> ... therefore we are all transsexuals. There are no transsexuals.[1]
> ... therefore we are all non-binary. There are no non-binaries.

I am attempting to write what this will become and it seems as if I have forgotten how to write. From where does a certain kind-of- writing come; how could one access it? Is it like a node? A central point where intersecting ideas finally collect and form something larger? Multiple leaves of a book, like multiple leaves sprouting out from a stem? Is it possible that I have oversaturated myself and now I am unable to write? And what relationship could exist between writing and not writing? Clearly, I am writing now, and I am unsure of where to go. I have fragments and thoughts, but it seems that I am at a loss. I am attempting to write on identity and I am thinking about what that writing needs to look like; a mental blueprint. Perhaps this is my problem. I oscillate between writing and not writing as if I must live on one end or the other. What I am trying to do is think through a nonbinary, an idea of what that might mean. A kind-of-writing seems to be in line with what it is I mean by a nonbinary. It's unstable, fluid with its intentions, and considers that sometimes a denial of what precedes construction is what is necessary to open up a new strain of thinking. Thinking for me is coextensive with writing.

To borrow from Deleuze and Guattari, I am thinking through a kind-of-writing as analogous to a becoming-nonbinary. As opposed to structuring non-binary[2] as an identity (especially as an identity I claim, even as I do "claim" it, if hesitantly due to my distaste for identity) I am concerned with what the word has become, and how we could think of it as a process. I think it may have something to do with a line from D+G's <u>A Thousand Plateaus</u>, in the plateau entitled <u>1914: One or Several Wolves?</u> "We each go through
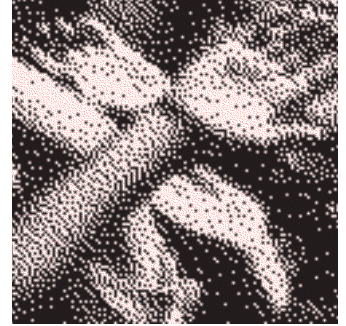
so many bodies in each other."[3] I am not interested in indulging a contextual understanding of this quoted sentence, although one need only read that plateau to know. And sometimes it is necessary to allow a quote severed from its original body to flourish in its new one. A grafting of another's ideas. Trans-planting from one space to another. This quote has become the blueprint for something larger. It is merely a projection forward; although what is nice about projections is the light that they provide in a darkened room. Just as early blueprints could only be produced through light exposure, ideas require a letting out so to speak, a kind of presentation to the light, that allows for the image of our thoughts to appear. However, it is easy to forget that it is also the blocking of the light, the darkness which in conjunction with the light forms the image. Just as the light can illuminate, the darkness clarifies.
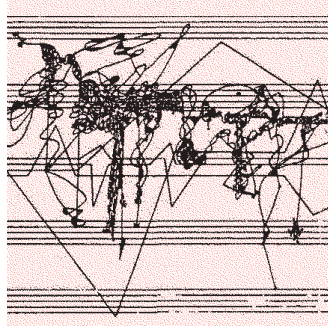
Is it necessary to continually undermine and question myself and never speak certainly? Maybe. Uncertainty is what allows me to subvert, deny, deconstruct, and rework certainties especially of my identity. It's not certainty and uncertainty, or writing and not writing, it's kind of. Free floating and fluid like water, as Spike from Cowboy Bebop says as Bruce Lee said before him, allowing yourself to act without resistance, without thought.
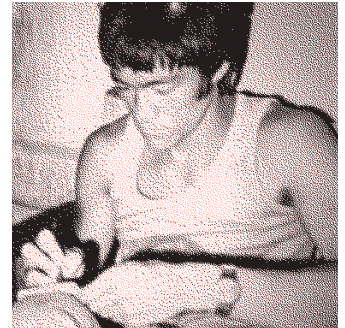
This could be why I feel the need to undermine myself. And perhaps it was never even a question I needed to ask at all. This connection between writing and identity is a necessary one. As writing inscribes on the paper, identity inscribes on the body. We would be foolish to believe that identity emanates from the body as if it were something fundamental within it. Identities bound by society

