

BODIES

Introductions to Queer Theory

Three videos by Antke A. Engel and Filmfetch (Tali Tiller, Magda Wystub), Hagen 2021



Video still (Engel/Filmfetch 2021)

The videos are distributed as OER (Open Educational Resources).

<https://e.feu.de/queer-theory-videos>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V5Ago3RloT8&t=1s>

BODIES – Introductions to Queer Theory

Voiceover

Queer theory sees bodies as products of power. Heteronormativity is power which turns identity and binarity into norms. Bodies are shaped. Desire is channelled. But the power of desire also brings forth the critique of power.

Scene 1: Heteronormativity

u-m/m-u

Queer theory emerges as a critical perspective on society. And as a self-critical perspective on lesbian and gay identity politics.

// FN: de Lauretis 1991

u-m/m-u

For this critical purpose, queer theory coined the term “heteronormativity”. In heteronormative societies, heterosexuality and the gender binary are regarded as natural and self-evident. They are normality.

// FN: Warner 1993; Wagenknecht 2007; Çetin 2012

(ROUND BRACKET)

The ideal, rather than the compulsion.

The norm which we internalise, with which we identify.

// FN: Hark 1996

u-m/m-u

The norm of heterosexuality needs clearly recognisable, stable genders. This means that it is allied with the two-gender norm, which only knows either male or female.

// FN: Butler 1991; Klöppel 2002; Eugenides 2004

(ROUND BRACKET)

But “homosexuality” also only recognises two genders!

When we say that someone is “gay” or “a lesbian”, we think we know which genders are attracted to which.

Scene 2: doing gender, doing sex

ki-wi

What's required — in sex and in our everyday lives — are recognisable bodies: bodies, identities and gender expressions are supposed to complement each other perfectly.

[SQUARE BRACKET]

This demand for a perfect fit is also called “the norm of coherence”.

// FN: Butler 1991

AB*

Here QT learns from the feminist concept of “doing gender” : Gender emerges in social interactions. Self images and expectations are cemented through repetition.

//FN: West/Zimmermann 1997

[SQUARE BRACKET]

The norm becomes reality performatively. We follow interpellations.

//FN: Butler 1995; 2001

u-m/m-u

Feminism had originally only applied “doing gender” to social gender, as opposed to sex. Queer theory recognises that even bodies are not defined by nature. Sex also develops socially. Doing gender is also doing sex.

Ki-wi, AB* and u-m/m-u look at the right-hand wall, where the CURLY BRACKET appears.

{CURLY BRACKET}

And both involve doing diversity. For example, gender is always embodied with a skin colour. And that brings both racism and class history with it.

//FN: Perko/Czollek 2004; Feinberg 2013; Khan-Cullers 2018

ki-wi

Imagine that your body is born here, like this, and received into a particular society. Your body can do particular things, it has to fulfil certain expectations, it is able or allowed to eat certain fruits but not others, to wear certain clothes, it is gendered in a certain way, sexualised in a certain way, abled or differently abled.

//FN: Raab 2013; McRuer 2006, Gregor 2015

u-m/m-u

This takes place through seduction or compulsion, promise or threat. That is the power of gender norms. Identity is required. Not doubts. But still, Gender Trouble comes along. And discomfort.

//FN: Butler 1991

AB*

We are not only subject to interpellations. We also answer them. And not always according to the rules.

//FN: Butler 2009

Scene 3: Gender Vertigo

//FN: Connell 2015

Spoken Word Performance (Jayrôme Robinet)

*One way streets
No through way
Stop —*

Gender is controlled like traffic

Accidents are pre-programmed.

Anyone who drives through a red light — e.g. anyone who wears lipstick when it's not allowed for this body — is punished, ridiculed, bullied, or killed.

Gender vertigo sets in.

Anyone who can't or won't keep to the rules: they get dizzy. And the ground disappears from beneath their feet.

Still, we feel like being a cheater, an imposter, like sham.

But I can turn that gender vertigo into something positive.

Dissidence.

Sexual and gender dissidence.

Taking pride in dissidence

Gender vertigo.

Scene 4: Queer as a critique of identity

u-m/m-u

Queer politics are different from identity politics or minority politics. It's not about recognition or integration, but about calling the norms into question. The violence of normality is revealed. The majority are shown to be the problem.

