuboniks[[8]](#footnote-8)

Xenofeminism understands that the viability of emancipatory abolitionist projects–the abolition of class, gender, and race–hinges on a profound reworking of the universal. The universal must be grasped as generic, which is to say, intersectional. Intersectionality is not the morcellation of collectives into a static fuzz of cross-referenced identities, but a political orientation that slices through every particular, refusing the crass pigeonholing of bodies. This is not a universal that can be imposed from above, but built from the bottom up – or, better, laterally, opening new lines of transit across an uneven landscape. This non-absolute, generic universality must guard against the facile tendency of conflation with bloated, unmarked particulars–namely Eurocentric universalism–whereby the male is mistaken for the sexless, the white for raceless, the cis for the real, and so on. Absent such a universal, the abolition of class will remain a bourgeois fantasy, the abolition of race will remain a tacit white-supremacism, and the abolition of gender will remain a thinly veiled misogyny, even–especially–when prosecuted by avowed feminists themselves. (The absurd and reckless spectacle of so many self-proclaimed 'gender abolitionists' campaign against trans women is proof enough of this). From the postmoderns, we have learnt to burn the facades of the false universal and dispel such confusions; from the moderns, we have learnt to sift new universals from the ashes of the false. Xenofeminism seeks to construct a coalitional politics, a politics without the infection of purity. Wielding the universal requires thoughtful qualification and precise self-reflection so as to become a ready-to-hand tool for multiple political bodies and something that can be appropriated against the numerous oppressions that transect with gender and sexuality. The universal is no blueprint, and rather than dictate its uses in advance, we propose XF as a platform. The very process of construction is therefore understood to be a negentropic, iterative, and continual refashioning. Xenofeminism seeks to be a mutable architecture that, like open source software, remains available for perpetual modification and enhancement following the navigational impulse of militant ethical reasoning. Open, however, does not mean undirected. The most durable systems in the world owe their stability to the way they train order to emerge as an 'invisible hand' from apparent spontaneity; or exploit the inertia of investment and sedimentation. We should not hesitate to learn from our adversaries or the successes and failures of history. With this in mind, XF seeks ways to seed an order that is equitable and just, injecting it into the geometry of freedoms these platforms afford.

#### Thinking through asexuality provides a more accurate account of the relationship between ethics, desire, love, sex, and rationality than erasing it. Other frameworks lead to an incomplete understanding of the ethical subject as they identify action with desires that society norms as always already sexual. This elides a domain of possible action constituted by different sorts of desire, limiting the applicability of a given moral theory. Ace logic is necessary for ace folks.

### [0:50] Theory Spikes

[omitted]

# Frontlines

## 1AR AT K

[omitted]

[some notes]

#### O/V: GIVE WEATHER REPORTS!

#### 1. mitigate the link

#### 2. perm the alt

#### 3. net benefit to the perm

#### 4. get offense—excluding ace methods is bad

#### 5. either good link turns or good impact turns

### AT Word PIK

[omitted]

## 1AR AT T

#### I meet – the AC is CLEARLY in the context of medical choices—Pryzybylo 1 and 2 indicate that asexuality is framed AS an illness and an injury, which means it meets the definition of your authors.

#### CI – I may read an advocacy of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ if \_\_\_\_\_\_

#### IMPACT TURN: Censoring identity and performance in debate is uneducational, and indicates a refusal to engage.

[omitted]

## 1AR AT Performance

[omitted]

## 1AR AT Philosophy

#### Asexuality as method solves. EXTEND Przybylo[[9]](#footnote-9):

Throughout this article I have argued that asexuality, while a production of sexusociety, holds the tools for substantively challenging sexu[al ]society. This challenge should not be formulated in terms of a massive attack by one force on another, but rather as a continuous eroding away of sexusociety from within. In other words, asexuality’s transformative potential is in its capacity to repeat differently, plurally, so as to demonstrate the absurdity of repeating in only one sequence. For asexuality to be genuinely transformative, however, it needs to allow itself to repeat variously, and perhaps, to do so consciously. This will require an abandonment not only of fantasies of unity, but more relevantly, of reactive, binary-entwined definitions and performances. For asexuality to ‘survive’ in the sexusocial landscape, it must shift its self-figurations. It is not that asexuality must altogether forget its lack of interest in ‘sex’ but rather that it should situate [its lack of interest in ‘sex’] this aspect as one [aspect] among many. Repeating differently, alternatively, plurally, asexuality will create spaces of sexual complication, and of sexusocial rupture.

