# Circuit Debater – Zeroth Circle – Fabulation

#### *This is the affirmative I read every round at the TOC.*

## 1AC – Prelims

#### We begin with an untold story of the resolution, a queer fictiontelling of what it means to be a “weapon” – David Wojnarowicz writes in “Close to the Knives – A Memoir of Disintegration”…

David Wojnarowicz is a visual and performance artist and writer. He has exhibited his visual art in galleries worldwide and has collaborated on many films and videos, including Silence=Death. “CLOSE TO THE KNIVES – A Memoir of Disintegration” Vintage Books, New York, 1991.

eleven. A number of months ago I read in the newspaper that there was a supreme court ruling which states that homosexuals in america have no constitutional rights against the government's invasion of their privacy. The paper stated that homosexuality is traditionally condemned in america and only people who are heterosexual or married or who have families can expect these constitutional rights. There were no editorials. nothing. Just flat cold type in the morning paper informing people of this. In most areas of the u.s.a. it is possible to murder a man and when one is brought to trial one has only to say that the victim was a queer and that he tried to touch you and the courts will set you free. When I read the newspaper article I felt something stirring in my hands; I felt a sensation like seeing oneself from miles above the earth or like looking at one's reflection in a mirror through the wrong end of a telescope. Realizing that I have nothing left to lose in my actions I let my hands become weapons, my teeth become weapons, every bone and muscle and fiber and ounce of blood become weapons, and I feel prepared for the rest of my life**. In my dreams I crawl across freshly clipped front lawns, past statues and dogs and cars containing your guardians. I enter your houses through the smallest cracks in the bricks that keep you feeling comfortable and safe. I cross your living rooms and go up your staircases and into your bedrooms where you lie sleeping.** I wake you up and tell you a story about when I was ten years old and walking around tin1es square looking for the weight of some man to lie across me to replace the nonexistent hugs and kisses from my mom and dad. I got picked up by some guy who took me to a remote area of the waterfront in his car and proceeded to beat the shit out of me because he was so afraid of the impulses of heat stirring in his belly. I would have strangled him but my hands were too small to fit around his neck. I will wake you up and welcome you to your bad dream. twelve. There were so many days of waiting for him to die the third and final time and we'd been talking to him daily because they say hearing is the last sense to go. Sometimes alone with him, the nurse outside the room, I'd take his hands and bend over whispering in his ears: hey, I don't know what you're seeing but if there's light move toward it; if there's warmth move toward it; if you see nothing then try to imagine that one period of calm in the midst of that sky just where it reaches the ocean. That one place I've always seen as a point of time and space where everything is possible, where I could dream myself anywhere in any position and I said move into that, become that, merge with it. Death. I don't necessarily believe that it's part of some cycle that repeats in other lifetimes and what difference does it make anyway? Are you supposed to save all your living for the next life? I just tend to see it as some final moment where all the energy of my body will disperse. So now it's day three or four or five, I can't remember, and his parents and two sisters are visiting the empire state building; me and philip and betty, one of his other sisters, are standing in the room. The doctor comes in and removes him from the pumps and hisses of hoses and he leaves the room immediately afterward. There's this cloudy kind of sunlight moving about the room. The guy on the bed takes two breaths and arches his back almost imperceptibly, his lips slightly parted. I have hold of one leg and his sister one hand philip another hand or part of his arm and we're sobbing and I'm totally amazed at how quietly he dies how beautiful everything is with us holding him down on the bed on the floor fourteen stories above the earth and the light and wind scattering outside the windows and his folks at this moment standing somewhere on the observation deck of the empire state building hundreds of stories up in the clouds and light and how perfect that is to me how the whole world is still turning and somewhere it's raining and somewhere it's snowing and somewhere forest fires rage and somewhere else something moves beneath dark waters and somewhere blood appears in the hallway of the home of some old couple who aren't bleeding and somewhere someo:ne else spontaneously self-com busts and somehow all the mysteries of this world as I know it offer me comfort and I don't know beans about heaven and hell and somehow all that stuff is no longer an issue and at the moment I'm a sixteen-foot-tall five-hundred and- forty-eight-pound man inside this six-foot body and all I can feel is the pressure all I can feel is the pressure and the need for release.

#### Wojnarowicz’s fabulation – or fictiontelling – of queerness as a deviant force rather than a static identity marks the breakdown of subjecthood in favor of affective forces. This disintegrates the notion of the ideal human subject through its conceptualization of identity as in flux and threatened with infection and produces the possibility of a fluid post-human becoming that enables the exploration of possibilities within deviant identities.

J. Halberstam and Ira Livingston, 1995

“Introduction: Posthuman Bodies” in “Posthuman Bodies” edited by J. Halberstam and Ira Livingston, Indiana University Press. [Gender]

When Aristotle described "man" as a "featherless biped," Diogenes confronted him with a plucked chicken. To assert, in the spirit of this vaudeville philosophy, that humanity (and the human body) is a catachresis-a term unable either to ground itself adequately in a referent or to assert a common logic to unite its various referents-is a good first step, but the imaginary closure of the category of the human, even or especially if perpetually deferred, has very real functions. Unlike the human subject-to-be (Lacan’s "1’hommelette"), who sees his own mirror image and fixed gender identity discrete and sovereign before him in a way that will forever exceed him, the posthuman becoming-subject vibrates across and among an assemblage of semi-autonomous collectivities it knows it can never either be coextensive with nor altogether separate from. The posthuman body is not driven, in the last instance, by a teleological desire for domination, death or stasis; or to become coherent and unitary; or even to explode into more disjointed multiplicities. Driven instead by the double impossibility and prerequisite to become other and to become itself, the posthuman body intrigues rather than desires; it is intrigued and intriguing just as it is queer: not as an identity but because it queers. Queering makes a postmodern politics out of the modernist aesthetics of "defamiliarization." "What intrigues me," k.d. lang asserts, "is being alternative and completely conformist at the same time" (98). David **Wojnarowicz**, in *Close to the Knives: A Memoir of Disintegration,* writes: Realizing that I have nothing left to lose in my actions, I let my hands become weapons, my feet become weapons, every bone and muscle and fiber and ounce of blood become weapons, and I feel prepared for the rest of my life. (81) Foucault calls the "reverse discourse" **becomes something else, something more than the "homosexual talking on his/her [their] own behalf." The reverse discourse ceases to be simply "the reverse" when it begins to challenge and disrupt the terms offered to it for self-definition.** Coalition across what we have called the collectivity of someness creates a necessary space for queer articulations. The AIDS body, for example, crumbles and disintegrates with the disease, but as Wojnarowicz shows, it also produces fear in those who do not have AIDS; it not only disintegrates, in other words, it produces disintegration at large. Disintegration as a political strategy attacks the oppressive imaginary gulf between the eternalized and "safe" body and the body at risk, the provisional body; it is this differential that constantly attempts to construct the Person-With-AIDS as "already dead," and beyond the human loop. Disintegration operates like a virus and infects people with fear of AIDS, exerting a weird kind of power, harnessed by ACT UP. The PWA, the junky, the homeless person, the queer in America also has power: as Wojnarowicz puts it, we have the power to "wake you up and welcome you to your bad dream." Queer tactics are not pacifist, embracing instead the "by any means necessary" approach: self defense and more. This is not simply an agenda of physical intimidation but a Foucauldian tactic of "discipline and punish," inspiring fear without actually laying a finger on anyone. "Fear," Jenny Holzer writes, "Is the most Elegant weapon." Close to the Knives is really a manifesto for action, a proposal designed to strike fear into right-wing hearts; it is a call to arms, a call to live-to acknowledge that we live-close to the knives and close to the edge of violence. People who die of AIDS die violent deaths and Wojnarowicz proposes to make this violence visible. The frame of reference within Wojnarowicz’s personal holocaust is viral: the virus becomes an epistemology yall its own, dividing the world into carriers and infected versus the possibly or potentially infected. The randomness of the disease means that everyone is affected by the infection of so many. This epistemology – knowing one’s identity by measuring one’s distance to or from the possibility of infection – opens up a window on other forms of knowing, on what he calls: “the unveiling of our order and disorder.” Being Queer in America is a posthuman agenda. At one point in Wojnarowicz’s book, he describes videotaping the death of his friend in order to give the man a virtual existence beyond the grave. Of course, Wojnarowicz’s writing is also a technology that extends the body beyond death and beyond the disintegration of the body. Technologies that remake the body also permeate and mediate our relations to the “real”: the real is literally unimaginable or only imaginable within a technological society: technology makes the body queer, fragments it, frames it, cuts it, transforms desire; the age of the image creates desire as a screen: the TV screen is analgous to elf, a screen that projects and is projected onto but only gives the illusion of depth. The image of an AIDS-related death being captured on film returns us all too quickly to U2's world of Zoo TV and its invitation to the reader to wonder which side of the lens she is on. While a connection between U2, an international mega-band. and Wojnarowicz, a queer artist dying of AIDS, may be arbitrary and coincidental, an odd image binds the two to- gether. On the 200 TV tour, U2 sold T-shirts featuring a silk-screened photo by David Wojnarowicz that appears as the cover of Close to the Knives. The photo shows buffalo stampeding over a cliff. and on the U2 T-shirt the Wojnarowicz caption. "Smell the flowers while you can," is scrawled underneath. The buffalo jumping to their doom. slipping off the edge of the earth and leaving their prairie zoo, resembles the medical zoo produced by the AIDS pandemic. This zoo cages AIDS-infected bodies and then drives them over the cliff. Smelling the ï¬‚owers while you can means not simply hedonistic abandon but staving off apocalypse with pleasure. And then making your apocalypse one that requires witnesses. "l'm carrying this rage like a blood-filled egg and there's a thin line between the inside and the outside a thin line between thought and ac- tion and that line is simply made up of blood and muscle and bone" (Wojnarowicz 161). Wojnarowicz trips over the line between inside and outside; he finds the meaning of his slow death in the anger that eats away at the human and the body and asks not for vengeance but for massive change and recognition that nothing is the same when you are dying a political death. The self disintegrates in this queer narrative into a post- human rage for disorder and uncivil disobedience. For the queer narrator. rage is the difference between being and having: it is a call to arms. a de- sire that the human be roughly shoved into the next century and the next body and that we become posthuman without nostalgia and because we already are.

