

**What is the Body Capable of? What is the Body for?
by
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In Kelley Winter's essay *Maligning Terminology in the DSM: the Language of Oppression* she states:

I'm speaking of affirmed transwomen being called "he" and transmen being called "she." I use the term Maligning Language to describe this specific kind of verbal violence. (Winter, 2008)

I wonder what an authentic replacement to this *verbal violence* (concerning gender and identity) that Kelley refers to would look like...I wonder what types of spaces would necessarily evolve, if we as a species were somehow more precisely able to focus our gestures and efforts on the continued re-structuring and imagining of the places where these *violences* take place.

The following outpour is a phantasmagoria built off of questions. It is a document to dream through. It is a grouping of inquiries rooted in belief that it is possible to proceed in our work with gender and embodiment practices, in ways that are more involved, more evolved, more interested and more creative.

The following is a place to begin. There will always be some sort of a future to reckon with—to recognize through. I find that there are some very real questions that need to be asked concerning how to create a future that makes all beings want to be here for that future.

What would it mean if we were to truly gesture toward the future of health for all persons?

In order for this future to truly occur, there need be inquiry into what and how gender variant bodies can most accurately be referred.

This future would also need to obviously use accurate pronouns. By accurate I do not mean correct in terms of the polarist options of typical patriarchal categoricism (e.g. he/she). I am speaking of an accuracy that would be dependent on the person utilizing

the pronouns (as reference) actually inquiring of whom they are referring, how they wish to be referred. For example:

Do you wish to be referred to as he or she? Or is there something else that you more deeply identify as?

What would it be to engage intimacies and accuracies rather than binary induced categorization? What would it be to replace traditional notions of categorization with fundamental openness and curiosity? And what effects would these particular revolutions have on our bodies as we continue?

Perhaps the authentic replacement that I am referring to would look like many spaces of uninhibited imagination, overlapping and commingling. Spaces that are not typical or traditional. Spaces that emphasize specificity and precision concerning the vitalities of the individual.

Perhaps this replacement would emerge as spaces wherein the body is no longer seen in terms of how an exterior position would categorize it—but instead is seen as a space for forms to move through. A space that needs to be seen, acknowledged and named in terms of awe and enigma.

Imagine what it would be like if we were to treat each body as if it were an ever original, non-debatable conglomerate. An always developing compound. Always perfect. Always amidst. And always continuing.

I propose that it is possible that we make a neoteric future. I believe that a future such as this will need be based on extreme invention and vision. It will require new realms of interactivity where language is engaged in as action, activism and opportunity to touch the most inner places in bodies.

In this future we will name our own realities based in what it is that actually animates us—what it is that brings us to life. A future where we reach to understand others' self-named realities with excitement and vigor rather than fear or complacency.

This will be a future that requires that we not fear differentiation. This will be future that demands that we understand variance.

In this future we will necessarily transmogrify the polarizing issue of exteriority. Traditional categorizations and misperceptions will be further specified, because there will be space made for variant bodies to speak their accuracies concerning them.

In this future, in the place of patriarchal history we will implant shining, myriad glossaries of exactness.

As Yurii Tynianov states: "a work that is not a closed symmetrical whole, but an unfolding dynamic integrity" (1978: 127-128). This future is a work that we allow to progress through models of motility.

If we consider perceiving in terms of its limits and we admit those limits and are willing to extend further than our own perceptions in order to expand, I believe it is possible for us to progress into this future with deeper and more profound notions of respect.

If we engaged in these ways, then perhaps what we would construct as methodologies to engage with the very bodies to which we are referring would be that much more developed in terms of space, capacity to understand and willingness to offer.

This future would no longer be dominated by rhetoric that incites fear or exteriorly deterministic frames of acceptability that demand social normatively. This future would be a place where we as a species, take pride in the study and active progressing of axiological tendencies concerning aptitude.

In this future, where previous histories and categorical imperatives, are seen and understood as insufficient (in their representation of all bodies) and are thereby in need of extreme imagination:

A place of beautiful distinctions and descriptions where we admit to one another:

I know you are not solvable. I will not try to control you or limit you.

A place from there we engage the following questions together:

What is the body capable of What is the body for?

I can only begin a posteriori, by perceiving the world as vast and overwhelming; each moment stands under an enormous vertical and horizontal pressure of information. Potent with ambiguity, meaning-full, unfixed and certainly not complete. What saves this from becoming a vast undifferentiated mass of data and situation is one's ability to make distinctions. (Hejinian, 2000: 41)

This is my hope for a future of personal, infused sites for accurate, limitless imaginations and motilities.

This future engages languages which attend and adhere to the body as a multifarious site of motions along an unending spectrum. This future that prides itself in the urgencies of inclusion that honor and recognize gender variant or *gender transcendent* (Winters, 2008) bodies: bodies that are not currently, thoroughly or accurately represented in the context of patriarchal historicity.

Our future that sees the body as subjective matter in desperate need of spaces to declare itself, within a social context that allows those declarations to be accurate, full and visible.

To consider our bodies as one would the following question:

Is there an answer for bread?

In this future we would become the work we engage in. A work that is reaching to itself by breaking open/discovering and accumulating spaces for its future.

This future would be the inherent reversal of Dylan Scholinski's question: "have you ever been so false your skin is your enemy" (1999).

At cadences of ritual and nourishment, honor and vivisection

where we become what it is that moves us

our voices increasing halo

supplying new types of verdant

as ever unconditional fields for us to plant in.

References

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