



The future is queer kids: Queering the homonormative temporalities of same-sex marriage

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Abstract

Same-sex marriage is emblematic of a crisis of vision in lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender non-binary, intersex, and queer (LGBTIQ) politics, according to some queer theorists. Through the concept of homonormativity, Duggan insightfully criticizes same-sex marriage politics as spatially privatizing and depoliticizing queer difference. Brown argues, however, that Duggan herself reifies homonormativity. He calls for theorists to imagine the queer potential in non-fixed spatial relations. Given Duggan and Brown's focus on spatiality, this article approaches queer imaginations beyond homonormativity from a temporal perspective: I ask what transformational potential same-sex marriage holds to queer heteronormative and homonormative temporalities. I argue that same-sex marriage may not only queer the public/private dichotomy, but also subvert the heteronormative temporality of straight time. Straight time produces identities, spaces, and times as fixed, pre-political, and timeless, and is constructed against queer time in which identities, spaces, and times are non-fixed, political, and sociohistorically constructed. By theorizing straight/queer time as politically produced through the reproductive relation between adulthood and Childhood, I repoliticize the temporalities of homonormative and queer imaginaries and recognize children as queer citizens of a queer future. Same-sex marriage may therefore produce two previously untheorized images of queer potential: the Child queered by their parents, and the Child queered by their sexuality.

Keywords

child, homonormativity, same-sex marriage, straight time, queer future

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Introduction

Same-sex marriage has been hotly debated by gay, lesbian, and queer theorists and activists. Traditional gay and lesbian theorists have long advocated for same-sex marriage (Mohr, 2005; Stoddard, 1992). Queer theorists, however, argue that same-sex

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marriage is emblematic of a homonormative crisis of vision in lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender non-binary, intersex, and queer (LGBTIQ) politics (Duggan, 2003; Nair, 2014). Homonormativity, according to Lisa Duggan (2003: 50), is a new 'politics that does not contest dominant heteronormative assumptions and institutions, but upholds and sustains them, while promising the possibility of a demobilized gay constituency and a privatized, depoliticized gay culture anchored in domesticity and consumption'. In response, Gavin Brown (2009) argues for a move beyond homonormativity and proposes new visions of queer spatial relations. While Duggan and Brown focus on homonormative and queer spatiality, this article approaches the move beyond homonormativity from an alternate temporal perspective: I ask what transformational potential same-sex marriage holds to queer heteronormative and homonormative temporalities.

For Jose Esteban Munoz (2009), homonormative politics presents a crisis of vision in LGBTIQ activism because it is founded on 'straight time' in which identities are constructed as natural, timeless, and pre-political. There are significant overlaps with Duggan's (2003) critique here; Duggan argues that homonormative same-sex marriage politics is founded on a fixed, depoliticizing, and privatizing 'equality'; it grants equality in public to white affluent gay men, but limits the potential for a more radical and democratic ongoing reconstruction of sexual, raced, gendered, or classed inequalities by removing queer difference to the private sphere (see also Nast, 2002; Puar, 2007).

Against straight time, Munoz calls for a queer utopian imaginary of the future. For Munoz (2009), a queer potential necessarily exists in the relations of politics. Brown similarly emphasizes the ways in which subjects and spaces are constructed through undetermined and interdependent relations with others (Brown, 2009). Indeed, a number of queer theorists have demonstrated the queer non-fixity of spatial relations, including the public/private dichotomy (Andrucki, 2017; Berlant and Warner, 1998; Blunt and Dowling, 2006; Brown, 2009; Gormann-Murray, 2007, 2012; Oswin, 2005). Brown (2009) contends, then, that sites that appear to strengthen norms or mark assimilation, such as same-sex marriage, also hold a queer potential.

As Doreen Massey (1994) argues, space and time are co-constructed and thus inextricably interlinked. Yet neither Duggan nor Brown consider the relational construction of times in their analyses of homonormativity. The first contribution of this article is therefore to repoliticize the relational construction of time in both homonormative and queer imaginaries through the adulthood/Childhood dichotomy institutionalized in marriage.¹ The second contribution of this article is to illuminate the thus far unexplored queer potential within homonormative relations after the legalization of same-sex marriage. The relational construction of the adulthood/Childhood dichotomy illuminates a significant omission in the works of both Duggan and Brown: both fail to figure children in their respective images of the future. I argue that the homonormative politics of same-sex marriage may produce two new images of utopian queer potential: the Child queered by their parents, and the Child queered by their sexuality (or, the ungrown homosexual).