1   Halberstam, Jack (Judith). "F2M: The Making of Female Masculinity." In Feminist Theory and the Body: A Reader, edited by Janet Price and Margrit Shildrick, 125–33. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999
2   My concern with our current conversation around nonbinary has to do with the mainstream strains that most people understand it through. Sure, Merriam-Webster naming "They" as their word of the year is a huge win for those who fight for the legitimacy of their choice of identification, myself included, but there's still something that feels not quite right with the way things are going. Nonbinary as I've come to engage with it, and what it means for so many, is a denial of this kind of neat and tidy identification. It is strict identification and subjectivation which necessitates "identities" like nonbinary coming to the fore in order to make space for those who do not align with the strict heteronormative dualistic nature of prescribed identities. As the artist [{"CIBELLE"(CAVALLI} BASTOS)] puts it in their Instagram post from October 12, 2019 "They/them doesn't define nonbinary." Rather, they/them is a way to use something which exists in the English language to halt gender, and in relation to those who do not strictly use they/them, it operates as a way to halt gendered assumption in first impressions. It's those same structures that are taking something which is a radical restructuring of gender terms and turning it into a simple third term which denies histories of gender non-conformity and genders other than that which we know as "biologically true" now which come to much more than three. (aevtarperform. "They/Them and gender neutral language PSA♥ …" Instagram, October 12th, 2019, https://www.instagram.com/p/B3g9-FKnhR9/.)
3   Deleuze, Gilles, and Felix Guattari. A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia. Translated by Brian Massumi. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987.

operate like the horoscopes at the back of the newspaper. You think they speak directly to you, while they say the same thing to everyone else. Allow a looseness, allow difference.

On the flipside this uncertainty in writing must exist as a balancing act. Just as uncertainty can block a writer from going anywhere, a critical uncertainty towards the concreteness of one's identity can become a source of anxiety permeating one's feelings of validity towards their own body and their choices about it. This process has to do with an implosion of language. Language as that original thing which dictates to us what we can and cannot say based on rules and regulations. As D+G say, language is always about repetition, not saying anything new, but simply saying it again: order-words. It is not about answering the question anew, but saying what is already known, but now reinforcing it with our enunciation of it. As with a student giving the "correct" answer. It is within writing that Derrida places the (an)origin of words undermining speech as the ultimate purveyor of truth, and for D+G there are always minoritarian languages and pass-words baked into the order-words of a proper majoritarian language.4

Already there is a distrust baked into this understanding of language. The words we use and how we use them are not free flowing, but rather have rules and regulations. By breaking out of these rules and regulations we are able to retool language. It is the double edged sword of the oppressor's language dictating identities especially radical ones.5 Through a willful misuse or disregard for the "correct" use of language, or the proper way to write, we can begin to form those pass-words out from under the order-word. A literal passage not through, but out and under. It is what I refer to in another writing6 as a poetics of an underneath. How do we manipulate systems that ignore minoritarian identities and languages, and operate outside of normative modes of perceptual judgement?
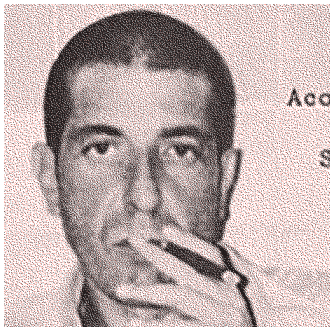
When one perceives,

... perception is not the object p l u s something, but the object m i n u s something, minus everything that does not interest us. It could be said that the object itself merges with a p u r e virtual perception, at the same time as our real perception merges with the object from which it has abstracted only that which did not interest us. Hence [Henri] Bergson's famous thesis (the full consequences of which we will have to analyze): We perceive things where they are, perception puts us at

once into matter, is impersonal, and coincides with the perceived object. Continuing on this same line, the whole of Bergson's method consists, first of all, in seeking the terms between which t h e r e c o u l d n o t be a difference in kind: There cannot be a difference in kind, but only a difference in degree between the faculty of the brain and the function of the core, between the perception of matter and matter itself.[7]

When one considers identification, it is perception that dictates how identification operates. It is the question of passing or a lack thereof, either by choice or not. Violence occurs throughout. It is in a passing that one's culture, identity, way of being is ripped away even as it may protect them from other violences. It is a violent misidentification that prevents the perceiver from truly engaging who it is that passes. It is in passing, or the lack thereof, that we can locate one of the main concerns of this kind-of-writing. A kind-of-writing questions passing and focuses on the pass-word. Passing or a failure too is always in relation to a certain hegemonic ideal of what someone looks like when they abide by certain tenets of an identity. Instead of passing as a stationary mode, it's a passing through, like Leonard Cohen.[8]

