

# TESTO JUNKIE

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**BEATRIZ PRECIADO**

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**SEX, DRUGS, AND BIOPOLITICS IN  
THE PHARMACOPORNOGRAPHIC ERA**

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TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY BRUCE BENDERSON



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*For our dead ones: A., T., E., J., K., S., T.*

*For William*

*For Virginie, Pepa, and Swann*

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## INTRODUCTION

**T**his book is not a memoir. This book is a testosterone-based, voluntary intoxication protocol, which concerns the body and affects of BP. A body-essay. Fiction, actually. If things must be pushed to the extreme, this is a somatopolitical fiction, a theory of the self, or self-theory. During the time period covered by this essay, two external transformations follow on each other in the context of the experimental body, the impact of which couldn't be calculated beforehand and cannot be taken into account as a function of the study; but it created the limits around which writing was incorporated. First of all, there is the death of GD, the human distillation of a vanishing epoch, an icon, and the ultimate French representative of a form of written sexual insurrection; almost simultaneously, there is the tropism of BP's body in the direction of VD's body, an opportunity for perfection—and for ruin. This is a record of physiological and political micromutations provoked in BP's body by testosterone, as well as the theoretical and physical changes incited in that body by loss, desire, elation, failure, or renouncement. I'm not interested in my emotions insofar as their being mine, belonging only, uniquely, to me. I'm not interested in their individual aspects, only in how they are traversed by what isn't mine. In what emanates

from our planet's history, the evolution of living species, the flux of economics, remnants of technological innovations, preparation for wars, the trafficking of organic slaves and commodities, the creation of hierarchies, institutions of punishment and repression, networks of communication and surveillance, the random overlapping of market research groups, techniques and blocs of opinion, the biochemical transformation of feeling, the production and distribution of pornographic images. Some will read this text as a manual for a kind of gender bioterrorism on a molecular scale. Others will see in it a single point in a cartography of extinction. In this text, the reader won't come to any definitive conclusion about the truth of my sex, or predictions about the world to come. I present these pages as an account of theoretical junctions, molecules, affects, in order to leave a trace of a political experiment that lasted 236 days and nights and that continues today under other forms. If the reader sees this text as an uninterrupted series of philosophical reflections, accounts of hormone administration, and detailed records of sexual practices without the solutions provided by continuity, it is simply because this is the mode on which subjectivity is constructed and deconstructed.

*Question: If you could see  
a documentary on a philosopher,  
on Heidegger, Kant, or Hegel,  
what would you like to see in it?*

*Jacques Derrida's answer:  
For them to talk about their sex life.  
. . . You want a quick answer?  
Their sex life.†*

† Jacques Derrida. *Derrida*, directed by Kirby Dick and Amy Ziering Koffman. (New York: Zeitgeist Video, 2003), DVD.

## 2. THE PHARMACOPORNOGRAPHIC ERA

I was born in 1970. The automobile industry, which had reached its peak, was beginning to decline. My father had the first and most prominent garage in Burgos, a Gothic city full of parish priests and members of the military, where Franco had set up the new symbolic capital of fascist Spain. If Hitler had won the war, the new Europe would have been established around two obviously unequal poles, Burgos and Berlin. At least, that was the little Galician general's dream.

Garage Central was located on rue du General Mola, named after the soldier who in 1936 led the uprising against the Republican regime. The most expensive cars in the city, belonging to the rich and to dignitaries of the Franco regime, were kept there. In my house there were no books, just cars. Some Chrysler Motor Slant Sixes; several Renault Gordinis, Dauphines, and Ondines (nicknamed "widows' cars," because they had the reputation of skidding on curves and killing husbands at the wheel); some Citroën DSs (which the Spanish called "sharks"); and several Standards brought back from England and reserved for doctors. I should add the collection of antique cars that my father had put together little by little: a black "Lola Flores" Mer-

cedes, a gray, pre-1930s Citroën with a traction engine, a seventeen-horsepower Ford, a Dodge Dart Swinger, a 1928 Citroën with its “frog’s ass,” and a Cadillac with eight cylinders. At the time, my father was investing in brickyard industries, which (like the dictatorship, coincidentally) would begin to decline in 1975 with the gas crisis. In the end, he had to sell his car collection to make up for the collapse of the factory. I cried about it. Meanwhile, I was growing up like a tomboy. My father cried about it.

During that bygone yet not-so-long-ago era that we today call Fordism, the automobile and mass-produced suburban housing industries synthesized and perfected a specific mode of production and consumption, a Taylorist temporal organization of life characterized by a sleek polychrome aesthetic of the inanimate object, a way of conceiving of inner space and urban living, a conflictual arrangement of the body and the machine, a discontinuous flow of desire and resistance. In the years following the energy crisis and the decline of the assembly line, people sought to identify new growth sectors in a transformed global economy. That is when “experts” began talking about biochemical, electronic, computing, or communications industries as new industrial props of capitalism . . . But these discourses won’t be enough to explain the production of added value and the metamorphosis of life in contemporary society.

It is, however, possible to sketch out a new cartography of the transformations in industrial production during the previous century, using as an axis the political and technical management of the body, sex, and identity. In other words,

it is philosophically relevant today to undertake a *somato-political*<sup>1</sup> analysis of “world-economy.”<sup>2</sup>

From an economic perspective, the transition toward a third form of capitalism, after the slave-dependent and industrial systems, is generally situated somewhere in the 1970s; but the establishment of a new type of “government of the living”<sup>3</sup> had already emerged from the urban, physical, psychological, and ecological ruins of World War II—or, in the case of Spain, from the Civil War.

How did sex and sexuality become the main objects of political and economic activity?

Follow me: The changes in capitalism that we are witnessing are characterized not only by the transformation of “gender,” “sex,” “sexuality,” “sexual identity,” and “pleasure” into objects of the political management of living (just as Foucault had suspected in his biopolitical description of new systems of social control), but also by the fact that this management itself is carried out through the new dynamics of advanced technocapitalism, global media, and biotechnologies. During the Cold War, the United States put more money into scientific research about sex and sexuality than any other country in history. The application of surveillance and biotechnologies for governing civil society

1. I refer here to Foucault’s notion “*somato-pouvoir*” and “*technologie politique du corps*.” See Michel Foucault, *Surveiller et punir: Naissance de la prison* (Paris: Gallimard, 1975), 33–36; see also Michel Foucault, “*Les rapports de pouvoir passent à l’intérieur du corps*,” in *La Quinzaine Littéraire*, 247 (1er–15 janvier 1977): 4–6.

2. Here I draw on the well-known expression used by Immanuel Wallerstein in *World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004).

3. Michel Foucault, “*Du gouvernement des vivants (1979–1980)*,” *Leçons du Collège de France, 1979–1980*, in *Dits et Ecrits*. (Paris: Gallimard, 1974), 4: 641–42.

started during the late 1930s: the war was the best laboratory for molding the body, sex, and sexuality. The necropolitical techniques of the war will progressively become biopolitical industries for producing and controlling sexual subjectivities. Let us remember that the period between the beginning of World War II and the first years of the Cold War constitutes a moment without precedent for women's visibility in public space as well as the emergence of visible and politicized forms of homosexuality in such unexpected places as, for example, the American army.<sup>4</sup> Alongside this social development, American McCarthyism—rampant throughout the 1950s—added to the patriotic fight against communism the persecution of homosexuality as a form of antinationalism while at the same time exalting the family values of masculine labor and domestic maternity.<sup>5</sup> Meanwhile, architects Ray and Charles Eames collaborated with the American army to manufacture small boards of molded plywood to use as splints for mutilated appendages. A few years later, the same material was used to build furniture that came to exemplify the light design of modern American disposable architecture.<sup>6</sup> During the twentieth century, the “invention” of the biochemical notion of the hormone and the pharmaceutical development of synthetic molecules for commercial uses radically modified traditional definitions of normal and pathological sexual identities. In 1941, the first natural molecules of progesterone and estrogens were

4. Allan Bérubé, *Coming Out Under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World War Two* (New York: The Free Press, 1990).

5. John D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities: The Making of a Homosexual Minority in the United States, 1940–1970* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983).

6. See Beatriz Colomina, *Domesticity at War* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007), 29.

obtained from the urine of pregnant mares (Premarin) and soon after synthetic hormones (Norethindrone) were commercialized. The same year, George Henry carried out the first demographic study of “sexual deviation,” a quantitative study of masses known as *Sex Variants*.<sup>7</sup> The Kinsey Reports on human sexual behavior (1948 and 1953) and Robert Stoller’s protocols for “femininity” and “masculinity” (1968) followed in sexological suit. In 1957, the North American pedo-psychiatrist John Money coined the term “gender,” differentiating it from the traditional term “sex,” to define an individual’s inclusion in a culturally recognized group of “masculine” or “feminine” behavior and physical expression. Money famously affirms that it is possible (using surgical, endocrinological, and cultural techniques) to “change the gender of any baby up to 18 months.”<sup>8</sup> Between 1946 and 1949 Harold Gillies was performing the first phalloplastic surgeries in the UK, including work on Michael Dillon, the first female-to-male transsexual to have taken testosterone as part of the masculinization protocol.<sup>9</sup> In 1952, US soldier George W. Jorgensen was transformed into Christine, the first transsexual person discussed widely in the popular press. During the early 50s and into the 60s, physician Harry Benjamin systematized the clinical use of hormonal molecules in the treatment of “sex change” and

7. Jennifer Terry, *An American Obsession: Science, Medicine, and Homosexuality in Modern Society* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999), 178–218.

8. John Money, Joan Hampson, and John Hampson, “Imprinting and the Establishment of Gender Role,” *Archives of Neurology and Psychiatry* 77 (1957): 333–36.

9. Harold Gillies and Raph Millard J., *The Principles and Art of Plastic Surgery* (Boston: Little Brown, 1957), 385–88; Michael Dillon, *Self. A Study in Ethics and Endocrinology* (London: Heinemann, 1946); for a larger historical survey see also: Berenice L. Hausman, *Changing Sex, Transsexualism, Technology, and the Idea of Gender* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1995), 67.

defined “transsexualism,” a term first introduced in 1954, as a curable condition.<sup>10</sup>

The invention of the contraceptive pill, the first biochemical technique enabling the separation between heterosexual practice and reproduction, was a direct result of the expansion of endocrinological experimentation, and triggered a process of development of what could be called, twisting the Eisenhower term, “the sex-gender industrial complex.”<sup>11</sup> In 1957, Searle & Co. commercialized Enovid, the first contraceptive pill (“the Pill”) made of a combination of mestranol and norethynodrei. First promoted for the treatment of menstrual disorders, the Pill was approved for contraceptive use four years later. The chemical components of the Pill would soon become the most used pharmaceutical molecules in the whole of human history.<sup>12</sup>

The Cold War was also a period of transformation of the governmental and economic regulations concerning pornography and prostitution. In 1946, elderly sex worker and spy Martha Richard convinced the French government to declare the “*maison closes*” illegal, which ended the nineteenth-century governmental system of brothels in France. In 1953, Hugh Hefner founded *Playboy*, the first North American “porn” magazine to be sold at newspaper stands, with a photograph of Marilyn Monroe naked as the

10. Whereas homosexuality was withdrawn from the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM) in 1973, in 1983, gender identity disorder (clinical form of transsexuality) was included in the DSM with diagnostic criteria for this new pathology.

11. President Eisenhower used the term “military-industrial complex” in his Farewell to the Nation speech of 1961.

12. Andrea Tone, *Devices and Desires. A History of Contraceptives in America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2001), 203–31; Lara V. Marks, *Sexual Chemistry: A History of the Contraceptive Pill* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001).

centerfold of the first publication. In 1959, Hefner transformed an old Chicago house into the Playboy Mansion, which was promoted within the magazine and on television as a “love palace” with thirty-two rooms, becoming soon the most popular American erotic utopia. In 1972, Gerard Damiano produced *Deep Throat*. The film, starring Linda Lovelace, was widely commercialized in the US and became one of the most watched movies of all times, grossing more than \$600 million. From this time on, porn film production boomed, from thirty clandestine film producers in 1950 to over 2,500 films in 1970.

If for years pornography was the dominant visual technology addressed to the male body for controlling his sexual reaction, during the 1950s the pharmaceutical industry looked for ways of triggering erection and sexual response using surgical and chemical prostheses. In 1974, Soviet Victor Konstantinovich Kalnberz patented the first penis implant using polyethylene plastic rods as a treatment for impotency, resulting in a permanently erect penis. These implants were abandoned for chemical variants because they were found to be “physically uncomfortable and emotionally disconcerting.” In 1984 Tom F. Lue, Emil A. Tanaghoy, and Richard A. Schmidt implanted a “sexual pacemaker” in the penis of a patient. The contraption was a system of electrodes inserted close to the prostate that permitted an erection by remote control. The molecule of sildenafil (commercialized as Viagra<sup>®</sup> by Pfizer laboratories in 1988) will later become the chemical treatment for “erectile dysfunction.”

During the Cold War years psychotropic techniques first developed within the military were extended to medical and recreational uses for the civil population. In the 1950s, the United States Central Intelligence Agency performed a series of experiments involving electroshock techniques as well as psychedelic and hallucinogen drugs as part of a program of “brainwashing,” military interrogation, and psychological torture. The aim of the experimental program of the CIA was to identify the chemical techniques able to directly modify the prisoner’s subjectivity, inflecting levels of anxiety, dizziness, agitation, irritability, sexual excitement, or fear.<sup>13</sup> At the same time, the laboratories Eli Lilly (Indiana) commercialized the molecule called Methadone (the most simple opiate) as an analgesic and Secobarbital, a barbiturate with anaesthetic, sedative, and hypnotic properties conceived for the treatment of epilepsy, insomnia, and as an anaesthetic for short surgery. Secobarbital, better known as “the red pill” or “doll,” became one of the drugs of the rock underground culture of the 1960s.<sup>14</sup> In 1977, the state of Oklahoma introduced the first lethal injection composed of barbiturates similar to “the red pill” to be used for the death penalty.<sup>15</sup>

The Cold War military space race was also the site of production of a new form of technological embodiment.