I here focus on marriage as an institution of social reproduction; marriage reproduces the social meaning of sexual practices and the associated social structure.² The Australian debate over same-sex marriage has centred on its social rather than economic implications, with a particularly strong focus on the figure of the Child (Hosking and Ripper, 2012). It therefore provides concrete insights into homonormative temporalities and their queer potential. In 2004, the Australian Liberal Coalition Government, supported by the Labor opposition, amended the Marriage Act 1961 to define marriage as exclusively between a man and a woman. This act was widely received as an attempt to delegitimize same-sex

relationships. It consequently greatly increased the social meaning attributed to, and public debate over, same-sex marriage in Australia (Bernstein and Naples, 2010). Public debate came to a climax when, in November 2017, a postal survey was held by the Liberal Coalition Government. From a participation rate of 79.5%, a vote of 61.6%–38.4% was returned in favour of legalizing same-sex marriage (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2018). Same-sex marriage legislation was passed on 7 December 2017 (Copland, 2018).

I begin by drawing on Edelman's (2004) theory of reproductive futurism to identify the desire to reproduce a fixed image of the self in straight time as the foundation of heteronormative politics. However, I argue for a Munozian, relational conception of the queer within this framework. I then unpack the political relations between the figures of the man, the woman, and the Child within the hegemonic imagined future. Marriage locates the man in straight time, the woman in reproductive time, and the Child in queer time, and regulates the reproduction of the fixed image of the self in 'the best interests of the Child'. With this theoretical framework established, I compare the political imaginaries dominant in the Australian same-sex marriage debate. I determine that a homonormative fantasy, which I term homonormative futurism, was widely publicized in pro-same-sex marriage discourse. Homonormative futurism seeks to privatize and depoliticize queer difference in order to maintain the reproduction of the fixed heteronormative image of the self through the Child. Finally, I unpack the ways in which social relations may produce queer temporalities after the legalization of same-sex marriage. I argue that, despite the privatizing and depoliticizing effects of same-sex marriage, the public/private dichotomy may be subverted, producing a queer future. Most importantly, I extend this imaginary to include homonormative and queer relations of publicity to, from, and between children. Such relations of publicity may queer the desire for straight time itself.

Is there a queer future?

For Lee Edelman, the crisis of vision in LGBTIQ activism that homonormativity presents is a necessary consequence of the discursive limits of politics. Edelman (2004) argues that politics is founded on reproductive futurism, a fantasy of the future organized around the Child. Edelman here uses the term 'fantasy' in the Lacanian sense, as an indeterminate image of the desirable future in which one realizes their authentic self. Politics is, then, essentially 'conservative insofar as it works to *affirm* a structure, to *authenticate* social order, which it then intends to transmit to the future in the form of its inner Child' (Edelman, 2004: 3). Edelman thus insightfully identifies the desire to reproduce a fixed image of the self through the Child ad infinitum as the foundation of political practice. In other words, politics is founded on a fantasy desire for straight time. I term this fantasy a fantasy of 'the best interests of the Child'.

For Edelman (2004: 27), reproductive futurism founds a heteronormative consensus, as any politics 'can only return us, by way of the Child, to the politics of reproduction'. Edelman defines the queer as that which exists outside the discursive limits of politics. As such, for Edelman, there is no queer future. He argues instead that the 'authentic' homosexual embodies the queer; homosexuality 'assert[s] itself against futurity, against propagation, insofar as it would designate an impasse in the passage to the future' (Edelman, 2004: 33).³ Here, the 'authentic' homosexual rejects the Child by refusing biological reproduction; they embrace a desire for no future. Edelman thus fixes the political boundary between the heterosexual self and the homosexual Other by reference to pro-natal sex.

In doing so, however, Edelman fails to acknowledge the various sociohistorical formations, such as marriage, that contribute to reproductive futurism and its different contingent, intersecting, and contradictory limits. He rules out the possibility of alternative temporalities (Munoz, 2009), effectively predetermining the homonormativity of same-sex marriage. In order not to reify reproductive futurism, I define queer practices as those practices that exist in a negative relation to the hegemonic fantasy of the future. The boundary between the heterosexual self and the homosexual Other, determined by the fantasy, is therefore in a sociohistorically contingent, always-incomplete and relational state of growth. Following Munoz (2009), this definition of the queer conceives of the queer as never quite arriving but always on the horizon; a utopian queer imaginary is therefore based on a desire for that which is not yet here. To assess the queer potential of same-sex marriage, it is therefore first necessary to more fully elaborate the discursive limits of the best interests of the Child.

The best interests of the Child

Since the turn of the twenty-first century, transnational heteroactivist discourses have increasingly centered on the best interests of the Child (Nash and Browne, 2015; Browne, Nash and Gormann-Murray, 2018; Baird, 2008; Faulkner, 2010). Much like the nation's 'way of life' (Žizek, 1993: 201–202), the best interests of the Child can be identified, though only approximately, in the hegemonic myths through which the community organizes its social practice. Marriage is one such myth; a traditional image of marriage remains hegemonic as the desirable organization of romantic and sexual practice in many Western countries, including Australia (Gross, 2005). The spatial boundaries marriage produces have been well theorized; I here focus on the role marriage plays in producing temporalities in the best interests of the Child.