There are a multitude of ways in which violence occurs in instances of passing, and it is important to note that violence can take many forms such as intellectual, emotional, abstract, material, physical, concrete, etc., but all forms are bound up in one another and are inextricable in their effects. The violence is apparent in perceptions of disability and chronic illness which can lead to the denial of healthcare and even the recognition that someone is sick, the denial of

4   While this is a pared down version of not only D+G's and Derrida's description of language and written language, but also language in general, it is still a useful starting point for my own extrapolation. Maybe it would be useful to add in this other moment from D+G's A Thousand Plateaus when they are describing a portion of what they mean by a rhizomatic system, specifically in relation to its ability to connect at any point to anything else, to be heterogenous, "A semiotic chain is like a tuber agglomerating very diverse acts, not only linguistic, but also perceptive, mimetic, gestural, and cognitive: there is no language in itself, nor are there any linguistic universals, only a throng of dialects, patois, slangs, and specialized languages. There is no ideal speaker-listener, any more than there is a homogenous linguistic community. Language is, in Weinrich's words, 'an essentially heterogenous reality.' There is no mother tongue, only a power takeover by a dominant language within a political multiplicity. Language stabilizes around a parish, a bishopric, a capital." Deleuze, Gilles, and Felix Guattari. A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia. Translated by Brian Massumi. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987.

5   I want to quickly note the inspiration for this moment in the text, "It's important that I also share the Western medical terminology that's been attached to me —— whether I like it or not, it can provide a common vocabulary: 'This is the oppressor's language,' Adrienne Rich wrote in 1971, 'yet I need it to talk to you.' But let me offer another language, too. In the Native American Cree language, the possessive noun and verb of a sentence are structured differently than in English. In Cree, one does not say, 'I am sick.' Instead, one says, 'The sickness has come to me.' I love that and want to honor it." Hedva, Johanna. "Sick Woman Theory." Mask Magazine, January 2016. http://www.maskmagazine.com/not-again/struggle/sick-woman-theory.

6   Fusco, Evan. Poetics of the Underneath: The criticality of care and its affects in Park McArthur and Beverly Buchanan. 2019 https://files.cargocollective.com/c43856/Abstraction-Essay-Zine.pdf

7   Deleuze, Gilles. Bergsonism. Translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam. Brooklyn, New York City: Zone Books, 1990.