#### Therefore, I affirm the banning of handguns as a queer fabulation. Wojnarowicz’s imagining of queerness-as-weaponized is not merely a fiction, but a manifestation of images of deviancy that produce a queer imaginary. Fabulation enables a politics of becoming that distort the historical conditions of the present by presenting the mind not as separate, but as a directly connected component to the processes of the larger world. Weaponization in this context becomes not a property of an object, but an affective force that enables play with history and attachments that skews dominant narratives and infects the resolution with impossible futures that exist outside of sentimental histories.

Daniel Hjorth, 2009

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Mind, as well as matter, is an attribute of life and not some separate substance from which the world is thought. The brain connects with other parts of the body and with the world (other bodies and relationships to the world) and form images/perceptions. One of those images is that of the mind. Its foundational status is but an illusion. This answers to a relational ontology: something is (achieves being) only as response. The mind ‘is’ the image that results from a response – the brain’s to the world. “Before there are actual terms – ‘mind’ on the one hand, ‘world’ on the other – there is a potential for relation, and relations for Deleuze are best described as ‘images’” (Colebrook, 2006: 5). It follows that this kind of empiricism – centred on Deleuze – suggests that fictiontelling, inventing of stories of futures, or – our preferred term – fabulation, is central to human nature. There would be no mind without the fantastic image of a mind, and this image is a product of life’s inventive powers. There is no primacy of either the faculty of understanding (as in Kant’s critique of pure reason), nor of the faculty of reason (as in Kant’s critique of practical reason). Nor is there the crisis of the disorder of the senses that Kant struggles with in his critique of judgement (where the sublime and imagination play a key role for the production of this crisis). Instead, there is an affirmation of this disorder and a turn to life’s immanent creative/inventive powers. Imagination, Deleuze suggests, is a synthesis of time and his reading of Hume resulted in the idea: based on the difference that the mind draws from repetition (the self is this drawing of difference), imagination anticipates and creates the future. Rather than starting from the image of the mind, Deleuze thus wants us to look at this create force of life, the force that creates Gods and Giants (as Bergson put it) – the force that has created also the image of the foundational mind, a force we here describe as fabulation. From this shifting of perspective, we can see how the image of mind, or subjectivity for that reason, becomes imprisonments of our power of becoming. **Fabulation would then be this narrative expression of life’s creative tendency to produce images and futures**. Moving images and people may be described as hinging on whether one can free them from investments in images and representations – that is, if decoding can take place. One example of a powerful image is of course Descartes’ cogito, always present in relationship to the conceptual persona of the lonely, doubting Descartes-on-travel (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994). **Fabulation**, to some extent already in Bergson but definitely in Deleuze’s appropriation of the concept and his adding to it a political dimension, **carries also the power to free us from the limits of the present. Imagination, we have noted above, is that mode of thought that represents a small crisis in Kant’s attempt to unite the faculties under common sense. Imagination gives rise to a disjunctive theory of the faculties** (Deleuze, 1997: 210; Smith, 1996: 33) **as we have to deal with the power of thinking**, not as a representational power of reason, but **as an inventive power presenting images of a world to come.** Imagination thus breaches the unity of reason in a leaping that spring from sensible experience. Imagination does not organise our experience but goes beyond it, challenges its present limits (cf. Colebrook, 2002: 81). It seems to me that we can describe the role of imagination for Kant as a disturbing one, provoking him to minimise its role in discussing how it plays together with understanding (Crockett, 2001). Deleuze instead finds imagination important precisely as it seems to point at a higher faculty (than knowledge, desire, and feeling) which is what makes us genuinely creative, moving beyond our present limits as we fabulate. Affect has this function in Deluze’s philosophy; it produces suspense, a breaking-free from the continuity of reason, as pause in which we are powered up in our receptivity so that our capacity to affect others increases. We will call this time the time of passion. Imagination then plays a crucial role in provoking these times of passion. Fabulation is described by Bergson as a creativity that “…fulfils its ends by creating hallucinatory fictions – vivid, haunting images that imitate perception and induce action, and thereby counteract the operations of judgement and reason. Fabulation, then emerges in the shock of an event, a vertiginous moment of disorientation in which images bypass reason and work directly on the senses to induce action.” (Bogue, 2006: 207) We can recognise how Bergson is trying to make space for his concept of fabulation vis-à-vis Kant’s faculty of imagination (they come close in Bergson’s description, although this is summarised here by Bogue). Deleuze, instead, contrasts fabulation with utopia and says the latter is too programmatic, simply not good enough if we want to understand how a ‘minor people’ (politically and not necessarily numerically ‘less’, such as women vis-à-vis men) can resist and transform majorities (the dominant group) by fabulating a world-to-come for the missing people (Deleuze, 1998). Bergson contrasted fabulation with élan vital and saved for the latter the true creative force that would result in an open society of love, whereas the former (as he discusses this in relationship to religion) would end in static societies of morality. Deleuze instead seems to move fabulation closer to the concept of élan vital as he conjoins the political force of the creative collective with the artistic force of inventing a missing people in his appropriation of fabulation: “For Deleuze, the fabulative function is the function proper to art, which projects into the world images so intense that they take on a life of their own.” (p. 218) Fabulation is sensed viscerally; we register intensity as we are moved into suspense, the pause created by falsifying received truths central in the re-production of dominant social orders. The receptivity of power’s ability to be affected and the spontaneity of power’s ability to affect (Deleuze, 1988: 71) play together in the relationship between the fabulator and the affected. Imagination is crucial in this relationship as it is what creates the break with the continuity of reason, which in turn provides material for the fabulation. Having falsified received truths there is a time of suspense to make use of. Here is where we could turn to entrepreneurship as figured on the idea of creating and making use of opportunities (Hjorth, 2003; Gartner, Carter, and Hills, 2003). The opportune act is what brings us towards the harbour (referring here to the Latin meaning of ob + portus, meaning toward, port/harbour). Harbour is a refuge, meaning an escape or to flee (from Latin refugere). Here is where ‘the entrepreneur’ shines through as a conceptual persona of social creation processes. The drama of creating a ‘line of flight’ (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994) – of articulating and acting towards an opportunity – is one that makes the concept of ‘entrepreneurship’ necessary. Crucial here is the fabulation’s articulation or expression of the flightline, of the imagined ‘nextness’, that provokes the world to become something it is not. I have described this as fabulation, and we can connect this now to the concept of flightline with Smith (1998: xlv): “…’fabulation’ is a function that extracts from them [the dominant stories or discourses presently ordering the social, my comment] a pure speech act, a creative storytelling that is, as it were, the obverse side of the dominant myths and fictions, an act of resistance whose political impact is immediate and inescapable, and that creates a line of flight on which a minority discourse and a people can be constituted.” Let us now bring the above discussions into an investigation of subjectification, how becoming-entrepreneur happens in the opening/break/suspense that fabulation creates. We are interested, in particular, in how intensity is provided by this artistic-political force of fabulation, and how this ‘electrification’ of the social provides a passionate time where the power to be affected and the power to affect are important forces.