**Impacts:**

**[omitted]**

## ROTB Frontlines

### AT Specific ROTB Bad

#### 1. Your argument just establishes that the role of the ballot should include other forms of oppression. You do not deny that situating oppression in the context of the resolution is good; you merely recontextualize the role of the ballot to be broader.

#### 2. We can’t talk about every issue in 26 minutes of speech time, so we should focus on issues that are relevant to debaters’ lives.

#### 3. Specificity is necessary—there is no one central source of power—it’s produced through particular practices and knowledge. Only challenging the regimes of power can contest racial and gendered violence. Spade 11[[10]](#footnote-10)

This kind of analysis helps us understand that there is not one source of power, no one person at the top dominating everyone¶ below. Rather, there are regimes of practices and knowledge¶ that coalesce in conditions and arrangements that affect everyone and that make certain populations highly vulnerable to imprisonment.¶ Such an analysis also suggests that there is much work to be done to dismantle the trend of racialized-gendered mass imprisonment— in many locations, not just in legislatures, courts, or police precincts. Understanding how the forces producing imprisonment¶ and criminalization operate at multiple sites and registers¶ ranging from laws and policies to education, health care, social¶ service, media, and even our own self-conceptions helps us both¶ account for the enormity of the signi5cance of imprisonment and¶ understand that addressing it is not simply a matter of appealing¶ to one central source of power or decision-making. Power is not a matter of one dominant individual or institution, but instead¶ manifests in interconnected, contradictory sites where regimes of¶ knowledge and practice circulate and take hold. This way of understanding the dispersion of power helps us¶ realize that power is not simply about certain individuals being targeted for death or exclusion by a ruler, but instead about the creation of norms that distribute vulnerability and security. When¶ we think about power this way, we undertake a different kind of¶ examination of conditions that concern us, asking different questions. Mitchell Dean describes how this kind of analysis attends to¶ the routines of bureaucracy; the technologies of notation,¶ recording, compiling, presenting and transporting of information, the theories, programmes, knowledge and expertise¶ that compose a field to be governed and invest it¶ with purposes and objectives; the ways of seeing and representing¶ embedded in practices of government; and the¶ different agencies with various capacities that the practices¶ of government require, elicit, form and reform. To examine¶ regimes of government is to conduct analysis in the plural:¶ there is already a plurality of regimes of practices in a given¶ territory, each composed from a multiplicity of in principle¶ unlimited and heterogeneous elements bound together by¶ a variety of relations and capable of polymorphous connections¶ with one another. Regimes of practices can be identi-¶ 5ed whenever there exists a relatively stable 5eld of correlation¶ of visibilities, mentalities, technologies and agencies,¶ such that they constitute a kind of taken-for-granted point¶ of reference for any form of problematization.6

### AT Practice Rules

#### 1. Self-refuting. [omitted]

#### 2. Intellectuals and activists should take their roles as our of transformative, working to change the system, questioning their stance and the stance of other, embracing the system as a sight for change

Fischman and McLaren ’05 [Gustavo E., Arizona State University, Peter, University of California, Los Angeles, “Rethinking Critical Pedagogy and the Gramscian and Freirean Legacies: From Organic to Committed Intellectuals or Critical Pedagogy, Commitment, and Praxis”, <http://www.freireproject.org/articles/node%2066/Future%20of%20CP/mclarenfisch.pdf>, JCook.] Accessed 6/4/13.

A central and related aspect of critical pedagogy is the role of educators in¶ the process of educational critique. Henry Giroux (1993) has described educators¶ as “transformative intellectuals” because they take a critical stance toward¶ their own practice and the practice of others to engage in debate and inquiry. In¶ doing so, educators become active in shaping the curriculum, having a role in¶ shaping school policy, defining educational philosophies, and working with¶ their communities in diverse capacities. Transformative intellectuals are aware¶ of their own theoretical convictions and are skilled in strategies for translating¶ them into practice (Giroux, 1993, 2002).Giroux builds here on the Gramscian¶ concept of praxis, or theoretically oriented action, and that of the intellectual[s],¶ who ha[ve]s a prominent role to play in promoting an agenda for change.