8   Leonard Cohen, "Passing Through," Live Songs, 1973.

care in general.9 This violence is apparent in the suicide rates of young lgbtq individuals who must pass in order to be accepted by family, friends, strangers, and are often ill-equipped to deny that part of themselves in such a way.10 In his discussion of narratives about the escape of people from slavery in the antebellum south, C. Riley Snorton discusses the importance of passing in relation to certain genderbending practices, and how in this passing there was always a promise of violence deferred in these acts.11 Passing is not a new phenomenon. Passing often means you must appear as something you are not in order to move around. It's the difference between passing according to a mainstream understanding of what a man or a woman or a black man or a white woman or a latinx man or a nonbinary person or a transgender woman or a black transgender woman and passing through according to what you think you should look like. Passing can be a form of respectability politics, or it can let us pass out from under these politics.
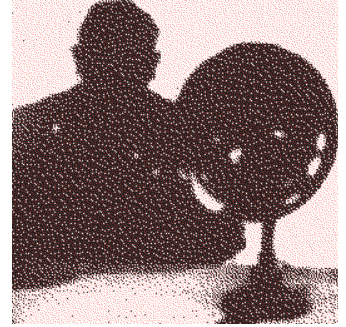
We can think through nonbinary as a kind of proper signification in the way that Derrida understood there is always something which is not represented by the signification, there is always something missing, some kind of material loss. Where identities usually try to act as if they properly represent that which they are placed upon and written onto, becoming-nonbinary understands the impossibility of this claim, and revels in the ways that it necessarily causes a loss of something in the identities it is bound up with, specifically gender identities. It is o b l i t é r a t i o n but not obliteration. I use the French word, as it is used in Derrida, because it does not mean an absolute annihilation, but rather a canceling or occlusion, in Derrida's case of the proper. Becoming-nonbinary contains within it a promise of a denial of identity's power to properly contain one's essence and to truly categorize and systematize those who exist within it. If for Derrida originary violence, which is not in itself violence, is predicated on the understanding of difference in appearance, and for an appearance to occur then there is an exclusionary violence that is born, then in many ways identity is that form of exclusionary violence par excellence in that as a classification system it must necessarily create limitations on who properly belongs to that identity and who does not. Becoming-nonbinary in its readymade situation of a third term
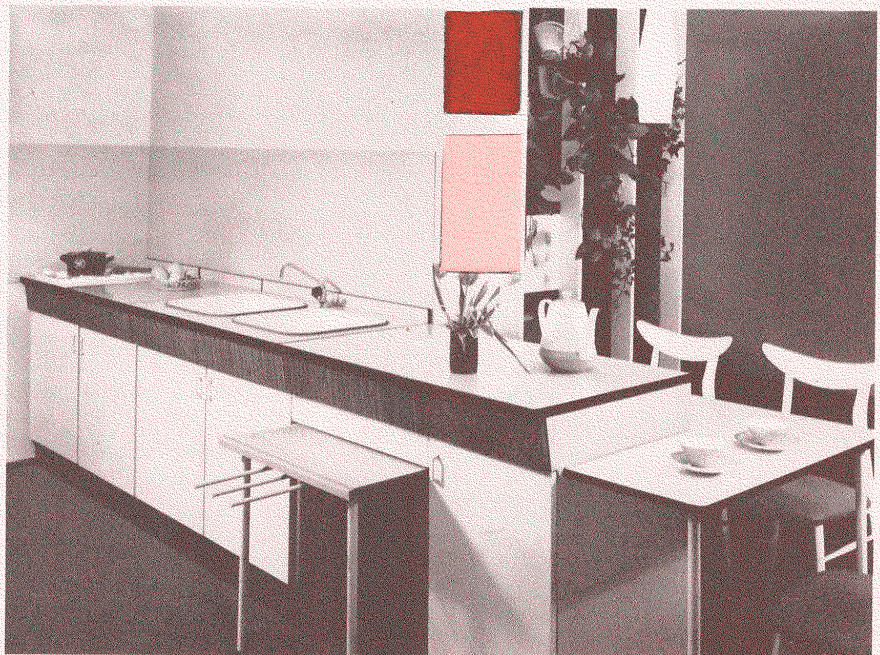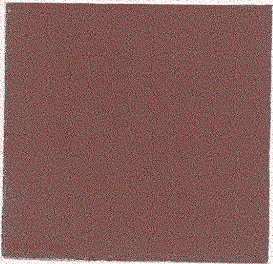
Flur, Garderobe

Der Flur in der Wohnung ist eine reine Verkehrsfläche
und verbindet die einzelnen Räume. Beim Betreten
einer Wohnung vermittelt er den ersten Eindruck;
er muß daher einladend wirken, hat aber auch ganz
bestimmte Funktionen zu erfüllen, die unbedingt be-
rücksichtigt werden müssen. Die Gestaltung eines
Flures ist meist schwierig, weil hier viele Türen vor-
handen sind und es eigentlich wenig Stellfläche gibt.
Es muß einerseits eine Geschlossen
mes erreicht, andererseits ein gü
zum Wohnzimmer geschaffen werde
Eine vorteilhafte Gestaltung des
jedem Fall und dazu mit verhältni:
Mitteln möglich. Geschlossenheit er
durch entsprechende Fußbodenbeha
chen der Türen und Wände in de
Auch bietet uns die Tapete unzähli
Beispielsweise läßt eine quergestr
Raum weiter erscheinen. Wir könner