#### The role of the ballot is to vote for who best analyzes structures of affect.

#### The resolution exists not as a purely rational object of analysis, but as a malleable product of our attachments and sentiments. Within this frame meaning is produced through our rhetoric that is a bridge between the purely theoretical and material body through affective intensity. Our affirmation marks a critical literary analysis of our attachments that recognizes their importance and enables an exploration of new ways of living while avoiding a cruel optimism that forces a static attachment to already experienced history.

Donovan Schaefer, 2013

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Framing literary criticism (broadly construed) as a practice of tracing the connective tissue between bodies and situations is what lets Berlant speak to the political uses of affect. She suggests that affect theory is a "another phase in the history of ideology theory," that it "brings us back to the encounter of what is sensed with what is known and what has impact in a new but also recognizable way" (Berlant: 2011, 53). Affect—especially ordinary affect—is the missing link between discursive regimes and bodies, the arterial linkages through which power is disseminated. "The present" is not an assemblage of texts and knowledges, bloodless discursive inscriptions on the body, but a felt sense out of which political circumstances emerge. "We understand nothing about impasses of the political," she writes, "without having an account of the production of the present" (Berlant: 2011, 4). Cruel optimism as a byproduct of political situations colliding with bodies plays out in ongoing, semistable routines, in ordinariness. This focus on the ordinary frames Berlant's conception of the political as a slow-motion reaction rather than a series of staccato punctuations. This comes out, for instance, in her exhortation to move away from trauma theory as a way of "describing what happens to persons and populations as an effect of catastrophic impacts" (Berlant: 2011, 9). Rather, Berlant suggests that trauma is only one facet of the ordinary, a precursory event that yields new historical trajectories lived out in slow-motion. "Trauma," she writes, ... forces its subjects not into mere stuckness but into crisis mode, where they develop some broad, enduring intuitions about the way we live in a now that's emerging without unfolding, and imagining a historicism from within a discontinuous present and ways of being that were never sovereign (Berlant: 2011, 93). Rather than the instantiating event, Berlant is interested in the fallout of politics, the long-running reverberations. It is in these interwoven aftermaths following in the wake of bodies that Berlant locates the tropic of cruel optimism. Optimism, she is careful to point out, can "feel" any number of different ways, can come clothed in any number of affective orientations. "Because optimism is ambitious," she writes, "at any moment it might not feel like anything, including nothing: dread, anxiety, hunger, curiosity, the whole gamut from the sly neutrality of browsing the aisles to excitement at the prospect of 'the change that's gonna come'" (Berlant: 2011, 2). Rather than a singularly identifiable feeling, optimism takes the phenomenological form of a "knotty tethering to objects, scenes, and modes of life that generate so much overwhelming yet sustaining negation" (Berlant: 2011, 52). Optimism binds bodies to "fantasies of the good life," to horizons of possibility that may or may not be defeated by the conditions of their own emergence. Cruel optimism is the outcome of this circumstance of tethering confused by itself, of Möbius-strip cycles of ambition and frustration. The ordinary, precisely because of its complexity, can contain the intransigent contradictions of cruel optimism (Berlant: 2011, 53). It is the space of the rubble, the hovering dust, the shockwaves that follow the event rather than the piercing clarity of the punctum itself. Berlant is interested in the ways that habits form out of situations of impossibility—for instance, in her reading of Gregg Bordowitz's documentary film Habit (2001), about the body rituals that structure the daily lives of a gay man living with AIDS and his partner in New York City in the 1990s. Bordowitz's work maps a crisis that reflects Berlant's delineation of the field of the political: with the new availability of anti-retroviral drugs in the 1990s, AIDS ceased to be "a death sentence," and thus "turned fated life back into an ellipsis, a time marked by pill- and test-taking, and other things, the usual" (Berlant: 2011, 58). For Berlant, the event is a rarity, and is only secondarily the zone of the political, which is itself constituted by ongoing patterns of response and desire—slow-motion echoes producing new forms as they cross-cut and interfere with one another (Berlant: 2011, 6). In this sense, Berlant explains, her work meshes with Sedgwick's queer reading of affect as the histories that make us desire in unexpected, perverse ways. "The queer tendency of this method," Berlant writes, "is to put one's attachments back into play and into pleasure, into knowledge, into worlds. It is to admit that they matter" (Berlant: 2011, 123). Berlant sees the terrain of the political emerging out of this tissue of affectively-embroidered histories. Although both Ahmed and Berlant write about the uses of affect as a phenomenological bridge to the political, and the slipperiness of happiness or the good life—the way that pleasure can be wrapped up with a strain of unease— there is a distinction between their respective scopes of inquiry. Where Ahmed's book is about frustration/promise/deferral, Berlant's is about addiction. When I asked my students to come up with examples of cruel optimism, they brainstormed the following list: heroin, abusive relationships, candy, horcruxes. Each of these instances suggests a vital but destructive need, an ambivalent compulsion—an addiction, where the tectonic plates of the body's affects shift in friction with one another. Cruel optimism indexes these moments where a body desires and needs an arrangement of the world that is also frustrating or corrosive. Politics is one of these zones of fractious attraction. Berlant writes, for instance, that 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" (Berlant: 2011, 223). Politics produces fantasies, tethers that draw us forward to particular attachments in the form of images, narratives, bodily practices. But these fantasies also contain the elements of their own frustration or refusal. President George W. Bush, for example, is able to use the affective elements of statecraft (a practice which, Berlant assures us, is decidedly non-partisan) to create a façade that diverts attention from his flailing foreign and economic policies (Berlant: 2011, 226). Berlant's focus in Cruel Optimism is on politics as a field of attachments, a skein of affectively pulsing tissues linking bodies together. "Pace Žižek," she writes, ... the energy that generates this sustaining commitment to the work of undoing a world while making one requires fantasy to motor programs of action, to distort the present on behalf of what the present can become. It requires a surrealistic affectsphere to counter the one that already exists, enabling a confrontation with the fact that any action of making a claim on the present involves bruising processes of detachment from anchors in the world, along with optimistic projections of a world that is worth our attachment to it (Berlant: 2011, 263). Berlant looks at how politics pulls on bodies using the ligaments of affect, how politics becomes irresistible, even when it is self-frustrating.