//FN: Jagose 2005; Haberler et al. 2012; Mesquita 2011

[SQUARE BRACKET]

A political answer to the state discrimination of gay people in the context of the AIDS crisis in the 1980s and 90s.

//FN: Schulman 1994; 1997; Brunnett/Jagow 2001

AB*

Identity is a problem in itself: there are no identities without drawing boundaries.

AB*

Identity leads to inclusions and exclusions. It invites stereotypical images. And when the boundaries have been drawn, identities can also be placed in a hierarchy. At least if they are stable.

//FN: Probyn 1995, Hark 1999, Jagose 2005

ki-wi

But has anyone ever seen a stable identity? They're always multi-dimensional and changeable! For example, the term "woman" is subject to historical change and refers to so many different identities across the world!

//FN: Anzaldúa 2007; Czollek 2004

Scene 5: intersectional-queer

u-m/m-u

Gender and sexuality never appear out of context. Age, social background and religion all have an influence. The cultural image of disability makes bodies seem sexless.

[SQUARE BRACKET/LIPS]

And racism projects hypersexuality onto some people and chastity onto others.

AB*

Many markers of difference come together to create an impression of normality. A deviation at one point or another can make the whole structure start to unravel.

ki-wi

Intersectional differences are reminiscent of street traffic. Those taking part are not all equally strong, or equally in danger; they have unequal resources: which mode of transport, which level of health, which level of wealth?

u-m/m-u

Dynamic processes of power. Cemented systems of domination: Racism, sexism, capitalism, eugenics. Queer intersectionality theory explores heteronormativity in the interplay between these forms of power.

//FN: Gutiérrez Rodriguez 2011

ki-wi

That means: black lesbians are subject to different rules than white sex-workers. And which rules apply to a black lesbian sex-worker?

AB, kiwi, u-m/m-u look at the righthand wall, where the CURLY BRACKET appears.

{CURLY BRACKET}

And why do most people only know the capitalist success story of the hula hoop, but not the indigenous tradition of the hoop dance? Cultural appropriation?

//FN: <https://nativeamericanhoopdance.blogspot.com/>

ki-wi

We need to pay attention to power differences! The “i for indigenous” should not be forgotten or thoughtlessly added to a row of letters, and nor should the “i for intersex”!

Scene 6: inter*/trans*/queer*

AB*

But should the list keep getting longer: QTINBIPoC?

//FN: Queer_Trans_Inter_Nonbinary_Black_Indigenous_Person-of-Color

ki-wi

Couldn't Q express all of this diversity?*

*The *asterisk signals: this is something ambiguous and constructed!*

[SQUARE BRACKET/LIPS]

After trans, inter*, man*, but also after white* or state*!*

u-m/m-u

Queer politics accepts the dilemma of identity politics: it wants to name discrimination, but not codify identities.

AB*

In trans and inter* activism there is both: The fight for self-determination, for rights and the recognition of past injuries. But also the endeavour to live gender as fluid and to create nonbinary spaces.*

//FN: Hechler 2016; Baumgartinger 2017

ki-wi

And the wish to take the cis-unambiguousness from the categories of male and female. When I say "female", it is not clear whether I'm referring to a trans, inter* or cis* person!*

//FN: cis = o.k. with the gender assigned at birth

AB, kiwi, u-m/m-u look at the righthand wall, where the CURLY BRACKET appears.

{CURLY BRACKET}

So much ambiguity! Can we desire ambiguity?

Scene 7: Desire

ki-wi

The western world has long defined desire by its object. The object, which is imagined as passive, gives the so-called "subject of desire" an "active" status. But since feminism and the gay/lesbian movement have questioned the devaluation of femininity and passivity, this heterosexual perspective has become more difficult to uphold.

//FN: Grosz 1994; hooks 1994; Adamczak 2016

AB*

Bisexual desire also disrupts the scheme. Is that why bisexuality meets with even more hostility than homosexuality?

//FN: Fritsche 2007

{CURLY BRACKET}

*Are you hoping that bisexuality is just a phase?
Are you a phase tester?*

ki-wi

When trans, inter* or a*sexual people are involved, desire cannot be labelled as hetero-, homo- or bi. Is a lesbian who desires a trans man heterosexual?*

//FN: Profus 2016

{the left CURLY BRACKET}

Are you trans or gay?*

{the right CURLY BRACKET}

And you, would you rather go by train or to Barcelona?