2
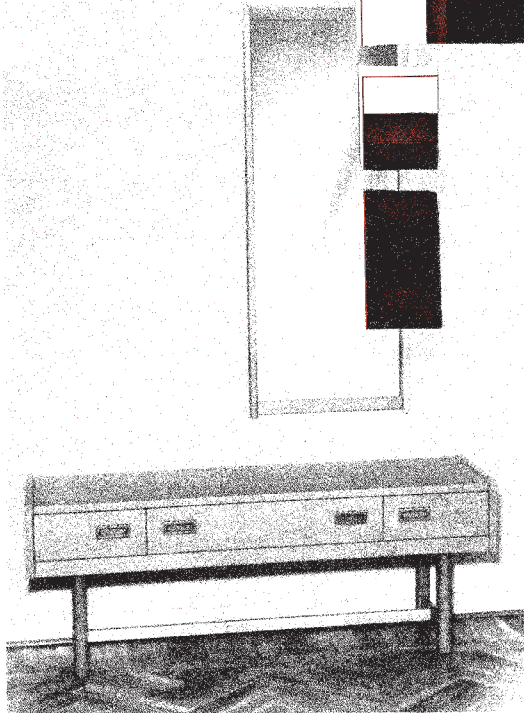
der Unpersönlichkeit mit
der Freiheit zuerst angez

Als Holtzman zum erste
Künstler zusammenbracht
sollten, hoffte er, Mondriar
wie er es nannte, etabli
seine Erwartung wurde er

Die andern Künstler zei
die feinen Punkte der T
und wollten nur ausstelle ка", mit kleiner Ablage
Leistenrückwand,   zu-
r Hutablage; Ausführung
in Ahorn, Buche oder Eiche, natur oder gebeizt mattiert
Gesamtgröße der Dielengarnitur

Entwurf und Ausführung: AGP Hol:

n Rot und Blau

2 Aus Schweden ein Garderober nicht mehr erkennbar;
Ablage für eine großzügige Gestalt von Mondrian 1925)
Entwurf und Ausführung: AB Glas),3 x 32,1 cm
n Art, New York

3 Dielengarnitur, Modell „Regina", dreiteilig, beste-
hend aus einem Schränkchen mit zwei Schubkästen
und einem offenen Ablagefach, einem Spiegel,
790 mm × 410 mm, und Hutablage
Größe des Schränkchens 850 mm × 600 mm, Tiefe
350 mm

Entwurf und Ausführung: AGP Holz, Weißenfels

4 Dielengarnitur, Modell „Ute", bestehend aus einem
Schränkchen, 550 mm × 610 mm, Tiefe 320 mm, und
einem Spiegel, 790 mm × 410 mm; Ausführung in
Mahagoni oder Birke, Kästen Ahorn, natur mattiert

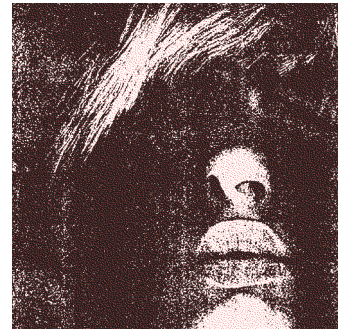Entwurf und Ausführung: AGP Holz Weißenfels

that exceeds the third term, a kind of non-middle, middle ground refutes this violence while making manifest said violence, not to enact it but to expose it as it is. It is not a willful or ignorant misidentification, but rather a denial of identification as possible based on appearance alone. Perhaps it is not so much a misidentification but an anidentification. Without identification; lacking an identification. Neither certain nor uncertain; neither writing nor not writing.

We can thus think passing in relation to nonbinary individuals, and how passing operates in this case both as a justification for the claiming of this "identity" and the ways that it operates for those who do not conform to certain "established aesthetics" of the nonbinary. This kind of retroactively normative aesthetics on something which is against the norm results in mental stress on those who do not see themselves as conforming to the "correct" aesthetics which results in situations of self doubt and reifies the notion that appearance and appearance alone is what confers legitimacy to one's belonging to a marginalized group. And this is not exclusive to nonbinary, but is prevalent throughout identity categories, except that nonbinary has been established as a category with a supposed set of aesthetic markers as its sole (soul) aspect even as it necessarily contains multiplicities. At this point I find it necessary to clarify a certain distinction between a mainstream nonbinary and the becoming-nonbinary that I am discussing. Why I didn't do this, clearly, sooner, I'm not really sure, but here makes sense.[12] Mainstream nonbinary is based on stability and an established androgyny, often skinny, white, and slightly feminine. Becoming-nonbinary is entropic, process-based, never still, always shifting. It is both something and nothing, it is and is not an identity. It's kind of.[13]

What this points out is that those defining seemingly fixed characteristics which mark someone with a certain marginal identity are ones which have been assigned to and then, over years

9   Wendell, Susan. "Unhealthy Disabled: Treating Chronic Illnesses as Disabilities." In The Disability Studies Reader, edited by Lennard J. Davis, 4th ed., 161–73. New York: Routledge, 2013.