#### The affirmative’s styling of affect is that of non-styling – a pushing to a limit that removes all exterior metaphor in favor of pure and raw intensity. Our styles of writing and affect produce a style of living obliterating the distinction between form and content. Such a styling follows the lines of Franz Kafka, George Jackson, Sanyika Shakur, and Baruch Spinoza in which writing obliterates metaphor and describes the world from a minoritarian reality. This obliteration reveals affect as superior to language which is broken down and exposed as meaningless absent our injected intensities.

Gregory Flaxman, 2012

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Ironically, the more the hunger artist suffers from a “change in public interest,” the more he is deserted by “the amusement seekers,” the more he resolves to “astound the world by establishing a record never yet achieved.”58 Thus, the artist fires his manager-impresario and hires himself to a circus where no one can prevent him from performing a feat of incomprehensible fasting. As the story ends, and the hunger artist has attenuated himself to the point of all but disappearing, the circus overseer finally empties his cage out and installs a new attraction, a beautiful and muscular panther, a vision of “life.” And yet, the vitalism expressed in the story takes flight from the anorexic artist, who literally disappears in a fabulous becoming, a nomadism sur place, that no mere physiology can possibly measure. The life to which Kafka gestures, and about which Deleuze writes, is vitalist without being organic—an intensity that cannot be located in bodies or states of affairs, but in a style that will invent them both. “Style, in a great writer, is always a style of life too,” Deleuze maintains, “not anything at all personal, but inventing a possibility of life, a way of existing” (Neg, 100). We typically associate “lifestyle” with a kind of commercial and consumerist banality—“You’ve come a long way, baby!”— but nothing could be further from the sense of minor literature and its style of writing. Hence, as Deleuze explains to Claire Parnet, “I should like to say what a style is. It belongs to people of whom you normally say, ‘They have no style’ ” (Dia, 4). This definition should not be confused with the claim of styleless objectivity, neutrality, and universality to which we alluded at the beginning of the chapter. This latter is all the more firmly conditioned by the tacit presuppositions of an image of thought, whereas Deleuze affirms nonstyle as the dissolution of those very presuppositions. Nonstyle is achieved by dint of displacement, dispossession, subtraction. In Kafka’s writing, nonstyle entails what we have called a “willed poverty,” a style that “proceeds by dryness and sobriety” in order to strip back all affectations, leaving nothing behind but intensities (K, 19). “The closer language approaches it, the more ‘sober’ style becomes” (TRM, 374). Hence, one could conclude that there is “no such thing as style,” as Deleuze says, but only on the condition that we affirm nonstyle as the “purest expression of style” (ibid., 371). What would be the “elements of a style to come which does not exist?” (PS, 165).59 The answer, with which we conclude our discussion of the deterritorialization of language, lies in Deleuze’s frequent, if cryptic, call for an end to metaphor. This exhortation may well strike us as surprising, even counter-intuitive, given Deleuze’s panoply of colorful concepts, which are frequently designated by peculiar neologisms (e.g., faciality) or strange, borrowed expressions (e.g., the body without organs). But Deleuze constantly asserts that his concepts are not metaphors and that the creation of concepts is in no way metaphorical. Rather, concepts are expressive intensities. Especially in the context of what we have called minor philosophy, concepts are developed as part of a war machine turned against the method of regulating language and stabilizing words (LS, 287)—above all, with metaphor. In his own writings, on the spare occasions when he deals with metaphor, Deleuze dismisses the trope, saying that it “just confuses matters and has no real importance” (Neg, 29) or that “there are no metaphors, only combinations” (Dia, 117). But in his writings with Guattari, for reasons that will become clear, Deleuze wages an open attack on metaphor. In Kafka, for instance, they say that writing destroys metaphor and achieves its expression in the absence of metaphor. “Kafka deliberately kills all metaphor, all symbolism, all signification, no less all designation. Metamorphosis is the contrary of metaphor,” they write (K, 22). “There is no longer any proper sense of figurative sense, but only a distribution of states that is part of the range of the word. The thing and other things are no longer anything but intensities overrun by deterritorialized sound or words” (ibid.). There are no metaphors in Kafka’s writing: Gregor Samsa wakes us to discover that he has turned into a bug, and “this was no dream.” 60 Kafka “means” exactly what he writes, and his writing is what it does. There is no waking up from a dream, no recourse to another level of reality, no world behind the world. The man is a vermin, the father is a tyrant, the law is a broken and sadistic machine, children are political prisoners, the school is a prison. But what would it mean to write philosophy in the absence of metaphor and to develop a kind of nonstyle? Or, what amounts to the same thing, how can we deterritorialize philosophy? Inasmuch as philosophy traditionally redoubles the state-form, as we have seen, it does so by reproducing the metaphor of the state—the structure and sovereignty of the signifier—in each subject (of the signifier). Hence, the resolution to “kill metaphor” (K, 60) acquires its problem-structure when we understand metaphor to consist in a most fundamental expression of a dominant language, namely, the power to organize the social field. Indeed, the signifier consists in the automatism of a virtual system existing in each of us simultaneously and unconsciously. In Lacan’s terms, with which Deleuze and Guattari duly wrestle and which they duly derange, the social field is organized around the imposition of the “Name-ofthe- Father” (Nom-du-Père), the “paternal metaphor,” which governs the distribution jouissance according to a prohibition (Non-du-Père) and, thence, the production of a lack of being (manqué-à-être) that defines the subject as the universalization of neurosis. We might recall here our discussion of Anti-Oedipus in chapter 1, where we argued that schizoanalysis undertakes the foreclosure of the Name-of-the- Father in the interest of unleashing the errancy of thinking and writing otherwise (les non-dupes-errent). Likewise, Deleuze’s minor philosophy begins on the basis of foreclosing the paternal metaphor and, thereby, unleashing language into all manner of becoming. If metaphor is the contrary and enemy of metamorphosis, underwriting the promise of signifiance and subjectivization, of regularity and predictability, then we must have done with this overcoding dimension. Like a minor literature, a minor philosophy always eliminates the transcendent dimension of metaphor. Only then can we affirm the indetermination of a substantial multiplicity. This is “the only way that one belongs to the multiple: always subtracted” (ATP, 7). For this reason, Deleuze and Guattari formulate the literary assemblage, the book as multiplicity, according to the principle of “n–1.” If we take “n” to be “the number of dimensions one already has available,” the art of subtraction consists in the removal of the unary trait (traite unaire) or over coding dimension (ibid.). The one is the shadow or specter that determines and overdetermines the multiple, attributing it to a preliminary unity, and so the multiple is destined to remain still-born without the benefit of this subtraction: only by getting rid of the transcendent function, by foreclosing that which confers a form of “common sense” across all other dimensions, can writing unleash the becoming of the multiple.