AB*

Queer theory departs from the subject-desires-object scheme. Instead, desire is a movement which draws unexpected lines of connection.

//FN: Probyn 1995

ki-wi

In complex scenarios of desire, norms buzz around everywhere, cultural images, old rituals and stories of violence. But so do our own wayward ideas, resistance, experiments, and secrets. Reality is fantasy and fantasy inspires realities.

//FN: Lauretis 1995 (orig. script; *Fantasy is reality and reality inspires fantasies.*)

AB*

Starting from the scenario, desire orientates itself in one direction or in many. These orientations reinforce or change the scenario.

//FN: Ahmed 2006

Scene 8: Bodies and sexuality

ki-wi

Instead of the usual sex organs, anything can be eroticised. Feminism already knew that the penis/phallus is not the centre of desire!

//FN: Tuijder 2013

{CURLY BRACKET}

Hands, legs, the anus, the ears – all of these are sex organs. Can we please forget the gender binary when we think about sex?!

AB*

All sorts of objects can also be added to the body. Not just sex toys. Mobile phones, wheelchairs and syringes can all be part of sexual lust or reproductive procreation.

[SQUARE BRACKET/LIPS]

Contra-sexual : contrary to masculine/feminine, hetero/homo, natural/artificial.

//FN: Preciado 2003

u-m/m-u

So my body is important. What I feel, how I feel, how I express myself.

//FN: Gregor 2015

{CURLY BRACKET}

Which body? I have several. I have a body which digests, a body with a migraine, a Parisian body (excited, exhausted), a countryside body (rested, heavy). An orthodox body.

//FN: Barthes 2010

ki-wi

And why do we think it's natural to divide the body into two, and only two genders?

[SQUARE BRACKET/LIPS]

Even if there really were only two genders, each one would be simultaneously a hormonal gender and a gonadal gender, as well as a genital, chromosomal, social and psychological gender. How can that ever become homogenous?

//FN: Schmitz 2006

AB*

But claiming that diversity is natural can easily mean overlooking the fact that nature is always experienced through culture. There is no natural body. Any body is culturally formed. Gender is not sex&gender, but sex_gender.

//FN: Palm 2005 (orig. script: *There is no natural body which is then shaped by culture retrospectively.*)

ki-wi

That means: no body is queer from the start. It is just a body. A body is always bodily subjectivity and bodily sociality – socially formed and divided and at the same time unique.

{CURLY BRACKETS}

Hairy legs! Why should they only be a feminist statement for cis women? Who is allowed to have hairy legs: cis men, cis women, trans men, trans women? Me!*

AB*

So there are queer bodies. Not by nature, but because they become queer under particular circumstances.

ki-wi

Under circumstances of power and domination!

u-m/m-u

So I wonder: do I experience the queerness which emerges as discriminating and hurtful? Or as joyful and empowering? Or both?

Voiceover

Pleasure in complexity, confusion and conflict – that's queer.

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FIGURATIONS - Introductions to Queer Theory

Voiceover

In Queer Theory, power fantasises. Power regulates. And power desires. No heteronormativity without desire. But no critique of power either. Desire moves through images.

AB*

“If you would like a different intro, please press 1.”

“If you would like a simpler opening, please press 2.”

“If you would like to know what queer critique of power has to do with language, please hold the line.”

Scene 1: How language is used

[SQUARE BRACKET]

Which pronouns do you use?

[SQUARE BRACKET] (written and spoken)

It seems a simple question at first. But grammar is tricky and there are many different options: sie is writing hir research report. Or zie is writing zirs. Hir bothfriend or zir boifriend or their joyfriend is helping hir. The clever birlfriend has good tips. They are happy. Who exactly?

// FN: Sylvain/Balzer 2008; www.annaheger.de/

u-m/m-u

Using the under_score creates hesitation and opens a space. Using the asterisk denaturalises and points to an open spectrum.

{CURLY BRACKET}

Could you explain that in plain language?

// FN: <http://lesmigras.de/leichte-sprache.html>

ki-wi

Yes, we need to enjoy experimenting. The first step is to ask how people like to refer to themselves, and to respect what they say.

Scene 2: The power of language

u-m/m-u

Language can be empowering or hurtful. It divides the world into categories such as male and female. Language is stereotyping and othering. Language classifies and creates hierarchies – and it's not only scientific language that does this.