## Asexuality Performance FLs

I’m key

#### Narratives of asexuality are currently framed as confessions, which plays into harmful systems of compulsory sexuality. Przybylo 4[[11]](#footnote-11)

Sexusociety operates through everything and everyone, in the sense that it is us, we are sexusociety. The operations of sexusociety may be effectively demonstrated with the ubiquitous tool of the confession, as outlined by Foucault (The History of Sexuality, 1990 [1978]). The confession is a mechanism not only of truth production, but also of [and] repetition correction. Sharing our innermost truths with others, be they friends, psychiatrists, or media personae, we are excavating personal details for public consumption and also learning, in this process of one-sided sharing, how faithfully our actions mimic those of the ‘norm’. As one illustrative example of the confession’s wide use by sexusociety (it is employed by parents, teachers, medical institutions, and even friends and sexual partners), I will examine the operations of the confession in relation to asexuals’ appearances on daytime television, specifically on The View (Jay, 2007b). The case seems to be that in the absence of anything to confess, it is that absence that must be confessed. Introduced as ‘a man who says he has absolutely no sexual desire at all!’ on The View, David Jay is subsequently coerced to reveal details of his asexuality, he is positioned as an object of sexual lack and is altogether bewildering for the hosts (Jay, 2007b). He must disclose details of his non-sexual past (‘do you masturbate?’) so that the hosts and the audience may assess to what extent his ‘non’-sexuality is ‘true’ (and of course, faithful repetition is impossible and any detail from the past may be fished out as counterevidence to his claims). Allow me first to recreate Joy Behar’s interrogation of David Jay: Joy Behar: ‘But maybe it’s repressed sexuality rather than, you know, that you’re just like a normal guy walking around. Maybe it’s repressed because you don’t want to face what the sexuality might look like. Could that be? Lie down. Just lie down. That will be a hundred dollars.’ [Laughs from audience] . . . ‘Because if you were having sex with yourself, excuse me one more question, that would mean that you had sexual feelings.’ . . . ‘I am trying to get to the bottom of this.’ . . . ‘So what are you just lazy or what?’ . . . ‘But how does that work? I don’t get this. A guy. I could see for a woman. But you? You have to do something.’ (Jay, 2007b). Like in Foucault’s articulations of the confession, Behar (along with the other hosts) [society] entreats [asexuals] Jay to tell everything, and functions as the interpreter and decipherer of Jay’s ‘inner’ (a)sexual truths (Foucault, 1990 [1978]: 65). It is obvious throughout that Behar, as the excavator of truth, is sceptical towards Jay’s claims of asexuality, and that she is intent on exposing him as a fraud, an ‘asexual impostor’ through whatever means are within her reach (‘but masturbation, but you are a guy, but you must be lazy’). This evinces Foucault’s notion that the ‘agency of domination does not reside in the one who speaks (for it is he who is constrained), but in the one who listens and says nothing’ (1990 [1978]: 62). Unwittingly, Behar even plays up her role as ‘the master of truth’ (Foucault, 1990 [1978]: 67) through fiddling with jokes surrounding the psychiatric role she is enacting (‘lie down’, ‘that will be a hundred dollars’). This moment of the program also relates to Foucault’s observation that ‘the confession and its effects were recodified as therapeutic operations’ (1990 [1978]: 67), with Behar playing up the role of psychiatry. Finally, Behar’s pursuit of ‘truth’ (‘I have to get to the bottom of this’) also speaks to Foucault’s observation that ‘innermost’ sexuality is formulated as hidden from the very confessor, and that it has to be ‘exacted by force’ (1990 [1978]: 66). David Jay’s interrogation on The View, like so many of his other television appearances exemplifies Foucault’s assertion that ‘Western man [sic] has become a confessing animal’ (1990 [1978]: 59). It also demonstrates sexusociety’s employment of the confession as a means to correct incorrect repetition. So while David Jay confesses absence, the hosts strive[s] to reconfigure absence into a sexual presence that resembles the ideal, in this case, the sexual ideal. Improper sexual repetitions (or in the case of asexuality, the paucity of sexual repetitions) are remedied with the guidance of other sexual subjects who are more faithful to the norms of sexual acting (presumably the hosts of The View). The confession is thus one of those very special moments within sexusociety when wrongs may be righted, when faulty repetitions may be discouraged or made to appear fraudulent, and when difference or absence may be permutated into a correct presence. Sex, and now also its absence, ‘has to be put into words’ (Foucault, 1990 [1978]: 32).

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