## 1AC – Outrounds

#### *Shout out to Rebar Niemi for making my prose more intelligible to judges for outrounds.*

#### We begin with an untold story of the resolution, a queer fictiontelling of what it means to be a “weapon” – David Wojnarowicz writes in “Close to the Knives – A Memoir of Disintegration”…

David Wojnarowicz is a visual and performance artist and writer. He has exhibited his visual art in galleries worldwide and has collaborated on many films and videos, including Silence=Death. “CLOSE TO THE KNIVES – A Memoir of Disintegration” Vintage Books, New York, 1991.

eleven. A number of months ago I read in the newspaper that there was a supreme court ruling which states that homosexuals in america have no constitutional rights against the government's invasion of their privacy. The paper stated that homosexuality is traditionally condemned in america and only people who are heterosexual or married or who have families can expect these constitutional rights. There were no editorials. nothing. Just flat cold type in the morning paper informing people of this. In most areas of the u.s.a. it is possible to murder a man and when one is brought to trial one has only to say that the victim was a queer and that he tried to touch you and the courts will set you free. When I read the newspaper article I felt something stirring in my hands; I felt a sensation like seeing oneself from miles above the earth or like looking at one's reflection in a mirror through the wrong end of a telescope. Realizing that I have nothing left to lose in my actions I let my hands become weapons, my teeth become weapons, every bone and muscle and fiber and ounce of blood become weapons, and I feel prepared for the rest of my life**. In my dreams I crawl across freshly clipped front lawns, past statues and dogs and cars containing your guardians. I enter your houses through the smallest cracks in the bricks that keep you feeling comfortable and safe. I cross your living rooms and go up your staircases and into your bedrooms where you lie sleeping.** I wake you up and tell you a story about when I was ten years old and walking around tin1es square looking for the weight of some man to lie across me to replace the nonexistent hugs and kisses from my mom and dad. I got picked up by some guy who took me to a remote area of the waterfront in his car and proceeded to beat the shit out of me because he was so afraid of the impulses of heat stirring in his belly. I would have strangled him but my hands were too small to fit around his neck. I will wake you up and welcome you to your bad dream. twelve. There were so many days of waiting for him to die the third and final time and we'd been talking to him daily because they say hearing is the last sense to go. Sometimes alone with him, the nurse outside the room, I'd take his hands and bend over whispering in his ears: hey, I don't know what you're seeing but if there's light move toward it; if there's warmth move toward it; if you see nothing then try to imagine that one period of calm in the midst of that sky just where it reaches the ocean. That one place I've always seen as a point of time and space where everything is possible, where I could dream myself anywhere in any position and I said move into that, become that, merge with it. Death. I don't necessarily believe that it's part of some cycle that repeats in other lifetimes and what difference does it make anyway? Are you supposed to save all your living for the next life? I just tend to see it as some final moment where all the energy of my body will disperse. So now it's day three or four or five, I can't remember, and his parents and two sisters are visiting the empire state building; me and philip and betty, one of his other sisters, are standing in the room. The doctor comes in and removes him from the pumps and hisses of hoses and he leaves the room immediately afterward. There's this cloudy kind of sunlight moving about the room. The guy on the bed takes two breaths and arches his back almost imperceptibly, his lips slightly parted. I have hold of one leg and his sister one hand philip another hand or part of his arm and we're sobbing and I'm totally amazed at how quietly he dies how beautiful everything is with us holding him down on the bed on the floor fourteen stories above the earth and the light and wind scattering outside the windows and his folks at this moment standing somewhere on the observation deck of the empire state building hundreds of stories up in the clouds and light and how perfect that is to me how the whole world is still turning and somewhere it's raining and somewhere it's snowing and somewhere forest fires rage and somewhere else something moves beneath dark waters and somewhere blood appears in the hallway of the home of some old couple who aren't bleeding and somewhere someo:ne else spontaneously self-com busts and somehow all the mysteries of this world as I know it offer me comfort and I don't know beans about heaven and hell and somehow all that stuff is no longer an issue and at the moment I'm a sixteen-foot-tall five-hundred and- forty-eight-pound man inside this six-foot body and all I can feel is the pressure all I can feel is the pressure and the need for release.

#### Wojnarowicz’s fabulation – or fictiontelling – sees queerness as necessarily deviant in a society that doesn’t want to believe in AIDS, that doesn’t want to believe in the homo. The fact that society doesn’t believe in him, doesn’t understand him becomes a new source of resistance – freed from the chains of a fixed identity, queer bodies are fantastic weapons – machines that don’t just kill fascists, but infect and seep through the cracks of everyday fascist control.

#### We always fear what we don’t understand – whether it’s an argument we don’t have blocks to or a body we can’t organize. Queer fabulation takes advantage of the hatred and fear that the ideal human subject propagates as its source of power – the fear of displacement forces majoritarian identity formations to stare on in horror as the world “goes gay” and decays queerly around them.

J. Halberstam and Ira Livingston, 1995

“Introduction: Posthuman Bodies” in “Posthuman Bodies” edited by J. Halberstam and Ira Livingston, Indiana University Press. [Gender]

When Aristotle described "man" as a "featherless biped," Diogenes confronted him with a plucked chicken. To assert, in the spirit of this vaudeville philosophy, that humanity (and the human body) is a catachresis-a term unable either to ground itself adequately in a referent or to assert a common logic to unite its various referents-is a good first step, but the imaginary closure of the category of the human, even or especially if perpetually deferred, has very real functions. Unlike the human subject-to-be (Lacan’s "1’hommelette"), who sees his own mirror image and fixed gender identity discrete and sovereign before him in a way that will forever exceed him, the posthuman becoming-subject vibrates across and among an assemblage of semi-autonomous collectivities it knows it can never either be coextensive with nor altogether separate from. The posthuman body is not driven, in the last instance, by a teleological desire for domination, death or stasis; or to become coherent and unitary; or even to explode into more disjointed multiplicities. Driven instead by the double impossibility and prerequisite to become other and to become itself, the posthuman body intrigues rather than desires; it is intrigued and intriguing just as it is queer: not as an identity but because it queers. Queering makes a postmodern politics out of the modernist aesthetics of "defamiliarization." "What intrigues me," k.d. lang asserts, "is being alternative and completely conformist at the same time" (98). David **Wojnarowicz**, in *Close to the Knives: A Memoir of Disintegration,* writes: Realizing that I have nothing left to lose in my actions, I let my hands become weapons, my feet become weapons, every bone and muscle and fiber and ounce of blood become weapons, and I feel prepared for the rest of my life. (81) Foucault calls the "reverse discourse" **becomes something else, something more than the "homosexual talking on his/her [their] own behalf." The reverse discourse ceases to be simply "the reverse" when it begins to challenge and disrupt the terms offered to it for self-definition.** Coalition across what we have called the collectivity of someness creates a necessary space for queer articulations. The AIDS body, for example, crumbles and disintegrates with the disease, but as Wojnarowicz shows, it also produces fear in those who do not have AIDS; it not only disintegrates, in other words, it produces disintegration at large. Disintegration as a political strategy attacks the oppressive imaginary gulf between the eternalized and "safe" body and the body at risk, the provisional body; it is this differential that constantly attempts to construct the Person-With-AIDS as "already dead," and beyond the human loop. Disintegration operates like a virus and infects people with fear of AIDS, exerting a weird kind of power, harnessed by ACT UP. The PWA, the junky, the homeless person, the queer in America also has power: as Wojnarowicz puts it, we have the power to "wake you up and welcome you to your bad dream." Queer tactics are not pacifist, embracing instead the "by any means necessary" approach: self defense and more. This is not simply an agenda of physical intimidation but a Foucauldian tactic of "discipline and punish," inspiring fear without actually laying a finger on anyone. "Fear," Jenny Holzer writes, "Is the most Elegant weapon." Close to the Knives is really a manifesto for action, a proposal designed to strike fear into right-wing hearts; it is a call to arms, a call to live-to acknowledge that we live-close to the knives and close to the edge of violence. People who die of AIDS die violent deaths and Wojnarowicz proposes to make this violence visible. The frame of reference within Wojnarowicz’s personal holocaust is viral: the virus becomes an epistemology yall its own, dividing the world into carriers and infected versus the possibly or potentially infected. The randomness of the disease means that everyone is affected by the infection of so many. This epistemology – knowing one’s identity by measuring one’s distance to or from the possibility of infection – opens up a window on other forms of knowing, on what he calls: “the unveiling of our order and disorder.” Being Queer in America is a posthuman agenda. At one point in Wojnarowicz’s book, he describes videotaping the death of his friend in order to give the man a virtual existence beyond the grave. Of course, Wojnarowicz’s writing is also a technology that extends the body beyond death and beyond the disintegration of the body. Technologies that remake the body also permeate and mediate our relations to the “real”: the real is literally unimaginable or only imaginable within a technological society: technology makes the body queer, fragments it, frames it, cuts it, transforms desire; the age of the image creates desire as a screen: the TV screen is analgous to elf, a screen that projects and is projected onto but only gives the illusion of depth. The image of an AIDS-related death being captured on film returns us all too quickly to U2's world of Zoo TV and its invitation to the reader to wonder which side of the lens she is on. While a connection between U2, an international mega-band. and Wojnarowicz, a queer artist dying of AIDS, may be arbitrary and coincidental, an odd image binds the two to- gether. On the 200 TV tour, U2 sold T-shirts featuring a silk-screened photo by David Wojnarowicz that appears as the cover of Close to the Knives. The photo shows buffalo stampeding over a cliff. and on the U2 T-shirt the Wojnarowicz caption. "Smell the flowers while you can," is scrawled underneath. The buffalo jumping to their doom. slipping off the edge of the earth and leaving their prairie zoo, resembles the medical zoo produced by the AIDS pandemic. This zoo cages AIDS-infected bodies and then drives them over the cliff. Smelling the ï¬‚owers while you can means not simply hedonistic abandon but staving off apocalypse with pleasure. And then making your apocalypse one that requires witnesses. "l'm carrying this rage like a blood-filled egg and there's a thin line between the inside and the outside a thin line between thought and ac- tion and that line is simply made up of blood and muscle and bone" (Wojnarowicz 161). Wojnarowicz trips over the line between inside and outside; he finds the meaning of his slow death in the anger that eats away at the human and the body and asks not for vengeance but for massive change and recognition that nothing is the same when you are dying a political death. The self disintegrates in this queer narrative into a post- human rage for disorder and uncivil disobedience. For the queer narrator. rage is the difference between being and having: it is a call to arms. a de- sire that the human be roughly shoved into the next century and the next body and that we become posthuman without nostalgia and because we already are.