13. On the use of chemicals for military purposes during the Cold War years see: Naomi Klein, “The Torture Lab,” in *The Shock Doctrine* (New York: Penguin, 2007), 25–48.

14. Methadone became in the 70s the basic substitution treatment for heroine addiction. See: Tom Carnwath and Ian Smith, *Heroin Century* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 40–42.

15. The same method had already been applied in a Nazi German program called “Action T4” for “racial hygiene” that euthanatized between 75,000 and 100,000 people with physical or psychic disabilities. It was abandoned because of the high pharmacological cost; instead it was substituted by gas chambers or simply death caused by inanition.

At the start of the 60s, Manfred E. Clynes and Nathan S. Kline used the term “cyborg” for the first time to refer to an organism technologically supplemented to live in an extraterrestrial environment where it could operate as an “integrated homeostatic system.”<sup>16</sup> They experimented with a laboratory rat, which received an osmotic prosthesis implant that it dragged along—a cyber tail. Beyond the rat, the cyborg named a new techno-organic condition, a sort of “soft machine”<sup>17</sup> (to use a Burroughs term) or a body with “electric skin” (to put it in Haus-Rucker & Co. terms) subjected to new forms of political control but also able to develop new forms of resistance. During the 1960s, as part of a military investigation program, *Arpanet* was created; it was the predecessor of the global Internet, the first “net of nets” of interconnected computers capable of transmitting information.

On the other hand, the surgical techniques developed for the treatment of “*les geules cassées*” of the First World War and the skin reconstruction techniques specially invented for the handling of the victims of the nuclear bomb will be transformed during the 1950s and 1960s into cosmetic and sexual surgeries.<sup>18</sup> In response to the threat inferred by Nazism and racist rhetoric, which claims that racial or religious differences can be detected in anatomical signs, “de-circumcision,” the artificial reconstruction of foreskin, was one of the most practiced cosmetic surgery operations

16. M. E. Clynes and N. S. Kline, “Cyborgs and Space,” in *Astronautics* (September, 1960).

17. William S. Burroughs, *The Soft Machine* (New York: Olympia Press, 1961).

18. Martin Monestier, *Les geules cassées, Les médecins de l'impossible 1914-18* (Paris: Cherche Midi, 2009).

in the United States.<sup>19</sup> At the same time, facelifts, as well as various other cosmetic surgery operations, became mass-market techniques for a new middle-class body consumer. Andy Warhol had himself photographed during a facelift, transforming his own body into a bio-pop object.

Meanwhile, the use of a viscous, semi-rigid material that is waterproof, thermally and electrically resistant, produced by artificial propagation of carbon atoms in long chains of molecules of organic compounds derived from petroleum, and whose burning is highly polluting, became generalized in manufacturing the objects of daily life. DuPont, who pioneered the development of plastics from the 1930s on, was also implicated in nuclear research for the Manhattan project.<sup>20</sup> Together with plastics, we saw the exponential multiplication of the production of transuranic elements (the chemical elements with atomic numbers greater than 92—the atomic number of Uranium), which became the material to be used in the civil sector, including plutonium, that had, before, been used as nuclear fuel in military operations.<sup>21</sup> The level of toxicity of transuranic elements exceeds that of any other element on earth, creating a new form of vulnerability for life. Cellulosic, poly-nosic, polyamide, polyester, acrylic, polypylene, spandex, etc., became materials used equally for body consumption and architecture. The mass consumption of plastic defined

19. Sander L. Gilman, "Decircumcision: The First Aesthetic Surgery," *Modern Judaism* 17, 3 (1997): 201–10. Maxell Matz, *Evolution of Plastic Surgery* (New York: Froben Press, 1946), 287–89.

20. Pap A. Ndiaye, *Nylon and Bombs: DuPont and the March of Modern America* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University, 2006).

21. See: Donna J. Haraway, *Modest\_Witness@Second\_Millennium. FemaleMan@Meets\_OncoMouse™: Feminism and Technoscience*, (New York: Routledge, 1997), 54.

the material conditions of a large-scale ecological transformation that resulted in destruction of other (mostly lower) energy resources, rapid consumption, and high pollution. The *Trash Vortex*, a floating mass the size of Texas in the North Pacific made of plastic garbage, was to become the largest water architecture of the twenty-first century.<sup>22</sup>

We are being confronted with a new kind of hot, psychotropic, punk capitalism. Such recent transformations are imposing an ensemble of new microprosthetic mechanisms of control of subjectivity by means of biomolecular and multimedia technical protocols. Our world economy is dependent on the production and circulation of hundreds of tons of synthetic steroids and technically transformed organs, fluids, cells (techno-blood, techno-sperm, techno-ovum, etc.), on the global diffusion of a flood of pornographic images, on the elaboration and distribution of new varieties of legal and illegal synthetic psychotropic drugs (e.g., bromazepam, Special K, Viagra, speed, crystal, Prozac, ecstasy, poppers, heroin), on the flood of signs and circuits of the digital transmission of information, on the extension of a form of diffuse urban architecture to the entire planet in which megacities of misery are knotted into high concentrations of sex-capital.<sup>23</sup>

These are just some snapshots of a postindustrial, global, and mediatic regime that, from here on, I will call *pharmacopornographic*. The term refers to the processes of a biomolecular (pharmaco) and semiotic-technical (porno-

22. Susan Freinkel, *Plastic: A Toxic Love Story* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2011).

23. See Mike Davis, "Planet of Slums," *New Left Review* 26 (April–March 2004).

graphic) government of sexual subjectivity—of which “the Pill” and *Playboy* are two paradigmatic offspring. Although their lines of force may be rooted in the scientific and colonial society of the nineteenth century, their economic vectors become visible only at the end of World War II. Hidden at first under the guise of a Fordist economy, they reveal themselves in the 1970s with the gradual collapse of this phenomenon.

During the second half of the twentieth century, the mechanisms of the pharmacopornographic regime are materialized in the fields of psychology, sexology, and endocrinology. If science has reached the hegemonic place that it occupies as a discourse and as a practice in our culture, it is because, as Ian Hacking, Steve Woolgar, and Bruno Latour have noticed, it works as a material-discursive apparatus of bodily production.<sup>24</sup> Technoscience has established its material authority by transforming the concepts of the psyche, libido, consciousness, femininity and masculinity, heterosexuality and homosexuality, intersexuality and transsexuality into tangible realities. They are manifest in commercial chemical substances and molecules, biotype bodies, and fungible technological goods managed by multinationals. The success of contemporary technoscientific industry consists in transforming our depression into Prozac, our masculinity into testosterone, our erection into Viagra, our fertility/sterility into the Pill, our AIDS into tritherapy, without knowing which comes first: our

24. Ian Hacking, *Representing and Intervening: Introductory Topics in the Philosophy of Natural Science* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1983); and Bruno Latour and Steve Woolgar, *La vie de laboratoire: La production des faits scientifiques* (Paris: La Découverte, 1979).

depression or Prozac, Viagra or an erection, testosterone or masculinity, the Pill or maternity, tritherapy or AIDS. This performative feedback is one of the mechanisms of the pharmacopornographic regime.

Contemporary society is inhabited by toxic-pornographic subjectivities: subjectivities defined by the substance (or substances) that supply their metabolism, by the cybernetic prostheses and various types of pharmacopornographic desires that feed the subject's actions and through which they turn into agents. So we will speak of Prozac subjects, cannabis subjects, cocaine subjects, alcohol subjects, Ritalin subjects, cortisone subjects, silicone subjects, heterovaginal subjects, double-penetration subjects, Viagra subjects, \$ subjects . . .

There is nothing to discover in nature; there is no hidden secret. We live in a punk hypermodernity: it is no longer about discovering the hidden truth in nature; it is about the necessity to specify the cultural, political, and technological processes through which the body as artifact acquires natural status. The oncomouse,<sup>25</sup> the laboratory mouse biotechnologically designed to carry a carcinogenic gene, eats Heidegger. Buffy kills the vampire of Simone de Beauvoir. The dildo, a synthetic extension of sex to produce pleasure and identity, eats Rocco Siffredi's cock. There is nothing to discover in sex or in sexual identity; there is no *inside*. The truth about sex is not a disclosure; it is *sexdesign*. Pharmacopornographic biocapitalism does not produce *things*.

25. See Donna J. Haraway, "When Man™ is on the Menu," in *Incorporations*(Zone 6), eds. Jonathan Crary and Sanford K. Winter (New York: Zone Books, 1992), 38–43.

It produces mobile ideas, living organs, symbols, desires, chemical reactions, and conditions of the soul. In biotechnology and in pornocommunication there is no object to be produced. The pharmacopornographic business is the *invention of a subject* and then its global reproduction.

## MASTURBATORY COOPERATION

The theoreticians of post-Fordism (Virno, Hardt, Negri, Corsani, Marazzi, Moulier-Boutang, etc.) have made it clear that the productive process of contemporary capitalism takes its raw material from knowledge, information, communication, and social relationships.<sup>26</sup> According to the most recent economic theory, the mainspring of production is no longer situated in companies but is “in society as a whole, the quality of the population, cooperation, conventions, training, forms of organization that hybridize the market, the firm and society.”<sup>27</sup> Negri and Hardt refer to “biopolitical production,” using Foucault’s cult notion, or to “cognitive capitalism” to enumerate today’s complex forms of capitalist production that mask the “production of symbols, language, information,” as well as the “production of

26. Some of the most influential analyses of the current transformations of industrial society and capitalism relevant to my own work are the following: Maurizio Lazzarato, “*Le concept de travail immatériel: la grande entreprise*,” *Futur Antérieur* 10 (1992); Antonella Corsani, “*Vers un renouveau de l’économie politique: anciens concepts et innovation théorique*,” *Multitudes* 2 (printemps 2000); Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt, *Multitude: guerre et démocratie à l’âge de l’empire* (Paris: La Découverte, 2006); Yann Moulier-Boutang, *Le capitalisme cognitive: La nouvelle grande transformation* (Paris: Editions Amsterdam, 2007).

27. Yann Moulier-Boutang, “*Eclats d’économie et bruits de lutte*,” *Multitudes* 2 (Mai 200): 7. See also Antonella Corsani, “*Vers un renouveau de l’économie politique*.”

affects.”<sup>28</sup> They call “biopolitical work” the forms of production that are linked to aids provided to the body, to care, to the protection of the other and to the creation of human relations, to the “feminine” work of reproduction,<sup>29</sup> to relationships of communication and exchange of knowledge and affects. But most often, analysis and description of this new form of production stops biopolitically at the belt.<sup>30</sup>

What if, in reality, the insatiable bodies of the multitude—their cocks, clitorises, anuses, hormones, and neurosexual synapses—what if desire, excitement, sexuality, seduction, and the pleasure of the multitude were all the mainsprings of the creation of value added to the contemporary economy? And what if cooperation were a *masturbatory cooperation* and not the simple cooperation of brains?

The pornographic industry is currently the great mainspring of our cybereconomy; there are more than a million and a half sites available to adults at any point on the planet. Sixteen billion dollars is generated annually by the sex industry, a large part of it belonging to the porn portals of the Internet. Each day, 350 new portals allow virtual access to an exponentially increasing number of users. If

28. Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt, *Multitude: guerre et démocratie à l'âge de l'empire* (Paris: Editions 10–18, DL, 2006), 135.

29. Ibid., 137. Cristian Marazzi, *The Violence of Financial Capitalism*, trans. Kristina Lebedeva and Jason Francis McGimsey (New York: Semiotext(e), 2011), op. cit.

30. Several trajectories in this direction come from the reflections in *Precarias a la Deriva*, by Anne Querrien and Antonella Corsani. See *Precarias a la Deriva, A la deriva por los circuitos de la precariedad femenina* (Madrid: Traficantes de Sueños, 2004); Antonella Corsani, “*Quelles sont les conditions nécessaires pour l'émergence de multiples récits du monde? Penser le revenu garanti à travers l'histoire des luttes des femmes et de la théorie féministe*,” *Multitudes* 27 (hiver 2007); Antonella Corsani, “Beyond the Myth of Woman: The Becoming-Transfeminist of (Post-)Marxism,” trans. Timothy S. Murphy, *SubStance* #112: *Italian Post-Workerist Thought* 36, no. 1, (2007): 106–38; and Linda McDowell, “Life without Father and Ford: The New Gender Order of Post-Fordism,” *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 16, no. 4 (1991): 400–19.

it's true that the majority of these sites belong to the multinationals (Playboy, Hotvideo, Dorcel, Hustler . . . ), the amateur portals are what constitute the truly emerging market for Internet porn. When Jennifer Kaye Ringley had the initiative in 1996 to install several webcams throughout her home that broadcast real-time videos of her daily life through her Internet portal, the model of the single transmitter was supplanted. In documentary style, JenniCams produce an audiovisual chronicle of sex lives and are paid for by subscription, similar to the way some TV stations operate. Today, any user of the Internet who has a body, a computer, a video camera, or a webcam, as well as an Internet connection and a bank account, can create a porn site and have access to the cybermarket of the sex industry. The autpornographic body has suddenly emerged as a new force in the world economy. The recent access of relatively impoverished populations all over the planet to the technical means of producing cyberpornography has, for the first time, sabotaged a monopoly that was until now controlled by the big multinationals of porn. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, the first people able to make use of this market were sex workers from the former Soviet bloc, then those in China, Africa, and India. Confronted with such autonomous strategies on the part of sex workers, the multinationals of porn have gradually united with advertising companies, hoping to attract cybervisitors by offering free access to their pages.

The sex industry is not only the most profitable market on the Internet; it's also the model of maximum profitability for the global cybernetic market (comparable only

to financial speculation): minimum investment, direct sales of the product in real time in a unique fashion, the production of instant satisfaction for the consumer. Every Internet portal is modeled on and organized according to this masturbatory logic of pornographic consumption. If the financial analysts who direct Google, eBay, or Facebook are attentively following the fluctuations of the cyberporn market, it's because the sex industry furnishes an economic model of the cybernetic market as a whole.