//FN: Wittig (1992); Kuch/Herrmann (2007); Lassalle (2019)

(ROUND BRACKET)

But language is also resistance: we can name ourselves, invent a political slogan, spray graffiti, write poetry.

//FN: Lorde (1982); Patton (2005); Robinet (2019); T. (2020)

[SQUARE BRACKET]

Queer abstractions.

//FN: Getsy (2015)

[SQUARE BRACKET]

or figurations – images which can take action, which can be inhabited.

//FN: Haraway (1997); Mertlitsch (2016)

AB*

Language also expresses that which does not yet exist, which is forbidden, which we can only hope for. Fantasy and speculation.

//FN: Anzaldúa (1987); Hochreiter/Babka (2005)

ki-wi

Language is cool. It has so much power. I want to do something with language.

Spoken word performance (Jayrôme C. Robinet)

No. Language has done something with me.

Long ago, language told me that I have to hate myself. Language taught me how I can destroy other people most effectively – and with humour! The language which brought me up didn't want to let me grow up. Language is a paved street that I walk on in high heels – with every word and every step I run the risk of falling flat on my face. I want to reduce the height of the drop from language to truth. Or else I want to learn to bear the vertigo. I want language to understand me. Or else I want language to leave me in peace.

Language has taught me to hate myself. Language has taught me how to hate myself and others.

//FN: Rodriguez (2015)

ki-wi
Symbolic violence!

Scene 3: Confronting symbolic violence

AB*

...which we can face with cultural tools. Because the media don't just describe the world. They communicate; they are inventive; they make new things exist.

// FN: Smith (2000); Kelly (2016); Köppert (2019)

ki-wi

Confronting the norm: we can also do that with performance and body language!

// FN: Halberstam (2012); Muñoz (1999); Schirmer (2010); Rodriguez (2014)

AB*

Did you know that body language is 80% of communication?

{CURLY BRACKET}

An 80 percent chance that drag works!?

// FN: Butler (1991); Thilman et al. (2007); Muñoz, (2014)

Scene 4: Resignification

AB*

*You have a new message:
Insults can be given new meaning.*

ki-wi

That's exactly what happened with queer.

u-m/m-u

Yes! Resignification!

//FN: Redecker (2011)

{CURLY BRACKET}

Or undisambiguation!

// FN: Engel (2002)

IMAGE

Resignification must be desired. And desire moves through imagers.

// FN: Probyn (1995)

AB*

Who said that?

IMAGE

Walls have ears and pictures talk.

Scene 5: Reading images collectively

ki-wi

A public kiss.

AB*

Sex in public.

// FN: Berlant/Warner (2005)

u-m/m-u

How can you tell it's in public? The background is just plain white.

AB*

What about us, aren't we the public? And isn't it pretty rude, the way we're standing here and making comments?

u-m/m-u

But it's a picture!

//FN: Paul/Schaffer (2009); Hoenes/Paul (2014)

AB*

So you don't think we can be voyeuristic when looking at an image? Even with a picture, I find it problematic to turn what we're looking at into an object: speaking about it can be disparaging and destructive or else idealising and idolising.

//FN: bell hooks (1994); Salley (2013)

ki-wi

You're right, instead of "speaking about" we should "speak with". After all, that's also useful in everyday situations, to avoid stereotypes. So that we don't turn some people into "those people there," the "other".

AB*

Speaking with? But then we'll be disturbing their kiss!

ki-wi

Speaking with the image, not with the people in the image!

IMAGE

Thanks, I'm fine.

AB*

Image, welcome to our group! You surprise us!

u-m/m-u

How can you expose such intimacy to the public?

Scene 6: Images as agents

{CURLY BRACKET}

Expose? Create a queer public!

// FN: Campbell (2019); Köppert (2019)

ki-wi

Is this a queer politics of “kiss-ins”? Along the lines of “we are here, we are queer – get used to it!”? At least, it’s not the classic straight couple that we see here.

IMAGE

Hello from me! I’ve been listening to you the whole time. I like the idea of the kiss-in. They were very important in the AIDS activism of the 1990s. They showed that a hostile, hate-filled public can be lethal.

//FN: Berlant/Warner (2005)

ki-wi

This is also a message for the fight against racism! Confrontational and not humble: “We’re here, get used to it.” Rather than begging for integration, we call on the majority to change.