#### Therefore, I affirm the banning of handguns as a queer fabulation. Queer fabulation is a methodology for envisioning new discourses and images – embracing a world that already is but simultaneously cannot be. This methodology opens new potentialities via deviancy, reveals the violence of subject formation for what it is, and overturns the acceptance of the presumptive dominant historical narratives that condition our understanding. The fiction of fabulation uses the resolution to counter dominant narratives as a politics of becoming that skews dominant narratives and infects the resolution with impossible futures that exist outside of sentimental histories.

Daniel Hjorth, 2009

Professor at the Department of Management, Politics, and Philosophy at Copenhagen Business School. “Imagination – Fabulation” delivered as a key note presentation at the ESU Conference in Benevento, Italy.

Mind, as well as matter, is an attribute of life and not some separate substance from which the world is thought. The brain connects with other parts of the body and with the world (other bodies and relationships to the world) and form images/perceptions. One of those images is that of the mind. Its foundational status is but an illusion. This answers to a relational ontology: something is (achieves being) only as response. The mind ‘is’ the image that results from a response – the brain’s to the world. “Before there are actual terms – ‘mind’ on the one hand, ‘world’ on the other – there is a potential for relation, and relations for Deleuze are best described as ‘images’” (Colebrook, 2006: 5). It follows that this kind of empiricism – centred on Deleuze – suggests that fictiontelling, inventing of stories of futures, or – our preferred term – fabulation, is central to human nature. There would be no mind without the fantastic image of a mind, and this image is a product of life’s inventive powers. There is no primacy of either the faculty of understanding (as in Kant’s critique of pure reason), nor of the faculty of reason (as in Kant’s critique of practical reason). Nor is there the crisis of the disorder of the senses that Kant struggles with in his critique of judgement (where the sublime and imagination play a key role for the production of this crisis). Instead, there is an affirmation of this disorder and a turn to life’s immanent creative/inventive powers. Imagination, Deleuze suggests, is a synthesis of time and his reading of Hume resulted in the idea: based on the difference that the mind draws from repetition (the self is this drawing of difference), imagination anticipates and creates the future. Rather than starting from the image of the mind, Deleuze thus wants us to look at this create force of life, the force that creates Gods and Giants (as Bergson put it) – the force that has created also the image of the foundational mind, a force we here describe as fabulation. From this shifting of perspective, we can see how the image of mind, or subjectivity for that reason, becomes imprisonments of our power of becoming. **Fabulation would then be this narrative expression of life’s creative tendency to produce images and futures**. Moving images and people may be described as hinging on whether one can free them from investments in images and representations – that is, if decoding can take place. One example of a powerful image is of course Descartes’ cogito, always present in relationship to the conceptual persona of the lonely, doubting Descartes-on-travel (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994). **Fabulation**, to some extent already in Bergson but definitely in Deleuze’s appropriation of the concept and his adding to it a political dimension, **carries also the power to free us from the limits of the present. Imagination, we have noted above, is that mode of thought that represents a small crisis in Kant’s attempt to unite the faculties under common sense. Imagination gives rise to a disjunctive theory of the faculties** (Deleuze, 1997: 210; Smith, 1996: 33) **as we have to deal with the power of thinking**, not as a representational power of reason, but **as an inventive power presenting images of a world to come.** Imagination thus breaches the unity of reason in a leaping that spring from sensible experience. Imagination does not organise our experience but goes beyond it, challenges its present limits (cf. Colebrook, 2002: 81). It seems to me that we can describe the role of imagination for Kant as a disturbing one, provoking him to minimise its role in discussing how it plays together with understanding (Crockett, 2001). Deleuze instead finds imagination important precisely as it seems to point at a higher faculty (than knowledge, desire, and feeling) which is what makes us genuinely creative, moving beyond our present limits as we fabulate. Affect has this function in Deluze’s philosophy; it produces suspense, a breaking-free from the continuity of reason, as pause in which we are powered up in our receptivity so that our capacity to affect others increases. We will call this time the time of passion. Imagination then plays a crucial role in provoking these times of passion. Fabulation is described by Bergson as a creativity that “…fulfils its ends by creating hallucinatory fictions – vivid, haunting images that imitate perception and induce action, and thereby counteract the operations of judgement and reason. Fabulation, then emerges in the shock of an event, a vertiginous moment of disorientation in which images bypass reason and work directly on the senses to induce action.” (Bogue, 2006: 207) We can recognise how Bergson is trying to make space for his concept of fabulation vis-à-vis Kant’s faculty of imagination (they come close in Bergson’s description, although this is summarised here by Bogue). Deleuze, instead, contrasts fabulation with utopia and says the latter is too programmatic, simply not good enough if we want to understand how a ‘minor people’ (politically and not necessarily numerically ‘less’, such as women vis-à-vis men) can resist and transform majorities (the dominant group) by fabulating a world-to-come for the missing people (Deleuze, 1998). Bergson contrasted fabulation with élan vital and saved for the latter the true creative force that would result in an open society of love, whereas the former (as he discusses this in relationship to religion) would end in static societies of morality. Deleuze instead seems to move fabulation closer to the concept of élan vital as he conjoins the political force of the creative collective with the artistic force of inventing a missing people in his appropriation of fabulation: “For Deleuze, the fabulative function is the function proper to art, which projects into the world images so intense that they take on a life of their own.” (p. 218) Fabulation is sensed viscerally; we register intensity as we are moved into suspense, the pause created by falsifying received truths central in the re-production of dominant social orders. The receptivity of power’s ability to be affected and the spontaneity of power’s ability to affect (Deleuze, 1988: 71) play together in the relationship between the fabulator and the affected. Imagination is crucial in this relationship as it is what creates the break with the continuity of reason, which in turn provides material for the fabulation. Having falsified received truths there is a time of suspense to make use of. Here is where we could turn to entrepreneurship as figured on the idea of creating and making use of opportunities (Hjorth, 2003; Gartner, Carter, and Hills, 2003). The opportune act is what brings us towards the harbour (referring here to the Latin meaning of ob + portus, meaning toward, port/harbour). Harbour is a refuge, meaning an escape or to flee (from Latin refugere). Here is where ‘the entrepreneur’ shines through as a conceptual persona of social creation processes. The drama of creating a ‘line of flight’ (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994) – of articulating and acting towards an opportunity – is one that makes the concept of ‘entrepreneurship’ necessary. Crucial here is the fabulation’s articulation or expression of the flightline, of the imagined ‘nextness’, that provokes the world to become something it is not. I have described this as fabulation, and we can connect this now to the concept of flightline with Smith (1998: xlv): “…’fabulation’ is a function that extracts from them [the dominant stories or discourses presently ordering the social, my comment] a pure speech act, a creative storytelling that is, as it were, the obverse side of the dominant myths and fictions, an act of resistance whose political impact is immediate and inescapable, and that creates a line of flight on which a minority discourse and a people can be constituted.” Let us now bring the above discussions into an investigation of subjectification, how becoming-entrepreneur happens in the opening/break/suspense that fabulation creates. We are interested, in particular, in how intensity is provided by this artistic-political force of fabulation, and how this ‘electrification’ of the social provides a passionate time where the power to be affected and the power to affect are important forces.