10   https://www.thetrevorproject.org/2019/06/27/research-brief-accepting-adults-reduce-suicide-attempts-among-lgbtq-youth/

11   Snorton, C. Riley. Black on Both Sides: A Racial History of Trans Identity. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2017.

12   One can always circle back if necessary in a written text, perhaps I introduce this distinction now to expose that necessity of return.

13   I would also like to add that nonbinary as an identity and how it is understood now is a bit easier wis why it is useful as an example in this discussion.

of indoctrination, policed in place. This allows for a seemingly truthful legitimacy to attach itself to that identity. This kind of legitimacy is often not allowed for those who identify or are adjacent to nonbinary and nonbinaryness, except when situated within the burgeoning world of heternormatively palatable modes of being nonbinary which are slowly being introduced.

Most identity categories as we know them today are born out of imperialist ideas created for the express purpose of justifying colonization and capitalist markets. Other identities such as transgender as we know it today came from a denial of certain tenets of (in this case) gender which were then adopted and standardized by neoliberal capitalism to keep its control. Nonbinary as we know it today has historical roots in non-european understandings of gender, but within contemporary discourse and how it engages the historical roots of all identity, nonbinary is on the precipice of being standardized and policed by the same structures which policed other formations of identity that sprung up as alternatives to the ways those identities were originally formulated.[14] As I stated before, all identities have this dual condition (allowing oneself to have a certain level of defining ability, while having to use another's language to do so) of serving a larger heteropatriarchal capitalist system which uses them as a way to prop up Man, but this means they also have their subversive components. However, there is often a willful forgetting or blurring of history which allows for a seemingly originary status for identity categories such as race and gender. We see this in the continued dissemination of the videos of the murder of Black and Trans individuals, positioning their deaths as a more consistent representation than their lives. It existed in the Nazi destruction and book burning of the Institut für Sexualwissenschaft, an early site of discussion of the rights of LGBT individuals and where transsexualism was first introduced into the lexicon and early sex reassignment surgeries took place. It occurs every time a revised history of the United States is told, willfully ignoring the horrors committed, and erasing the histories of the indigenous peoples who lived here and whose ideas of race and gender were a far cry from our current understanding. In current discourse we have the work of Snorton whose book Black on Both Sides deals with an historical analysis of artifacts to reengage past forms of

blackness and transness to think through a new way of engaging
our contemporary understanding ——

> Although the perception that 'race' and 'gender' are fixed and know-
> able terms is the dominant logic of identity, in this book 'trans' is more
> about a movement with no clear origin and no point of arrival, and
> "blackness" signifies upon an enveloping environment and condition
> of possibility. Here, trans —— in each of its permutations —— finds
> expression and continuous circulation within blackness, and blackness is
> transected by embodied procedures that fall under the sign of gender.[15]

It is in a hopeful belief in these discourses that I locate a
possible radicalism which could liberate our entrenched
ideas about identity in the way we engage nonbinary and
its implications.

To return to anidentification and its usefulness I
want to focus for a moment on certain technologies and
techniques that work to frustrate facial recognition. I don't
believe that it is that much of a coincidence that many of
these techniques involve the use of makeup to disrupt cer-
tain facial markers which can be
read by AI trained for facial recog-
nition. There is Adam Harvey's Computer
Vision Dazzle or CV Dazzle makeup which
pulls from the dazzle techniques intro-
duced in World War I by ships which were
painted to frustrate another ship's ability to
ascertain certain qualities about the boat
including size, direction of travel, and speed.
In Hong Kong towards the end of last year
this kind of makeup, plus facial covering,
was banned during protests. It's in the rec-
ognition and classification implicit in this
ban that the power structures which the cit-
izens of Hong Kong are protesting against
find their strength, and this fact was under-
stood by protesters who before these laws
were put into place refused to be facially
identified by the technologies used by the
police and government. When it becomes
a legal requirement that you make your-
self readily available to be identified when
protesting there is a certain radical refusal that is embedded in
this willful anidentification. The fact that these forms of invisibility

14   For example, transgender identities are seeing
a rise in acceptance at the same time we are seeing a
rise in transphobic murders. This happens more often
to trans woman of color, and to those who do not
pass "correctly." This is a concern of heightened visi-
bility, and what happens when that visibility is policed.
A larger exploration of this occurs in Trap Door: Trans
Cultural Production and the Politics of Visibility.