// FN: El-Tayeb (2015); Adusei-Poku (2014); Stüttgen (2014)

AB*

The majority. Hm. Or rather: the specific, concrete audience?! Because exclusion also takes place in alternative scenes. The predominantly white organisers of the CSD – that would also be a context for Black people and QTIBIPoC to demand, quite rightly: “We are here! Keep your ‘white’ mouths shut for once, listen to us and let us set the agenda.”

//FN: Haritaworn (2009)

[SQUARE BRACKET]

QTIBIPoC = Queer Trans Inter Black Indigenous People of Color

u-m/m-u

True. But what does all that have to do with the picture?

IMAGE

It makes sense to me. At the beginning, someone said that the background was plain white. I would say instead that it opens up space, and the particular audience can step into that space. If it was filled, the intimate kiss would have a context. The viewer would interpret the kiss in relation to the context – and could remain at a distance.

ki-wi

By the way: who created the drawing?

IMAGE

My artist is called Laylah Ali. She is a Black US-American and is known for her very precise, comic-like drawings which are unsettlingly ambivalent. Racialised relationships, gender relations, the distinctions between tenderness and violence – all of these oscillate and interfere with the typical structure.

//FN: <https://laylahali.net/>; Wright (2001)

u-m/m-u

That's a good description. I have seen other drawings by her. I thought I could recognise Muslim bodies, or Black people or the Ku Klux Klan. But then I didn't know what I was basing that on. I thought I could recognise basketball players, but then I saw that the ball was a person's head.

AB*

Maybe the relationships are more important than categories? The feelings that are being expressed?

//FN: Wagenknecht (2003); von Bose et al. (2015)

ki-wi

That could well be. But look, they're ambivalent too: the figures here – why don't they embrace each other? They stand stock still and keep a distance between their bodies!

AB*

And they look sideways, with a suspicious gaze.

u-m/m-u

As if they felt observed, or even threatened. By us? Or by each other? Is there a contrast between the two of them? Bare breasts versus chainmail? It's impossible for me to tell whether this is love or fear.

ki-wi

Or provocation? Or a plea? Or sex appeal?

AB*

How can you actually tell that it isn't a classic hetero couple, as we said before? And why do you see a couple?

//FN: Fuchs (2002); Schaffer (2019)

IMAGE

Very good questions. Luckily, they cannot be answered definitively. So you can keep on discussing them. And it's fun to listen to you.

Someone once said that queer means refusing to take on a definite shape. In this sense, I am very happy to be a queer picture!

//FN: Jagose (2005)

Scene 7: Queer is Queering. Queering is...

ki-wi

Queering is a political practice.

AB*

Queering is an aesthetic practice.

u-m/m-u

Queering dissolves dichotomies.

All

Instead:

alternate voices:

*Ambiguity hybridity fluidity oscillation
nuances paradoxes absurdity.*

*Queering creates a dynamic relationship with the norm:
contradictory positions complement each other,
categories are mixed together,
fixed identities are questioned.*

Queering means withstanding conflicts.

Voiceover

Pleasure in complexity, confusion and conflict – that's queer.

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WORLDS

Introductions to Queer Theory

Three videos by Antke A. Engel and Filmfetch (Tali Tiller, Magda Wystub), Hagen 2021



Video still (Engel/Filmfetch 2021)

The videos are distributed as OER (Open Educational Resources).

<https://e.feu.de/queer-theory-videos>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V5Ago3RloT8&t=1s>

WORLDS – Introductions to Queer Theory

Voiceover

Queer theory is a critique of power which challenges binaries. Differences are more complex than opposites. We can desire complexity. And desire interferes with heteronormative power. But power also regulates desire, bodies, fantasies, the world.

Written text appears across the screen and recedes into the distance:

The queer rebels who attack from their subcultural base have scored another victory. The heteronormative empire is tottering. The spies have gained possession of secret plans to make gendered oppression last for ever. Will they save queer folk and bring sexual justice to the galaxy?

BALL (ki-wi)

What? The “good” queer rebels and the “evil” mainstream? If only it were so simple. We draw a boundary (hetero/homo, male/female, white/black, healthy/ill), divide people into one group or the other and have a snowball fight. Whoever’s snow melts first will sink into the sea. Lost.

// FN: Cohen 1997; Vujanović/Popivoda 2008

{CURLY BRACKET}

Luckily there will soon be no more snow.