Marriage marks subjects' entry into straight time. It has historically institutionalized the cultural desirability of heterosexual practices, organized through the white, cisgendered, middle-class and abled patriarchal relations of husband and wife. In Western liberal countries like Australia, man is assumed to naturally embody the ideal rational and autonomous self. In order to sustain this image of the self, the queer affectivity and embodied relations of the self are projected and condensed onto an Other, the woman. In the best interests of the Child, marriage thus marks the dyadic 'union' of man and woman in romantic, monogamous, and pro-natal love (Pateman, 1988). Reproductive futurism thus imagines that the fixed, pre-political, and timeless image of the heterosexual self, the image of the self in straight time, is realized by the subject's entry into marriage. The heterosexual self, however, is not an identity fixed by social reality; heterosexuality is produced through the repetitive imitation of this fantasy (Butler, 2007). The repetition of practices institutionalized in marriage 'freezes' heterosexuality into a pre-political and timeless truth of being (Freeman, 2010: 4). That is, the repetition of practices produces straight time.

In the best interests of the Child, marriage structures heterosexual practices through distinct spaces. The man takes up their purportedly 'natural' position of authority in politics, work, and as head of the family. The public sphere, the space outside the home associated with politics and work, thus becomes the 'natural' place of men. The woman takes up the subservient responsibilities of domestic labour and reproduction, and her queer affective and relational nature is limited through her 'natural' placement in the private sphere, inside the home (Blunt and Dowling, 2006; Boyd, 1997). Again, here, the public/private dichotomy is not fixed by social reality but is constituted through practice (Massey, 1994); it appears as pre-political and timeless due to its repetition over time.

Munoz (2009) does not directly address the relation between adulthood and Childhood, despite acknowledging the importance of Edelman's critique of reproductive futurism. As I will show, understanding the adulthood/Childhood dichotomy is crucial if queer imaginaries are to adequately think beyond straight time. Within this dichotomy, adulthood is a straight time, constructed against Childhood as a queer time. Marriage marks the subject (with the woman now subservient to man's desires) as having transitioned from Childhood to adulthood. In adulthood, then, the heterosexual self embodies straight time, a fixed, rational, and autonomous heterosexual desire in the best interests of the Child. However, the heterosexual self cannot embody straight time if not constructed against an Other who embodies a queer, non-fixed time. This Other is the queer Child. Since the second half of the 19th century, dominant Enlightenment images of the Child as innocent or a blank slate have been supplemented with biological, psychological, and sociological theories of development (Nakata, 2015). In each of these images, Childhood is imagined as an irrational and dependent queer time in which one lacks a fixed political identity and is instead in the process of 'growing up'. This queered Child embodies the discursive limit of straight time. Children's sexual practices are rendered unintelligible in the present (Nakata, 2015; Stockton, 2009), as they are incapable of knowing what is in their own best interests. The queer Child's lack of fixity thus produces a paradox; it both makes the image of adulthood as a straight time appear possible, while blocking the imagined fixity of straight time from being realized.

Crucially, then, this paradox cannot be overcome within reproductive futurism. Instead, it is reproduced: the realization of the desired fixed heterosexual self is always necessarily deferred onto the next generation (see Edelman, 2004). Any analysis of heteronormative temporalities must therefore incorporate not only straight time, but also reproductive time. Reproductive time is a cyclical imagined future of birth, marriage, reproduction, and death (Halberstam, 2005), most closely associated with womanhood (Freeman, 2010: 5). For women, marriage marks the temporal transition from Childhood into the sexualized and reproductive role of wife within the private sphere; from the wedding onwards, pro-natal sex, childbearing, and childrearing are not only sanctioned but expected of the wife. Entry into marriage thus marks the self as embodying a desire for futurity through the biological and social reproduction of the Child. The best interests of the Child, then, is not simply a fantasy of a desirable social order, but a fantasy of the Child growing up to enact that social order. The fantasy is not addressed universally to children in the present, but to the Child conceived as a future white, cisgendered, middle-class, and abled heterosexual self.

The institutionalized practices of marriage therefore regulate the biological and social reproduction of the Child in the image of this heterosexual self. First, marriage regulates the biological reproduction of the Child in connection with a temporally lineal, racialized history of the heterosexual self (Lettow, 2015). While such regulation is no longer formalized (see Hegarty et al., 2018), the objectivity of marriage enables informal social regulation of ethnic, racial, and other political boundaries through social surveillance, punishment, and self-discipline (Vasquez, 2015). Second, marriage regulates the biological reproduction of labour power (Bhattacharya, 2017b), in the form of abled workers. Marriage sets a temporal social expectation for women to wed and begin biological reproduction by a certain age (Halberstam, 2005), often to avoid the 'risk' of producing a disabled Child (Waldschmidt, 2015).