If we consider that the pharmaceutical industry (which includes the legal extension of the scientific, medical, and cosmetic industries, as well as the trafficking of drugs declared illegal), the pornography industry, and the industry of war are the load-bearing sectors of post-Fordist capitalism, we ought to be able to give a cruder name to *immaterial labor*. Let us dare, then, to make the following hypothesis: the raw materials of today's production process are excitation, erection, ejaculation, and pleasure and feelings of self-satisfaction, omnipotent control, and total destruction. The real stake of capitalism today is the pharmacopornographic control of subjectivity, whose products are serotonin, techno-blood and blood products, testosterone, antacids, cortisone, techno-sperm, antibiotics, estradiol, techno-milk, alcohol and tobacco, morphine, insulin, cocaine, living human eggs, citrate of sildenafil (Viagra), and the entire material and virtual complex participating in the production of mental and psychosomatic states of excitation, relaxation, and discharge, as well as those of omnipotence and total control. In these conditions, money itself becomes an abstract, signifying psychotropic substance.

Sex is the corollary of capitalism and war, the mirror of production. The dependent and sexual body and sex and all its semiotecnical derivations are henceforth the principal resource of post-Fordist capitalism.

Although the era dominated by the economy of the automobile has been named “Fordism,” let us call this new economy *pharmacopornism*, dominated as it is by the industry of the pill, the masturbatory logic of pornography, and the chain of excitation-frustration on which it is based. The pharmacopornographic industry is white and viscous gold, the crystalline powder of biopolitical capitalism.

Negri and Hardt, in rereading Marx, have shown that “in the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the global economy is characterized by the hegemony of industrial labor, even if, in quantitative terms, the latter remains minor in comparison to other forms of production such as agriculture.”<sup>31</sup> Industrial labor was hegemonic by virtue of the powers of transformation it exerted over any other form of production.

Pharmacopornographic production is characteristic today of a new age of political world economy, not by its quantitative supremacy, but because the control, production, and intensification of narcosexual affects have become the model of all other forms of production. In this way, pharmacopornographic control infiltrates and dominates the entire flow of capital, from agrarian biotechnology to high-tech industries of communication.

In this period of the body’s technomanagement, the

31. Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt, *Multitude* (Paris: Editions 10-18, DL, 2006), 133-34.

pharmacopornographic industry synthesizes and defines a specific mode of production and consumption, a masturbatory temporization of life, a virtual and hallucinogenic aesthetic of the living object, an architecture that transforms inner space into exteriority and the city into interiority and “junkspace”<sup>32</sup> by means of mechanisms of immediate auto-surveillance and ultrarapid diffusion of information, a continuous mode of desiring and resisting, of consuming and destroying, of evolution and self-destruction.

### **POTENTIA GAUDENDI**

To understand how and why sexuality and the body, the excitable body, at the end of the nineteenth century raided the heart of political action and became the objects of a minute governmental and industrial management, we must first elaborate a new philosophical concept in the pharmacopornographic domain that is equivalent to the force of work in the domain of classical economics. I call *potentia gaudendi*, or “orgasmic force,” the (real or virtual) strength of a body’s (total) excitation.<sup>33</sup> This strength is of indeterminate capacity; it has no gender; it is neither male nor female, neither human nor animal, neither animated nor inanimate. Its orientation emphasizes neither the fem-

32. For an elaboration of this idea, see Rem Koolhaas, “Junkspace,” *October* 100 (Spring, 2002): 175–90.

33. My work here begins with the notion of “power of action or force of existing” elaborated by Spinoza and derived from the Greek idea of *dynamis* and its correlations in scholastic metaphysics; cf. Baruch Spinoza, *Éthique*, trans. Bernard Pautrat (Paris: Le Seuil, 1988); Gilles Deleuze, “Spinoza” (lecture, Université de Vincennes à Saint Denis, Université Paris 8, Paris, February 2, 1980).

inine nor the masculine and creates no boundary between heterosexuality and homosexuality or between object and subject; neither does it know the difference between being excited, being exciting, or being-excited-with. It favors no organ over any other, so that the penis possesses no more orgasmic force than the vagina, the eye, or the toe. Orgasmic force is the sum of the potential for excitation inherent in every material molecule. Orgasmic force is not seeking any immediate resolution, and it aspires only to its own extension in space and time, toward everything and everyone, in every place and at every moment. It is a force of transformation for the world in pleasure—"in pleasure with." *Potentia gaudendi* unites all material, somatic, and psychic forces and seeks all biochemical resources and all the structures of the mind.

In pharmacopornographic capitalism, the force of work reveals its actual substratum: orgasmic force, or *potentia gaudendi*. Current capitalism tries to put to work the *potentia gaudendi* in whatever form in which it exists, whether this be in its pharmacological form (a consumable molecule and material agency that will operate within the body of the person who is digesting it), as a pornographic representation (a semiotethical sign that can be converted into numeric data or transferred into digital, televisual, or telephonic media), or as a sexual service (a live pharmacopornographic entity whose orgasmic force and emotional volume are put in service to a consumer during a specified time, according to a more or less formal contract of sale of sexual services).

*Potentia gaudendi* is characterized not only by its impermanence and great malleability, but also and above all by the impossibility of possessing and retaining it. *Potentia gaudendi*, as the fundamental energetics of pharmacopornism, does not allow itself to be reified or transformed into private property. I can neither possess nor retain another's *potentia gaudendi*, but neither can one possess or retain what seems to be one's own. *Potentia gaudendi* exists exclusively as an event, a relation, a practice, or an evolutionary process.

Orgasmic force is both the most abstract and the most material of all workforces. It is inextricably carnal and digital, viscous yet representational by numerical values, a phantasmatic or molecular wonder that can be transformed into capital.

The living pansexual body is the *bioport* of the orgasmic force. Thus, it cannot be reduced to a prediscursive organism; its limits do not coincide with the skin capsule that surrounds it. This life cannot be understood as a biological given; it does not exist outside the interlacing of production and culture that belongs to technoscience. This body is a technoliving, multiconnected entity incorporating technology.<sup>34</sup> Neither an organism nor a machine, but “the fluid, dispersed, networking techno-organic-textual-mythic system.”<sup>35</sup> This new condition of the body blurs the traditional modern distinction between art, performance,

34. Haraway, *Modest\_Witness*.

35. Donna J. Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (New York: Routledge, 1990), 219.

media, design, and architecture. The new pharmacological and surgical techniques set in motion tectonic construction processes that combine figurative representations derived from cinema and from architecture (editing, 3-D modeling, 3-D printing, etc.), according to which the organs, the vessels, the fluids (techno-blood, techno-sperm, etc.), and the molecules are converted into the prime material from which our pharmacopornographic corporality is manufactured. Technobodies are either not-yet-alive or already-dead: we are half fetuses, half zombies. Thus, every politics of resistance is a monster politics. Marshall McLuhan, Buckminster Fuller, and Norbert Wiener had an intuition about it in the 1950s: the technologies of communication function like an extension of the body. Today, the situation seems a lot more complex—the individual body functions like an extension of global technologies of communication. “Embodiment is significant prosthesis.”<sup>36</sup> To borrow the terms of the American feminist Donna J. Haraway, the twenty-first-century body is a technoliving system, the result of an irreversible implosion of modern binaries (female/male, animal/human, nature/culture). Even the term *life* has become archaic for identifying the actors in this new technology. For Foucault’s notion of “biopower,” Donna J. Haraway has substituted “techno-biopower.” It’s no longer a question of power over life, of the power to manage and maximize life, as Foucault wanted, but of power and control exerted over a technoliving and connected whole.<sup>37</sup>

36. *Ibid.*, 195.37. *Ibid.*, 204–30.

In the circuit in which excitation is technoproduced, there are neither living bodies nor dead bodies, but present or missing, actual or virtual connectors. Images, viruses, computer programs, techno-organic fluids, Net surfers, electronic voices that answer phone sex lines, drugs and living dead animals in the laboratory on which they are tested, frozen embryos, mother cells, active alkaloid molecules . . . display no value in the current global economy as being “alive” or “dead,” but only to the extent that they can or can’t be integrated into a bioelectronics of global excitation. Haraway reminds us that “cyborg figures—such as the end-of-the-millennium seed, chip gene, database, bomb, fetus, race, brain, and ecosystem—are the offspring of implosions of subjects and objects and of the natural and artificial.”<sup>38</sup> Every technobody, including a dead technobody, can unleash orgasmic force, thus becoming a carrier of the power of production of sexual capital. The force that lets itself be converted into capital lies neither in *bios* nor in *soma*, in the way that they have been conceived from Aristotle to Darwin, but in *techno-eros*, the technoliving enchanted body and its *potentia gaudendi*. And from this it follows that biopolitics (the politics of the control and production of life) as well as necropolitics (the politics of the control and production of death) function as pharmacoporno politics, as planetary managements of *potentia gaudendi*.

Sex, the so-called sexual organs, pleasure and impotence, joy and horror are moved to the center of technopolitical management as soon as the possibility of drawing

38. Haraway, *Modest\_Witness*, 12.

profit from orgasmic force comes into play. If the theorists of post-Fordism were interested in immaterial work, in cognitive work, in “non-objectifiable work,”<sup>39</sup> in “affective work,”<sup>40</sup> we theorists of pharmacopornographic capitalism are interested in sexual work as a process of subjectivization, in the possibility of making the subject an inexhaustible supply of planetary ejaculation that can be transformed into abstraction and digital data—into capital.

This theory of “orgasmic force” should not be read through a Hegelian paranoid or Rousseauist utopian/dystopian prism; the market isn’t an outside power coming to expropriate, repress, or control the sexual instincts of the individual. On the other hand, we are being confronted by the most deprived of political situations: the body isn’t aware of its *potentia gaudendi* as long as it does not put it to work.

Orgasmic force in its role as the workforce finds itself progressively regulated by a strict technobiopolitical control. The sexual body is the product of a sexual division of flesh according to which each organ is defined by its function. A sexuality always implies a precise governing of the mouth, hand, anus, vagina. Until recently, the relationship between buying/selling and dependence that united the capitalist to the worker also governed the relationship between the genders, which was conceived as a relationship between the ejaculator and the facilitator of ejaculation. Femininity, far from being nature, is the quality of the

39. Paolo Virno, “La multitude comme subjectivité,” in *Grammaire de la multitude: pour une analyse des formes de vie contemporaines* (Paris: Éditions de l’éclat, 2002), 78–121.

40. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Multitudes*, 134.

orgasmic force when it can be converted into merchandise, into an object of economic exchange, into work. Obviously, a male body can occupy (and in fact already does occupy) a position of female gender in the market of sex work and, as a result, see its orgasmic power reduced to a capacity for work.

The control of orgasmic power (*puissance*) not only defines the difference between genders, the female/male dichotomy, it also governs, in a more general way, the technobiopolitical difference between heterosexuality and homosexuality. The technical restriction of masturbation and the invention of homosexuality as a pathology are of a pair with the composition of a disciplinary regime at the heart of which the collective orgasmic force is put to work as a function of the heterosexual reproduction of the species. Heterosexuality must be understood as a politically assisted procreation technology. But after the 1940s, the molecu­lized sexual body was introduced into the machinery of capital and forced to mutate its forms of production. Biopolitical conditions change drastically when it becomes possible to derive benefits from masturbation through the mechanism of pornography and the employment of techniques for the control of sexual reproduction by means of contraceptives and artificial insemination.

If we agree with Marx that “workforce is not actual work carried out but the simple potential or ability for work,” then it must be said that every human or animal, real or virtual, female or male body possesses this masturbatory potentiality, a *potentia gaudendi*, the power to produce molecular joy, and therefore also possesses productive

power without being consumed and depleted in the process. Until now, we've been aware of the direct relationship between the pornification of the body and the level of oppression. Throughout history, the most pornified bodies have been those of non-human animals, women and children, the racialized bodies of the slave, the bodies of young workers and the homosexual body. But there is no ontological relationship between anatomy and *potentia gaudendi*. The credit goes to the French writer Michel Houellebecq for having understood how to build a dystopian fable about this new capacity of global capitalism, which has manufactured the megaslut and the megaletch. The new hegemonic subject is a body (often codified as male, white, and heterosexual) supplemented pharmacopornographically (by Viagra, coke, pornography) and a consumer of pauperized sexual services (often in bodies codified as female, childlike, or racialized):

“When he can, a westerner *works*; he often finds his work frustrating or boring, but he pretends to find it interesting; this much is obvious. At the age of fifty, weary of teaching, of math, of everything, I decided to see the world. I had just been divorced for the third time; as far as sex was concerned, I wasn't expecting much. My first trip was to Thailand, and immediately after that I left for Madagascar. I haven't fucked a white woman since. I've never even felt the desire to do so. Believe me,” he added, placing a firm hand on Lionel's forearm, “you won't find a white woman with a soft, submissive, supple, muscular pussy anymore. That's all gone now.”<sup>41</sup>

41. Michel Houellebecq, *Platform*, trans. Frank Wynne (New York: Random House, 2002), 80.

Power is located not only in the (“female,” “childlike,” or “nonwhite”) body as a space traditionally imagined as pre-discursive and natural, but also in the collection of representations that render it sexual and desirable. In every case it remains a body that is always pharmacopornographic, a technoliving system that is the effect of a widespread cultural mechanism of representation and production.

The goal of contemporary critical theory would be to unravel our condition as pharmacopornographic workers/consumers. If the current theory of the *feminization of labor* omits the *cum shot*, conceals videographic ejaculation behind the screen of cooperative communication, it’s because, unlike Houellebecq, the philosophers of biopolitics prefer not to reveal their position as customers of the global pharmacopornomarket.