15   Snorton, C. Riley. Black on Both Sides: A Racial
History of Trans Identity. Minneapolis: University of
Minnesota, 2017. p 2

through hypervisibility were first utilized for war purposes is no coincidence. Just as there is state violence involved in the protests that this kind of camouflage wishes to mitigate, in World War I and into World War II dazzle was a way to mitigate harm done to ships (although this was simply to guarantee harm was done to the other side fighting instead). It is violence, again, that is tied up in the stakes of these issues of visibility. The interesting part of this adoption through makeup of a war tactic is that there was no proper evidence that the dazzle paint jobs actually helped to hide the ships. However, when implemented as makeup dazzle does work to obstruct facial recognition. Something ab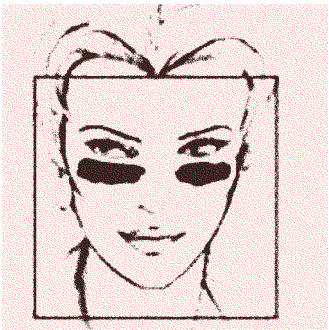out the dazzle not working for warships, but working for protesters feels profound, but I'm not sure if I have the proper words to describe why. Again, the limits of this kind-of-writing are found here. There is more for me to write, but in this moment, I feel the beginnings of an end.

Another historical example, not necessarily of anidentification proper, but of something which operated as a semi-identification, is scare drag. This type of drag was the product of an era when you could be arrested if as a cis man you did not wear at least three articles of men's clothing, and socks didn't count. The idea was you would wear men's clothing but give them a flair of the feminine, tying up your shirt so it worked like a crop for example. The point was that if you wore this on the street you could be easily identified by other queer people, but if the cops came around you could easily "take off" the drag, by adjusting all of your clothes. The scare in the name was derived from the effect it had on straight cis viewers, primarily because in its simplicity it didn't create the more illusionistic and pleasant drag which we are familiar with today. When I first heard this term during a paper presentation by the Art Historian David Getsy it immediately felt right to me. A kind of drag that was interested in signaling a queerness without being concerned that it didn't perform a genderbending well enough. I think it's no coincidence that in many fashion trends popular among those who would call themselves nonbinary there is a certain kinship to scare drag. The same queerness of the scare drag is present in the CV Dazzle makeup.

When I began to write this essay I was thinking about what it would mean to take the performative lecture, something which is already a riff on the lecture proper, and perform another riff with

it. This would be to write a performative lecture like an essay, call it a performative lecture, but never read it out loud. This is what allowed me to be comfortable with making a kind-of-writing about becoming-nonbinary as opposed to feeling obligated to write a proper essay which cohered into a solid point. The performative lecture as a form has a few things baked into it which include: the denial or questioning of an authority (sometimes yourself), a questioning of the delivery and construction of information, and a self-awareness of the movement involved in the act of doing it. To turn the performative lecture into an essay which then turns the essay into a kind of script for a performance that will never happen is to both strengthen and weaken those elements of the performative lecture. It would also be nice to know that someone chose to defy the idea that this text would not be read aloud by reading it aloud to themselves or even performing it. Either way I thought it important that this piece took the form of a performative lecture, if it only did so through my declaration that it was one, for the very reason that in my thinking about becoming-nonbinary the performative lecture is a nonbinary form par excellence as a performance practice which is necessarily interested in defying what is supposedly understood to be proper to its form. Trying to think through the implications of forms of visibility as they relate to ways in which a kind-of-writing can both fall apart and spread out and grow because of that fall, like the seeds blown in all direction by a child wishing on a dandelion.

      To pass through, in this way, concerning oneself with becoming-nonbinary all the while being very cognizant of one's visibility or lack thereof. Nonbinary in many ways is an interdisciplinary and transversal category of study which, rather than carving its very specific niche just in relation to what nonbinary is, has the opportunity to pull from all identity studies to craft something wholly new and radical in its uniting of how we understand marginalization and structures of domination and subjectivation. Just look back at the quote from Snorton and the work he is doing. To pass through other disciplines. To understand one's relationship to not just themselves as an individual and what concerns them, but a larger community and their concerns and battles and projects. In denying a coherent self (which is itself a fallacy) one's relationship to their community becomes greater. While it is important to note that the denial of a coherent self is not something always available to everyone, we must recognize it as an option which exists for those who move through the world in order to allow for a greater empathetic understanding towards those who don't appear coherent, or who challenge how you see the world.