Marriage also regulates the social reproduction of binary genders and heterosexuality itself. Children's normative social development, including development into white, cisgendered, middle-class, and abled heterosexuality, is an important measure of success for parents and their marriage, particularly for women. Parents (and other adults, such as

educators) therefore intensively govern children's experiences (Rose, 1999: 121). Heteronormativity largely dominates and pervades the experiences of children. For example, in addition to the example that the normative heterosexual, marital family may play to children in itself, heteronormativity ordinarily pervades children's stories and TV shows (Faulkner, 2010) and parents' positive reactions to children's 'cute' pre-heterosexual practices such as opposite-sex rehearsals of marriage, kissing, hugging, and relationships (Robinson, 2013). Furthermore, play is gender-differentiated, as boys are socialized to take up their 'natural' position in the public sphere, while girls are socialized for reproductive roles in the private sphere (Taylor, 2008). Non-normative practices are largely silenced, and these silences reinforce social taboos (Robinson, 2013). Cisgendered heterosexuality therefore remains hegemonic due to the cyclical efficacy of marriage. Children as young as 4 years old predominantly understand the gendered nature of the public/private dichotomy (Taylor, 2008), and hold marriage to be opposite-sex, a rite of passage to adulthood, the place for legitimate sexual intimacy, and strongly associate marriage with parenthood (Robinson, 2013).

The white, cisgendered, middle-class, and abled heterosexual self therefore needs to be considered not only in terms of the spaces they construct and enact, but also the times. Heterosexuality is not only a spatial practice, but a lifecycle of birth, marriage, reproduction, and death. Processes of biological and social reproduction must therefore be politicized. The repetition of a reproductive lifecycle constructs the adulthood/Childhood dichotomy and the normative process of growth from the latter to the former as fixed, timeless, and pre-political. Straight time does not allow us to see beyond the here and now because, under reproductive futurism, the future is a reproduction of an imagined self, fixed in the present. The next question to be addressed, then, is whether homonormative same-sex marriage politics imagines a reproductive or queer future.

Homosexuality in the Australian marriage debate

Affective investment in the best interests of the Child was particularly intense throughout the Australian marriage debate, as transnational discourses of the best interests of the Child were stoked locally by nationalist narratives of Anglo-Australian Childlike innocence, victimhood, and abandonment (Baird, 2008; Faulkner, 2010). In this section, I draw on the growing literature alongside illustrative examples to briefly theorize the two fantasies that dominated the same-sex marriage debate. I term the dominant anti-same-sex marriage fantasy 'heteroexclusive futurism' and the dominant pro-same-sex marriage fantasy 'homonormative futurism'. A full empirical analysis of these fantasies is beyond the scope of this article; I here seek to ground the later discussion of the queer futures same-sex marriage politics has made possible. Neither side of the same-sex marriage debate imagined a queer future; like heteroexclusive futurism, homonormative futurism seeks to realize a reproductive future, and thereby straight time. The question of how best to realize a reproductive future lies at the heart of the same-sex marriage debate.

Heteroexclusive futurism is defined by a political strategy that aims to exclude the homosexual body from the future. Under heteroexclusive futurism, the Child's growth into the heterosexual self is considered a pre-political process facilitated by a timeless public institution: heterosexual-only marriage (Hosking and Ripper, 2012). Heteroexclusive futurism affirms that the institution of heterosexual-only marriage is a sacred public space because only the naturally procreative sexual union between man and woman can bring about the stable, gender-complementary and lineal family that is in the best interests of the

Child (Edwards, 2007; Webb et al., 2017), including the Child's normative development of gender and sexual identity (Hosking and Ripper, 2012; Webb and Chonody, 2014; Webb et al., 2018; see also Nash and Browne, 2015). Under this logic, the reproduction of the heterosexual self through the Child is an integral part of marriage; support for heterosexual-only marriage reflects a desire for a reproductive future and straight time.

Under heteroexclusive futurism, the self's desire for straight time is constructed against the homosexual Other. The homosexual acts as cause and explanation for the failure of the self to realize the desirable fixed future, because they embody a perverse desire for the queer. In the marriage debate, anti-same-sex marriage activists commonly argued that same-sex marriage is not in the best interests of the Child, because it will increase and legitimize same-sex parenting. They argued that same-sex parents cannot naturally produce children or fulfil the complementary roles of mother and father (Hosking and Ripper, 2012; Webb et al., 2018). Because they embody queer gender roles, same-sex parents are thus considered biologically incapable of reproducing the fixed heterosexual self. Queerness is here pathologized within the homosexual body, and bodies recognized as homosexual are therefore excluded from the sacred public space of marriage. The desire to legalize same-sex marriage is consequently perceived as a destructive and perverse desire, as the legalization of same-sex marriage would undermine society's future (Edwards, 2007). Under heteroexclusive futurism, rather than legalizing same-sex marriage, the homosexual Other should be overcome by reinforcing the traditional heterosexual-only image of marriage, thereby ensuring the normative growth of the Child (Edwards, 2007; see also Nash and Browne, 2015).