In the first volume of *Homo Sacer*, Giorgio Agamben reclaims Walter Benjamin’s concept of the “naked life” in order to define the biopolitical status of the subject after Auschwitz, a subject whose paradigm would be the concentration camp prisoner or the illegal immigrant held in a temporary detention center, reduced to existing only physically and stripped of all legal status or citizenship. To such a notion of the “naked life,” we could add that of the pharmacopornographic life, or *naked technolife*; the distinctive feature of a body stripped of all legal or political status is that its use is intended as a source of production of *potentia gaudendi*. The distinctive feature of a body reduced to naked technolife, in both democratic societies and fascist regimes, is precisely the power to be the object of maximum pharmacopornographic exploitation. Identical codes

of pornographic representation function in the images of the prisoners of Abu Ghraib,<sup>42</sup> the eroticized images of Thai adolescents, advertisements for L'Oréal and McDonald's, and the pages of *Hot magazine*. All these bodies are already functioning, in an inexhaustible manner, as carnal and digital sources of ejaculatory capital. For the Aristotelian distinction between *zōē* and *bios*, between animal life deprived of any intentionality and "exalted" life, that is, life gifted with meaning and self-determination that is a substrate of biopolitical government, we must today substitute the distinction between *raw* and *biotech* (biotechnoculturally produced); and the latter term refers to the condition of life in the pharmacopornographic era. Biotechnological reality deprived of all civic context (the body of the migrant, the deported, the colonized, the porn actress/actor, the sex worker, the laboratory animal, etc.) becomes that of the *corpus* (and no longer that of *homo*) *pornographicus* whose life (a technical condition rather than a purely biological one), lacking any right to citizenship, authorship, and right to work, is composed by and subject to self-surveillance and global mediatization. No need to resort to the dystopian model of the concentration or extermination camp—which are easy to denounce as mechanisms of control—in order to discover naked technolife, because it's at the center of postindustrial democracies, forming part of a global, integrated multimedia laboratory-brothel, where the control of the flow of affect begins under the pop form of excitation-frustration.

42. See Judith Butler, "Torture and Ethics of Photography," in *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*. 25, no. 6 (April 19, 2007): 951–66.

## **EXCITE AND CONTROL**

The gradual transformation of sexual cooperation into a principal productive force cannot be accomplished without the technical control of reproduction. There's no porn without the Pill or without Viagra. Inversely, there is no Viagra or Pill without porn. The new kind of sexual production implies a detailed and strict control of the forces of reproduction of the species. There is no pornography without a parallel surveillance and control of the body's affects and fluids. Acting on this pharmacoporno body are the forces of the reproduction industry, entailing control of the production of eggs, techniques of programming relationships, straw collections of sperm, in vitro fertilization, artificial insemination, the monitoring of pregnancy, the technical planning of childbirth, and so on. Consequently, the sexual division of traditional work gradually disintegrates. Pharmacopornographic capitalism is ushering in a new era in which the most interesting kind of commerce is the production of the species as species, the production of its mind and its body, its desires and its affects. Contemporary biocapitalism at the same time produces and destroys the species. Although we're accustomed to speaking of a society of consumption, the objects of consumption are only the scintilla of a psychotoxic virtual production. We are consumers of air, dreams, identity, relation, things of the mind. This pharmacopornographic capitalism functions in reality thanks to the biomediatric management of subjectivity, through molecular control and the production of virtual audiovisual connections.

The pharmaceutical and audiovisual digital industry are the two pillars on which contemporary biocapitalism relies; they are the two tentacles of a gigantic, viscous built-in circuit. The pharmacoporno program of the second half of the twentieth century is this: control the sexuality of those bodies codified as woman and cause the ejaculation of those bodies codified as men. The Pill, Prozac, and Viagra are to the pharmaceutical industry what pornography, with its grammar of blowjobs, penetrations, and cum shots, is to the industry of culture: the jackpot of postindustrial biocapitalism.

Within the context of biocapitalism, an illness is the conclusion of a medical and pharmaceutical model, the result of a technical and institutional medium that is capable of explaining it discursively, of realizing it and of treating it in a manner that is more or less operational. From a pharmacopornopolitical point of view, a third of the African population infected with HIV *isn't really sick*. The thousands of seropositive people who die each day on the continent of Africa are precarious bodies whose survival has *not yet* been capitalized as bioconsumers/producers by the Western pharmaceutical industry. For the pharmacopornographic system, these bodies are *neither dead nor living*. They are in a prepharmacopornographic state or their life isn't likely to produce an ejaculatory benefit, which amounts to the same thing. They are bodies excluded from the technobiopolitical regime. The emerging pharmaceutical industries of India, Brazil, or Thailand are fiercely fighting for the right to distribute their antiretrovirus therapies. Similarly, if we are still waiting for the commercialization of a vaccine for

malaria (a disease that was causing five million deaths a year on the continent of Africa), it is partly because the countries that need it can't pay for it. The same Western multinational companies that are launching costly programs for the production of Viagra or new treatments for prostate cancer would never invest in malaria. If we do not take into account calculations about pharmacopornographic profitability, it becomes obvious that erectile dysfunction and prostate cancer are not at all priorities in countries where life expectancies for human bodies stricken by tuberculosis, malaria, and AIDS don't exceed the age of fifty-five.<sup>43</sup>

In the context of pharmacopornographic capitalism, sexual desire and illness are produced and cultivated on the same basis: without the technical, pharmaceutical, and mediatic supports capable of materializing them, they don't exist.

We are living in a toxopornographic era. The postmodern body is becoming collectively desirable through its pharmacological management and audiovisual advancement: two sectors in which the United States holds—for the moment but, perhaps not for long—worldwide hegemony. These two forces for the creation of capital are dependent not on an economy of production, but on an *economy of invention*. As Philippe Pignare has pointed out, “The pharmaceutical industry is one of the economic sectors where the cost of research and development is very high, whereas the manufacturing costs are extremely low. Unlike in the automobile industry, nothing is easier than reproducing a drug and

43. Michael Kremer and Christopher M. Snyder, “Why Is There No AIDS Vaccine?” (Research Paper, Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, June 2006).

guaranteeing its chemical synthesis on a massive scale, but nothing is more difficult or more costly than inventing it.”<sup>44</sup> In the same way, nothing costs less, materially speaking, than filming a blowjob or vaginal or anal penetration with a video camera. Drugs, like orgasms and books, are relatively easy and inexpensive to fabricate. The difficulty resides in their conception and political dissemination.<sup>45</sup> Pharmacopornographic biocapitalism does not produce things. It produces movable ideas, living organs, symbols, desires, chemical reactions, and affects. In the fields of biotechnology and pornocommunication, there are no objects to produce; it’s a matter of *inventing* a subject and producing it on a global scale.

44. Philippe Pignarre, *Le grand secret de l'industrie pharmaceutique* (Paris: La Découverte, 2004), 18.

45. Maurizio Lazzarato, *Puissance de l'invention: La Psychologie économique de Gabriel Tarde contre l'économie politique* (Paris: Les Empêcheurs de Penser en Rond, 2002).

## 4. HISTORY OF TECHNOSEXUALITY

**T**he discontinuity of history, body, power: Foucault describes the transformation of European society in the late eighteenth century from what he calls a “sovereign society” into a “disciplinary society,” which he sees as a shift away from a form of power that determines and ritualizes death toward a new form of power that technically plans life based on population, health, and the national interest. *Bio-pouvoir* (biopower) is his way of referring to this new form of productive, diffuse, sprawling power. Spilling beyond the boundaries of the legal realm and punitive sphere, it becomes a force of “somato-power” that penetrates and composes the body of the modern individual. This power no longer plays the role of a coercive law through a negative mandate but is more versatile and welcoming, taking on the form of “an art of governing life,” an overall political technology that is transformed into disciplinary architectures (prisons, barracks, schools, hospitals, etc.), scientific texts, statistical tables, demographic calculations, how-to manuals, usage guidelines, schedules for the regulation of reproduction, and public health projects. Foucault underlined the centrality of sex and of sexuality in this modern art of government. The biopower processes of the feminine body’s hysterization, children’s sexual pedagogy, the regu-

lation of procreative conduct, and the psychiatrization of the pervert's pleasures will be to Foucault the axes of this project that he characterized with some degree of irony as a process of sexual modernization.<sup>1</sup>

In keeping with the intuitions of Michel Foucault, Monique Wittig, and Judith Butler, I refer to one of the dominant forms of this biopolitical action, which emerged with disciplinary capitalism, as *sexopolitics*.<sup>2</sup> *Sex*, its truth, its visibility, and its forms of externalization; *sexuality* and the normal and pathological forms of pleasure; and *race*, in its purity or degeneracy, are three powerful somatic fictions that have obsessed the Western world since the eighteenth century, eventually defining the scope of all contemporary theoretical, scientific, and political activity. These are somatic fictions, not because they lack material reality but because their existence depends on what Judith Butler calls the performative repetition of processes of political construction.<sup>3</sup>

Sex has become such a part of plans for power that the discourse on masculinity and femininity, as well as techniques of normalizing sexual identity, have turned into governmental agents of the control and standardization of life. Hetero- and homosexual identities were invented in 1868, inside a sphere of empiricism, taxonomic classification, and psychopathology. Likewise, Krafft-Ebing created an encyclopedia of normal and perverse sexualities where

1. Michel Foucault, *Histoire de la sexualité: La volonté de savoir* (Paris: Gallimard, 1976), 136–39; see also Michel Foucault, *Naissance de la biopolitique: Cours au collège de France, 1978–1979* (Paris: Seuil, 2004).

2. Beatriz Preciado, "Multitudes Queer," *Multitudes* 12 (printemps 2003): 17–25.

3. Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990).

sexual identities became objects of knowledge, surveillance, and judicial repression.<sup>4</sup> At the end of the nineteenth century, laws criminalizing sodomy spread throughout Europe. “Sexual difference” was codified visually as an anatomical truth. The fallopian tubes, Bartholin’s gland, and the clitoris were defined as anatomical entities. One of the elemental political differences of the West (being a man or a woman) could be summed up by a banal equation: whether one had or did not have at birth a penis that was a centimeter and a half long. The first experiments in artificial insemination were accomplished on animals. With the help of mechanical instruments, interventions were made in the domain of the production of female pleasure; whereas, on the one hand, masturbation was controlled and prohibited, on the other, the female orgasm was medicalized and perceived as a crisis of hysteria.<sup>5</sup> Male orgasm was mechanized and domesticated through the lens of a budding pornographic codification . . . Machinery was on the way. The body, whether docile or rabid, was ready.

We could call the “sexual empire” (if we can be allowed to sexualize Hardt and Negri’s rather chaste catchword)<sup>6</sup> that biopolitical regime that uses sex, sexuality, and sexual identity as the somato-political centers for producing and governing subjectivity. Western disciplinary sexopolitics at

4. Richard von Krafft-Ebing, *Psychopathia Sexualis: The Classic Study of Deviant Sex* (New York: Arcade, 1998).

5. For a visual history of hysteria see Georges Didi-Huberman, *Invention of Hysteria: Charcot and the Photographic Iconography of the Salpetriere* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004); for a history of the technologies of the hysteric body see Rachel P. Maines, *The Technology of Orgasm: “Hysteria,” Vibrators and Women’s Sexual Satisfaction* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2001).

6. Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt, *Empire* (Paris: Exils, 2000).

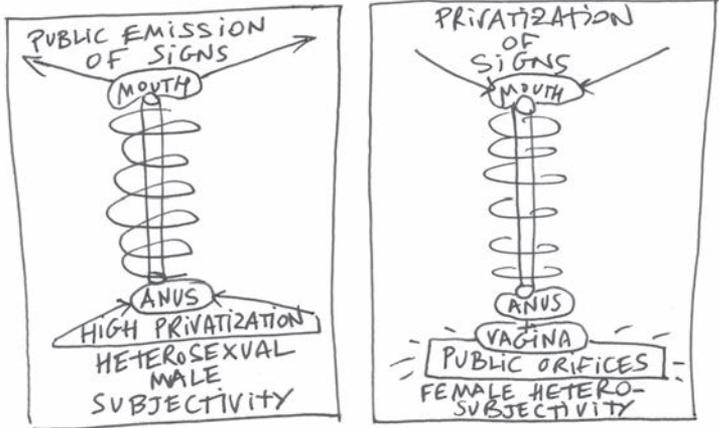
the end of the nineteenth and during a good part of the twentieth century boils down to a regulation of the conditions of reproduction or to those biological processes that “concern the population.” For the sexopolitics of the nineteenth century, the heterosexual is the artifact that will rake in the most success for government. The *straight mind*, to borrow an expression developed by Monique Wittig in the 1980s to designate heterosexuality— taken not as a sexual practice but as a political regime<sup>7</sup>—guarantees the structural relationship between the production of sexual identity and the production of certain body parts (to the detriment of others) as reproductive organs. One important task of this disciplinary work will consist of excluding the anus from circuits of production and pleasure. In the words of Deleuze and Guattari, “The first organ to suffer privatization, removal from the social field, was the anus. It was the anus that offered itself as a model for privatization, at the same time that money came to express the flows’ new state of abstraction.”<sup>8</sup> The anus as a center of production of pleasure (and, in this sense, closely related to the mouth or hand, which are also organs strongly controlled by the sexopolitical campaign against masturbation and homosexuality in the nineteenth century) has no gender. Neither male nor female, it creates a short circuit in the division of the sexes. As a center of primordial passivity and a perfect locale for the abject, positioned close to waste and shit, it serves as the universal black hole into which rush genders, sexes, identities, and capital. The West has

7. Monique Wittig, *La Pensée straight* (Paris: Balland, 2001), 65–76.

8. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus* (London: Continuum, 2004), 157.

designed a tube with two orifices: a mouth that emits public signs and an impenetrable anus around which it winds a male, heterosexual subjectivity, which acquires the status of a socially privileged body.

## 2 STRAIGHT SOMATIC FICTIONS



Until the seventeenth century, the sexual epistemology of the sovereign regime was dominated by what the historian Thomas Laqueur calls “a system of similarities”; female sexual anatomy was set up as a weak, internalized, degenerate variation of the only sex that possessed an ontological existence, the male.<sup>9</sup> The ovaries were considered to be internal testicles and the vagina to be an inverted penis that served as a receptacle for male sex organs. Abortion and infanticide, practices of the time, weren’t regu-

9. Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), 63–108.

lated by the legal apparatus of the state but by different economic-political micropowers to which pregnant bodies found themselves affixed (the tribe, the feudal house, the paterfamilias . . . ). Two hierarchically differentiated social and political expressions divide the surface of a “mono-sexual” model: “man,” the perfect model of the human, and “woman,” a reproductive receptacle. In the sovereign regime, masculinity is the only somatic fiction with political power. Masculinity (embodied within the figures of the king and the father) is defined by necropolitical techniques: the king and the father are those who have the right of giving death. Sex assignment depended not only on the external morphology of the organs but, above all, on reproductive capacity and social role. A bearded woman who was capable of pregnancy, of putting a child into the world and nursing it, was considered a woman, regardless of the shape and size of her vulva. Within such a somato-political configuration, sex and sexuality (note that the term *sexuality* itself wouldn’t be invented until 1880) do not yet amount to categories of knowledge or techniques of subjectivization that are likely to outdo the political segmentation that separates the slave from the free man, the citizen from the metic, or the lord from the serf. Differences between masculinity and femininity remain, as well as between several modes of the production of sexual pleasure, but these do not yet determine the crystallizations of sexopolitical subjectivity.