JAGGED SHAPE

Yes, and conflicts are complex: Sometimes they’re about homophobia and transphobia in the middle of society. Sometimes they’re about racism, classism, ableism within queer movements. And sometimes they’re about how racism uses sexist clichés.

// FN: Haritaworn 2015; Dietze/Hashemi Yekani/Michaelis 2007

CONE (u-m/m-u)

That’s exactly why we need precise analysis of how the double helix of power and desire is formed differently in each case.

// FN: Engel 2011

[SQUARE BRACKET/LIPS]

*Desire for power.
Desire for solidarity.
Resistance which desires.*

BALL (ki-wi)

Analysing power shows that there are not only boundaries between different identities, but also hierarchies.

// FN: quaestio (2000)

CONE (u-m/m-u)

Queer theory asks: does desire reinforce the hierarchies? Or does it undermine them? When is desire heteronormative? How does it become queer? But also: are the state and the economy permeated by desire? Do they only know two genders? Do they make sex a state affair?

// FN: Probyn 1996; Heiliger 2015; Ludwig 2012

JAGGED SHAPE

You're talking theory. Others live or survive in worlds you can't conceptualise. In love, lust or suffering. Or all three.

Be concrete! Do you know queer subcultures? Which ones? Who do you share the world with? What do you know about the desires of the children who mine cobalt for your mobile phone?

// FN: Abbas/Ekine 2013; Chen 2014

BALL (ki-wi)

Yes, let's start close to life.

CONE (u-m/m-u)

Heteronormativity? People should form monogamous, heterosexual couples. They should then start families and bring up children.

// FN: Ahmed 2006; Chambers/Carver 2008; Edelman 2012

Children whom they will call their property. To whom they will leave their property – or whom they will teach to sell their labour, their bodies and their desires.

// FN: Wagenknecht 2003; Preciado 2020

{CURLY BRACKET}

In a queer time and place there is no norm of reproduction, but gaga feminism.

// FN: Halberstam 2005; 2012

BALL (ki-wi)

So does it make a difference whether these are hetero or rainbow families?

//FN: Nay 2017

{CURLY BRACKET}

Why don't we ask a rainbow trout?

BALL (ki-wi)

Hetero, homo – both raise the question of how reproduction and care work and forms of love are involved in the global economy.

[SQUARE BRACKET/LIPS]

Queers are part of the global care chain.

// FN: Cruz-Malavé/Manalasan 2002; Laufenberg 2012

JAGGED SHAPE

A Filipino woman cleans for a white, gay couple in Wuppertal. In Manila, the children of various women who have emigrated live together in patchwork households. Contact via mobile phone. The call centres employ Indian trans people.

BALL (ki-wi)

And you think there are not just different perspectives on the world, but different worlds?

JAGGED SHAPE

Yes, exactly. That's why it matters which perspective you speak from! Because your perspective doesn't just situate you, it also opens or closes worlds.

BALL (ki-wi)

Worlds interlock with each other. But they have different levels of power.

CONE (u-m/m-u)

Queer seeks to name these differences. They are multi-dimensional, ambiguous and conflict-ridden. Differences can be analysed with intersectionality.

// FN: Dietze/Hashemi Yekani/Michaelis 2007; Mesquita 2016

{CURLY BRACKET}

*Analysed! Always analysing! Queer theory is too cerebral.
People are drowning and fish are swallowing plastic.*

ALL

Become queer worlds. Worlds: one world, many worlds, to world, to be worlded (create worlds, become a world) = queer worldings.

BALL (ki-wi)

It's a shame that in German we don't have the English word "worlding".

//FN: Spivak 1990; Haraway 2018

JAGGED SHAPE

How would that help?

BALL (ki-wi)

Well, “worlding” emphasises the process whereby worlds emerge. Always more than a single factor: never only “humans”, “the patriarchy”, “capitalism” or “artificial intelligence”.

CONE (u-m/m-u)

Worlding and being worlded. Processes in which active and passive are not opposites.

JAGGED SHAPE

That sounds a bit too harmonious to me! This is about power! Where is the responsibility for change?

FN: Daring et al. 2017

CONE (u-m/m-u)

In the desire for different worlds!

BALL (ki-wi)

“Queer desire”? Desire which creates unexpected connections. Orientation without Orientalism?