The crucial insight in Duggan's concept of homonormativity is her identification of a new strategy to overcome the queer difference of the homosexual Other: a strategy based on privatization and depoliticization. I extend Duggan's insight by theorizing homonormativity as an attempt to realize straight time through a reproductive future. To realize a reproductive future, the self requires only the fixity of their relations with the Other. As discussed above, for example, within reproductive futurism the threat of the woman's queerness is not overcome through outright exclusion, but through her fixed placement in the private sphere. Similarly, homonormative futurism engages a strategy of fixing the homosexual within a homonormative public/private dichotomy by depoliticizing and privatizing homosexual orientation. This allows homonormative futurism to imagine a desirable future in which same-sex marriage is legalized and the fixed image of a reproductive self is realized. Cautious of the heteronormative context in which they sought majority support, pro-same-sex marriage activists predominantly privileged homonormative futurism in public and privatized more radical queer practices and identities (Bernstein et al., 2018; Copland, 2018), leading to an apparent crisis of vision, at least in public activism.

Homonormative futurism constructs a unified image of the self through what Amin Ghaziani (2011) terms a 'post-gay', 'us and them' logic (Webb et al., 2017). To construct this image of the self, overtly political references to sexuality and gender are largely erased or elided. Human rights, equality, and the sentiment that 'love is love' were prominent, unifying themes among supporters of same-sex marriage (Webb et al., 2017). Pro-same-sex marriage discourse also often drew on 'the power of the white picket fence' – white and middle-class fantasies of the heterosexual family – to establish political legitimacy (Hegarty et al., 2018: 408). These themes and images work against heteroexclusive futurism's claims of difference to normalize same-sex relationships in Australia.

Most importantly, this post-gay identity extended to the realm of parenting. In public, pro-same-sex marriage activists predominantly argued that same-sex parents are ‘just like’ heterosexual parents, and that same-sex parents make no difference to the normative development of the Child (Hosking and Ripper, 2012). For example, the first ad run by lead campaigners, Australian Marriage Equality, during the postal survey campaign focused explicitly on rebutting claims that same-sex marriage would have a negative impact on children. In it, Kerry Phelps, referred to as ‘Doctor and Grandmother’, argues that ‘the only young people affected by marriage equality are young gay people, who, for the first time, will have the same dignity as everyone else in our country’ (Australian Marriage Equality, 2017). The ad elided Phelps’ own same-sex marriage (Quinn, 2018). Homonormative futurism does not challenge the desirability of heterosexual marital practices, such as heterosexual sexual orientation, monogamy, sexual privacy, pro-nativity, and dyadic, lifelong romantic partnership. It thereby reproduces the normative regulation of the Child’s growth in marriage, and the fantasy of a fixed, white, middle-class, cisgendered, and abled heterosexual future on which that regulation is founded.

The threat that the queer sexual orientation of the homosexual poses to a reproductive future is managed, within homonormative futurism, through its depoliticization and privatization. Claims of post-gay unity are founded on the construction of the normal homosexual. The normal homosexual is a globalized gay identity in which homosexual orientation is the singular marker of difference from the norm (Altman, 2013). Homosexual orientation, according to the scientific discourse supporting homonormative futurism, is ‘an unremarkable variation in nature (probably in most cases genetic)’, not a ‘willful antisocial “lifestyle”’ (Kirby, 2012). Here, ‘homosexual’ is depoliticized; it is a static biological anomaly, not a matter of political desire (Altman, 2013). It follows that, under homonormative futurism, ‘homosexual’ is not something that the Child or self may become. This depoliticization of homosexual orientation allays fears that the legalization of same-sex marriage may produce queer children and an unviable future, and thus leads to a greater likelihood of supporting same-sex marriage (Sloane and Robbillard, 2018).

Where the normal homosexual’s orientation does mark a queer political desire, it is privatized under homonormative futurism. The practice of sexual privacy, institutionalized in marriage, locates queer practices outside the political public sphere. The privacy of marriage was therefore a common theme in pro-same-sex marriage discourse; same-sex marriages were characterized as ‘no one’s business’ (Webb et al., 2017). Even within the home, the queer sexual orientation of the normal homosexual may be located in the most private place – the bedroom. Thus, Andrew Tiedt (2013), a proponent of same-sex marriage, states that most Australians are willing to tolerate homosexuality on the basis that ‘what you do in the privacy of your own bedroom [is your own business] – as long as you don’t expect me to join in’. Even within the private sphere, the sexualized space of the parental bedroom is closed off to the Child, thus purportedly removing any potential for the Child’s normative growth to be queered.