Beginning in the eighteenth century, a new, visual sexopolitical regime that depends on a “system of oppositions” rather than on “similarities” takes form. It maps out a new sexual anatomy, in which the female sex ceases to be an

inversion or interiorization of the male sex and becomes an entirely different sex whose forms and functions proceed from their own anatomical logic. According to Thomas Laqueur, the invention of what could be called the aesthetic of sexual (and racial) difference is needed to establish an anatomical-political hierarchy between the sexes (male, female) and the races (white, nonwhite) in the face of upheavals resulting from movements of revolution and liberation that are clamoring for the enlargement of the boundaries of the public spheres for women and foreigners. It is here that anatomical truth functions like a legitimization of a new political organization of the social field.<sup>10</sup>

The change that will give birth to the disciplinary regime begins with the political management of syphilis, the advent of sexual difference, the technical repression of masturbation, and the invention of sexual identities.<sup>11</sup> The culmination of these rigid and cumbersome technologies of the production of sexual identity will come in 1868 with the pathologizing of homosexuality and the bourgeois normalization of heterosexuality. From then on, abortion and postpartum infanticide will be subject to surveillance and punished by law. The body and its products will become the property of the male/husband/father and, by extension, the state and God.

Inside this system of recognition, any corporal divergence from the norm (such as the size and form of the sex organs, facial pilosity, and the shape and size of the breasts)

10. *Ibid.*, 149–92.

11. See Thomas Laqueur, *Solitary Sex: A Cultural History of Masturbation* (New York: Zone Books, 2003).

will be considered a monstrosity, a violation of the laws of nature or a perversion, a violation of moral law. As sexual difference is elevated to a category that is not only natural but even transcendental (going beyond historical and cultural contexts), differences between homosexuality and heterosexuality appear as both anatomical and psychological, and so do the differences between sadism, masochism, and pedophilia; between normalcy and perversion. Considered simple sexual practices until this moment, they become identities and conditions that must be studied, recorded, hounded, hunted, punished, cured. Each body, as Foucault tells us, becomes an “individual to correct.”<sup>12</sup> Invented as well are the child masturbator and the sexual monster. Under this new epistemological gaze, the bearded woman becomes either an object of scientific observation or a fairground attraction in the new urban agglomerate. This double shift toward medico-legal surveillance and mediatic spectacularization, intensified as it is by digital and data-processing techniques and communication networks, will become one of the characteristics of the pharmacopornographic regime, whose expansion begins in the middle of the twentieth century.

The sexopolitical devices that develop with the nineteenth-century aesthetics of sexual difference and sexual identities are mechanical, semiotic, and architectonic techniques to naturalize sex. And here we can list a loose collection of the resulting phenomena: the atlas of sexual anatomy, treatises on optimizing natural resources com-

12. Michel Foucault, *Les anormaux: cours au Collège de France (1974–1975)* (Paris: Seuil, 1999), 53.

mensurate with the growth of population, legal texts on the criminalization of transvestism or sodomy, the tying of little girls' masturbating hands to their beds, irons for forcing apart the legs of young hysterics, silver nitrate photographic prints that engrave images of the dilated anus of passive homosexuals, straitjackets immobilizing the uncontrollable bodies of masculine women . . . These devices for the production of sexual subjectivity take the form of a political architecture *external* to the body. Their systems have a firm command of orthopedic politics and disciplinary exoskeletons. The model for these techniques of subjectivization, according to Foucault, could be Jeremy Bentham's architecture for the prison-factory (panopticism, in particular), the asylum, or the military barracks. If we think about devices of sexo-political subjectivization, then we must also speak about the expansion of a network of "domestic architecture." These extensive, intensive, and, moreover, intimate architectural forms include a redefinition of private and public spaces, the management of sexual commerce, but also gynecological devices and sexual orthopedic inventions (the corset, the speculum, the medical vibrator), as well as new media techniques of control and representation (photography, film, incipient pornography) and the massive development of psychological techniques for introspection and confession.

If it is true that Foucault's analysis up to this point, although not always chronologically exact, seems to have great critical acuity, it is no less true that his analysis loses intensity the closer it gets to contemporary society. Foucault neglected the emergence of a group of profound trans-

formations of technologies of production of the body and subjectivity that progressively appeared beginning with World War II. They force us to conceptualize a third regime of subjectivization, a third system of knowledge-power that is neither sovereign nor disciplinary, neither premodern nor modern. In the postscript to *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari, inspired by William S. Burroughs, use the term “control society”<sup>13</sup> to name this “new monster” of social organization that is a by-product of biopolitical control. Adding notions inspired by both Burroughs and Bukowski, I shall call this the “pharmacopornographic society.” A politically programmed ejaculation is the currency of this new molecular-informatic control.

After World War II, the somato-political context of the body’s technopolitical production seems dominated by a series of new technologies of the body (biotechnology, surgery, endocrinology, genetic engineering, etc.) and representation (photography, cinema, television, internet, video games, etc.) that infiltrate and penetrate daily life like never before. These are biomolecular, digital, and broadband data-transmission technologies. This is the age of soft, featherweight, viscous, gelatinous technologies that can be injected, inhaled—“incorporated.” The testosterone that I use is a part of these new gelatinous technologies.

These three regimes of production of sexual bodies and subjectivities should not be understood as mere historical periods. The disciplinary regime didn’t erase the sovereign necropolitical techniques. Likewise, the pharmacoporno-

13. Gilles Deleuze, “Post-scriptum sur les sociétés de contrôle,” in *Pourparlers* (Paris: Minuit, 1990), 241.

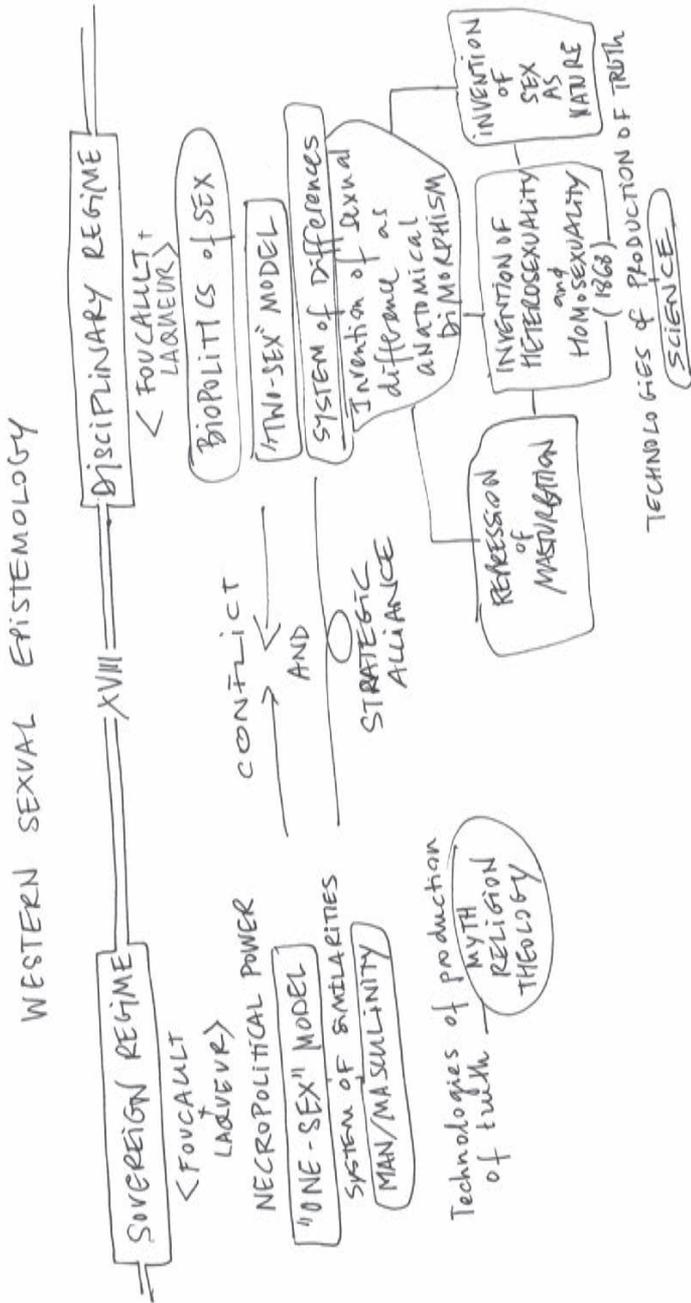
graphic regime has not totally obliterated biopolitical disciplinary techniques. Three different and conflicting power regime techniques juxtapose and act upon the body producing our contemporary subject and somatic fiction.

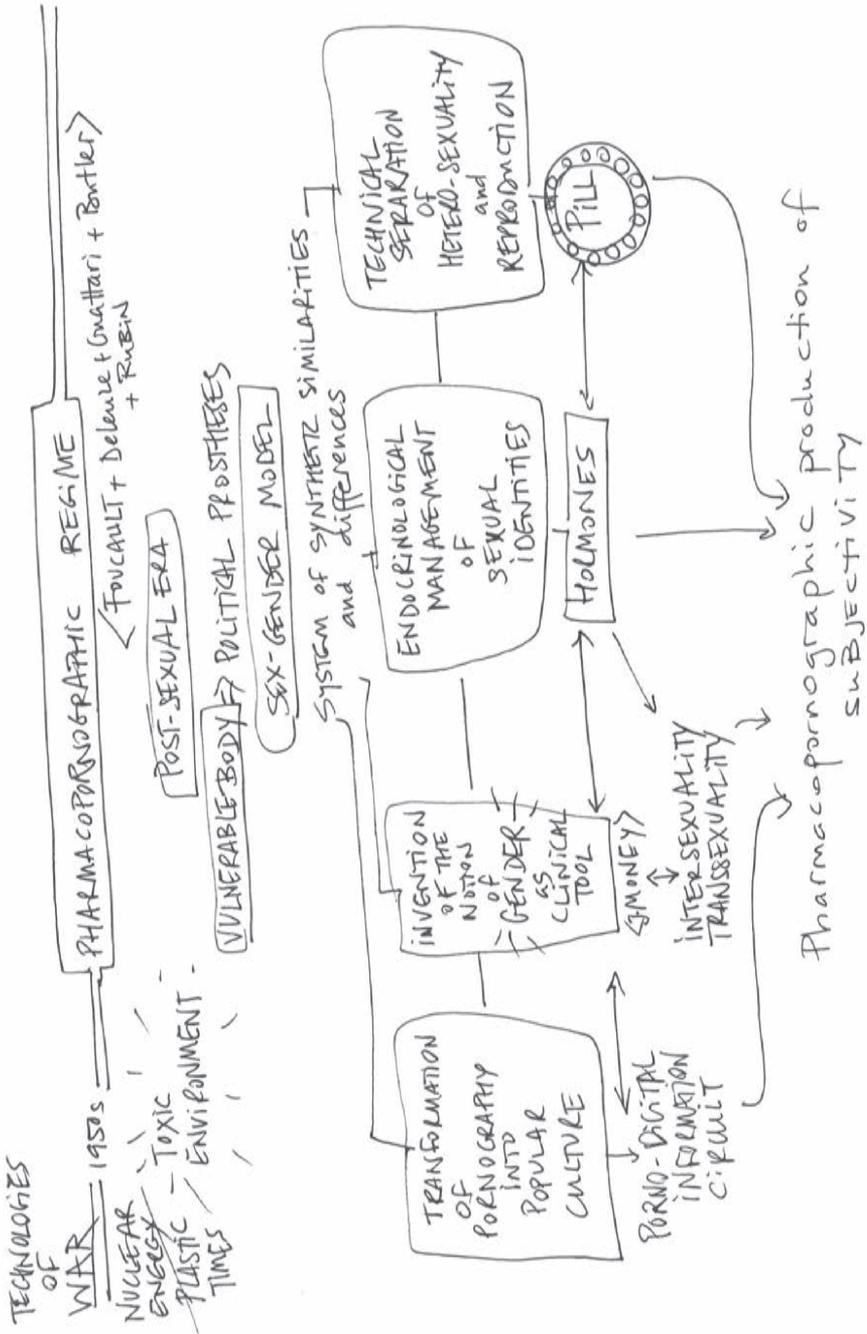
In disciplinary society, technologies of subjectivization controlled the body externally like orthoarchitectural apparatuses, but in the pharmacopornographic society, the technologies become part of the body: they dissolve into it, becoming *somatechnics*.<sup>14</sup> As a result, the body-power relationship becomes tautological: technopolitics takes on the form of the body and is incorporated. One of the first signs of the transformation of the somato-power regime in the mid-twentieth century was the electrification, digitalization, and molecularization of these devices for the control and production of sexual difference and sexual identities. Little by little, orthopedic-sexual and architectural disciplinary mechanisms were absorbed by lightweight, rapid-transmission microcomputing, as well as by pharmacological and audiovisual techniques. If architecture and orthopedics in the disciplinary society served as models for understanding the relation of body to power, in the pharmacopornographic society, the models for body control are microprosthetic: now, power acts through molecules that incorporate themselves into our immune system; silicone takes the shape of our breasts; neurotransmitters alter our perceptions and behavior; hormones produce their systemic

14. In the early 2000s, a group of academics at Macquarie University, including Susan Stryker, coined the term "somatechnics" to highlight the complex relationship between body and technology. Technology does not add upon a given body, but rather it is the very means by which corporeality is crafted.

effects on hunger, sleep, sexual arousal, aggressiveness, and the social decoding of our femininity and masculinity.