// FN: Probyn 1996; Ahmed 2006

(ROUND BRACKETS) by CONE (u-m/m-u)

Desire which departs from violence?

BALL (ki-wi)

Nice idea. But unfortunately, “the nation” is often the object of desire. Then gays and lesbians join in with the patriotic love song.

//FN: Duggan 2003

[SQUARE BRACKETS/LIPS]

That’s what’s called homonationalism.

//FN: Puar 2007

JAGGED SHAPE

Queers who presume to subjugate the rest of the world – lovingly. Sexual politics which market LGBTI human rights as bestselling western exports.

// FN: Dhawan 2015, Weber 2016

BALL (ki-wi)

Or racist desire which blames homophobia and hate crimes on migrantised populations. So that the white so-called “majority” can claim tolerance for itself.

// FN: Haritaworn 2015, Çetin 2012

JAGGED SHAPE

I’d like to gobble up the rainbow flag.

BALL (ki-wi)

And then? Where would you go from there? And how?

JAGGED SHAPE

*Through the conflicts, towards queer sociality.
Billions of beings, single-celled organisms, multicellular organisms, non_human animals and cultural_technological artefacts share the planet. Do they create worlds – or are they prevented from doing so? Who creates? Who disables? Who resists?*

{CURLY BRACKET}

*Can we love nature ecosexually,
rather than heteronormatively producing a climate catastrophe?*

// FN: Mortimer-Sandilands/Erickson 2010; Reed 2015

BALL (ki-wi)

We need queer utopias. Visions of the future which allow us to move through the past and create a different present.

// FN: Muñoz 2009; Stüttgen 2014; Keeling 2019

[SQUARE BRACKET/LIPS]

Moving backwards as a strategy.

// FN: Boudry/Lorenz 2019

JAGGED SHAPE

*But the violence of the past isn’t over!
Slavery, colonialism, Nazism, and eugenics are still having an effect today!*

// FN: Povinelli 2011, McRuer 2006, Gopinath 2012

CONE (u-m/m-u)

Queer temporality calls the promise of progress into question. The future does not develop in a linear way. “Speculative fiction” experiments with the way the past could have branched off. And shows that freedom and solidarity could have emerged in the midst of violence.

// FN: Freeman 2010; Tinsley 2012, Hartman 2018, Macharia 2019

BALL (ki-wi)

Why should we grant a special cosmic status to humanity? How absurd is that – given the suffering and violence which humans have inflicted on other humans! How many are excluded from human status after being vilified as queer?

// FN: Butler 2009; 2010

JAGGED SHAPE

Racist animalisation and objectification. Ableist freakification. The pathologisation of trans and inter* people.*

BALL (ki-wi)

We need to break the status of the controlling subject. Because white, abled, Christian, cis straight masculinity is misunderstood as a sign of superiority?

// FN: Connell 2015

JAGGED SHAPE

Produce a crisis of masculinity. Draw attention to dependence and vulnerability. Decentre and denaturalise the masculine.

// FN: Waldmann 2019; Hashemi Yekani 2011

CONE (u-m/m-u)

Der klare Unterschied zwischen Mensch und Tier, Kultur, Natur, muss ad absurdum geführt werden.

[SQUARE BRACKET/LIPS]

*Gender is sex_underscoregender:
always simultaneously material, linguistic, natural, artificial
and techno-pharmaceutical.*

// FN: Preciado 2020

JAGGED SHAPE

Cyborg (simultaneously human_animal_machine_goddess) does not only question the categories of man and woman, but also the HUMAN.

// FN: Haraway 2012

[SQUARE BRACKET/LIPS]

non/human animals

// FN: Giffney/Hird 2016

JAGGED SHAPE

That's why we need worlds, open for odd-kin, for queer socialities and solidarities.

[SQUARE BRACKET/LIPS]

Multispecies, transhuman, humanimals, symbionts, hybrids

CONE (u-m/m-u)

Sympoesis, not autopoiesis. As in a pile of humus, change does not arise through solo action, but together. There is no autonomous action, and there are no beings that are clearly separate from each other.

// FN: Haraway 2018

BALL (ki-wi)

Instead of inter-action, intra-action. How is politics formed in intra-action? Is this queer politics?

// FN: Barad 2011, 2015

VOICEOVER

Pleasure in complexity, confusion and conflict – that's queer.

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