#### The role of the ballot is to vote for who best presents a minor style of resistance.

#### The resolution exists not as a static rational object of analysis, but as a malleable product of our attachments and sentiments. Debate is made of texts, and so examining the resolution with literary analysis is the key mechanism that allows argumentation to occur at all – we already engage with affect in debate, but limiting our engagement to feelings we’re familiar with dooms us to accept dominant explanations for what matters. Our affirmation marks a critical literary analysis of our attachments that bridges the gap between the theoretical and the material while avoiding a cruel optimism that forces a static attachment to already experienced history.

Donovan Schaefer, 2013

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Framing literary criticism (broadly construed) as a practice of tracing the connective tissue between bodies and situations is what lets Berlant speak to the political uses of affect. She suggests that affect theory is a "another phase in the history of ideology theory," that it "brings us back to the encounter of what is sensed with what is known and what has impact in a new but also recognizable way" (Berlant: 2011, 53). Affect—especially ordinary affect—is the missing link between discursive regimes and bodies, the arterial linkages through which power is disseminated. "The present" is not an assemblage of texts and knowledges, bloodless discursive inscriptions on the body, but a felt sense out of which political circumstances emerge. "We understand nothing about impasses of the political," she writes, "without having an account of the production of the present" (Berlant: 2011, 4). Cruel optimism as a byproduct of political situations colliding with bodies plays out in ongoing, semistable routines, in ordinariness. This focus on the ordinary frames Berlant's conception of the political as a slow-motion reaction rather than a series of staccato punctuations. This comes out, for instance, in her exhortation to move away from trauma theory as a way of "describing what happens to persons and populations as an effect of catastrophic impacts" (Berlant: 2011, 9). Rather, Berlant suggests that trauma is only one facet of the ordinary, a precursory event that yields new historical trajectories lived out in slow-motion. "Trauma," she writes, ... forces its subjects not into mere stuckness but into crisis mode, where they develop some broad, enduring intuitions about the way we live in a now that's emerging without unfolding, and imagining a historicism from within a discontinuous present and ways of being that were never sovereign (Berlant: 2011, 93). Rather than the instantiating event, Berlant is interested in the fallout of politics, the long-running reverberations. It is in these interwoven aftermaths following in the wake of bodies that Berlant locates the tropic of cruel optimism. Optimism, she is careful to point out, can "feel" any number of different ways, can come clothed in any number of affective orientations. "Because optimism is ambitious," she writes, "at any moment it might not feel like anything, including nothing: dread, anxiety, hunger, curiosity, the whole gamut from the sly neutrality of browsing the aisles to excitement at the prospect of 'the change that's gonna come'" (Berlant: 2011, 2). Rather than a singularly identifiable feeling, optimism takes the phenomenological form of a "knotty tethering to objects, scenes, and modes of life that generate so much overwhelming yet sustaining negation" (Berlant: 2011, 52). Optimism binds bodies to "fantasies of the good life," to horizons of possibility that may or may not be defeated by the conditions of their own emergence. Cruel optimism is the outcome of this circumstance of tethering confused by itself, of Möbius-strip cycles of ambition and frustration. The ordinary, precisely because of its complexity, can contain the intransigent contradictions of cruel optimism (Berlant: 2011, 53). It is the space of the rubble, the hovering dust, the shockwaves that follow the event rather than the piercing clarity of the punctum itself. Berlant is interested in the ways that habits form out of situations of impossibility—for instance, in her reading of Gregg Bordowitz's documentary film Habit (2001), about the body rituals that structure the daily lives of a gay man living with AIDS and his partner in New York City in the 1990s. Bordowitz's work maps a crisis that reflects Berlant's delineation of the field of the political: with the new availability of anti-retroviral drugs in the 1990s, AIDS ceased to be "a death sentence," and thus "turned fated life back into an ellipsis, a time marked by pill- and test-taking, and other things, the usual" (Berlant: 2011, 58). For Berlant, the event is a rarity, and is only secondarily the zone of the political, which is itself constituted by ongoing patterns of response and desire—slow-motion echoes producing new forms as they cross-cut and interfere with one another (Berlant: 2011, 6). In this sense, Berlant explains, her work meshes with Sedgwick's queer reading of affect as the histories that make us desire in unexpected, perverse ways. "The queer tendency of this method," Berlant writes, "is to put one's attachments back into play and into pleasure, into knowledge, into worlds. It is to admit that they matter" (Berlant: 2011, 123). Berlant sees the terrain of the political emerging out of this tissue of affectively-embroidered histories. Although both Ahmed and Berlant write about the uses of affect as a phenomenological bridge to the political, and the slipperiness of happiness or the good life—the way that pleasure can be wrapped up with a strain of unease— there is a distinction between their respective scopes of inquiry. Where Ahmed's book is about frustration/promise/deferral, Berlant's is about addiction. When I asked my students to come up with examples of cruel optimism, they brainstormed the following list: heroin, abusive relationships, candy, horcruxes. Each of these instances suggests a vital but destructive need, an ambivalent compulsion—an addiction, where the tectonic plates of the body's affects shift in friction with one another. Cruel optimism indexes these moments where a body desires and needs an arrangement of the world that is also frustrating or corrosive. Politics is one of these zones of fractious attraction. Berlant writes, for instance, that 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" (Berlant: 2011, 223). Politics produces fantasies, tethers that draw us forward to particular attachments in the form of images, narratives, bodily practices. But these fantasies also contain the elements of their own frustration or refusal. President George W. Bush, for example, is able to use the affective elements of statecraft (a practice which, Berlant assures us, is decidedly non-partisan) to create a façade that diverts attention from his flailing foreign and economic policies (Berlant: 2011, 226). Berlant's focus in Cruel Optimism is on politics as a field of attachments, a skein of affectively pulsing tissues linking bodies together. "Pace Žižek," she writes, ... the energy that generates this sustaining commitment to the work of undoing a world while making one requires fantasy to motor programs of action, to distort the present on behalf of what the present can become. It requires a surrealistic affectsphere to counter the one that already exists, enabling a confrontation with the fact that any action of making a claim on the present involves bruising processes of detachment from anchors in the world, along with optimistic projections of a world that is worth our attachment to it (Berlant: 2011, 263). Berlant looks at how politics pulls on bodies using the ligaments of affect, how politics becomes irresistible, even when it is self-frustrating.