Duggan is therefore right to be concerned about the vision of the future produced in homonormative same-sex marriage politics; it is a vision of straight time. Homonormative futurism does not aim to exclude normal white, cisgender, middle-class, and abled homosexual bodies, but instead produces a homonormative public/private dichotomy that aims to privatize and depoliticize the queer sexual practices of these bodies. Homonormative futurism imagines a reproductive future fixed through marriage and does not seek to realize a queer democratic public culture. The destructive and perverse desire for the queer, for no future, will continue to be projected and condensed onto Others, such as the figures

of the perverted Muslim terrorist (see Puar, 2007) and the Aboriginal Child abuser (see Baird, 2008). The political nature of this homonormative imagined process of reproduction must therefore be recognized.

Queer spaces

Duggan's concerns may nevertheless be overstated. Despite the centrality of same-sex marriage to her critique, the queer potential of homonormative relations after the legalization of same-sex marriage is yet to be explored. I therefore now turn to queer the reproductive relations and practices that homonormative futurism aims to privatize and depoliticize through the homonormative public/private dichotomy. In doing so, I unpack the quotidian potential for the figure of the normal homosexual to produce queer futures after the legalization of same-sex marriage.

Even within the homonormative relations of same-sex marriage, there exists a potential to produce a future in which the homonormative public/private dichotomy is queered. As geographers of sexualities have stressed, the so-called 'private' sphere is constructed through political relations that extend beyond the home's white picket fence (Blunt and Dowling, 2006; Brown, 2009; Gormann-Murray, 2007, 2012; Massey, 1994). Andrew Gormann-Murray's (2012: 114) description of 'social relations of publicity' is here insightful. As Gormann-Murray (2012) argues, relations of publicity are political, and flow within, between, and beyond spaces through social connections to others. Against homonormative futurism, marriage is not wholly private but is constructed through its relations of publicity to the state and other institutions, spaces, and subjects outside the home.

The legalization of same-sex marriage therefore creates new and public discursive opportunities for LGBTIQ people to deliberately queer the public/private dichotomy. Patriarchal gender roles divided through a public/private dichotomy may be publicly rejected by LGBTIQ people who get married. Same-sex weddings in particular constitute a highly public moment in which LGBTIQ people may have a platform to actively reject homonormative images of their relationship (see Kimport, 2014: 148). Being married too, can enable and empower such queer practices. Some married same-sex couples reject the official term 'wife' due to perceived connotations of private sphere subordination, instead adopting the term 'girlfriend' or 'partner' (Badgett, 2009). Every time such a label-change is enacted, the spatial differences between the roles of wife and girlfriend/partner are publicly transvaluated.

Noting this relational construction of space, Brown (2009) criticizes theorists of homonormativity, such as Duggan, for limiting the queer possibilities of homonormative relations by assuming their normative fixity. The concept of relations of publicity, however, also implies varying degrees of publicity. This is where the inextricable link between spaces and times theorized in Munoz's concept of straight time must be recognized in spatial imaginaries: if varying degrees of publicity are repeated through time, homonormative futurism's public/private dichotomy may come to appear as pre-political and timeless. The concept of relations of publicity is not a complete rejection of the public/private dichotomy but instead its theoretical transformation to align with relational conceptions of politics.

The relational nature of space therefore does not rule out the possibility of queer complicity within heteronormativity (Oswin, 2005, 2008); partial fixity may normatively limit the potential for same-sex marriage to produce queer futures. After the legalization of same-sex marriage, some regular and everyday queer practices may be limited in their publicity. Such practices include non-monogamous relationships, the rejection of

traditional gendered roles and norms including in favour of more egalitarian divisions of labour (Badgett, 2009; Green, 2013), adoption processes or use of assisted reproduction technologies, and non-dyadic family structures. Other homonormative practices may be more public, such as the same-sex wedding itself. The legalization of same-sex marriage under homonormative futurism's hegemony may, in some ways, therefore have a normative effect on queer practices. It may consolidate the marital dyad as a universal goal (Green, 2013; see also Badgett, 2009; Kimport, 2014) and lead to the public delegitimization of 'do-it-yourself' queer alternatives to marriage, such as public commitment ceremonies or other relationship forms generally. Duggan is thus – partially – right to be concerned about the potential privatizing and depoliticizing effects of same-sex marriage politics.

Nevertheless, straight time is never fully realized. Duggan's polemical approach places the homosexual in straight time, as she fails to pay sufficient attention to nuanced and localized relations of publicity and the potential for queer futures that resides therein, including after the legalization of same-sex marriage. Even incidental, everyday queer practices such as homosexual or bisexual orientation, non-dyadic or non-monogamous relationships, non-traditional relationship roles, and technologies of reproduction are never completely private nor pre-political. Despite the fact that these practices largely occur in what is commonly conceived as the private sphere, they often extend through relations of publicity to friends, families, colleagues, healthcare professionals, and others.

