The counterplan is to endorse the entirety of the AFF, but use the word flesh instead of body. Permutation is severance from your representations, but the harm has already occurred and it is impossible to go back.

**First**, focus on the body creates conceptual problems of wholeness, which excludes the disabled flesh from accessing liberation. **CREAMER:**[[1]](#footnote-1) Betcher offers us some openings, some possibilities for conversational intersection. Her appeal to flesh, rather than to body, is one such space. Two important claims are embedded in her argument against body. The **first** is that **the use of body invites**, as she writes, “**the hallucinatory delusion of wholeness”** (108). In other words, **body has been taken to be another** (disembodied) **ideal that no one can attain.** The **second**, related but yet somewhat different, is that **we too often take body to be a generic term, leading to** what Betcher describes as **“naturalization or normalization.”** In this way, **the term body had been taken as shorthand for “normal body,” requiring a signifier for other kinds of bodies** (“**disabled body” being one example** among many). I would argue that these two errors are interrelated, as **we all have neither ideal nor normal bodies,** and yet that they must be unpacked or challenged from slightly different perspectives. **A corollary** here might be found in other areas of feminist discourse where **both the ideal woman and the generic woman have had to be deconstructed**—**the first to show** that **women were**, in fact, **human**, living, people; **the second to highlight ways in which the assumption of a generic type acts to “white”-wash** or erase critical differences **between and among these human, living, people.** I find the lens of disability to be a promising way to challenge both the ideal body and the normal body. Clearly, this is significant for people who already wear the label of disability, as we are often identified as those whose bodies are least normal—and, from this position on the margins, we can first make appar ent and then challenge the assumptions of the center. Yet it is also important to recognize that **this is not just a project for or of people “with disabilities**.” Here I find Sallie McFague’s proposal of attention epistemology to be helpful: “the kind of knowing that focuses on embodied differences.” Betcher makes a similar claim when she invites us to focus on “that which we know to be true of lives” (108). **The illusion of the ideal body and the distortion of the normal body** begin to **fade away as** we begin to **see** bodies (or **flesh**) **with new levels of complexity,** **observing that normal only exists in our imaginations**, **and** **recognizing** **ourselves** **as** having limits and “**leaky bodies and boundaries**.” **Once we recognize** that **limits** **are unsurprising**, **we** **can** then **begin** **to** move not only to a perspective where we **embrace** (value, accept, respect) the idea of **having limits** (as individuals and as communities)—**whether or not we claim disability as a label**—but can also notice ways in which these limits might embrace us, acting to make and unmake issues of identity, relationality, space, and place. As I have argued more fully elsewhere, a limits perspective has profound implications for theology and ethics, as well as self- and communal understanding. And again, while clearly there is relevance here for and within the discourses of disability theology, **it is not hard to recognize the ways in which the embrace of limits can engage other conversations,** **such as those emerging within postcolonial theory**, as they declare danger in binaries and dualisms and seek new ways of under standing and being.

O/w since limits control the internal link to other post-colonial discussions.

**Second,** only a focus on flesh enables meaningful solvency for the disabled body. It allows us to queer the categories of liberation is a socially necessary fashion. **CREAMER (2):**

**Betcher’s move from body to flesh** also **offers** **a** second **significant point of intersection and openness around issues of identity.** As she observes, Eiesland’s The Disabled God and other **works that have focused primarily on a liberation ist model** **have been limited in their impact**—in part, as she notes, because disability is still conceived as an individual (rights-based) issue, and in part, as I and others have argued elsewhere, because the liberationist (or social/minority) model is not without limits and flaws itself. Beyond this, **the liberationist model attracts allies only insofar as we are seen to have common commitments and concerns.** Some may join with us out of a sense of duty or outrage; others may see ways in which the liberation of one group is tied to the liberation of others. **Thus, we may** work together in protest of inaccessible public transportation or **build coalitions around health care policies, but these alliances dissolve once an issue is closed or** energy and **funds are exhausted.** I would not want to argue that we let go of these alliances or identity politics—any day’s newspaper will show how much remains to be done—and yet we have seen that **these movements are not enough. Identity politics can only take us so far, and clinging too firmly** to them **leads to fragmentation and isolation.** **Here, I see an invitation, from the flesh, to queer this discourse.** In Donald Hall’s words, **queer theories** “work to **challenge** and undercut **any attempt to render ‘identity’ singular, fixed, or normal.” Queering**, in this way, **means to question and complicate, to challenge and play, to propose and subvert, and to push continually toward complexity. It is a move beyond the body and into flesh.** It seems to me that disability theology is on the verge of making this shift, allowing us to claim our roots in (and continuing commitments to) liberation while simultaneously announcing that even more is at stake. We must be cautious in this, recognizing Robert McRuer’s re minder that “crip theory” (his term for a queering of disability discourse) must not dematerialize disability identity. We have seen the dangers of moving too quickly to a dismissive “we are all disabled” perspective, and **we ought not let the queering of our discourse mean the erasure of material bodies, hungry bodies, bodies in pain. Yet what I see in this move to the flesh is a significant step toward queering our work by not just denying but also subverting the idea of a norm, challenging both stasis and separation, attending to identity politics and issues of justice while still opening new spaces and alliances.** I wonder, too, if **disability theology might** actually **help queer theology be more queer, through our attention to the disruptions, messiness, and unruliness of the flesh.** **It is**, I would argue, at the very least, **a generative locus for further conversation and interaction.**

Thus, my position by replacing the oppressed body with the broken flesh is critical to meaningful solvency. This means I can solve 100% of my opponent’s position but metaphorical and discursive benefit by endorsing their movement but with a methodological focus on flesh rather than the normalizing body.

1. Deborah Beth Creamer [Creamer is the author of Disability and Christian Theology: Embodied Limits and Constructive Possibilities(2009), a book that encourages thought in new ways about categories like ability and disability.] *Embracing Limits, Queering Embodiment: Creating/Creative Possibilities for Disability Theology.* Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion, Vol. 26, No. 2 (Fall 2010), pp. 123-127 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)