The process of becoming-nonbinary introduces and thrives off of nuance, which while often not available to the ways in which actual politics need to be enacted (there is no nuance necessary or useful in the discussion of whether or not healthcare is a human right even as arguments are made to the contrary, one should not be sentenced to death for being too sick or too poor) it is something which is necessary when discussing the ways in which we engage with identity as it is constructed and performed, and the terms with which we have this discourse. Often it is in an acknowledgement that there will never be an end all be all solution, but through a constant engagement with the ways that we navigate the problems we face that something akin to (a) solution(s) can begin to form. When we allow ourselves to work against coherency, overarching "solutions," and certainty we allow a certain openness to form. It prevents an assumptive mode from taking over our decisions about what would work best for our community. Just because something has supposedly worked for you and what might be your immediate concern doesn't mean it has benefited the whole community.16

So how is it that you end a kind-of-writing? Can there be a "good" conclusion even if it is written in the formats that are taught to us as part and parcel of a good conclusion? If we think of the problems that can come with certain forms of recognition, is a recognition of a conclusion let alone that one is "good" even worth it? Maybe the work cannot end. Maybe a kind-of-writing must always be a living text, never finished. If that is the case, maybe I never quite knew how to write in the first place, and that is what allowed me to write at all.

Postscript on the Face and Ethics

Already o f i t s e l f ethics is an "optics"17

Located within the face, the experience of it, is an ethical engagement with the other. Faciality as a logics of racialization through Deleuze and Guattari and what Stefano Harney and Fred Moten refer to as speciation in tandem with capital improvement and dominative ownership. Face to face as an ethical engagement with the "other" vis a vis infinity, following Emmanuel Levinas. Facial reconstructions, virtual faces of communication, facetime, and the face of G*d. What is to be considered following this essay engaging a nuanced implosion of identity, is to consider how we locate in facial concerns our ethical imperatives with another. Face as some element of humanity, and its regulation as our inherent inhumanity. Complexities of facial obfuscation of the religious, medical, and criminal kinds. To obscure the face is not a monolith, but how we attempt it, how we contort, make up, shift, and hide it can expose regulatory mechanisms around the face

and our presuppositions around it. What would it mean to think against the grain of facial identification, which is always also the organization of body, apart from mind, in favor of a logistical operation upon the body, for the instrumentalization and cordoning off of bodies? How is it that we can simultaneously exist within the knowledge that the border patrols of identity prevent solidarity and community, but also that the very understanding of identity is sometimes the counter-instrumentalization that can constitute solidarity and community? It is both to accept and be frustrated by what Moten says, that

> social death is precisely understood as the imposition of the subject's necessity rather than the refusal of the subject's possibility, which, in any case, the imposition founds and enforces.

It is an undercommon positionality that is no position; it is Deleuze and Guattari's hopeful declaration of the password contained within every orderword, our line of flight out from the order; it is what Moten finds in m u , nothingness; it is the ineffable in action; it is the face you can never see, because it is your own, but always seen by others. What I'm writing about / speaking of is the impossibility of depiction, an iconoclastic abstraction. This is geared towards an engagement with the invisible and the ineffable, to find in the facialization of an individual the very impossibility latent within that which we imbue with certainty and quantifiable knowns. A synesthesiac cacophony of limit and vision breaking maneuvers. An ethics against ethics, a face against the face.

16   For example, if you look at the tough on crime bill authored by Joe Biden and passed by Bill Clinton in 1994 we can see this principle in action. While it was a bill that on its face is supposed to be tough on crime and making communities safer it actually led to the mass incarceration problem we are facing today, and "hurt black and brown Americans who are disproportionately likely to be incarcerated." https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2019/6/20/18677998/joe-biden-1994-crime-bill-law-mass-incarceration?

17 Emmanuel Lévinas and Alphonso Lingis, Totality and infinity: an essay on exteriority. Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: Duquesne University Press, 1969, p 29