#### The affirmative’s styling of affect is that of non-styling – a pushing to the limit that removes all exterior metaphor in favor of pure and raw intensity. This is a fantastic literalism where the sounds of words are themselves deviant.

#### This style won’t submit to organization of the body and won’t submit to the intelligibility of fascist thought. Following Franz Kafka queer fabulation describes the world from a minoritarian reality. The dominant subject position cannot accept this fiction as existing because it doesn’t make sense according to them. You say an argument matters because it references some external authority, I say an argument matters because it creates itself.

Gregory Flaxman, 2012

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Ironically, the more the hunger artist suffers from a “change in public interest,” the more he is deserted by “the amusement seekers,” the more he resolves to “astound the world by establishing a record never yet achieved.”58 Thus, the artist fires his manager-impresario and hires himself to a circus where no one can prevent him from performing a feat of incomprehensible fasting. As the story ends, and the hunger artist has attenuated himself to the point of all but disappearing, the circus overseer finally empties his cage out and installs a new attraction, a beautiful and muscular panther, a vision of “life.” And yet, the vitalism expressed in the story takes flight from the anorexic artist, who literally disappears in a fabulous becoming, a nomadism sur place, that no mere physiology can possibly measure. The life to which Kafka gestures, and about which Deleuze writes, is vitalist without being organic—an intensity that cannot be located in bodies or states of affairs, but in a style that will invent them both. “Style, in a great writer, is always a style of life too,” Deleuze maintains, “not anything at all personal, but inventing a possibility of life, a way of existing” (Neg, 100). We typically associate “lifestyle” with a kind of commercial and consumerist banality—“You’ve come a long way, baby!”— but nothing could be further from the sense of minor literature and its style of writing. Hence, as Deleuze explains to Claire Parnet, “I should like to say what a style is. It belongs to people of whom you normally say, ‘They have no style’ ” (Dia, 4). This definition should not be confused with the claim of styleless objectivity, neutrality, and universality to which we alluded at the beginning of the chapter. This latter is all the more firmly conditioned by the tacit presuppositions of an image of thought, whereas Deleuze affirms nonstyle as the dissolution of those very presuppositions. Nonstyle is achieved by dint of displacement, dispossession, subtraction. In Kafka’s writing, nonstyle entails what we have called a “willed poverty,” a style that “proceeds by dryness and sobriety” in order to strip back all affectations, leaving nothing behind but intensities (K, 19). “The closer language approaches it, the more ‘sober’ style becomes” (TRM, 374). Hence, one could conclude that there is “no such thing as style,” as Deleuze says, but only on the condition that we affirm nonstyle as the “purest expression of style” (ibid., 371). What would be the “elements of a style to come which does not exist?” (PS, 165).59 The answer, with which we conclude our discussion of the deterritorialization of language, lies in Deleuze’s frequent, if cryptic, call for an end to metaphor. This exhortation may well strike us as surprising, even counter-intuitive, given Deleuze’s panoply of colorful concepts, which are frequently designated by peculiar neologisms (e.g., faciality) or strange, borrowed expressions (e.g., the body without organs). But Deleuze constantly asserts that his concepts are not metaphors and that the creation of concepts is in no way metaphorical. Rather, concepts are expressive intensities. Especially in the context of what we have called minor philosophy, concepts are developed as part of a war machine turned against the method of regulating language and stabilizing words (LS, 287)—above all, with metaphor. In his own writings, on the spare occasions when he deals with metaphor, Deleuze dismisses the trope, saying that it “just confuses matters and has no real importance” (Neg, 29) or that “there are no metaphors, only combinations” (Dia, 117). But in his writings with Guattari, for reasons that will become clear, Deleuze wages an open attack on metaphor. In Kafka, for instance, they say that writing destroys metaphor and achieves its expression in the absence of metaphor. “Kafka deliberately kills all metaphor, all symbolism, all signification, no less all designation. Metamorphosis is the contrary of metaphor,” they write (K, 22). “There is no longer any proper sense of figurative sense, but only a distribution of states that is part of the range of the word. The thing and other things are no longer anything but intensities overrun by deterritorialized sound or words” (ibid.). There are no metaphors in Kafka’s writing: Gregor Samsa wakes us to discover that he has turned into a bug, and “this was no dream.” 60 Kafka “means” exactly what he writes, and his writing is what it does. There is no waking up from a dream, no recourse to another level of reality, no world behind the world. The man is a vermin, the father is a tyrant, the law is a broken and sadistic machine, children are political prisoners, the school is a prison. But what would it mean to write philosophy in the absence of metaphor and to develop a kind of nonstyle? Or, what amounts to the same thing, how can we deterritorialize philosophy? Inasmuch as philosophy traditionally redoubles the state-form, as we have seen, it does so by reproducing the metaphor of the state—the structure and sovereignty of the signifier—in each subject (of the signifier). Hence, the resolution to “kill metaphor” (K, 60) acquires its problem-structure when we understand metaphor to consist in a most fundamental expression of a dominant language, namely, the power to organize the social field. Indeed, the signifier consists in the automatism of a virtual system existing in each of us simultaneously and unconsciously. In Lacan’s terms, with which Deleuze and Guattari duly wrestle and which they duly derange, the social field is organized around the imposition of the “Name-ofthe- Father” (Nom-du-Père), the “paternal metaphor,” which governs the distribution jouissance according to a prohibition (Non-du-Père) and, thence, the production of a lack of being (manqué-à-être) that defines the subject as the universalization of neurosis. We might recall here our discussion of Anti-Oedipus in chapter 1, where we argued that schizoanalysis undertakes the foreclosure of the Name-of-the- Father in the interest of unleashing the errancy of thinking and writing otherwise (les non-dupes-errent). Likewise, Deleuze’s minor philosophy begins on the basis of foreclosing the paternal metaphor and, thereby, unleashing language into all manner of becoming. If metaphor is the contrary and enemy of metamorphosis, underwriting the promise of signifiance and subjectivization, of regularity and predictability, then we must have done with this overcoding dimension. Like a minor literature, a minor philosophy always eliminates the transcendent dimension of metaphor. Only then can we affirm the indetermination of a substantial multiplicity. This is “the only way that one belongs to the multiple: always subtracted” (ATP, 7). For this reason, Deleuze and Guattari formulate the literary assemblage, the book as multiplicity, according to the principle of “n–1.” If we take “n” to be “the number of dimensions one already has available,” the art of subtraction consists in the removal of the unary trait (traite unaire) or over coding dimension (ibid.). The one is the shadow or specter that determines and overdetermines the multiple, attributing it to a preliminary unity, and so the multiple is destined to remain still-born without the benefit of this subtraction: only by getting rid of the transcendent function, by foreclosing that which confers a form of “common sense” across all other dimensions, can writing unleash the becoming of the multiple.