We are gradually witnessing the miniaturization, internalization, and reflexive introversion (an inward coiling toward what is considered intimate, private space) of the surveillance and control mechanisms of the disciplinary sexopolitical regime. These new soft technologies of micro-control adopt the form of the body they control and become part of it until they are inseparable and indistinguishable from it, ending up as techno-soma-subjectivities. The body no longer inhabits disciplinary spaces but is inhabited by them. The biomolecular and organic structure of the body is the last hiding place of these biopolitical systems of control. This moment contains all the horror and exaltation of the body's political potential.





## 6. TECHNOGENDER

The invention of the category *gender* signaled a splitting off and became the source point for the emergence of the pharmacopornographic regime for producing and governing sexuality. Far from its being the creation of a feminist agenda, the notion of gender belongs to the biotechnological discourse that appeared in the US medical and therapeutic industries at the end of the 1940s. Gender and pharmacopornographic masculinity and femininity are artifacts that originated with industrial capitalism and would reach commercial peaks during the Cold War, just like canned food, computers, plastic chairs, nuclear energy, television, credit cards, disposable ballpoint pens, bar codes, inflatable mattresses, or telecommunications satellites.

In 1955, the child psychologist John Money, who treated “hermaphrodites” and “intersex babies,” became the first to make use of the grammatical category of *gender* as a clinical and diagnosis tool. He would develop it with Anke Ehrhardt and Joan and John Hampson as part of a set of potential hormonal or surgical techniques to modify the bodies of babies born with genitals or chromosomes that medicine—relying on its visual and discursive criteria—

couldn't classify as strictly female or male.<sup>1</sup> To the rigid nineteenth-century categorizations of sex, John Money opposed the malleability of *gender*, using social and biochemical techniques. When he used *gender* as a name for "social role" or "psychological identity," he was essentially thinking of the possibility of using technologies (from hormones to social techniques, such as those employed in pedagogic and administrative institutions) to modify the body or to produce subjectivity intentionally in order to conform to a preexisting visual and biopolitical order, which was prescriptive for what was supposed to be a female or male human body.<sup>2</sup> In order to ensure that their external "sexual" development could be identified as feminine, newborns declared to be "intersex" because they possessed a "micropenis" (according to somato-political visual criteria) had it amputated, and their genitals were reconstructed in the form of a vagina, after which they received hormone-substitution therapy.<sup>3</sup> Intersex activists have pointed out the similarity between traditional non-Western cliterodectomy techniques and industrialized practices of genital mutilation on intersex bodies in the West.<sup>4</sup> Far as they were from the rigidity and exteriority of techniques of normalization

1. John Money, Joan G. Hampson, and John L. Hampson, "Imprinting and the Establishment of Gender Role," *Archives of Neurology and Psychiatry* 77, no. 3 (1957): 333–36, doi:10.1001/archneurpsyc.1957.02330330119019.

2. Joanne Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed: A History of Transsexuality in the United States* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002), 98–129.

3. Suzanne Kessler, "The Medical Construction of Gender: Case Management of Intersex Infants," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 16, no. 1 (1990); Suzanne Kessler and Wendy McKenna, *Gender: An Ethnomethodological Approach* (New York: John Wiley, 1978).

4. Cheryl Chase, "Hermaphrodites with Attitude: Mapping the Emergence of Intersex Political Activism," in *The Transgender Studies Reader*, eds. Susan Stryker and Stephen Whittle (New York: Routledge, 2006), 300–14.

of the body of the architectonic and disciplinary systems at the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth, the new biocapitalism's pharmacopornographic techniques of gender production were simultaneously invasive and minimal, penetrating and invisible, intimate and toxic, high tech and mutilating.

Like the Pill or the oncomouse, gender is a biotech industrial artifact. The technologies of gender, sex, sexuality, and race are the true economicopolitical sectors of pharmacopornism. They are technologies of production of somatic fictions. *Male* and *female* are terms without empirical content beyond the technologies that produce them. That being the case, the recent history of sexuality appears as a gigantic pharmacopornographic Disneyland in which the tropes of sexual naturalism are fabricated on a global scale as products of the endocrinological, surgical, agrifood and media industries.

Whereas Money tampered with the bodies of infants to force them into the categories of "male gender" or "female gender," Dr. Henry Benjamin administered estrogens and progesterone to a new kind of patient of state-managed medicine: an adult who claims not to identify with the gender that was assigned at birth. Curiously, the criteria for the assignment of gender, as well as those for its reassignment in cases of transsexuality, function according to two metaphysical models of the body that are nearly irreconcilable. On the one hand, the criteria for sex assignment that permit a decision regarding whether or not a body is "female" or "male" at the moment of birth (or in utero, using a

sonogram) depend on a model of visual recognition that is supposedly empirical and in which the signifiers (chromosomes, size of the genitals, etc.) are cast as scientific truths. In this case, making a body visible implies that it is being assigned a male *or* female gender in a univocal and definitive way. This unveiling of gender depends on an optical ontology: the real is what you can see. On the other hand, the idea that posits a true “psychological sex” distinct from the one that has been assigned at birth—in other words, a subjective conviction of being a “man” or a “woman”—belongs to the model of radical invisibility, of the nonrepresentable, and this paradigm is close to that of the Freudian unconscious: an immaterial ontology. In this case, the real isn’t accessible to the senses and is by definition what cannot be apprehended by empirical means. These two models can function together thanks to a single metaphysical axis that attaches them as it opposes them. It’s necessary to imagine the biopolitical ideals of masculinity and femininity as transcendental essences from which are suspended aesthetics of gender, normative codes of visual recognition, and immaterial psychological convictions prompting the subject to proclaim itself male or female, heterosexual or homosexual, cis- or trans. However, the visual criteria that govern sex assignment at birth are not a biological event any more than are the psychological criteria that lead to the “inner” conviction of being a man or a woman: “Physical genitals are a construction of biological and scientific forms of life.”<sup>5</sup> Penises and vaginas are biocodes of power-

5. Suzanne Kessler and Wendy McKenna, “Toward a Theory of Gender,” in *The Transgender Studies Reader*, eds. Susan Stryker and Stephen Whittle (New York: Routledge, 2006), 173.

knowledge regimes. They are ideal regulators, biopolitical fictions that find their somatic support in individual subjectivity.<sup>6</sup> The pharmacopornographic sex-gender regime is the result of the unexpected alliance between the nineteenth-century naturalist metaphysics of sexual dimorphism, focused on heterosexual reproduction, and the rise of a hyperconstructivist medical and biotech industry in which gender roles and identities can be artificially designed.<sup>7</sup> Plato meets Money in the high-tech gender garage.

The hyperbolic production of the postwar medical discourse on gender is the sign of an epistemic crisis: the endless “nature versus nurture” debates of the 1950s–70s that involved John Money, David O. Caudwell, Robert Stoller, Henry Benjamin, Richard Green, or Milton Diamond remind us of sixteenth-century tricks on spheres and epicycles whose aim was to maintain the hegemony of the geocentric astronomical model. The proliferation of the clinical discourse on “true hermaphroditism,” “pseudo-hermaphroditism,” “intersexuality,” “sexual incongruities,” and “psychopathia transexualis,”<sup>8</sup> as well as the medical normalization of techniques of sex reassignment, genital mutilation of intersex babies, and surgical reconstruction of gender, are nothing other than desperate (and violent) measures to reinforce a shattered epistemology. In the 1950s, which were confronted with the political rise of feminism and with homosexuality, as well as with the desire

6. Judith Butler, “Doing Justice to Someone: Sex Reassignment and Allegories of Transsexuality,” in *Undoing Gender* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 57–74.

7. See Butler, “Doing Justice.”

8. See David O. Caudwell, “Psychopathia Transexualis,” in *The Transgender Studies Reader*, eds. Susan Stryker and Stephen Whittle (New York: Routledge, 2006), 40–44.

of “transvestites,” “deviants,” and “transsexuals” to escape or transform birth sex assignment, the dimorphism epistemology of sexual difference was simply crumbling. Nineteenth-century disciplinary epistemology was grounded on the biopolitical imperative of the heterosexual reproduction of the nation’s population. As Suzanne J. Kessler and Wendy McKenna put it, human bodies were “diagnosed” male or female at birth as potential “sperm and egg cell carriers.”<sup>9</sup> But “sperm and egg cell carriers” were gaining new political agency over their reproductive power. Moreover, new techniques in the 1950s for reading genetic and chromosomal differences and measuring endocrinological levels introduced variables that could not be reduced to the epistemological framework of sexual dimorphism. Medical, biological, and political discourses were confronted with an infinite variability of bodies and desires (multiple chromosomal, gonadal, hormonal, external genital, psychological, and political variables) that could not be subsumed within the disciplinary imperative of heterosexual reproduction. John Money puts it this way:

In human beings, the irreducible sex differences are that males impregnate, and females menstruate, gestate, and lactate. Otherwise, sexual dimorphism that is programmed into the brain under the influence of prenatal hormones appears to be not sex-irreducible, but sex-shared and threshold-dimorphic. A complete theory of the differentiation of all the constituents of masculinity or femininity of the gender identity role needs to be both

9. Kessler and McKenna, “Toward a Theory of Gender,” in *The Transgender Studies Reader*, 180.

multivariable and sequential in type. It must be applicable to all the syndromes of hermaphroditism, and to the genesis of the gender identity role phenomena, including transvestism and transsexualism, as well as to the genesis of a heterosexual gender identity role.<sup>10</sup>

But in the late 1950s, males are no longer guaranteed to impregnate, females stop menstruating and gestating under the effects of the contraceptive pill, and lactation is provided by food industries instead of by female breasts. The heterosexual dimorphic regime of “sperm and egg cell carriers” is going awry.

Instead of collectively producing an alternative (multimorphic) epistemology for understanding bodies and desires, the 1950s medical, biological, and political discourses decided to directly intervene within the structures of living beings to artificially construct sexual dimorphism using surgical, prosthetic, and hormonal techniques supported by the pharmacological, medical, and food industries.<sup>11</sup> When the possibility of the technical construction of sexual difference is recognized as a point of departure, nature and identity are brought to the level of a somatic parody. Whereas the disciplinary system of the nineteenth century considered sex to be natural, definitive, unchangeable, and transcendental, pharmacopornographic gender seems to be synthetic, malleable, variable, open to transfor-

10. John Money, “Pediatric Sexology and Hermaphroditism,” *Journal of Sex and Marital Therapy*, 11, no. 3 (1985): 139, doi: 10.1080/00926238508405440.

11. See Anne Fausto-Sterling, “The Five Sexes, Revisited,” *Sciences* 40, no. 4 (July/August 2000): 18–23. Several biologists have recently called for a change to a non-dimorphic epistemology of sex-gender assignment.

mation, and imitable, as well as produced and reproduced technically.

Strangely, the medical and biotechnological dimensions of gender production were ignored within the “cultural” version of white feminism’s constructivism, which reappropriated the notion of “gender” in order to recast it as an instrument of critical analysis of the oppression of women. Gender appears gradually in the anthropological or sociological texts of Margaret Mead or Ann Oakley as the social and cultural construction of sexual difference.<sup>12</sup> The feminist culturalist definitions of gender have been the source of two stumbling blocks whose disastrous effects are still at work in the current “politics of gender” that maintain that sex, an anatomical truth, is a biological given and therefore isn’t subject to cultural construction, whereas gender specifically expresses the social, cultural, and political difference of *women* in a society and at a particular historical moment. In this context, there’s nothing surprising about feminism’s finding itself on a dead-end street of the essentialism/constructivism debates or regarding the politics of the state’s facility in co-opting feminist rhetoric into an extensive program of sexual normalization and social control. Why didn’t 1970s culturalist and constructivist feminists fight against clinical diagnosis, reassignment protocols for intersex bodies, normalizing biochemical and surgical technologies, and the binary regime within administrative systems? Intersex activist Cheryl Chase answers: “Intersexuals have had such difficulty generating

12. One of the first texts where this difference is clearly thematicized is Ann Oakley, *Sex, Gender and Society* (London: Maurice Temple Smith, Ltd., 1972). See also Christine Delphy, *L’Enemi principal*, vol. 2, *Penser le genre*, (Paris: Syllepse, 2001).

mainstream feminist support not only because of the racist and colonialist frameworks that situate cliterodectomy as a practice foreign to proper subjects within the first world, but also because intersexuality undermines the stability of the category of ‘woman.’”<sup>13</sup>

Apart from claims coming from the intersex and transsexual movements, late 1980s queer theory represented the first critique of the use of the notion of gender within feminism itself. In the 1980s, Teresa de Lauretis and Judith Butler started to point out that second-wave feminism uncritically shared the very epistemological sex-gender framework it aimed to question. Lauretis claimed that feminist “theory” could not be evinced unless it examined its own critical foundations, political terms, linguistic practices, and practices of the production of visibility. Lauretis asked what the political subject produced by feminism as a discourse and practice of representation was. Stripped of all self-indulgence, her conclusion takes the form of an extremely lucid warning: feminism functions, or can function, as an instrument of normalization and political control when it reduces its subject to “women.” Under the apparent neutrality and universality of the term *woman*, a host of vectors of production and subjectivity are hiding: sex, race, class, sexuality, age, ability, geopolitical or corporal difference, and so on. In Lauretian terms, the subject of feminism is inevitably *eccentric*; rather than coinciding with “women,” it arises as a force of displacement, as a practice for the transformation of subjectivity.<sup>14</sup>

13. Chase, “Hermaphrodites,” in *The Transgender Studies Reader*, 312.

14. Teresa de Lauretis, “Eccentric Subjects: Feminist Theory and Historical Consciousness,” *Feminist Studies* 16, no. 1 (Spring 1990): 115–50.