Queer parenting arrangements exemplify political relations of publicity that extend outwards from the home. Nancy Naples (2004) describes how parenthood as part of a lesbian couple has 'foregrounded' her relationship in new ways; she and her partner are forced to publicly take up both roles of 'mother' and 'father' at times. Group childbirth classes, for example, are both a private yet strangely public practice in which the queer gender roles of same-sex parents subvert and reconstruct homonormative futurism's image of lesbian and gay assimilation to heterosexual marital roles. Relational theories of space thus allow for a nuanced consideration of the constructive role that LGBTIQ people may play as queer citizens producing queer spatial relations, and thus queer futures.

Queer times

This outline of the potential for homonormative social relations to queer the public/private dichotomy, however, provides only part of the picture of a queer utopian future. Neither Duggan nor Brown consider the adulthood/Childhood dichotomy. Duggan (2003) fails to consider Childhood because she implicitly assumes the fixity of social relations and therefore uncritically reproduces straight time. Brown (2009) explicitly theorizes the non-fixity of social relations, and thus places the homosexual in a queer time beyond straight time. In doing so, however, he fails to recognize the political construction of queer time, the time of Childhood, against straight time, the time of adulthood. This is where theorizing the adulthood/Childhood dichotomy is crucial to the work of queering straight time. The above critical examination of the adulthood/Childhood dichotomy reveals that something is missing from both Duggan's reproduction of straight time and Brown's image of 'beyond homonormativity': a politicized account of reproductive time and queer children. Without an analysis of processes of biological and social reproduction and children's queer practices, any account of the queer potential in homonormative relations is incomplete; the queer Child's social relations hold a potential to queer the future.

Just as the legalization of same-sex marriage creates new and public discursive opportunities for LGBTIQ people to queer the public/private dichotomy, so too it provides new opportunities to queer the adulthood/Childhood dichotomy. The legalization of same-sex marriage means that the normative transition from Childhood to adulthood through marriage may be consciously and publicly rejected. Such a queer practice undermines homonormative futurism's depoliticized reproduction of the desirability of lifelong and romantic dyadic 'unions' within straight time. LGBTIQ people, and especially women, may also decouple the association between marriage and reproductive time by refusing the imperative to reproduce the self through the Child even after entering the institution of marriage. LGBTIQ people may thus reject marriage as the marker of the desirable transition to adulthood's straight and reproductive times and instead embody queer times in which one may 'grow sideways' or embrace an 'adolescent' and rebellious subculture (Stockton, 2009; Halberstam, 2005; Munoz, 2009). The legalization of same-sex marriage may repoliticise the image of the homosexual body outside marriage and reproductive time, or what Kathryn Stockton (2009) terms the image of the queer Child as 'the grown homosexual'.⁴

Most importantly, acknowledging the relational construction of time allows for social relations of publicity to extend through temporal boundaries, including the boundary between adulthood and Childhood. Both Duggan and Brown overlook the ways in which quotidian queer practices enacted within the bounds of the white picket fence may queer the Child's growth. Homonormative futurism creates a potential for a new utopian image of the queer Child: the Child queered by their parents. This research illustrates that queer family arrangements may queer social reproduction, because relations of publicity extend from parents to children. For children of queer parents, key aspects of their socialization may occur in a queer place where homosexual orientation and other queer practices are not reduced to a static difference but are meaningful and desirable to them and their family. For example, children of queer parents may learn from their parents the fluidity of gender roles (Hosking and Ripper, 2012) and the alternative reproductive technologies that challenge assumptions of ablest and racialized lineal reproductive futures. They also often adopt a sense of 'gay pride' (Hosking et al., 2015). Children of queer parents may therefore see the many ways in which their family violates homonormative futurism on an everyday basis, and the queer futures that this makes possible. They are thus unlikely to experience, at least to the same degree, relations of publicity through which they are interpellated with a heterosexual and lineal sense of self. Even within same-sex marriage, queer family arrangements may thus produce the Child queered by their parents.

Even after reaching adulthood, children of queer parents are more likely to be open to the reflection and reconstruction characteristic of a queer state of continual growth, rather than the fixed identities of straight time. They are more likely to adopt and be open to queer practices, including violations of gendered cultural norms and having or being open to having homoerotic relationships (Hosking et al., 2015). They also report being more accepting of all kinds of alternative lifestyles, including gender and sexual non-conformity (Goldberg, 2007), again reflecting an image of the Child queered by their parents.

Relational conceptions of time also allow for relations of publicity to flow in queer directions, such as from queer children to adults and other children. This points towards another new utopian image of the queer Child: the Child queered by their sexuality, or, to play on Stockton's imaginary, the ungrown homosexual. With the shift to homonormative futurism and a depoliticized homosexual orientation, children's 'coming out' may become intelligible. Stockton (2009) notes that children are now declaring their queer genders and

sexualities earlier. This may reflect an increased homonormative recognizability of homosexual orientation as pre-political, and thus something a Child may 'be'. There is a risk that this Child is then subjected to a homonormative regime of growing up (Horn and Wong, 2017); yet, again, this growth is towards a future queer to homonormative futurism. The homonormative growth of the Child may see many queer aspects of homonormative parent–Child relations reversed, such that parents of queer children may develop a greater understanding of LGBTIQ people's experiences of inequality, adopt a sense of gay pride and engage in LGBTIQ activism, and their assumption of their own futurity through lineal, racialized reproduction may be disrupted (Horn and Wong, 2017). The Child queered by their sexuality may in turn queer others, and the future.

Children's queer relations of publicity are not restricted to the bounds of the white picket fence; they extend into kindergartens and schoolyards, playgrounds, sports fields, and far beyond (Ansell, 2009; Bosco, 2010). Even while young, queer children may extend relations of publicity from themselves and their parents to others, as regular, sometimes minor, incidences in their daily lives subvert heteronormative assumptions (Bernstein, 2015). Moreover, queer children may deliberately combat heteronormativity, by taking an educative approach to others' everyday ignorance and prejudice (Hosking et al., 2015; Robinson, 2013; Saffron, 1998). Others may engage in more overtly political activism, such as those that entered the marriage debate itself (Hosking et al., 2015). In a queer utopian imaginary, children may thus be considered as queer citizens playing a constructive role in a queer future.

Conclusion

Same-sex marriage thus holds a transformational potential to not only queer space, but also to queer heteronormative times and subvert the desire to reproduce a fixed image of the self. This article has sought to bring a temporal perspective to debates over the crisis of vision in LGBTIQ studies and activism. Analyses of homonormativity that fail to consider the temporalities they produce and reproduce, and the political relations on which these temporalities are founded, are necessarily limited in their queer potential. In closing, it is worth revisiting the relations between the three core temporalities considered here: man's straight time, woman's reproductive time, and the Child's queer times.

In the best interests of the Child, straight time is most closely associated with adult men in the public sphere. Straight time depoliticizes the heteronormative public/private dichotomy constructed through the political relations of man/woman within marriage. Duggan's contribution to the study of homonormativity is incisive because it brings the privatizing and depoliticizing effects of same-sex marriage to the fore. These effects must not be overlooked or disregarded, as they may produce a homonormative public/private dichotomy. Nevertheless, straight time is not unassailable; relations of publicity hold a potential to queer the future. Queer futures invoke a new kind of politics founded on a fantasy of the future that is not yet here but always on the horizon. Homonormative relations in same-sex marriage may queer the public/private dichotomy and thereby produce a public queer future.

Like space, time is undetermined, and produced through political relations with Others. I have argued that the fixed straight time of adulthood is constructed against the unfixed queer future of Childhood. This adulthood/Childhood dichotomy produces a reproductive paradox in which the Child embodies the potential to realize the desired image of the self fixed in straight time, but simultaneously blocks the realization of straight time through their non-fixity. Reproductive time is a cyclical political attempt to overcome this

paradox by reproducing the fixed image of the self through the Child. Reproductive time is therefore crucial to the production of straight time, as it produces the approximate repetition of practice across generations through the institution of marriage.

Queer futures may therefore also present a point from which to critique reproductive time, and the adulthood/Childhood dichotomy on which it is founded. Relations of publicity, and their queer potential, extend between children and adults. However, children have been omitted from both Duggan and Brown's images of the future. Extending Brown's work, I argue that the queer Child holds a potential to queer the future. The homonormative practices of same-sex marriage may produce two new images of the queer Child: the Child queered by their parents, and the Child queered by their sexuality.

Finally, I acknowledge the limits of the queer future I have here imagined. Same-sex marriage is not a revolutionary escape from heteronormativity; its immediate queerness is limited, especially for members of the LGBTIQ community who experience intersecting oppressions. The queer future imagined here names only a few of many ways in which LGBTIQ people and their allies may queer the future. Aside from brief references to the lineal racism and ableism of straight and reproductive times, I have not sought here to highlight the ways in which the queer futures produced within same-sex marriages may intersect with afro-, crip-, or other futures. Such intersectional imaginaries would prove highly informative, not only in producing futures worth desiring, but by diversifying the points from which to critique the present and other imaginaries of the future, including my own. Queer theorists and activists must similarly embrace the diverse futures of women and lesbian, gay, transgender and non-binary, intersex, queer, racialized, disabled, lower classed and other oppressed peoples in order to queer the future.

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Notes

1. I define the political as the relation between self and Other (Mouffe, 2005).
2. As such, recent debates in Marxist social reproduction theory (see, for example, Bhattacharya, 2017a) are beyond the scope of this article. My analysis of social reproduction may instead be located roughly in the Bourdieusian tradition (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977).
3. Following Edelman (2004), throughout this article I refer to 'homosexual' here because lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender non-binary, intersex, and queer (LGBTIQ) identities have historically been conflated and grounded in the hegemonic scientific construction of 'homosexual' under reproductive futurism.
4. It may instead be pathologized in the body of racialized or otherwise Othered people.

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