In order to question the conflation of gender and woman, Teresa de Lauretis developed the notion of “technologies of gender.”<sup>15</sup> For Lauretis, filmmaking devices—specific modes of recording, projection, montage, signification, and decoding—serve as a paradigm for conceiving of the production of gender and sexual subjectivity. This amounts to saying that the pharmacopornographic regime functions like a machine of somatic representation in which text, image, and the corporal spread through the interior of an expansive cybernetic circuit. According to Lauretis’s semiotic-political interpretation, gender is the effect of a system of signification that includes modes of production and decoding of politically regulated visual and textual signs. The subject, who is simultaneously the producer and interpreter of these signs, is constantly involved in a corporal process of signification, representation, and self-representation. Transposing Foucault’s critique of disciplinary power and Metz’s cinematographic semiotics to feminism, Lauretis writes:

It seemed to me that gender was not the simple derivation of anatomical/biological sex but a sociocultural construction, a representation, or better, the compounded effect of discursive and visual representations which I saw emanating from various institutions—the family, religion, the educational system, the media, medicine, or law—but also from less obvious sources: language, art, literature, film, and so on. However, the constructed-ness or discursive nature of gender does not prevent it from

15. See Teresa de Lauretis, *Technologies of Gender: Essays on Theory, Film, and Fiction* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1987).

having real implications, or concrete effects, both social and subjective, for the material life of individuals. On the contrary, the reality of gender is precisely in the effects of its representation; gender is realized, becomes “real” when that representation becomes a self-representation, is individually assumed as a form of one’s social and subjective identity.<sup>16</sup>

Lauretis displaces the naturalized notion of “woman” with “gender” while translating the question of the “dialectics of oppression” into a multiplicity of “technologies.” The issue of this conceptual difference between gender and woman, between “technologies of power” and “dialectics of oppression” isn’t limited to nominal questions of translation or semantics. The issue directly concerns body technologies and devices of subjectification. This distinction has the potential to disrupt the entire grammar of feminism, and even the entire political history of the production of difference between the sexes. Whereas the feminism of the 1970s studied the sources of the oppression of women, Lauretis invites us to identify the functioning of a collection of technologies of gender, operating across bodies that produce not only differences of gender but also sexual, racial, somatic, class, age, disability, and other differences.

As a result, a new field of study has been established for feminism: the analysis of different *technologies of gender* that produce (always in a precarious, unstable way) bodies,

16. Teresa de Lauretis, “Gender Identities and Bad Habits,” in *Actas del IV Congreso Estatal Insomnía sobre Identidad de Género vs. Identidad Sexual* (Castelló de la Plana, España: Publicacions de la Universitat Jaume I, 2008): 13–23.

subjects of enunciation and action. It goes without saying that research about these technologies of gender cannot, in any case, be reduced to a statistical or sociological study of women's situation in the different domains of production of bodies, discourses, and representations.<sup>17</sup> The issue no longer comes down to considering gender as a cultural force that comes to modify a biologically determined foundation (sex). Instead, it is subjectivity as a whole, produced within the techno-organic circuits that are codified in terms of gender, sex, race, and sexuality through which pharmacopornographic capital circulates.

With Lauretis, Judith Butler introduced the largest and most acute critique of both gender-sex epistemology and the grammar of feminism. For Butler, gender is a system of rules, conventions, social norms, and institutional practices that *performatively* produce the subject they claim to describe. Through a cross-referenced reading of Austin, Derrida, and Foucault, Butler reaches a consideration of gender in which it is no longer an essence or psychological truth, but a discursive, corporal, and performative practice by means of which the subject acquires social intelligibility and political recognition.<sup>18</sup> Today, this Butlerian analysis comes together with Donna J. Haraway's lessons for examining the semiototechnical dimension of this performative production: pushing the performative hypothesis further into the body, as far as its organs and fluids; drawing it into the cells, chromosomes, and genes.

17. Lauretis, *Technologies of Gender*.

18. See Butler's *Gender Trouble*, *Bodies That Matter*, and *Undoing Gender*.

The clinical notion of gender invented by Money sees it above all as an instrument of rationalization for a living being whose visible body is only one of the parameters. The invention of gender as an organizing principle was necessary for the appearance and development of a series of pharmacopornographic techniques for the normalization and transformation of living beings—a process that includes photographing “deviants,” cellular diagnosis, hormonal analysis and therapy, chromosomal readings, and transsexual and intersexual surgery.

Photography, invented at the end of the nineteenth century, before the appearance and perfection of hormonal and surgical techniques, signaled a crucial stage in the production of the new sexual subject and its visual truth. Of course, this process of representation of the body had already begun in the seventeenth century with anatomical and pornographic drawings,<sup>19</sup> but it is photography that would endow this technical production of the materiality of the body with the merit of visual realism. Let us take the example of one of the classical images by Félix Nadar<sup>20</sup> representing “hermaphrodites” and “inverts”: a body, named “X” in medical histories, appears in a supine position with legs spread, covered with a white slip that has been raised to the level of the chest, exposing the upper part of the pelvis. The genitals have been unveiled to the eyes of the camera by a hand coming from outside the frame. The image reveals its own process of discursive production. It shares its codes

19. Laqueur, *Making Sex*, 154–63.

20. Nadar photographed a “hermaphrodite” patient around 1860 at the behest of the French physician Armand Trousseau.

of representation with the pornography that appears at the same period; the doctor's hand hides and exhibits the genitals, thus establishing a power relationship between the subject and the object of representation. The face and, especially, the eyes of the patient have been effaced; the deviant cannot be the agent of his/her own representation. The truth of sex takes on the nature of a visual disclosure, a process in which photography participates like an ontological catalyst, making explicit a reality that wouldn't be able to emerge any other way.

A century later, in 1980, the anthropologist Susan Kessler will denounce the aesthetic codes (relying on the shape and form of the penis and the clitoris) that dominate medical protocol for the assignment of sex to newborns. Although the visual criteria for sex assignment may not seem to have changed very much since the end of the nineteenth century, the current technical possibilities of body modification are introducing substantial differences in the process of the assignment and production of femininity and masculinity in the pharmacopornographic era. The process of normalization (assignment, reassignment) that could be accomplished only by discursive or photographic representation in the past is now inscribed within the very structure of the living being by surgical, endocrinological, and even genetic techniques.

After World War II, human mapping in the West, characterized by sexual dimorphism and its classification of sexualities as normal or deviant, healthy or disabled, becomes dependent on the legal and commercial management of molecules essential to the production of phenotypes

(external signs) that are culturally recognized as female or male (facial hair, size and shape of the genitals, voice register . . . ), as well as on the technopolitical management of the reproduction of the species and on the pharmacological control of our immune systems and their resistance to aggression, illness, and death.

There have been several regimes of body production—political regimes for producing and reproducing human life on the planet, depending on the historical moment and the political, economic, and cultural context. Some lost their potential for subjectification (for example, patriarchy or Greek pedophilia) when the *political technoecologies* inside of which they functioned disappeared. Others are undergoing full mutation. This is the case with ours.

If the concept of gender has introduced a rift, the precise reason is that it represents the first self-conscious moment within the epistemology of sexual difference. From this point on, there is no going back; Money is to the history of sexuality what Hegel is to the history of philosophy and Einstein to the conception of space-time. It is the beginning of the end, the explosion of sex-nature, nature-history, time and space as linearity and extension. With the notion of gender, the medical discourse is unveiling its arbitrary foundations and its constructivist character, and at the same time opening the way for new forms of resistance and political action. When I bring up the idea of a rift introduced by the notion of gender, I'm not claiming to be referring to the passage from one political paradigm to a radically distinct other, or to an epistemological rupture that will give rise to a form of radical discontinuity. Rather,

I'm referring to a superimposition of strata in which different techniques of producing and managing life are interlacing and overlapping. The pharmacopornographic body is not passive living matter but a techno-organic interface, a technoliving system segmented and territorialized by different (textual, data-processing, biochemical) political technologies.

Let us examine, for example, the displacement of production of body hair from the disciplinary sex regime to the gender pharmacopornographic regime. In the sexodisciplinary system of the nineteenth century, the "bearded lady" was considered to be a monstrous abnormality, and her body was becoming visible within the spectacularized framework of circuses and freak shows. In the pharmacopornographic regime, "hirsutism" has become a clinical condition, making women potential clients of the medical system and consumers of manufactured molecules (specifically, Androcur, which is administered to neutralize testosterone production, but also insulin regulators), the purpose of which is not hormonal, but political, normalization. After 1961, hirsutism was measured by the Ferriman-Gallwey scale, which examines nineteen body areas (from sideburns to toes) to assess normal hair growth.<sup>21</sup> The Ferriman-Gallwey score establishes a correlation between

21. David Ferriman and J.D. Gallwey, "Clinical Assessment of Body Hair Growth in Women," *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology* 21, no. 11 (November 1961): 1440-7.

gender, ethnicity, and hair; for example, in a Caucasian woman a score of eight is regarded as indicative of androgen excess whereas in East Asian and Native American women a much lower score reveals hirsutism. According to the same clinical method, Ashkenazi Jews and Hispanic women are “high-risk ethnic groups.”<sup>22</sup> Hirsutism becomes here a method to clinically assess race as much as gender. Biopolitical loop: femininity-body-hair-visibility, circus-hirsutism-Androcur-race-cosmetic-treatment-invisibility-femininity. Different “techniques of the body”<sup>23</sup> and visual frameworks produce different somato-political living fictions: formerly exhibited in the circus, the racialized pharmacopornographic hirsute body becomes the object of the plastic surgery clinic and the beauty salon and their techniques of hormonal regulation and electrolysis.

In the changing definitions of gender, there is no succession of models (sovereign, disciplinary, and pharmacopornographic) about to be supplanted historically by others, or any ruptures or radical discontinuities, but rather an interconnected simultaneity, a transversal effect of multiple somato-political models that compose and implement subjectivity according to various intensities, different indexes of penetration, and different degrees of efficiency.

22. Daniel A. Dumesic and Lauri A. Pasch, “Hirsutism: Bother or Burden? Developing a patient-centered management approach,” *Sexuality, Reproduction & Menopause* 9, no. 3 (August 2011): 14.

23. Marcel Mauss, “Techniques du corps,” in *Sociologie et anthropologie* (Paris: PUF, 2001). This article was originally published in *Journal de Psychologie*, 32, no. 3–4 (15 mars–15 avril, 1936). Paper presented at the Société de Psychologie on May 17, 1934.

If this is not the case, then how to explain the fact that, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, rhinoplasty is considered plastic surgery whereas vaginoplasty (the surgical construction of a vagina) and phalloplasty (the surgical construction of a penis) are considered sex change operations?<sup>24</sup> One could say that two clearly distinct regimes of power-knowledge traverse the body and that they construct the nose and the genitals according to different somato-political technologies. Whereas the nose is regulated by a pharmacopornographic power in which an organ is considered to be private property and merchandise, the genitals are still imprisoned in a premodern, sovereign, and nearly theocratic power regime that considers them to be the property of the state and dependent on unchanging transcendental law. But in the pharmacopornographic society, a conflicting multiplicity of power-knowledge regimes is operating simultaneously on different organs, tearing the body apart. We are not bodies without organs, but rather an array of heterogeneous organs unable to be gathered under the same skin. Those who survive the mutation that is happening will see their bodies moving into a new semio-technical system and will witness the proliferation of new organs; in other words, they'll cease to be the bodies that they were before.

When it comes to such transformations of the living body, the outlines of the problem become clearer. Pharma-

24. See Dean Spade, "Mutilating Gender," in *The Transgender Studies Reader* eds. Susan Stryker and Stephen Whittle (New York: Routledge, 2006), 315–52.

copornographic gender is neither metaphor nor ideology; it can't be reduced to a performance: it is a form of political technoeology. The certainty of being a man or a woman is a somato-political biofiction produced by a collection of body technologies, pharmacologic and audiovisual techniques that determine and define the scope of our somatic potentialities and function like prostheses of subjectification. Gender is an operational program capable of triggering a proliferation of sensory perceptions under the form of affects, desires, actions, beliefs, and identities. One of the characteristic results of such a technology of gender is the production of inner knowledge about oneself, with a sense of a sexual self that appears to be an emotional reality that is evident to consciousness. "I am a man," "I am a woman," "I am heterosexual," "I am homosexual," "I am transsexual": these are units of specific knowledge about oneself, hard biopolitical nuclei around which it's possible to assemble an entire collection of discourses and performative practices.

We could call the "programming of gender" a psychopolitical neoliberal modeling of subjectivity that potentiates the production of subjects that think of themselves and behave like individual bodies, aware of themselves as private organic spaces and biological properties with fixed identities of gender and sexuality. The prevailing programming of gender operates with the following premise: an individual = a healthy body = a sex = a gender = a sexuality = a private property. But constructing gender, as Butler has argued, always amounts to taking the risk of dismantling it. Producing gender implies a collection of

strategies of naturalization/denaturalization and identification/disidentification. Drag king devices and hormonal self-experimentation are only two of these derailment strategies.

Within the pharmacopornographic regime, gender is constructed in industrial networks of biopolitical materialization; it is reproduced and reinforced socially by its transformation into entertainment, moving images, digital data, pharmacological molecules, cybercodes. Pharmacopornographic female or male gender exists before a public audience, as a somato-discursive construction of a collective nature, facing a scientific community or a network. Technogender is a public, scientific, community network biocode.

Oxytocin, serotonin, codeine, cortisone, the estrogens, omeprazole, testosterone, and so on, correspond to the group of molecules currently available for the manufacturing of subjectivity and its affects. We are technobiopolitically equipped to screw, reproduce the National Body, and consume. We live under the control of molecular technologies, hormonal straitjackets intended to maintain biopower: hyperestrogened bodies—rape—testosterone—love—pregnancy—sex drives—abjection—ejaculation. And the state draws its pleasure from the production and control of our pornogore subjectivity.

The objective of these pharmacopornographic technologies is the production of a living political prosthesis: a body

that is compliant enough to put its *potentia gaudendi*, its total and abstract capacity for creating pleasure, at the service of the production of capital and the reproduction of the species. Outside such somato-political ecology of “sperm and egg carriers,” there are neither men nor women, just as there is neither heterosexuality nor homosexuality, neither ableness nor disability.

Our contemporary societies are gigantic sexopolitical laboratories where the genders are produced. The body—each and every one of our bodies—is the invaluable enclave where transactions of power are ceaselessly carried out. My body = the multitude’s body. Postwar white men and women are biotechnological beings belonging to the sexopolitical regime, whose goal is the production, reproduction, and colonial expansion of heterosexual human life on the planet.

Beginning in the 1940s, the new biopolitical ideals of masculinity and femininity were created under laboratory conditions. These artifacts (us) can’t exist in a pure state, but only within our enclosed sexual *technoecosystems*. In our role as sexual subjects, we’re inhabiting biocapitalist amusement parks. We are men and women of the laboratory, effects of a kind of politicoscientific bio-Platonism. We are strange biopolitical fictions because we are alive: we are simultaneously the effect of the pharmacopornographic power (*biopower*) regime and the potential for its defeat (*bioempowerment*).

**Some semiotechanical codes of white heterosexual femininity belonging to the postwar pharmacopornographic political ecology:**

*Little Women*, a mother's courage, the Pill, the hyperloaded cocktail of estrogens and progesterone, the honor of virgins, *Sleeping Beauty*, bulimia, the desire for a child, the shame of deflowering, *The Little Mermaid*, silence in the face of rape, *Cinderella*, the ultimate immorality of abortion, cakes and cookies, knowing how to give a good blowjob, bromazepam, the shame about not having done it yet, *Gone with the Wind*, saying no when you want to say yes, not leaving home, having small hands, Audrey Hepburn's ballet shoes, codeine, taking care of your hair, fashion, saying yes when you want to say no, anorexia, knowing in secret that the one you're really attracted to is your best friend, fear of growing old, the need to be on a diet constantly, the beauty imperative, kleptomania, compassion, cooking, the desperate sensuality of Marilyn Monroe, the manicure, not making any noise when you walk, not making any noise when you eat, not making any noise, the immaculate and carcinogenic cotton of Tampax, the certainty that maternity is a natural bond, not knowing how to cry, not knowing how to fight, not knowing how to kill, not knowing much or knowing a lot but not being able to say it, knowing how to wait, the subdued elegance of Lady Di, Prozac, fear of being a bitch in heat, Valium, the necessity of the G-string, knowing how to restrain yourself, letting yourself be fucked in the ass when it's necessary, being resigned, accurate waxing of the pubes, depression, thirst, little lavender balls that smell good, the smile, the living mummification of the smooth face of

youth, love before sex, breast cancer, being a kept woman, being left by your husband for a younger woman . . .

**Some semiotechanical codes of white heterosexual masculinity belonging to the postwar pharmacopornographic political ecology:**

James Bond, soccer, wearing pants, knowing how to raise your voice, *Platoon*, knowing how to kill, knowing how to smash somebody's face, mass media, stomach ulcers, the precariousness of paternity as a natural bond, overalls, sweat, war (including the television version), Bruce Willis, Operation Desert Storm, speed, terrorism, sex for sex's sake, getting hard like Ron Jeremy, knowing how to drink, earning money, *Rocky*, Prilosec, the city, bars, hookers, boxing, the garage, the shame of not getting hard like Ron Jeremy, Viagra, prostate cancer, broken noses, philosophy, gastronomy, *Scarface*, having dirty hands, Bruce Lee, paying alimony to your ex-wife, conjugal violence, horror films, porn, gambling, bets, the government, the state, the corporation, cold cuts, hunting and fishing, boots, the tie, the three-day growth of beard, alcohol, coronaries, balding, the Grand Prix, journey to the Moon, getting plastered, hanging yourself, big watches, callused hands, keeping your anus squeezed shut, camaraderie, bursts of laughter, intelligence, encyclopedic knowledge, sexual obsessions, Don Juanism, misogyny, being a skinhead, serial killers, heavy metal, leaving your wife for a younger woman, fear of getting fucked in the ass, not seeing your children after the divorce, the desire to get fucked in the ass . . .

For a long time I believed that only people like me were really in deep shit. Because we aren't and will never be Little Women or James Bond heroes. Now I know that shit concerns all of us, especially Little Women and James Bond heroes.

## THE TWILIGHT OF HETEROSEXUALITY

Monique Wittig with Michel Foucault. Judith Butler with Antony Negri. Angela Davis with Félix Guattari. Kate Bornstein with Franz Fanon. White heterosexual femininity is, above all, an economic function referring to a specific position within biopolitical relationships of production and exchange, and based on the transformation of sex work, the work of pregnancy, body care, and other unpaid activity within industrial capitalism.<sup>25</sup> This sexualized economy functions through what Judith Butler has called performative coercion:<sup>26</sup> by means of semiotecchnical, linguistic, and corporal processes of regulated repetitions imposed by cultural conventions. It's impossible to imagine the rapid expansion of industrial capitalism without the slave trade, colonial expropriation, and the institutionalization of the heterosexual *dispositif* as a mode of transformation in surplus value of unpaid sexual services historically performed by women. It is reasonable to posit an unpaid debt for sex work that heterosexual men historically contracted with regard to women, in the same way that Western countries

25. Wittig, 58–59.

26. Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble*.

should be, according to Franz Fanon, forced to reimburse a colonial debt to colonized peoples.<sup>27</sup> If interest were applied to the debt for sexual services and colonial plundering, all women and colonized peoples on the planet would receive an annuity that would allow them to spend the rest of their lives without working.

Heterosexuality hasn't always existed. The contemporary transformation of capitalism entails a mutation of the sex-gender order. If we look attentively at the signs of technification and informatization of gender that emerge starting with World War II, we can even affirm that heterosexuality has been summoned to disappear one day. In fact, it is in the act of disappearing now. The postsexual era will then begin as a secondary effect of the pharmacoporno industry. This means that there will no longer be sexual relations between cis-males and cis-females and that the conditions of sexual production (production of bodies and pleasures) are drastically changing, that they will begin to resemble more and more closely the production of bodies and deviant pleasures, under the control of the same pharmacopornographic regulations. In other words, all forms of sexuality and production of pleasure, all libidinal and biopolitical economies are now subject to the same molecular and digital technologies of the production of sex, gender, and sexuality.

The normative premises of the nineteenth-century

27. Frantz Fanon, "De la violence," in *Les Damnés de la terre*, in *Oeuvres* (Paris: La Découverte, 2011), 503.

disciplinary sexual regime (continuity between sexuality and reproduction and pathologization of nonreproductive practices, including masturbation and homosexuality) were radically displaced with the invention of the Pill and the making of pornography into a branch of popular media industries that transformed masturbation into a source of production of capital. But the technoliving park of which we are part isn't completely coherent and integrated. The two poles of the pharmacopornographic industry (pharmaco and porno) function more in opposition than they do in tandem. Although the pornography industry as a whole works as cultural propaganda for the gender dimorphic regime (producing normative and idealized representations of heterosexual and homosexual practice, where sexuality equals penetration with a biopenis) and the political asymmetry between cis-males and cis-females is legitimized as based on anatomical differences (cis-male = biopenis; cis-female = biovagina), the pharmaceutical and biotechnical industries and the new techniques of assisted reproduction—even if they do continue to function in a heteronormative legal framework—are ceaselessly redesigning the frontiers between the genders and, as a whole, turning the economic, heterosexual, and political system into an obsolete means of management of subjectivity.

The dialectic between pharmaco and porno is already arising in the contradictions between various (low-tech or high-tech) biocodes of subjectivity coming from different regimes of production of the body. For example, families (whether heterosexual, homosexual, or monoparental) in which reproduction has been accomplished by *in vitro* fer-

tilization with anonymous donor sperm continue to function in a politicolegal system in which the performative ideals of masculinity and kinship have not been challenged. Moreover, the biocodes of the production of subjectivity (both those that are semiotic and those that are pharmaceutical, from Viagra to testosterone, by way of the aesthetics of the gay body or sexual practices using synthetic organs) are circulating within the pharmacopornographic market without any possibility of controlling the processes of production of subjectivity that they are inducing. Thus, biocodes (language, ways of dressing, hormones, prostheses) that once belonged to feminine, masculine, heterosexual, homosexual, transsexual, or even genderqueer configurations can achieve means of expression that are denaturalized and offbeat and free of a sexual identity or a precise biopolitical subjectivity. A way of life or an identity agenda. The visual codes governing the transformed face of Courtney Love, a rock icon, are not at all different from those used to rejuvenate the face of the queen of Spain, the actress Pamela Anderson, Chen Lili (the transsexual woman who attempted to compete in the Miss Universe contest in 2004), or the lesbian star Ellen DeGeneres, or from those used in remodeling the face of an anonymous working-class cis-female who wins the right to participate in the American TV show *Extreme Makeover*. As a result, we are witnessing a horizontalization of the consumption of the techniques of production of the body that redistributes the differences between class, race, or sexual identities, between the culture of rock music, high society, and the porn industry. This pharmacopornographic shifting is a

sign that normative white heterosexuality will soon be one body aesthetic among many others, a retro reproductive style that various future generations will be able to denigrate or exalt, a low-tech reproduction machine possibly exportable to other parts of the world (even an excuse for waging war against Muslim countries), but completely out of date and decadent in Western democratic post-Judeo-Christian societies.

Fifty years after the invention of the Pill, all sexual bodies are produced and become intelligible according to a common pharmacopornographic epistemology. There are not body biotechnologies that differ but the administrative systems that, as Dean Spade argues, sort and manage the access and use of those technologies, distributing life chances according to class, race, ability, gender, or sexuality.<sup>28</sup> Today, a cis-male can self-administer a testosterone-based hormonal complex to increase his athletic efficiency, and a teenager can have an implant placed under her skin that releases a composite of estrogens and progesterone for three years, acting as a contraceptive; a cis-female who claims to be a man can sign an agreement for a sex change and receive endocrinal therapy with a base of testosterone that makes it possible to grow a beard and mustache and increases muscularity; a cis-female of sixty may discover that more than twenty years of swallowing her high-strength contraceptive pill has caused kidney failure or breast cancer that she is supposed to treat with chemotherapy resembling what the victims of Chernobyl were

28. See Dean Spade, *Normal Life: Administrative Violence, Critical Trans Politics and the Limits of the Law* (New York: South End Press, 2011).

exposed to; a heterosexual couple can resort to in vitro fertilization after discovering that the male can't produce sperm mobile enough to fertilize the ovum of his partner because he has consumed too much tobacco and alcohol. The same testosterone that helps turn the wheels of the Tour de France serves to transform the bodies of F2M transsexuals . . . The question is, who has access to hormone treatments? According to which clinical diagnosis? How do class and race modify the distribution of and the access to technologies of production of gender?

All this suggests that a normative regime for segregated distribution of race, class, gender, sexuality, and ability coexists with the process of "becoming common"<sup>29</sup> of technologies of the production of body, gender, sex, race, and sexuality. From now on, the mutation will be impossible to stop.

In the middle of the Cold War, a new ontological-political distinction between "cis-" (a body that keeps the gender it was assigned at birth) and "trans" (a body availing itself of hormonal, surgical, prosthetic, or legal technologies to change that assignment) made its appearance. Henceforth, I will use the nomenclature *cis-* and *trans*, with the understanding that these two biopolitical gender statuses are technically produced. Both of them fall within the province of common methods of visual recognition, performative production, and morphological control. The difference between "cis-" and "trans" is enumerated as a function of resistance to the norm of the consciousness of those tech-

29. See the notion of "becoming common" in Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt, *Multitudes*, 142.

nical (pharmacopornographic) processes that produce somatic fictions of masculinity and femininity and as a function of scientific techniques and social recognition in public space. This implies no judgment about value: “trans” gender is neither better nor more political than “cis-” gender. It comes down to saying that, in ontopolitical terms, there are only technogenders. Photographic, biotechnological, surgical, pharmacological, cinematographic, or cybernetic techniques come to construct the materiality of the sexes *performatively*. Some transsexuals claim to have been born “imprisoned in the body of the opposite sex” and say that the technical mechanisms placed at their disposal by contemporary medicine are only a way of revealing their *true, authentic sex*. Others, like Kate Bornstein, Del LaGrace Volcano, or Susan Stryker,<sup>30</sup> affirm their status as *gender queers*, or gender deviants, and refuse any summons as man or woman, declaring them to be impositions of the norm. Del LaGrace Volcano puts it this way:

As a gender variant visual artist I access “technologies of gender” in order to amplify rather than erase the hermaphroditic traces of my body. *I name myself*. A gender abolitionist. A part time gender terrorist. An intentional mutation and intersex by design, (as opposed to diagnosis), in order to distinguish my journey from the thousands of intersex individuals who have had their “ambiguous” bodies mutilated and disfigured in a misguided attempt at “normalization.”<sup>31</sup>

30. Kate Bornstein, *Gender Outlaw: On Men, Women, and the Rest of Us* (New York: Routledge, 1994); Susan Stryker, “My Words to Victor Frankenstein Above the Village of Chamounix: Performing Transgender Rage,” *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 1, no. 3 (1994): 227–54.

31. Del LaGrace Volcano, “Artist Statement,” last modified September 2005, <http://www.dellagracevolcano.com/statement.html>.

One cannot insist enough on the fact that the pharmacopornographic regime of sexuality cannot function without the circulation of an enormous quantity of semitechnical flow: the flow of hormones, the flow of silicone, and the flow of digital, textual, and representational content . . . In other words, it cannot function without the constant trafficking of gender biocodes. Gender in the twenty-first century functions as an abstract mechanism for technical subjectification; it is spliced, cut, moved, cited, imitated, swallowed, injected, transplanted, digitized, copied, conceived of as design, bought, sold, modified, mortgaged, transferred, downloaded, enforced, translated, falsified, fabricated, swapped, dosed, administered, extracted, contracted, concealed, negated, renounced, betrayed . . . It transmutes.

In terms of political agency, subjection, or empowerment do not depend on the rejection of technologies in the name of nature, but rather on the differential use and reappropriation of the very techniques of the production of subjectivity. No political power exists without control over production and distribution of gender biocodes. Pharmacopornographic emancipation of subaltern bodies can be measured only according to these essential criteria: involvement in and access to the production, circulation, and interpretation of somato-politic biocodes.